

A message from the
Massachusetts Department of
Elementary and Secondary Education

December 7, 2020

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Commissioner's WEEKLY UPDATE

News from Commissioner Jeffrey C. Riley and the Massachusetts Department of
Elementary and Secondary Education

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1. Updates to MCAS and ACCESS Schedules and Participation:

In recognition of the scheduling and logistical challenges that schools and districts are experiencing, DESE is adjusting the schedules and expectations for

MCAS high school testing and ACCESS testing as follows:

January-February High School MCAS ELA and Mathematics Tests:

- Students in grade 11 (class of 2022) **will no longer participate in testing** during the January-February window. Testing for this class in English language arts and mathematics is being postponed until later in the year.
- Students in grade 12 (class of 2021), as well as adult test-takers, **will remain eligible to participate** in one or both tests beginning in January to earn their Competency Determination.
- The testing window for eligible students is extended through Friday, February 12, giving schools an additional week to complete testing. The full testing window will be **Thursday, January 14 through February 12**.

ACCESS for ELLs:

- The testing window for the ACCESS tests is being extended for several months. Schools will be able to administer the ACCESS tests at any time between **Thursday, January 7 and Thursday, May 20**.
- Results will be returned in late summer.

The [statewide testing schedule](#) will be updated shortly to reflect the changes indicated above, and DESE will provide more information in the coming weeks about testing schedules for the remainder of the school year.