



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

February 4, 2020

The Honorable Jeffrey C. Riley
Commissioner
Massachusetts Department of Elementary
and Secondary Education
75 Pleasant Street
Malden, MA 02148

Dear Commissioner Riley:

Thank you for your participation in the U.S. Department of Education's (the Department) assessment peer review process under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). I appreciate the efforts of the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (MA DESE) to prepare for the peer review, which occurred in August 2019. Specifically, MA DESE submitted evidence regarding the MCAS, its general assessment in reading/language arts (R/LA) and mathematics in grades 3-8.

State assessment systems provide essential information that States, districts, principals and teachers can use to identify the academic needs of students, target resources and supports toward students who need them most, evaluate school and program effectiveness and close achievement gaps among students. A high-quality assessment system also provides useful information to parents about their children's advancement against and achievement of grade-level standards. The Department's peer review of State assessment systems is designed to provide feedback to States to support the development and administration of high-quality assessments.

External peer reviewers and Department staff carefully evaluated MA DESE's submission and the Department found, based on the evidence received, that the components of your assessment system meet many, but not all, of the statutory and regulatory requirements of sections 1111(b)(1) and (2) of the ESEA, as amended by ESSA. Based on the recommendations from this peer review and our own analysis of the State's submission, I have determined the following:

- General assessment in R/LA and mathematics in grades 3-8 (MCAS): **Substantially meets requirements of the ESEA, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).**

Substantially meets requirements means that these components meet most of the requirements of the statute and regulations but some additional information is required. Please note that while your State met many of the requirements related to State administration of the MCAS assessments, the Department has significant concerns related to test design and alignment with your State's academic content standards. Alignment to the State's challenging academic standards is critical to having a valid and reliable

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The Department of Education's mission is to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access.

assessment system. The Department must see that the State has made substantial progress on these critical elements in the next peer review or the Department may take additional enforcement action.

The specific list of items required for MA DESE to submit is enclosed with this letter. Within 30 days of receipt of this letter, MA DESE must provide to the Department a plan and timeline by which it will submit the additional documentation. Upon submission of the plan, the Department will reach out to the State educational agency (SEA) to determine a mutually agreeable schedule. Resubmission should occur once all necessary evidence is complete (rather than in multiple submissions). If adequate progress is not made in providing this information, the Department may take additional action.

The full peer review notes from the review are enclosed. These recommendations to the Department formed the basis of our determination. Please note that the peers' recommendations may differ from the Department's feedback; we encourage you to read the full peer notes for additional suggestions and recommendations for improving your assessment system beyond what is noted in the Department's feedback. Department staff will reach out to your assessment director in the next few days to discuss the peer notes and the Department's determination and to answer any questions you have.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to improving educational outcomes for all students. I look forward to our continued partnership as we move ahead with this critical work. I appreciate the work you are doing to improve your schools and provide a high-quality education for your students.

If you have any questions, please contact my staff at: OESE.Assessment@ed.gov.

Sincerely,

/s/

Frank T. Brogan
Assistant Secretary for
Elementary and Secondary Education

Enclosures

cc: Michol Stapel, Associate Commissioner for Student Assessment

Critical Elements Where Additional Evidence is Needed to Meet the Requirements for Massachusetts’ Assessment System

