PARCC Accessibility and Accommodations
Overview for Massachusetts Educators

(Note: Additional information is available in the *PARCC Accessibility Features and Accommodations Manual* and appendices, available at www.parcconline.org/parcc-accessibility-features-and-accommodations-manual.)

BACKGROUND

The accessibility of PARCC tests has been enhanced by including

- a range of tools and supports in the computer test-delivery system for use by *all* students;
- corresponding accessibility features and accommodations, where available, for students taking **paper-and-pencil** PARCC tests; and
- test administration policies and procedures that allow a broad range of options for adapting the testing environment.

PARCC TEST ADMINISTRATION CONSIDERATIONS FOR *ALL* STUDENTS

Although most students can be tested in their regular classrooms according to the guidelines and schedule intended for all students, Table 1 below outlines the test administration considerations that may be provided to **any** student, including non-disabled students and ELLs, at the discretion of the principal (or designee) who determines a need to modify the testing environment for a particular student. These considerations may be provided regardless of whether the student is participating in PARCC computer- or paper-based testing. **It is advisable (though not required) to continue toinclude these in the IEPs or 504 plans of students with disabilities.** This table also lists the corresponding MCAS accommodation (with accommodation numbers in parentheses). For more information on MCAS accommodations, refer to the *Requirements for the Participation of Students with Disabilities in MCAS,* which is available at www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/participation/sped.pdf.

Table 1. PARCC Test Administration Considerations available to any student, at the principal's discretion

PARCC Test Administration Consideration	Corresponding MCAS Accommodation for students with disabilities (MCAS accommodation number)
Frequent Breaks	Frequent Breaks (1)
Time of Day	Time of Day (2)
Small Group/Individual	Small Group (3), Individual (5)
Separate or Alternate Location	Separate Setting (4)
Specified Area or Seating	Specified Area (6)
Familiar Test Administrator	Familiar Test Administrator (7)
Student Reads Test Aloud (in separate setting)	Student Reads Test Aloud (21)
Adaptive and Specialized Equipment, Furniture, or Lighting	Other Standard Accommodation (25)

PARCC ACCESSIBILITY FEATURES FOR *ALL* STUDENTS

Table 2 below outlines

- the PARCC accessibility features available to *all* students participating in the **computer-based** PARCC tests;
- the corresponding accessibility feature, if available, for students taking **paper-and-pencil** PARCC tests; and
- the corresponding **MCAS accommodation** (and accommodation number) for comparison.

Many MCAS accommodations will now be available as onscreen tools on the computer-based PARCC tests, or incorporated into the accessible design of PARCC computer- and paper-based assessments. These *accessibility features* will be available to *all* students participating in PARCC, although some may need to be requested during the student data upload prior to testing.

Table 2. PARCC Accessibility Features available to all students

PARCC Accessibility Features		Corresponding MCAS Accommodation for students with disabilities (MCAS accommodation number)
for Computer-Based Testing	**for Paper-Based Testing**	
Answer Masking/ Eliminate Answer Choices	Place Marker, Masking Device	Place Marker (13)
Audio Amplification	Auditory Aids	Amplification (15)
Blank Paper	Blank Paper	Answers Recorded in Test Booklet (or uses special paper for drafts or computation) (24)
Color Contrast (Background/Font Color)	Colored Overlays	Magnification or Overlays (9)
Flag Items for Review	Not Available	Not Available
General Administration Directions Read Aloud and/or Repeated, as needed	General Administration Directions Read Aloud and/or Repeated, as needed	Test Directions (10)
General Administration Directions Clarified	General Administration Directions Clarified	Test Directions (10)
Highlight Tool	Highlighting in test booklet only (not answer document) for students in grade 4 or higher	Highlighting in test booklet only (not answer booklet) for any student in grade 4 or higher
Headphones	Not Available	Not Available
Line Reader (masks area around each line read by student)	Place Marker	Place Marker (13)
Magnification/Screen Enlargement/ Zoom Tool	Magnification/Enlargement (External Device)	Magnification or Overlays (9)
Noise Buffers	Noise Buffers	Noise Buffers (8)
NotePad	Students will be given blank paper	Not Available
Pop-up Glossary	Footnotes provided in test	Footnotes provided in test

