Meeting Minutes - MCAS Presentation

February 27, 2024

Presented by Sarah Hardy (Assistant Superintendent for Learning & Teaching, Jennifer Stys (Assistant Superintendent for RPS), and Allison Wright (Director for Special Education)

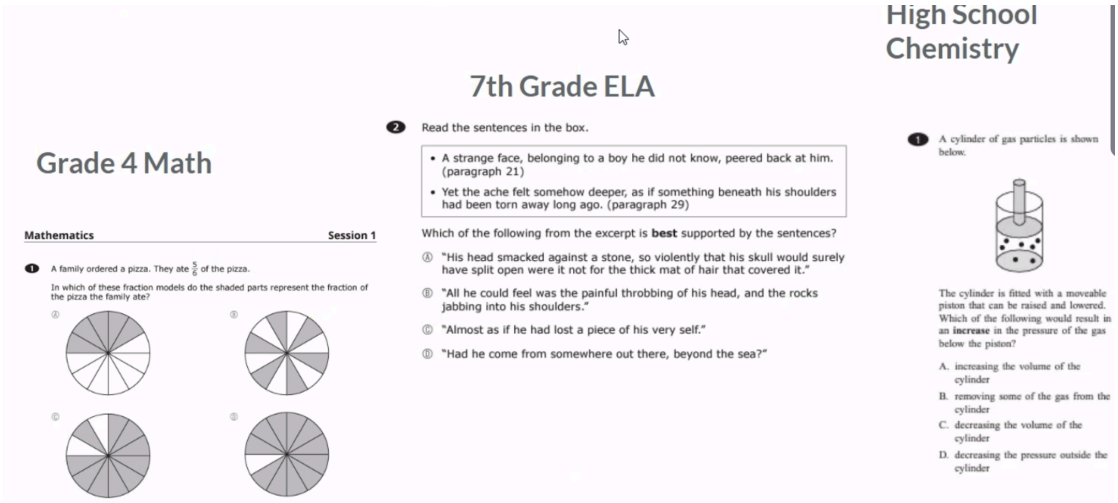
Presentation was recorded and will be posted by SEPAC.

Agenda

1. What is MCAS?
2. Why is MCAS given?
3. MCAS Participation
4. Types of Questions
5. Sample Questions
6. High School Retakes
7. Students with Disabilities
8. MLL Students
9. MCAS Grading
10. Reporting Results
11. Questions from SEPAC
12. Educational Proficiency Plans (EPPs)
13. MCAS Legislation: Information from SEPAC
14. Q&A

Notes

- **What is MCAS?**
  - Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System
  - Used to help us understand student performance and how that compares to students across the state
- **Why is MCAS given?**
  - 1993 MA Education Reform Act
  - Requires high standards that students are expected to meet.
  - Specifics:
    - Test all students who are educated with MA public funds, including students with disabilities and limited English proficient students;
    - Measure students' knowledge of the material contained in the MA Curriculum Frameworks; and
    - Report on the performance of individual students, schools, and districts.
- **MCAS Participation**
  - Required for all students grades 3-8 and grade 10; in addition, in Reading, a science assessment is given in grade 9
  - Subjects:

        - English language arts (ELA): Grades 3-8, 10
        - Mathematics: Grades 3-8, 10
        - Science, technology and engineering (STE): Grades 5 and 8
        - Biology: in Reading for grade 9 (because that is when they take Biology)
        - Optional - Introductory Physics: If a student doesn't pass Biology they can take opt to take the Physics MCAS in grade 10 in place of Biology
        - Civics Field Test, Grade 8 (new subject)
    - Each MCAS assessment contains 2 sessions
    - Passing MCAS in ELA, Math, and STE is a state requirement for graduation
- **Types of Questions**
    - Multiple choice
    - Multiple Select
    - Short Response
    - Text-Based Essay
    - Technology enhanced question
    - Constructed Response
    - See: https://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/tdd/default.html
- **Sample Questions**
    - Each year the state will post example questions and practice tests
    - DESE MCAS resource page: https://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/parents/default.html
    - Sample questions: https://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/testitems.html
    - 

- **High School Retakes**
    - Students who do not pass the Biology MCAS in grade 9 can retake it twice in grades 10, 11, and 12