Critical Element	Evidence Needed
2.1 – Test Design and Development	<p>For the MCAS mathematics and R/LA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence that the MCAS measures the breadth and depth of the State’s grade level academic content standards. <p>For the MCAS R/LA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence that the tests support the intended interpretations and uses of the results.
2.2 – Item Development	<p>For the MCAS mathematics and R/LA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence that the State uses reasonable and technically sound procedures to develop and select items to assess student achievement based on the State’s academic content standards in terms of content and cognitive process, including higher-order thinking skills.
3.1 – Overall Validity, including Validity Based on Content	<p>For the MCAS mathematics and R/LA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence requested in critical element 2.1.
3.2 – Validity Based on Cognitive Processes	<p>For the MCAS mathematics and R/LA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequate validity evidence that its assessments tap the intended cognitive processes appropriate for each grade level as represented in the State’s academic content standards (e.g., cognitive labs, expert judgment, and other empirical evidence).
3.3 – Validity Based on Internal Structure	<p>For the MCAS mathematics and R/LA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequate validity evidence that the scoring and reporting structures of the assessments are consistent with the sub-domain structures of the State’s academic content standards on which the intended interpretations and uses of results are based.
3.4 – Validity Based on Relationships with Other Variables	<p>For the MCAS mathematics and R/LA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequate validity evidence that the State’s assessment scores are related as expected with other variables, including plans to address findings from the 8th grade correlation study.
4.2 – Fairness and Accessibility	<p>For the MCAS mathematics and R/LA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of reasonable and appropriate steps to ensure the assessments are accessible to all students and fair across student groups in the design, development and analysis of the assessments (e.g., DIF analysis for subgroups, especially English learners, summary analysis of results for students with disabilities versus students who do not have disabilities, subgroup summary statistics and estimates of reliability, decision consistency), including, to the extent practicable, how principles of universal design for learning (UDL) are addressed.
6.3 – Challenging and Aligned Academic Achievement Standards	<p>For the MCAS mathematics and R/LA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence that the State’s academic achievement standards are challenging and aligned with the State’s academic content standards (e.g., evidence that students who score at the proficient or above level have mastered what students are expected to know and be able to do and are on track to succeed in college and the workforce by the time they graduate from high school).

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR MASSACHUSETTS

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Peer Review of State Assessment Systems

August 2019 State Assessment Peer Review Notes



U. S. Department of Education
Office of Elementary and Secondary Education
Washington, D.C. 20202

Note: Peer review notes provide the combined recommendations of the individual peers to the U.S. Department of Education (Department), based on the statute and regulations, the Department's peer review guidance, and the peers' professional judgement of the evidence submitted by the State. These assessment peer review notes, however, do not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for assessment peer review. Although the peer notes inform the Secretary's consideration of each State's assessment system, the Department makes the final decision regarding whether the assessment system meets the requirements in the statute and regulations. As a result, these peer notes may not completely align with the final determination made by the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR Massachusetts

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STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR Massachusetts

SECTION 1: STATEWIDE SYSTEM OF STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENTS

Critical Element 1.1 – State Adoption of Academic Content Standards for All Students

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p><u>For academic content standards:</u></p> <p>The State formally adopted challenging academic content standards for all students in reading/language arts, mathematics and science and applies its academic content standards to all public schools and public school students in the State.</p>		<p>No additional evidence requested.</p>
<p>Section 1.1 Summary Statement</p> <p>___ No additional evidence is required or</p> <p>___ The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [list additional evidence needed w/brief rationale] 		

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STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR Massachusetts

Critical Element 1.2 – Challenging Academic Content Standards

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p><u>For academic content standards:</u> The State’s challenging academic content standards in reading/language arts, mathematics, and science are aligned with entrance requirements for credit-bearing coursework in the system of public higher education in the State and relevant State career and technical education standards.</p>		<p>No additional evidence requested.</p>
<p>Section 1.2 Summary Statement</p>		
<p>___ No additional evidence is required or</p> <p>___ The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [list additional evidence needed w/brief rationale] 		

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR Massachusetts

Critical Element 1.3 – Required Assessments

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>The State’s assessment system includes annual general and alternate assessments aligned with <u>grade-level academic achievement standards</u> or alternate academic achievement standards in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading/language arts (R/LA) and mathematics in each of grades 3-8 and at least once in high school (grades 9-12); • Science at least once in each of three grade spans (3-5, 6-9 and 10-12). <p>AND</p> <p>The State’s <u>academic content assessments</u> must be the same assessments administered to all students in the tested grades, with the following exceptions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students with the most significant cognitive disabilities may take an alternate assessment aligned with alternate academic achievement standards. • A State may permit an LEA to administer a nationally recognized high school academic assessment in lieu of the State high school assessment if certain conditions are met. • A State that administers an end-of-course high school mathematics assessment may exempt an 8th grade student from the mathematics assessment typically administered in 		<p>No additional evidence requested.</p>

