



Northbridge Public Schools

MCAS Presentation
November, 2009

What is MCAS?

- **Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System**
- **Provides scores on individual students to show their progress in learning**
- **Provides a measure of basic achievement for high school graduation**
- **Measures performance of schools and districts to show the quality of their educational programs**

Who is tested?

- **State testing 1998:**
 - **ELA and Math: Grades 4, 5, 10**
 - **Passing MCAS not a graduation requirement**
- **State testing 2009:**
 - **ELA Grades: 3,4,5,6,7,8,10**
 - **Math Grades: 3,4,5,6,7,8,10**
 - **Science Grades: 5,8, high school**
 - **Passing MCAS a graduation requirement for ELA, Math, and Science**

What types of questions appear on the MCAS?

- **Multiple choice: Select best answer out of 4 choices**
- **Open-response questions: Create a written response to show understanding of the question**
- **Short-answer (just Math): Generate a brief response or short statement**

Multiple Choice Question

Grade 8 Reading Comprehension

Read the sentences from paragraph 59 in the box below.

Alfred left. He moved carefully down the steps.
They were still narrow and slippery,
but no longer darkly threatening.

Based on the excerpt, what do the steps symbolize for Alfred?

- A. escape from work and family
- B. the beginning of a friendship
- C. the challenges ahead
- D. fame and riches



Open Response Question

Grade 5 Science & Technology Engineering

(up to 4 points earned)

Elena found a piece of a mineral while on a hike. She wants to identify the mineral she found.

- **a. Identify two physical properties of minerals.**
- **b. Describe how Elena can test the mineral she found for each of the physical properties that you identified in part (a).**

Short-Answer Question

Grade 6 Math

(up to 1 point earned)




Luke spent $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours reading on Saturday and $1\frac{3}{4}$ hours reading on Sunday. What was the total time, in hours, that Luke spent reading on Saturday and Sunday?

How are *MCAS* scores reported?

Grades 3-8:

- **Advanced:** Scaled scores 260-280
- **Proficient:** Scaled scores 240-258
- **Needs Improvement:** Scaled scores 220-238
- **Warning:** Scaled scores 200-218

How do I read my child's MCAS report?

Subject Area	Performance Level	Scaled Score	Display of Score and Probable Range of Scores								
			Warning	Needs Improve.	Proficient	Advanced					
English Language Arts	Proficient	242									
Mathematics	Needs Improvement	238									
Science	Proficient	253									
			200	210	220	230	240	250	260	270	280

Information about your child's performance on test questions:

Question Number	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Mathematics								
Reporting Category	NS	NS	PR	GE	ME	SP	NS	PR
Your Child's Score	+	+	A	+	1	2	B	+
					1	4		

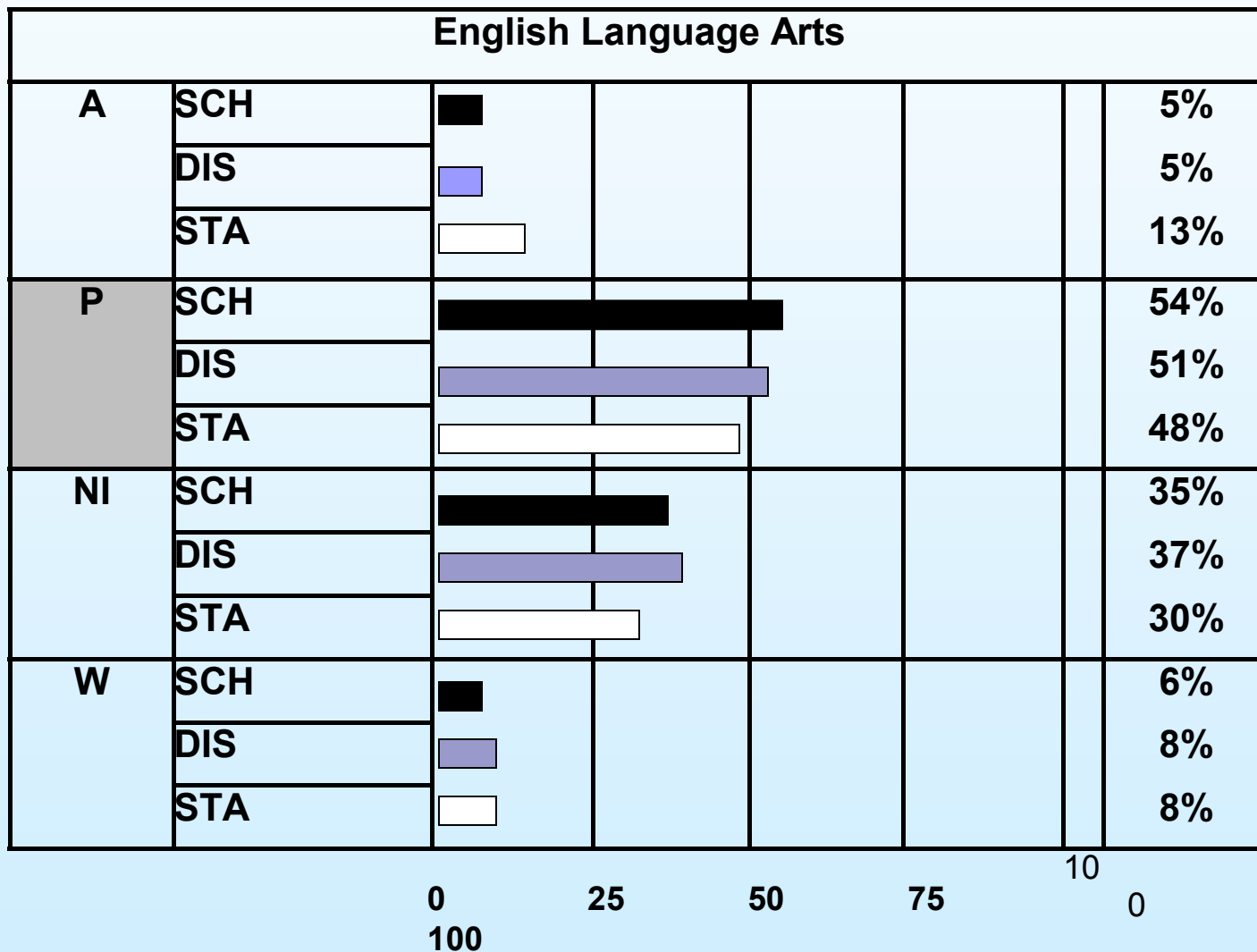
+ = Answer correct Letter = Wrong answer chosen