        - Alternatively they can opt to take the Physics MCAS in grade 10
    - Students who do not pass the ELA or Math in grade 10 can retake it three times in grades 11 and 12
    - RMHS offers support for students who need to take a retest (currently during flex block)
    - While retakes are rare at RMHS, students are supported and encouraged throughout the process. We know it takes some students a bit longer to reach mastery across all standards.
    - There are no penalties for students who take retakes.
- **Students with Disabilities**
    - 3 different modes for taking
        - Routine (standard) MCAS testing
        - Test Accommodations
        - MCAS Alternate Assessment (MCAS-Alt)
    - IEP Team decision on format
        - If a student has testing accommodations in their IEP or 504 and are utilized throughout the school day, then the team should consider if the student requires these accommodations during the MCAS assessment.
    - **MCAS-Alt**
        - Portfolio of samples of work
        - Entry point may be different
        - 1% statewide participate in MCAS-Alt
        - Students graduate with a **Certificate of Attendance** (rather than a **Diploma)**
        - Portfolio includes a coversheet, work, and evaluation
        - Parents can view portfolio and sign off before it is sent to the state
        - Examples of MCAS-Alt Portfolio:

Work samples (MCAS-Alt.)

Grade 4 : Measurement and Data

2021 MCAS-Alt

STRAND COVER SHEET

(A completed Strand Cover Sheet must be included at the beginning of each strand being submitted.)

(1) Student's Name: [redacted]

(2) Student's grade as reported in the Student Information Management System (SIMS): **04**

(3) a. Content Area (Subject): **Mathematics**

b. Strand: **Measurement and Data**

c. Learning Standard: **4.MD.B.4 Make a line plot (dot plot) representation to display a data set of measurements in fractions of a unit (1/2, 1/4, 1/8). Solve problems involving addition and subtraction of fractions by using information presented in line plots (dot plots).**

(List the standard number for the grade in which the student was reported in SIMS.)

(4) Level of complexity: Student addressed the learning standard in this strand ...

For a student working at "grade-level," use Work Descriptions for Grade Level or Competency Portfolios, instead of this form.

(5) Measurable outcome: Select a challenging skill from the Resource Guide that the student is expected to learn as a result of instruction at the appropriate level of complexity, and the percent of accuracy and independence required for mastery. (for example, "student will summarize key events in a literary text with 80% accuracy and 100% independence").

[redacted] **will solve problems involving data presented in a line plot with 80% accuracy and 80% independence.**

(6) Adaptations, accommodations, and/or modifications routinely used by the student during instruction of this skill, including augmentative or alternative communication (AAC) system, if used:

Graphic organizers and reference sheets

Evidence Page Type	My Description
Grade Level Work Sample Description	Line Plots and Word Problems Exit Ticket
Grade Level Work Sample Description	Making Line Plots
Grade Level Work Sample Description	MD.4 Standard Based Assessment
Grade Level Work Sample Description	Line Plots Practice 1

(Continue list on additional paper, if needed.)

2021 Grade-Level Portfolio
WORK DESCRIPTION

for students in Grades 3-8

(Attach one **WORK DESCRIPTION** to **each work sample** in the portfolio.)

Student's Name: [redacted] Date work was produced: **3/29/2021**

Student's grade: **04**

Content Area: **Mathematics**

Strand/Domain: **Measurement and Data**

Learning Standard: **4.MD.B.4 - Make a line plot (dot plot) representation to display a data set of measurements in fractions of a unit (1/2, 1/4, 1/8). Solve problems involving addition and subtraction of fractions by using information presented in line plots (dot plots).**

Brief Description of the assignment or activity in the attached work sample:

After being given a lesson on line plots and working on practice problems together. Students were given an exit ticket where they had to demonstrate the skill independently to see how comfortable they were with it.

What was the student's overall percent of accuracy on this assignment?

(Level of **Accuracy = 100 %**)

How much of this assignment was done independently by the student (i.e., without the use of prompts, guidance, coaching, or suggestions)

(Level of **Independence = 100 %**)

If Independence percentage is less than 100%, **what type of assistance** did the student receive on the attached work sample?

Describe any **accommodations** the student received (e.g., scribe, read-aloud, calculator, assistive/augmentative technology, etc.). **Note:** Use of accommodations does not affect the Independence percentage.

Given a line plot reference sheet Teacher redirected student's attention

List any examples of self-evaluation by the student, including self-correction, editing, planning, reflection, or goal setting.

[redacted] 3/30/21

4.MD.4 **Making Line Plots**

I can make a line plot to show measurements involving fractions.

A Line Plot can be used to display data related to measurements, including those with fractions.

