

Public Feedback on Next-Generation MCAS Achievement Levels and Descriptors

The next-generation MCAS tests will be given for the first time to students in grades 3–8 in English Language Arts and Mathematics in spring 2017. A key feature of our state test is the achievement levels and descriptors that denote students' levels of academic achievement on the new test. The Department is seeking public feedback on the new recommended achievement levels and descriptors.

This fall, the Department convened educators to form a 14-member [standard-setting policy committee](#) to recommend achievement level names and descriptors for the next-generation MCAS tests. The committee recommended that student performance on the next-generation tests be reported using new achievement levels, instead of the current ones that will remain for the legacy MCAS tests in 2017 (high school tests and Science and Technology/Engineering tests). For reference, the proposed levels for the next-generation tests and the levels for the legacy MCAS tests are shown below.

The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education will ultimately vote on new achievement levels, but prior to that, the Department is seeking public feedback on the committee's recommendations. Please complete this survey to share your feedback by January 27, 2017. We wish to thank all respondents for providing the Department with feedback on this important topic.

Achievement Levels and Descriptors

Draft Next-Generation MCAS Achievement Levels and Descriptors, as proposed by the Standard Setting Policy Committee

Exceeding Expectations

Students performing at this level on this test exceed grade-level expectations for knowledge, skills, and understanding; and, are academically well prepared to succeed at the next grade level.

Meeting Expectations

Students performing at this level on this test meet grade-level expectations for knowledge, skills, and understanding; and, are academically prepared to succeed at the next grade level.

Partially Meeting Expectations

Students performing at this level on this test partially meet grade-level expectations for knowledge, skills, and understanding. These students may need coordinated assistance and/or additional instruction to succeed at the next grade level.

Not Yet Meeting Expectations

Students performing at this level on this test did not meet grade-level expectations for knowledge, skills, or understanding. These students need substantial coordinated intervention and/or additional instruction to

succeed at the next grade level.

Legacy MCAS Achievement Levels and Descriptors

Advanced

Students at this level demonstrate a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of challenging subject matter and provide sophisticated solutions to complex problems.

Proficient

Students at this level demonstrate a solid understanding of challenging subject matter and solve a wide variety of problems.

Needs Improvement

Students at this level demonstrate a partial understanding of subject matter and solve some simple problems.

Warning (Failing at high school)

Students at this level demonstrate a minimal understanding of subject matter and do not solve simple problems.

1. Which of the following best describes your role?

- Teacher
- School Administrator
- District Administrator
- Parent
- Student
- Other - Write In

2. Given the choice between continuing to report results using the legacy achievement level names and descriptors or adopting new ones, the standard-setting policy committee recommended adopting new ones for the next-generation MCAS tests.

(To see the proposed and legacy achievement levels and descriptors, refer back to the beginning of this survey.)

Indicate whether or not you support this recommendation.

- I support the adoption of new achievement level names and descriptors for the next-generation MCAS tests.

- I support retaining the legacy achievement level names and descriptors for the next-generation MCAS tests.
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3. In reporting results, some testing programs have more than four achievement levels (e.g., PARCC has five). The standard-setting policy committee recommended reporting four achievement levels for the next-generation MCAS tests.

Indicate whether or not you support this recommendation.

- I support the recommendation for four achievement levels.
- I would prefer five achievement levels.
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4. The standard-setting policy committee recommended that the descriptors focus on two main factors related to student achievement:

- The ability to meet grade-level expectations, and
- The level of preparedness for success in the next grade.

Indicate whether you or not support this recommendation.

- I support the inclusion of both factors in the descriptors.
- I support the inclusion of the first factor only.
- I support the inclusion of the second factor only.
- I support a different approach [explain in the box below].

Additional Comments

For the next two questions, indicate your level of support for each of the ideas underlying the standard-setting policy committee's recommendations.

5. Achievement level names should be positive and motivating.

- Strongly support
- Somewhat support
- Do not support
-

6. Achievement level names should communicate shared responsibility for student success (i.e., responsibilities are shared among students, educators, and the community).

- Strongly support
- Somewhat support
- Do not support
-

7. Do you have any specific suggestions or ideas related to the proposed achievement level names (Exceeding Expectations, Meeting Expectations, Partially Meeting Expectations, Not Yet Meeting Expectations)?

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8. What other comments do you wish to share about the recommendations from the standard-setting policy committee?

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Submit

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