

2017-18 MCAS State Assessment and Accountability Results – Executive Summary September 27, 2018

Context for the next-generation MCAS assessments

Today, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) publicly released MCAS assessment and accountability data for the 2018 testing administration.

The next-generation MCAS is an updated version of the nearly 20-year-old MCAS assessment and focuses on students' critical thinking abilities, ability to apply their knowledge and ability to make connections between reading and writing. It gives a clearer signal of readiness for the next grade level and is much more rigorous than the legacy MCAS. School year 2017-18 is the second year of the next-generation MCAS state assessment for all students in Grades 3-8 in both English language arts and mathematics. The majority of students in grades 3-8 statewide took the next-generation MCAS on a computer, including Milton's students. Grade 10 will transition to the next-generation MCAS in spring 2019 in ELA and Math; and Grades 5 and 8 will also take the next-generation MCAS in science this spring. DESE plans to transition all high school legacy MCAS testing in science to the next-generation version in the next few years, as well as develop a new test for history/social studies.

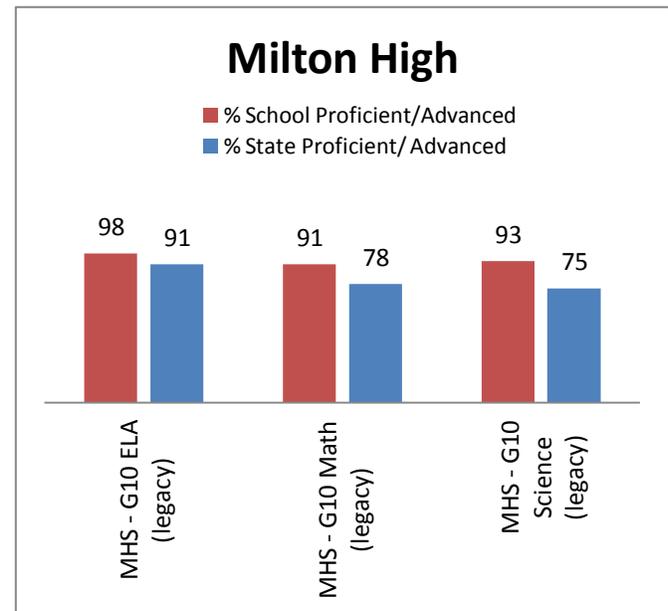
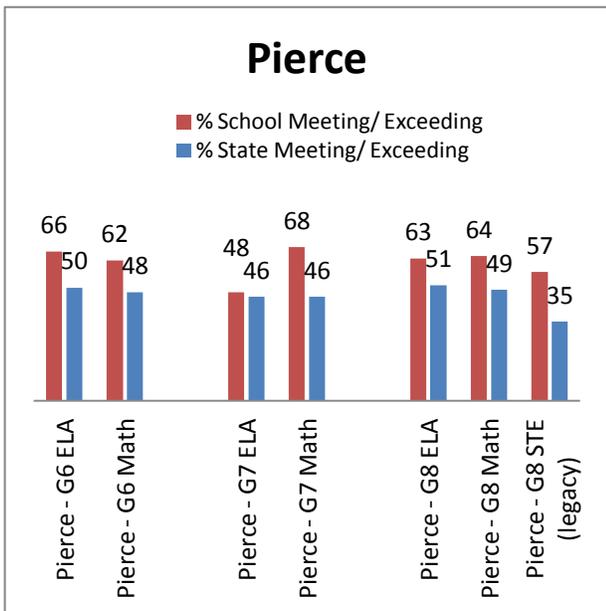
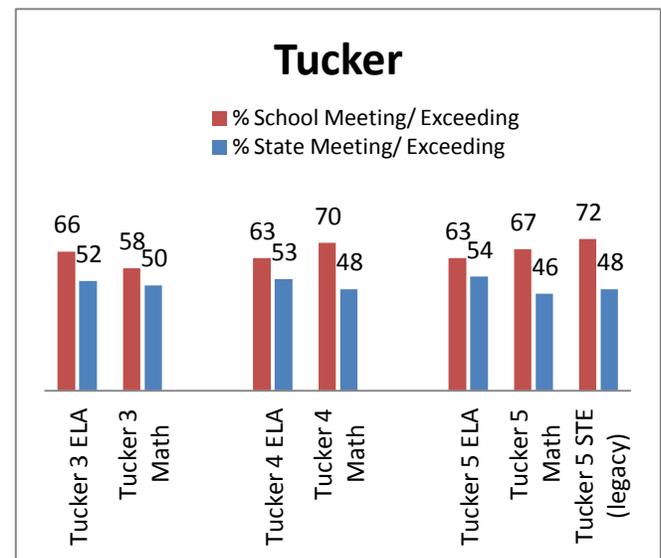
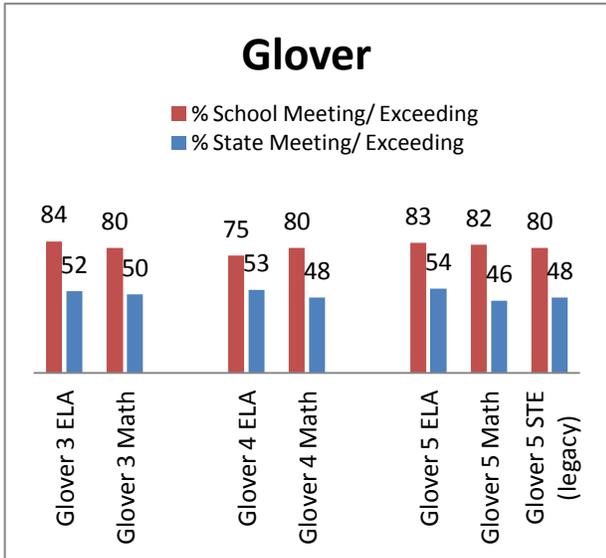
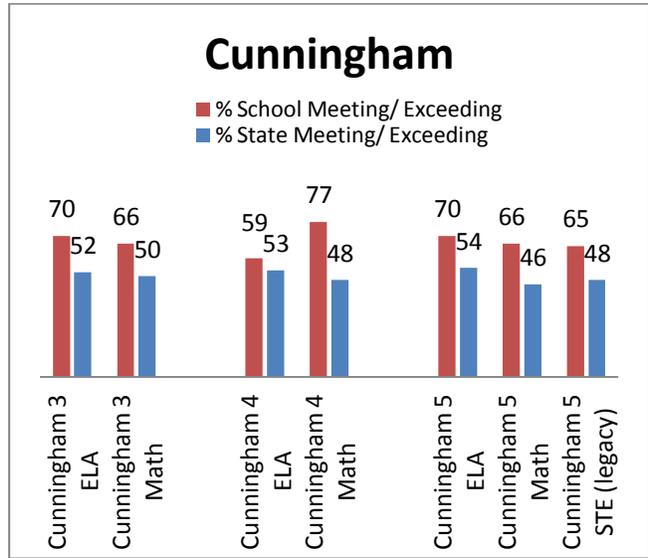
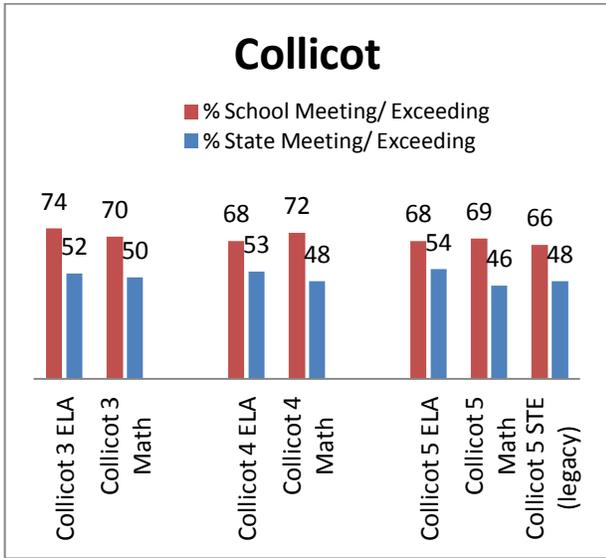
This new assessment was developed after the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education found that despite being the top public school system in the nation, Massachusetts still sends students to college who need remedial courses to catch up and engage in college-level work.

