



# Watertown Public Schools

30 Common Street  
Watertown, Massachusetts 02472-3492  
Phone: (617) 926-7700  
Fax: (617) 923-1234

**Mary C. DeLai**  
*Assistant Superintendent  
Finance & Operations*

**Dede Galdston, Ed.D.**  
*Superintendent of Schools*

**Theresa B. McGuinness, Ed.D.**  
*Assistant Superintendent  
Teaching, Learning, & Assessment*

**Kathleen Desmarais, M.Ed.**  
*Director of Student Services*

**Craig Hardimon, M.Ed.**  
*Director of Human Resources*

---

To: The Watertown School Committee  
From: Deanne Galdston, Superintendent  
RE: MCAS 2017 Review Timeline

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education released the results of the 2017 administration of the MCAS assessment on October 18. The results released last week are based on the next-generation MCAS, an updated version of the test that was given for the first time in spring 2017 to students in grades 3-8 in English language arts and mathematics. Eventually, all MCAS tests will be next-generation MCAS through grade 10, including the science, technology and engineering assessments. Watertown students completed the test online in grades 4 and 8, while students in grades 3, 5, 6, 7, 9 and 10 took a paper/pencil form of the assessment.

The next-generation MCAS was developed after the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education voted in November 2015 to create a next-generation, computer-based, and Massachusetts-specific test. The next-generation MCAS focuses on students' critical thinking abilities, ability to apply their knowledge and ability to make connections between reading and writing. This new assessment gives a clearer signal of readiness for the next grade level and provides parents, teachers and students with data and insight into how Watertown students are achieving the expectations for demonstrating proficiency on the state standards. High school students are still taking the legacy MCAS tests. The next-generation tests will be introduced at the high school level in spring 2019.

The score levels for the next-generation MCAS are different from those of the past MCAS. Next-generation MCAS scores fall into four categories: Exceeding Expectations, Meeting Expectations, Partially Meeting Expectations and Not Meeting Expectations. These score levels are not equivalent to the previous MCAS levels, and therefore can't be compared to previous years' results. As this is the first year of the next-generation MCAS, scores are considered baseline and will be used to measure student growth and achievement in the coming years.

The Watertown Public Schools did not receive an accountability rating this year. In addition to the new assessment, a new, more comprehensive accountability system for Massachusetts is currently being designed to comply with the recent federal Every Student Succeeds Act.

WPS will send out individual student scores soon after receiving them from the State. Our intention is to ensure that parents have the results by the first week of November. The office of Teaching, Learning, and Assessment, along with our principals, will present an in-depth analysis of our scores over two School Committee meetings with Secondary results being presented on November 13 followed by elementary results on December 5.