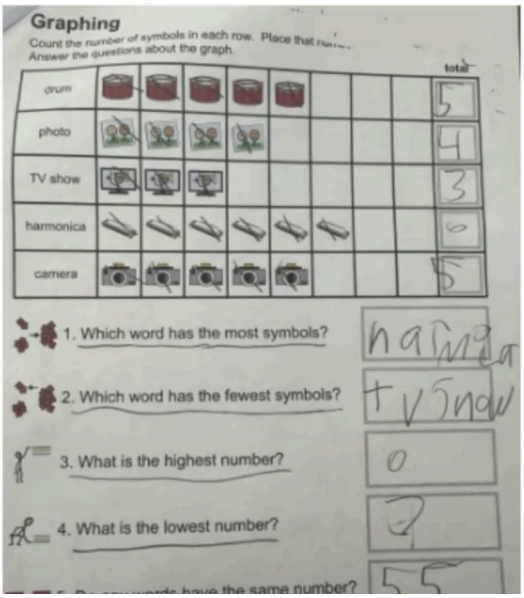
The students in Miss Johnson's class measured their heights to the nearest ¼ Foot. They organized the data using a tally chart. Use the tally chart to create a line plot.

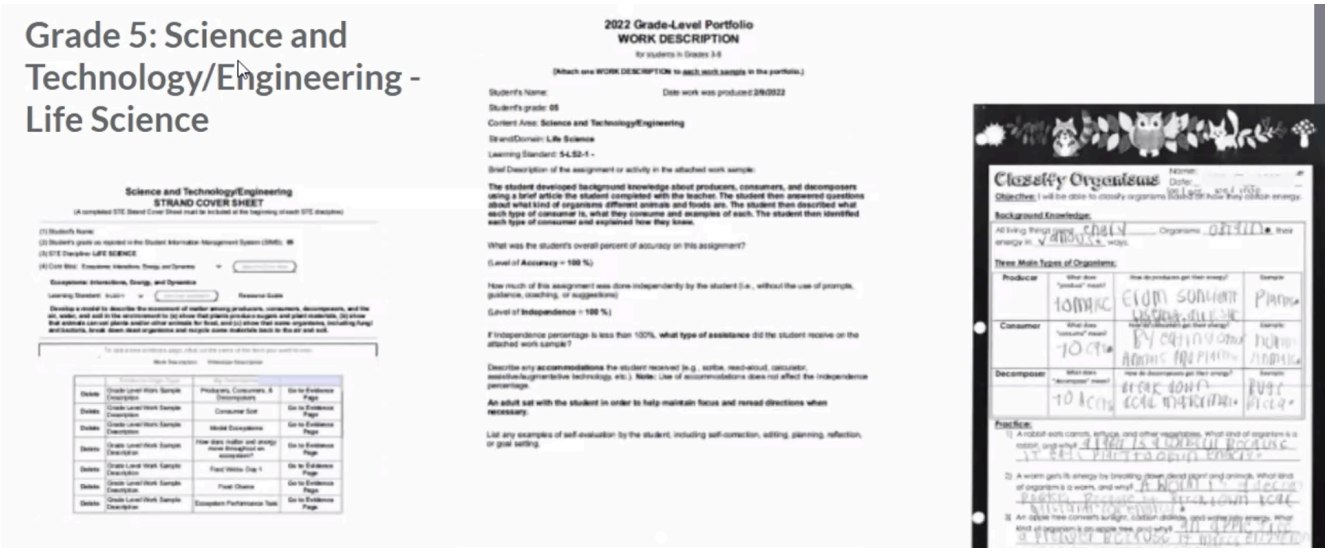
Height in Feet	Number of Students
4	IIII
4¼	IIII I
4½	IIII
4¾	III

Heights of Students in Feet

Grade 10 Math







- **Test Accommodations**
    - Computer-based or paper-and-pencil MCAS
    - Align with…
    - Graduate with a **Diploma**
- **MLL Students**
    - Multilingual learners (formally known as English Language (EL) students)
    - 1st year of enrollment in the US they do not have to take the MCAS
    - Word to word translation dictionary is given
    - Other accommodations can be given
- **MCAS Grading**
    - Use of Scoring Rubrics
    - Scorer Training
    - Scoring High School Constructed-Response Questions
    - Graders
        - Graded by people who are trained and assessed in their ability to score students within a certain range; pretty rigorous process to ensure students are given a similar score for the same type of writing.
        - Sarah Hardy has experience being a grader.
        - In most recent years MA has hired professional scorers. But they have and may continue to still have teachers grade.
- **Reporting Results**
    - Families receive MCAS reports in the Fall
    - Results are reviewed by the District Data Team each fall for achievement and growth.

- The District Data Team also examines results by demographic group (race, income, disability status, MILL status, etc)
- District wide results are shared each Fall at a school committee meeting
- The District leadership team reviews MCAS data and the plan for dissemination of results at the school level
- Each school provides an overview

- **Questions from SEPAC**

Questions from the SEPAC

Does it get recorded how many times you take the MCAS? The record of assessments is held by DESE, and schools have access to it through a secure portal which at RMHS only the principal and MCAS coordinator have access to. The district also has access to this information. If a student transfers to another public school their record follows them. It is linked to their State ID Number or SASID.