Milton Public Schools MCAS assessment results

Please note that while Grades 3-8 took the next-generation MCAS in English language arts and mathematics, Grades 5 and 8 still took the legacy MCAS assessment in science; as did high school Grade 10 in all three subjects.

As a district, we are proud of our students (and teachers) for continuing to out-perform the state at every grade level in every subject at every school, even when the assessments for grades 3 - 8 have gotten more rigorous. Last year, we implemented a new language arts curriculum in the elementary schools that we will continue to refine and hone to provide all our students with the skills to meet grade level expectations. Although historically the middle school grades do dip in performance state-wide, and this year proves no different, we are committed to getting more of our students to grade-level expectations. The high school data remains very high-performing, but we do want to acknowledge that students will be asked to take the next-generation MCAS this spring in ELA and Math; we may need to recalibrate our expectations after the initial results are released.

Individual student MCAS reports will be mailed home to families the week of October 1st after we receive them from DESE. To learn more about the next-generation MCAS and how to interpret results, visit www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/parents. Please contact your child's current teacher/principal if you have any questions regarding performance.



The new school and district accountability system

Results from the first administration of the next-generation MCAS in spring 2017 were considered the baseline for this new assessment. Along with results from spring 2018, DESE now has two years of testing data to build out a new school and district accountability system, as required by state and federal laws. The purpose of the accountability system is to provide clear, actionable information to families, community members, and the public about district and school performance. Additionally, the accountability system helps the state department of education to direct resources and assistance.

Because the state assessment is only in its second year and the accountability system is brand new as well, schools and districts across the state are still learning how best to use the assessment and accountability data to inform teaching practice and programming priorities. DESE has explicitly stated that it will review the new accountability system and make refinements as necessary. **DESE cautions that data from this year should not be compared to data in years past, because different data points are used for the calculations and schools are grouped differently.**

A major focus of the new accountability system is on closing the achievement gap by raising the performance of the lowest performing students – the lowest 25% of students based on their combined performance on ELA and Math. Although subgroups are still reported and considered, the overall accountability “scores” take into account primarily the performance of all students and the performance of the lowest 25%. DESE decided to use the lowest 25% as a grouping because not every school has subgroups, but all schools will have a lowest 25% group.

The two major “scores” for school accountability results are the target percentage and the percentile. Based on each school’s individual 2017 baseline MCAS results, certain improvement targets are calculated for the school in terms of the **accountability indicators (achievement, growth, high school completion, English learner progress, advanced coursework completion, and chronic absenteeism)**. 2018 results are then used to determine whether the improvement targets have been achieved. The target percentage combines information about these improvement targets into a single number between 0 and 100. For a school or subgroup to be considered meeting targets, it must have a target percentage of 75% or higher.

Please note that whereas the legacy accountability system did take into account achievement (ELA, math and science) and growth, the indicators on English learner progress and chronic absenteeism are new data points in the new more comprehensive system. **DESE defines chronic absenteeism as missing 10% or 18 days of school, regardless of the absences being excused or unexcused. Please help your students be present each and every day for learning.**

An accountability percentile between 1 and 99 is also reported for most schools; it is not calculated for districts. The percentile is an indication of the school's current year (2018) overall performance on all available accountability indicators relative to other schools in the same grouping. **DESE has placed elementary and middle schools, who all took the next-generation MCAS, in one grouping and high schools, who all took the legacy MCAS in another.** The bottom 10 percentile of schools will be identified for focused/targeted support. Based on the target percentage and the accountability percentile, schools are placed into one of four categories this year: 1) Meeting targets; 2) Partially meeting targets; 3) In need of focused/targeted support;

and 4) In need of broad/comprehensive support. State-wide, 31% of schools are categorized as “meeting targets”, 53% as “partially meeting targets”, 14% as “in need of focused/targeted support” and 2% as “in need of broad/comprehensive support.”

Milton Public Schools accountability results

School results are calculated individually based on each school’s performance. District results are calculated as if the entire district were one giant school; the district does not take the classification of its lowest performing school as it did in the legacy accountability system. For more detailed results, please visit the state’s website at www.profiles.doe.mass.edu and look up Milton.

2018 Overall Accountability Results	Progress % toward meeting improvement targets*	Accountability percentile**	Accountability classification
District	64% - Partially meeting	n/a	Not requiring assistance or intervention
Collicot	93% - Meeting	91	Not requiring assistance or intervention
Cunningham	84% - Meeting	89	Not requiring assistance or intervention
Glover	94% - Meeting	92	Not requiring assistance or intervention
Tucker	90% - Meeting	93	Not requiring assistance or intervention
Pierce	26% - Partially meeting	59	Not requiring assistance or intervention
Milton High	67% - Partially meeting	76	Not requiring assistance or intervention

* The calculations for this target percentage consider the relevant accountability indicators (achievement, growth, high school completion, English learner progress, advanced coursework completion, and chronic absenteeism) and compare them to the school’s 2017 baseline to evaluate improvement. Less than 25% means an overall decline in school performance; 25 to 49% means no change; 50 to 74% means some improvement; and 75% or above means meeting improvement targets.

** The calculations for the accountability percentile consider the relevant accountability indicators for 2018 only and compare the school’s performance to other schools in the same grouping – either high schools or non-high schools.

In Milton, we are committed to preparing our students to achieve academically. A standardized state assessment is a useful measure of what our students have learned during the year and whether they are on track to meet the rigor of the next grade level. Please be reminded that the state assessment is one of multiple measures – including homework, quizzes, internal assessments, class participation, projects, etc. – that we use in the district to evaluate your child’s performance. We firmly believe that the tremendous value of an education greatly exceeds any one singular measure.

At the school and district level, we will continue to monitor results longitudinally in this new accountability system to derive meaningful trends and patterns in the data. In our recent conference with the new education commissioner, he emphasized that this first year is a “learning year” for the commonwealth, as his team will also step back to analyze whether this new system works for the state. We encourage everyone to keep these early years’ results in perspective as we all make adjustments to the new more rigorous state expectations, designed to prepare students for college and career.