PARCC Accessibility Features		Corresponding MCAS Accommodation for students with disabilities (MCAS accommodation number)
for Computer-Based Testing	**for Paper-Based Testing**	
Redirect Student to the Test	Redirect Student to the Test	Redirect Student's Attention to the Test (14)
Spell Checker	Spell Checker	Nonstandard Accommodation: Spell- or Grammar-Checking Function on Word Processor, Spell-Checking Device, or Word Prediction Software for the ELA Composition (31)
Text-to-Speech for the Mathematics assessments	Human Reader for the Mathematics assessments	Use of Human Reader (16) or Electronic Text Reader (18) for the ELA Composition, Mathematics, and/or Science and Technology/Engineering tests
Writing Tools (e.g., copy, cut-and-paste, bold, underline)	Not Available	Not Available

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PARCC AND MCAS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

For districts administering PARCC assessments in 2014-2015, IEP teams should consider the following differences between PARCC and MCAS when developing IEPs for the current school year. Most test accommodations that are allowed for MCAS are also allowed for PARCC, either as accessibility features for all students, test administration considerations for all students, or accommodations specifically for students with disabilities. A small number of accommodations allowed for MCAS are either *not* allowed for PARCC, or are administered differently on PARCC tests. In addition to several MCAS accommodations that are now available to all students, Table 3 below describes the important differences between MCAS and PARCC accessibility features, test administration considerations, and accommodations.

Table 3. Differences between PARCC and MCAS Accessibility Features, Accommodations, and Test Administration Policies

PARCC Accessibility Feature, Accommodation, or Test Administration Policy	MCAS Accommodation or Test Administration Policy (Accommodation number, if applicable)
Individualized graphic organizers, checklists, or reference sheets are **not available** on PARCC tests. Use of this MCAS accommodation on PARCC assessments will result in the invalidation of the student's test for which it was used. (Note that *all* students are provided with the standard reference sheets and blank paper.)	Individualized Graphic Organizer, Checklist, or Reference Sheet, or Abacus (20)
PARCC tests are timed. **Extended time** (up to the end of the school day) to complete a test session is an accommodation available to students with disabilities and ELLs. Therefore, **IEPs and 504 plans should list *extended time* as an accommodation, if the student will require it.** For students doing computer-based testing, principals should plan for students using extended time to be in a separate setting.	MCAS tests are untimed for all students (up to one school day to complete a test session).
Paper-based tests may be administered as an accommodation, either to a student with a disability who is unable to use a computer, or an English learner with little or no prior experience or familiarity with technology.	All MCAS tests are administered using paper-based format.

Table 3. Differences between PARCC and MCAS Accessibility Features, Accommodations, and Test Administration Policies *(continued)*

PARCC Accessibility Feature, Accommodation, or Test Administration Policy	MCAS Accommodation or Test Administration Policy (Accommodation number, if applicable)
Students with recently occurring injuries, illnesses, or disabilities may be provided accommodations on PARCC tests once the form for **emergency accommodations** has been completed and kept on file at the school.[1] (No 504 plan is necessary to receive an emergency accommodation on PARCC assessments)	Students with recently occurring injuries or disabilities must have a 504 plan created by the school before MCAS accommodations may be provided.
Additional accommodations available to **ELLs**, as outlined in Table 7	Use of word-to-word, bilingual dictionary in student's native language for ELLs or former ELLs
Text-to-speech/read-aloud on the PARCC Mathematics test is an *accessibility feature* available to all students.	Test administrator may read aloud the Mathematics test only to a student with a disability per the IEP.

PARCC ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Tables 4 through 6 show PARCC accommodations for students with disabilities grouped into three main categories: **test presentation**, **test responses**, and **timing and scheduling of tests**. For each table, the following is included:

- PARCC accommodations on the **computer-based** tests that are available to students with disabilities who have the accommodation listed in their IEP or 504 plan;
- comparable PARCC **paper-based** test accommodation (if available); and
- corresponding MCAS accommodation.