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STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR Massachusetts

<p> eighth grade and allow the student to take the State end-of-course mathematics test instead. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Department may have approved the State, under the Innovative Assessment Demonstration Authority, to permit students in some LEAs to participate in a demonstration assessment system in lieu of participating in the State assessment. </p>		
<p>Section 1.3 Summary Statement</p>		
<p> <input type="checkbox"/> No additional evidence is required or <input type="checkbox"/> The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [list additional evidence needed w/brief rationale] </p>		

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

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Critical Element 1.4 – Policies for Including All Students in Assessments

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>The State requires the inclusion of all public elementary and secondary school students in its assessment system and clearly and consistently communicates this requirement to districts and schools.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For students with disabilities, policies state that all students with disabilities in the State, including those children with disabilities publicly placed in private schools as a means of providing special education and related services, must be included in the assessment system; • For ELs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Policies state that all ELs must be included in all aspects of the content assessment system, unless the State has chosen the statutory option for recently arrived ELs under which such ELs are exempt from one administration of its reading/ language arts assessment. ○ If a State has developed native language assessments for ELs in R/LA, ELs must be assessed in R/LA in English if they have been enrolled in U.S. schools for three or more consecutive years, except, if a district determines, on a case-by-case basis, that native language assessments would yield more accurate and reliable information, the district may assess a student with native 		<p>No additional evidence requested.</p>

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STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR Massachusetts

<p>language assessments for a period not to exceed two additional consecutive years.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If the State uses the flexibility for Native American language schools and programs: (1) the State provides the content assessment in the Native American language to all students in the school or program; (2) the State submits such content assessment for peer review as part of its State assessment system; and (3) the State continues to provide ELP assessments and services for ELs as required by law. The State must assess in English the students' achievement in R/LA in high school. 		
<p>Section 1.4 Summary Statement</p>		
<p><input type="checkbox"/> No additional evidence is required or</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [list additional evidence needed w/brief rationale] 		

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR Massachusetts

Critical Element 1.5 – Meaningful Consultation in the Development of Challenging State Standards and Assessments

(Note: this is a new requirement under ESSA, so it does not apply to standards and assessments adopted prior to the passage of ESSA (December 2015)).

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>If the State has developed or amended challenging academic standards and assessments, the State has conducted meaningful and timely consultation with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State leaders, including the Governor, members of the State legislature and State board of education (if the State has a State board of education). • Local educational agencies (including those located in rural areas). • Representatives of Indian tribes located in the State. • Teachers, principals, other school leaders, charter school leaders (if the State has charter schools), specialized instructional support personnel, paraprofessionals, administrators, other staff, and parents. 		<p>Department staff determined that MA DESE demonstrated meaningful consultation in the development of the Massachusetts academic content standards consistent with the requirements under ESEA section 1111(a)(1)(A). In particular, Department staff note that MA DESE adopted the Common Core Standards in 2010 and adopted revised standards in 2017. A report describing the standards revision process provided a lengthy list of individuals and organizations that were contacted to provide input and the State also provided a public comment period.</p>
Section 1.5 Summary Statement		
x No additional evidence is required.		

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STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR Massachusetts

