



# Hanover Schools

## Helping Your Child Prepare for Tests

March 2006

The Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) was implemented in response to the Education Reform Law of 1993, which required that MCAS be designed to:

- test all public school students in the Commonwealth
- be administered annually in selected grades
- measure performance based on learning standards in the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks
- report on the performance of individual students, schools, and districts
- serve as one basis of accountability for students, schools, and districts (for example, grade 10 students must pass the English Language Arts and Mathematics tests as one condition of eligibility for earning a high school diploma.

The MCAS test also fulfills the requirements of the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) law. NCLB requires annual assessments in reading and math for students in grades 3-8 and high school. Students also must be tested annually in science in an elementary school grade, a middle school grade, and a high school (10 - 12) grade. This requirement is fulfilled in Massachusetts by testing students in grades 5, 8, and high school.

Testing procedures are strictly defined by the Massachusetts Department of Education (DOE) and test security is essential.

Source: Massachusetts Department of Education  
www.doe.mass.edu

Testing periods are determined by the Department of Education, and those dates are recorded below according to grade level. Districts are provided with a time period to implement each test. For example, the Grade 3 math testing opportunities are in place for fourteen days. Students will test for two, sixty-minute sessions. The fourteen days are necessary to receive the materials, document the receipt of all testing materials, distribute materials prior to each session of testing, collect the testing material after each session, count material, pack up the testing material and then send it out for scoring. Districts need the testing periods for the complete process for each test. Schools may provide more specific information regarding testing dates. The information below refers to the testing periods.

Time Periods for MCAS Testing		
Grade 3	Reading	3/27 - 4/7
	Mathematics	5/15 - 6/2
Grade 4	ELA Language/Literature	3/29- 4/7
	ELA Long Composition	3/28
	Mathematics	5/15 - 6/2
Grade 5	ELA Language/Literature	3/27 - 4/7
	Mathematics	5/15 - 6/2
	Science & Technology/ Engineering	5/15 - 6/2
	<i>History &amp; Social Science</i>	<i>5/15 - 6/2</i>
	<i>Question Tryout</i>	
Grade 6	ELA Language/Literature	3/27 - 4/7
	Mathematics	5/15 - 6/2
Grade 7	ELA Language/Literature	3/30 - 4/7
	ELA Long Composition	3/29
	Mathematics	5/15 - 6/2
	<i>History &amp; Social Science</i>	<i>5/15 - 6/2</i>
	<i>Question Tryout</i>	
Grade 8	ELA Language/Literature	3/27 - 4/7
	Mathematics	5/15 - 6/2
	Science & Technology/ Engineering	5/15 - 6/2

## Hanover High School Specific Testing Dates

Grade 10	ELA Long Composition	3/28
	ELA Long Composition Makeup	4/5
	ELA Language/Literature	3/29 & 30
	Mathematics	5/23 & 24
	Chemistry (Honors)	5/30 & 5/31
	Biology (Honors)	5/30 & 5/31
Grade 11	<i>US History Question Tryout</i>	5/25

### MCAS Alternative Assessment

On May 5, portfolios assessments will be submitted for students with significant disabilities in grades 3-8 and 10.

### Supporting Your Child Throughout the Year

- Make sure your child gets enough sleep, eats properly, and gets to school on time. Regular attendance is one predictor of academic success. During test time, make attendance a special effort.
- Encourage your child to read. Parents, guardians, and siblings can share good books and discuss main characters to reinforce positive reading habits. Parents and guardians may even read with their children for a fun family activity.
- Record important dates on your home calendar that include testing dates.
- Set times each day for study and homework.
- Provide your child with a quiet, well-lit comfortable space to study which includes important supplies like paper, pens, pencils, calculators, rulers, a dictionary and a thesaurus.
- Encourage your child to record assignments and due dates in his or her agenda book.
- Check your child's homework.

Source: Parents Place Pointers  
[www.pplace.org](http://www.pplace.org)

## The Day of the Test

- Make sure that your child is well rested and eats a protein rich, healthy breakfast.
- See that your child arrives at school on time and is relaxed.
- Comfort counts. Send a sweater if it is a cool day. Dress in layers for a warm day.
- Encourage your child to do the best work possible and to have a positive attitude.
- Encourage your child to listen/read carefully to all test taking directions and to ask questions if any directions are unclear.
- Encourage your child to check answers for accuracy if time permits.
- Your child should bring a book to read in case she or he finishes early.

## Reducing Test Anxiety

Test anxiety occurs when students worry too much about doing well on a test. It can keep students from performing their best and it may contribute to a burden of stress or fear. The following information provides parents or guardians with strategies to help reduce test anxiety:

- Talk about the test in positive ways.
- Encourage best efforts.
- Encourage your child to focus on his or her strengths, such as good memory or strong analytical skills.
- Assure your child that the test is only one measure of academic performance.
- Confidence and motivation are key components to success. Support your child in these areas through positive reinforcement.
- Encourage your child to get enough sleep, exercise, and eat a protein rich, healthy diet.