More information about accessibility features and accommodations on PARCC paper-based tests is available in Appendix A at www.parcconline.org/parcc-accessibility-features-and-accommodations-manual

Table 4. PARCC Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: Test Presentation

PARCC Test Presentation Accommodations		Corresponding MCAS Accommodation (Accommodation number)
for PARCC Computer-Based Testing	for PARCC Paper-Based Testing	
Assistive technology (AT) device or software[2]	Assistive technology device or software (used in conjunction with paper-based test)	Assistive technology device with prior Department approval (18, 28, or 25)
Screen Reader, Refreshable Braille (ELA only), and Tactile Graphics for ELA/Literacy and Mathematics assessments (for student who is blind or visually-impaired)	Braille (contracted) edition of ELA/Literacy and Mathematics assessments	Braille (12)

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[1] Appendix G: *Form for Use of an Emergency Accommodation on a PARCC Assessment* is available at www.parcconline.org/parcc-accessibility-features-and-accommodations-manual

[2] AT devices for use on PARCC computer-based tests must either be compatible with TestNav 8.0 or used with an external computer or device, with answers transcribed onto the paper- or computer-based test. Information on compatibility will be available prior to PARCC test administration.

PARCC Test Presentation Accommodations		Corresponding MCAS Accommodation (Accommodation number)
for PARCC Computer-Based Testing	**for PARCC Paper-Based Testing**	
Not Available	**Paper-based edition** of the ELA/Literacy or Mathematics assessment for student with a disability who is unable to use a computer[3]	Not Applicable
Text-to-Speech or Screen Reader for the **ELA/Literacy** assessments, including items, response options, and passages (**Note:** Intended for students who are severely limited or prevented from decoding, as documented in diagnostic evaluations; and for whom interventions are already in place; or who are blind and do not read Braille fluently)	Human read-aloud for the ELA/Literacy assessments (**Note:** Intended for students who are severely limited or prevented from decoding, as documented in diagnostic evaluations; and for whom interventions are already in place; or who are blind and do not read Braille fluently)	Nonstandard accommodations: • Test Administrator Reads ELA Reading Comprehension Test to the Student (26) • Electronic Text Reader for the ELA Reading Comprehension Test (28)
Embedded ASL Video of **Test Directions** for a student who is Deaf or Hard of Hearing	Test Administrator Signs the **Test Directions** to a Student Who is Deaf or Hard of Hearing	Test Directions (10)
Embedded ASL Video of the **Mathematics** assessments for a student who is Deaf or Hard of Hearing	Test Administrator Signs the **Mathematics** Test to a Student Who is Deaf or Hard of Hearing	Test Administrator Signs the Mathematics Test to a Student Who is Deaf or Hard of Hearing (17)
Embedded ASL Video of the **ELA/Literacy** assessments for a student who is Deaf or Hard of Hearing (**Note:** Intended for students who are deaf or hard of hearing and are severely limited or prevented from decoding text, either due to a specific disability or due to a documented history of early and prolonged language deprivation, as documented in diagnostic evaluations; and for whom interventions are already in place.)	Test Administrator Signs the **ELA/Literacy** Test to a Student Who is Deaf or Hard of Hearing (**Note:** Intended for students who are deaf or hard of hearing and are severely limited or prevented from decoding text, either due to a specific disability or due to a documented history of early and prolonged language deprivation, as documented in diagnostic evaluations; and for whom interventions are already in place.)	Nonstandard Accommodation: Test Administrator Signs the ELA Reading Comprehension Test for a Student Who is Deaf of Hard of Hearing (27)
Not Available	Large-Print Test Edition	Large Print (11)

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[3] *Appendix A: Accessibility Features and Accommodations for Students Taking the Paper-and-Pencil PARCC Assessments* is available at www.parcconline.org/parcc-accessibility-features-and-accommodations-manual.