SECTION 2: ASSESSMENT SYSTEM OPERATIONS

Critical Element 2.1 – Test Design and Development

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>The State’s test design and test development process is well-suited for the content, is technically sound, aligns the assessments to <u>the depth and breadth of the State’s academic content standards</u> for the grade that is being assessed and includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statement(s) of the purposes of the assessments and the intended interpretations and uses of results; • Test blueprints that describe the structure of each assessment in sufficient detail to support the development of assessments that are technically sound, measure the depth and breadth of <u>the State’s grade-level academic content standards</u> and support the intended interpretations and uses of the results. • Processes to ensure that each academic assessment is tailored to the knowledge and skills included in <u>the State’s academic content standards</u>, reflects appropriate inclusion of challenging content, and requires complex demonstrations or applications of knowledge and skills (i.e., higher-order thinking skills). • If the State administers computer-adaptive assessments, the item pool and item selection procedures adequately support the test design and intended uses and interpretations of results. 	<p>2.1.1 Draft 2018 Next-Generation MCAS and MCAS-Alt Technical Report, pages 5-7 Expanded statements regarding the purposes of the MCAS tests.</p> <p>2.1.2 Findings from a Content Alignment Study of the 2017 Massachusetts Grades 3-8 English Language Arts and Mathematics Next- Generation MCAS Tests (June 2019) Expanded statements regarding the purposes of the MCAS tests.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Categorical consistency (the extent to which content standards were covered by the test items in each content domain) • Depth of Knowledge (DOK) consistency (the extent to which the DOK on an item aligned with the DOK expressed on relevant standard) • Range of knowledge (the extent to which the test items represented the full set of standards in each domain) • Balance of representation (the extent to which standards are represented evenly across the items) <p>The study found strong content alignment for math across all grades and content domains, providing evidence of content validity that includes alignment with the DOK expressed on the standards. One area of adequate content alignment was noted – grade 8 statistics and probability (summary of mathematics findings: pp. 12-20).</p> <p>The study found strong overall content alignment for ELA across all grades and domains; in writing particularly strong alignment was found when considering the writing rubrics in the analysis. One area of improvement noted was including more content</p>	<p>Previous request: For the MCAS mathematics and reading/language arts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statements about the purpose(s) of each MCAS assessment in sufficient detail to support validity. • Evidence that the MCAS measures the breadth and depth of the State’s grade level academic content standards. <p>For the MCAS reading/language arts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence that the tests support the intended interpretations and uses of the results. <p>-----</p> <p>2.1.1 Appears sufficient for the first bullet; assessment purposes stated.</p> <p>2.1.2 From the evidence alignment document: "It must be emphasized that these analyses focus on only a single year of test administration. For grades 3-8, the MCAS program partially releases operational items following test administration. Operational items are replaced each year..." (p. 3).</p> <p>There appears to still be a gap and the test blueprints and evidence of the alignment between the reviewed assessment and the blue print is needed.</p> <p>The alignment study addresses an examination of depth and breadth of the assessment with respect to the content standards. However, the State's plan to address</p>

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STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR Massachusetts

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the State administers a computer-adaptive assessment, it makes proficiency determinations with respect to the grade in which the student is enrolled and uses that determination for all reporting. • If the State administers a content assessment that includes portfolios, such assessment may be partially administered through a portfolio but may not be <i>entirely</i> administered through a portfolio. 	<p>representation for reading informational texts in grades 7 and 8 (summary of ELA findings: pp. 21-31). Summary of overall findings: pp. 32-34</p> <p>2.1.3 ELA Reporting Categories The ELA reporting categories document is provided in response to peer reviewer comments that the reporting categories for ELA were not provided in the initial submission in order to provide evidence that the tests support the intended interpretations and uses of the results.</p>	<p>shortcomings/recommendations noted in the alignment study report is needed. Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grade 8 statistics & probability (improve DOK consistency) • Writing is 30% of the reporting category in grades 5-8. While no recommendations were found stated in the report there are areas in writing that should be addressed. Language is 25% and is also measured by writing. Which represents 55% when combining writing and language in the ELA test reporting category. The blueprint does not make this clear. • Writing Standards did not meet the alignment criteria for range of knowledge writing at grades 8; and depth of knowledge consistency and range of knowledge. Writing standards had no range of knowledge. • Language standards did not meet categorical concurrence nor range of knowledge. • Had a weak balance of representation in language standards • Grade 4 had a weak range of knowledge in reading standards for literature (Domain is 55%) <p>Informational Text</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grade 5 & 6 was weak in range of knowledge in informational text (45%). Writing and language standards had no range of knowledge (30+25%=55%). Grade 6 categorical concurrence in language standards were not aligned (25%). • Grade 7 No alignment for categorical concurrence in <i>informational text</i> (45%) and language standards (25%); range of knowledge in informational text, writing (30%) and language standards. • Grade 7 & 8 reading informational text: need to carefully examine reading passages and items to understand why alignment is problematic for this
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STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR Massachusetts