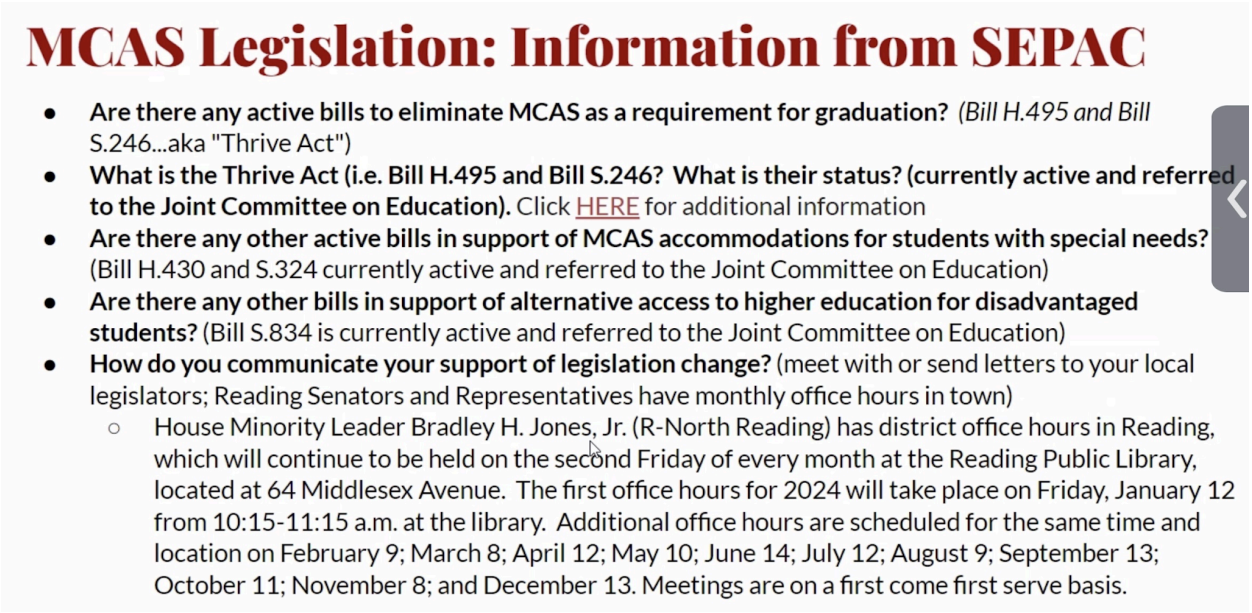
Are there any consequences/effects/penalties for retakes? None.

Who gets access to MCAS scores and retakes? School Principals, MCAS coordinator, district administrators. Also, English / math / science department leaders are given the results because they work with the principal to support students if they did not pass, and also celebrate those that did well. Individual scores are only shared with these staff if a student was not successful to allow us to devise a support plan for students to pass. The admin team and school counselors are also aware of students that have yet to pass any MCAS.

Do colleges get access to MCAS scores and records of retakes? No, colleges do not care about MCAS scores unless it is for scholarship purposes, ex. John and Abigail Adams Scholarship.

What if you never pass the MCAS? If a student does not pass the three required MCAS at the high school level, English, math, STE they do not earn their Competency Determination and hence will not get a diploma. If they meet all other local requirements the student can be given a certificate of completion, but this is not the same as a diploma. There are some cases where the district can submit an appeal, for a student in an extreme situation. There are different types of appeals and students must fit into one of these categories and usually the Department requires a student to attempt each MCAS at least three times before they are granted an appeal. Here is a link that explains more: https://www.doe.mass.edu/mcasappeals/default.html. If a student is attending school at an out of district placement the out of district placement administers the MCAS.

- Educational Proficiency Plans (EPPs)
  - Schools take time to see if additional supports are needed for those who have not met requirements
- MCAS Legislation: Information from SEPAC
  - The school cannot speak to any bills but SEPAC has provided some information



- **Q&A**
  - **Instead of retaking the Biology MCAS can students take the Physics MCAS as an alternative?** Yes
  - **Is the Civics MCAS optional or an alternative for anything?** State requirement for 50% of all 8th graders to take the Civics MCAS; each school designates who takes the Civics MCAS but for ease of management, all 8th grade students in Reading will take the Civics MCAS
  - **Is there an option to opt out of the Civics MCAS?** No