Table 5. PARCC Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: Test Responses

PARCC Test Response Accommodations		Corresponding MCAS Accommodation (Accommodation number)
for PARCC Computer-Based Testing	**for PARCC Paper-Based Testing**	
Assistive Technology Device or Software[4]	Assistive Technology Device or Software (used in conjunction with paper-based test)	Available with prior approval by Department
Student uses an external keyboard to record their responses. (Answers must be transcribed onscreen by a test administrator)	Student uses an external keyboard to record their responses. (Answers must be transcribed by a test administrator into the student's answer booklet)	Typed Responses (23)
Braille Notetaker/Braille Writer (External device used in conjunction with Braille test or Screen Reader)	Braille Note-Taker/Braille Writer (External device used in conjunction with Braille test or Screen Reader)	Typed Responses (23)
Calculation Device or Other Mathematics Tool (e.g., arithmetic table, manipulatives) on non-calculator session of the Mathematics assessment (**Note:** Intended for students who are severely limited or prevented from performing basic calculations (i.e., addition, subtraction, multiplication or division) without a calculation device or other mathematics tool, as documented in locally-administered diagnostic evaluations; and for whom interventions are already in place)	Calculation Device and Mathematics Tools (e.g., arithmetic table, manipulatives) on non-calculator session of the Mathematics assessment (**Note:** Intended for students who are severely limited or prevented from performing basic calculations (i.e., addition, subtraction, multiplication or division) without a calculation device or other mathematics tool, as documented in locally-administered diagnostic evaluations; and for whom interventions are already in place)	Nonstandard Accommodation: Calculation Devices (30)
Scribing by test administrator for the Mathematics assessments; and for selected response (not constructed response) items on the English Language Arts/Literacy assessments[5] (Student must be tested in separate setting)	Scribing by test administrator for the Mathematics assessments; and for selected response (not constructed response) items on the English Language Arts/Literacy assessments[6] (Student must be tested in separate setting)	Test Administrator Scribes the ELA Reading Comprehension, or Mathematics Tests or Student Uses a Speech-to-Text Conversion Device (19)

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[4] AT devices for use on PARCC computer-based tests must either be compatible with TestNav 8.0; or used with an external computer or device, with the answers transcribed onto the paper- or computer-based test. Information on compatibility will be available prior to PARCC test administration.

[5,6] *Appendix C: Protocol for the Use of the Scribe Accommodation*, and a description of students for whom the scribe accommodation is appropriate on the ELA/Literacy and Mathematics assessments, is available at www.parcconline.org/parcc-accessibility-features-and-accommodations-manual.

Table 5. PARCC Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: Test Responses *(continued)*

PARCC Test Response Accommodations		Corresponding MCAS Accommodation (Accommodation number)
for PARCC Computer-Based Testing	**for PARCC Paper-Based Testing**	
Scribing by test administrator for constructed responses on the English Language Arts/Literacy assessments[7] (Student must be tested in separate setting) (**Note:** Intended for students who either have a physical disability that severely limits or prevents keyboarding; or a disability that severely limits or prevents the student from expressing written language, as documented in locally-administered diagnostic evaluations; and for whom interventions are already in place)	Scribing by test administrator for constructed responses on the English Language Arts/Literacy assessments[8] (Student must be tested in separate setting) (**Note:** Intended for students who either have a physical disability that severely limits or prevents keyboarding; or a disability that severely limits or prevents the student from expressing written language, as documented in locally-administered diagnostic evaluations; and for whom interventions are already in place)	Nonstandard Accommodation: Scribe ELA Composition (29)
Speech-to-Text external device (Answers must be transcribed onscreen by a test administrator; student must be tested in separate setting)	Speech-to-Text external device (Answers must be transcribed by a test administrator into the student's answer booklet; student must be tested in separate setting)	Student Uses a Speech-to-Text Conversion Device (19; nonstandard accommodation 29)
Word Prediction on the ELA/Literacy Performance-Based Assessment[9]	Word Prediction on the ELA/Literacy Performance-Based Assessment[10]	Word Prediction Software for the ELA Composition (31)
Not Available	Answers Recorded in Test Booklet	Answers Recorded in Test Booklet (24)
Monitor Placement of Responses by Test Administrator	Monitor Placement of Responses by Test Administrator	Monitor Placement of Responses (22)

Table 6. PARCC Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: Timing and Scheduling of the Tests

PARCC Timing and Scheduling Accommodation for Computer- and Paper-Based Testing	Corresponding MCAS Accommodation
Extended time (up to the end of a school day) to complete a test session[11] (PARCC tests are timed.)	MCAS tests are untimed for all students. Students may have up to the end of a school day to complete a test session

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[7, 8] *Appendix C: Protocol for the Use of the Scribe Accommodation*, and a description of students for whom the scribe accommodation is appropriate on the ELA/Literacy and Mathematics assessments, is available at www.parcconline.org/parcc-accessibility-features-and-accommodations-manual.