		<p>domain. Is there a plan and a schedule to conduct the review of the finding?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grade 8 No alignment for <i>informational text in</i> categorical concurrence (45%) <p>Test blueprints that describe the tests' structures in sufficient detail are needed (e.g., number of items, item types, the proportion of item types, response formats, range of item difficulties, types of scoring procedures, and applicable time limits) as a piece of evidence to support intended interpretations and uses of results--key information that ought to be included in a test blueprint, as well as how they fit together. Test blueprints need to reflect current tests--new item types are included for writing and complex items in mathematics.</p> <p>Paper-based tests were available as a test accommodation at grades 4, 5, 7, and 8 but not for grade 3. Page 8--"In 2018 (as in 2017), all students in grades 3--8 took the next-generation assessments in ELA and mathematics. Looking ahead, next-generation assessments will be administered for the first time in the following grades and subjects: 2019: ELA and mathematics assessments at grade 10 and STE assessments at grades 5 and 8". This is confusing evidence. Were grades 5 and 8 part of the 2017, 2018 administration?</p> <p>2.1.3 gives three reporting categories, however reading, language, and writing do not provide enough detail for the intended purposes of the assessments as now described in 2.1.1. More evidenced needed to support the intended interpretations and uses of results for R/LA (e.g., test blueprint [see note above], reliability information that the test forms produce adequately precise estimates of student achievement).</p>
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STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR Massachusetts

Section 2.1 Summary Statement

The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:

- Evidence of an alignment study that includes test blueprints for the current test.
- Test blueprints that describe the structure of the current tests with greater clarity and specificity.
- Evidence related to the ELA assessment that supports intended interpretations and uses of results, particularly with regard to outcomes providing a basis for instructional improvement.

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR Massachusetts

Critical Element 2.2 – Item Development

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>The State uses reasonable and technically sound procedures to develop and select items to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess student achievement based on the <u>State’s academic content standards</u> in terms of content and cognitive process, including higher-order thinking skills. 	<p>2.2.1 2017 Next-Generation MCAS and MCAS-Alt Technical Report (pages 19-26) Pages 19-26 of the 2017 Next-Generation MCAS and MCAS-Alt Technical Report describe the process for developing and selecting items, including standards alignment</p> <p>2.2.2 Findings from a Content Alignment Study of the 2017 Massachusetts Grades 3-8 English Language Arts and Mathematics Next-Generation MCAS Tests (June 2019) The alignment study (as described in more detail in 2.1) provides evidence that the items used to assess student achievement are based on the academic content standards in terms of content and cognitive process</p>	<p>Previous request: For the MCAS mathematics and reading/language arts: •Evidence that the State uses reasonable and technically sound procedures to develop and select items to assess student achievement based on the State’s academic content standards in terms of content and cognitive process, including higher- order thinking skills. ----- The comment in 2.1 about test blueprint detail applies here as it relates to cognitive processes.</p> <p>Evidence of design and intent is presented with some support validating intent; however, more robust evidence supporting design and development and support of intent in terms of content and cognitive processes is needed. There is a discussion of what cognitive levels are and how they can be assessed, what is lacking is a clear blueprint demonstrating that items are assigned based on cognitive levels in addition to number of points per item and the domain being measured. Also, how is the DOK of writing determined using Webb?</p> <p>Item writer qualifications are listed. The development of items do state an expectation of qualifications beyond content. However, more information is needed about qualifications--it is unclear what the specialization/experience is with students who are ELs and/or students with disabilities.</p>
<p>Section 2.2 Summary Statement</p>		
<p><u> X </u> The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Test blueprints that reflect the cognitive levels being addressed, not just the domain, and more generally, more robust evidence supporting design and development and support of intent in terms of content and cognitive processes. Alignment findings demonstrating the tests (and test forms) are aligned to the blueprints for every student who is assessed. 		