1/1 = Number of points from short answer question

2/4 – Number of points from open response question

Reporting category – see page 1 of parent report letter

How your child's scores compare to the school/district and state:



How Are Schools Measured on the MCAS?

AYP=

Adequate Yearly Progress

Adequate Yearly Progress measures individual school progress against specific performance targets established by the Department of Education to ensure that all students reach 100% proficiency in ELA and Math by the year 2014.

How is a school's AYP determined?

- **Advanced & Proficient = 100 points each**
- **Needs Improvement = 75 points each**
- **Warning/Failure = 25 points each**
- **Students who don't take the test receive 0 points but are still counted in AYP total.**
- **All scores added together and divided by # of students to get the school's AYP score.**
- **If the school meets or exceeds the state AYP target, no AYP status is assigned.**

Who is Affected by AYP?

All schools and student groups are required to make AYP.

- **All school: Aggregate**
- **Student subgroups:**
 - **Special Education**
 - **Limited English Proficient**
 - **Low Income**
 - **Racial backgrounds**

AYP Status Categories

Year	AYP status
1st Year	No status
2nd Year	Improvement Year 1
3rd Year	Improvement Year 2
4th Year	Corrective action
5th Year	Restructuring Year 1
6th Year	Restructuring Year 2+

What is our current AYP status?

- **District: Did not make AYP for aggregate and all subgroups in Math (no status)**
- **High School: Did not make AYP for aggregate and all subgroups in ELA and Math (no status)**
- **Middle School: Did not make AYP for aggregate and all subgroups in Math (corrective action subgroups in Math)**
- **Balmer (composite of Balmer & NES): Did not make AYP for aggregate and all sub-groups in ELA and Math (improvement year 1 in ELA)**

Percent of students scoring proficient or higher

	State ELA 2009	ELA 2009	State Math 2009	Math 2009
Grade 3	57%	59%	60%	58%
Grade 4	53%	53%	48%	47%
Grade 5	63%	71%	55%	45%
Grade 6	66%	72%	57%	60%
Grade 7	70%	77%	49%	43%
Grade 8	78%	87%	48%	52%
Grade 10	81%	70%	75%	60%

How are we helping at-risk students?

- **Individual Student Success Plans:**
Written for all students grades 4-12
scoring Warning/Failing
- **Educational Proficiency Plans:**
Written for students in grades 11 &
12 scoring Needs Improvement

How are we helping at-risk students?

- Providing Title I services in grades 1-8 for identified students
- Will be offering after-school tutoring in math for eligible students grades 5-8
- High School offers specific support classes for identified students
- High School will be offering after-school tutoring for identified students in grades 9-12.
- Working on grant to provide summer program in math for identified students in grades 8 and 9

What is our plan?

- **To make real change takes time**
- **Need to lay foundation and put consistent systems in place to focus on student achievement**
- **Need to engage and motivate teachers to set high expectations for student learning, engage students through inquiry-based instruction, and differentiate instruction so all learners are successful**

What is our plan?

- **Need to analyze achievement data to focus on student needs**
- **Need to provide an adequate budget and resources to fund our school initiatives**
- **Need to engage and energize students, staff, parents, and community in celebrating our successes and working on our challenges**

What can parents do to help their child do well in school and on the MCAS?

- **Make sure your child gets enough rest, eats properly, attends school every day, and arrives on time. Send your child to school prepared to learn.**
- **Encourage your child to READ, READ, READ. No activity is linked to academic success as much as reading.**
- **Ask your child about homework that is due tomorrow and next week, and make sure this homework is completed.**

What can parents do to help their child do well in school and on the MCAS?

- **Have regular discussions with your child's teacher to see what you can do at home to support your child's work at school.**
- **Have discussions with your child to see if there are particular subjects that are difficult. Check with the teacher to see if there is a need for extra help in school or at home.**



What can parents do to help their child do well in school and on the MCAS?

- **Provide activities for your children that encourage them to work well with others, talk about their experiences, and feel proud of their accomplishments!**
- **Praise your children for working hard and for the things they do well.**

Resources for Parents

- **MCAS web site – test items, answers, and previous years tests:**

www.doe.mass.edu/mcas

- **MCAS test schedule:**

www.doe.mass.edu/cal.html

- **MA Curriculum Frameworks:**

www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks

- **Parents Place – information and resources that support parents as partners in their child's education**


www.pplace.org



Mission of the Northbridge Schools:

The mission of the Northbridge Public Schools is to prepare our students to become responsible, contributing members of society by providing a challenging, rigorous educational program which will maximize academic achievement, enable intellectual, physical, social, and emotional development in an atmosphere which promotes creative and critical thinking.

To achieve our mission, we must engage, not only teachers, but also parents and the community to support our efforts in working with our students.



**Thank you for coming
tonight, and for your efforts
in helping all our students
achieve to the best of their
abilities.**