[9, 10] Word prediction must be used on a separate computer loaded with the student's preferred software. A description of the students for whom the word prediction accommodation is appropriate is available on page 33 of the *PARCC Accessibility Features and Accommodations Manual*.

[11] *Appendix E: Guidance for Selecting and Administering the Extended Time Accommodation* is available at www.parcconline.org/parcc-accessibility-features-and-accommodations-manual.

PARCC ACCOMMODATIONS FOR ENGLISH LEARNERS

In addition to the test administration considerations (in Table 1) and accessibility features (in Table 2), English learners may be provided any of the following accommodations when the need has been determined by educators familiar with the student, and with the approval of the principal (or designee). For additional information, see pages 37-40 of the *PARCC Accessibility Features and Accommodations Manual (Second Edition)*, available at www.parcconline.org/parcc-accessibility-features-and-accommodations-manual.

Table 7. PARCC Accommodations for Students Who Are English Language Learners (ELLs)

PARCC Accommodations for English Learners
Extended time (up to the end of a school day) to complete a test session.
General Administration Directions Clarified and/or Read Aloud in Student's Native Language, if native language speaker is available
Scribe or Speech-to-Text (i.e., Responses dictated in English only) for PARCC Mathematics assessments
Approved Bilingual Word-to-Word Dictionary (i.e., English/Native Language). List is available at www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/testadmin/lep_bilingual_dictionary.pdf.
Paper-based edition of PARCC assessments, if an English learner recently entered the school with little or no prior experience or familiarity with technology.

SPECIAL PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS FOR SELECTED GROUPS OF STUDENTS

A small number of students in selected groups will not participate in PARCC even though the district has elected to administer PARCC, according to the following participation requirements.

Table 8. Participation Requirements for Selected Groups of Students

Group of Students	Participation Requirements
Students with disabilities designated for participation in the **MCAS Alternate Assessment** (MCAS-Alt)	Students designated for alternate assessments will continue to participate in the MCAS-Alt, which is now fully aligned with the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks (incorporating the Common Core State Standards).
English learners in their **first year of enrollment** in a U.S. school (i.e., enrolled *after* the SIMS submission of March 1, 2014)	These students participate in PARCC or MCAS **ELA/Literacy** tests (according to the district's selection) at the principal's discretion (testing is optional). These students *must* participate in PARCC or MCAS **Mathematics** (according to the district's selection) and MCAS **Science and Technology/Engineering** tests (testing is required). The participation of grade 9 students in MCAS high school STE testing is optional.

STUDENT ACCOMMODATION REFUSAL

If a student refuses an accommodation that is included in an IEP or 504 plan, the school may wish to document the refusal using the optional Student Accommodation Refusal Form, available at www.parcconline.org/sites/parcc/files/Appendix%20H%20Student%20Accommodation%20Refusal%20Form.pdf. Regardless of whether this form is used or not, the school should always document the refusal in writing, and retain this information in the student's assessment record.

EMERGENCY ACCOMMODATION REQUEST

See Table 3 elsewhere in this document for information on the procedure for requesting an emergency accommodation for a student with a recently occurring illness, injury, or disability.

UNIQUE ACCOMMODATIONS REQUEST

If a student with a disability or an English learner requires an accommodation (i.e., a "unique accommodation") that is not listed in the *PARCC Accessibility Features and Accommodations Manual*, and that does not fundamentally change the test, or the construct being measured by the test, the school may request approval for use of the accommodation using the request form found in *Appendix F: Unique Accommodation Request Form* at www.parcconline.org/parcc-accessibility-features-and-accommodations-manual. If approved by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the accommodation must be listed in the IEP or 504 plan of a student with a disability. To request approval of a unique accommodation, the completed form must be submitted to the Department at parcc@doe.mass.edu or by fax at 781-338-3630 at least two weeks prior to testing.