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR Massachusetts

Critical Element 2.3 – Test Administration

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>The State implements policies and procedures for standardized test administration; specifically, the State:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has established and communicates to educators clear, thorough and consistent standardized procedures for the administration of its assessments, including administration with accommodations; • Has established procedures to ensure that general and special education teachers, paraprofessionals, teachers of ELs, specialized instructional support personnel, and other appropriate staff receive necessary training to administer assessments and know how to administer assessments, including, as necessary, alternate assessments, and know how to make use of appropriate accommodations during assessments for all students with disabilities; • If the State administers technology-based assessments, the State has defined technology and other related requirements, included technology-based test administration in its standardized procedures for test administration, and established contingency plans to address possible technology challenges during test administration. 		<p>No additional evidence requested.</p>
<p>Section 2.3 Summary Statement</p>		
<p><input type="checkbox"/> No additional evidence is required or</p>		

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR Massachusetts

___ The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:

- [list additional evidence needed w/brief rationale]

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR Massachusetts

Critical Element 2.4 – Monitoring Test Administration

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
The State adequately monitors the administration of its State assessments to ensure that standardized test administration procedures are implemented with fidelity across districts and schools. Monitoring of test administration should be demonstrated for all assessments in the State system: the general academic assessments and the AA-AAAS.		No additional evidence requested.
Section 2.4 Summary Statement		
<p>___ No additional evidence is required or</p> <p>___ The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [list additional evidence needed w/brief rationale] 		

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR Massachusetts

Critical Element 2.5 – Test Security

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>The State has implemented and documented an appropriate set of policies and procedures to prevent test irregularities and ensure the integrity of test results through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention of any assessment irregularities, including maintaining the security of test materials (both during test development and at time of test administration), proper test preparation guidelines and administration procedures, incident-reporting procedures, consequences for confirmed violations of test security, and requirements for annual training at the district and school levels for all individuals involved in test administration; • Detection of test irregularities; • Remediation following any test security incidents involving any of the State’s assessments; • Investigation of alleged or factual test irregularities. • Application of test security procedures to all assessments in the State system: the general academic assessments and the AA-AAAS. 		<p>No additional evidence requested.</p>
<p>Section 2.5 Summary Statement</p>		
<p><input type="checkbox"/> No additional evidence is required or</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [list additional evidence needed w/brief rationale] 		

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR Massachusetts

Critical Element 2.6 – Systems for Protecting Data Integrity and Privacy

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>The State has policies and procedures in place to protect the integrity and confidentiality of its test materials, test-related data, and personally identifiable information, specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To protect the integrity of its test-related data in test administration, scoring, storage and use of results; • To secure student-level assessment data and protect student privacy and confidentiality, including guidelines for districts and schools; • To protect personally identifiable information about any individual student in reporting, including defining the minimum number of students necessary to allow reporting of scores for all students and student groups. 		<p>No additional evidence requested.</p>
<p>Section 2.6 Summary Statement</p>		
<p>___ No additional evidence is required or</p> <p>___ The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [list additional evidence needed w/brief rationale] 		

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR Massachusetts

SECTION 3: TECHNICAL QUALITY – VALIDITY

Critical Element 3.1 – Overall Validity, Including Validity Based on Content

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>The State has documented adequate overall validity evidence for its assessments consistent with nationally recognized professional and technical testing standards. The State’s validity evidence includes evidence that:</p> <p><u>The State’s academic assessments</u> measure the knowledge and skills specified in the State’s academic content standards, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation of adequate alignment between the State’s assessments and the academic content standards the assessments are designed to measure in terms of content (i.e., knowledge and process), , balance of content, and cognitive complexity; • Documentation that the assessments address the depth and breadth of the content standards; • If the State has adopted alternate academic achievement standards and administers alternate assessments aligned with those standards, the assessments show adequate alignment to the State’s academic content standards for the grade in which the student is enrolled in terms of content match (i.e., no unrelated content) and the breadth of content and cognitive complexity determined 	<p>3.1.1 Findings from a Content Alignment Study of the 2017 Massachusetts Grades 3-8 English Language Arts and Mathematics Next-Generation MCAS Tests (June 2019)</p> <p>The alignment study (described in more detail in 2.1) found strong evidence that the 3-8 MCAS assessments represent the full range of assessable content on the state’s academic content standards. The study also found strong evidence of a range of cognitive complexity on both tests.</p> <p>Summary of ELA findings: pp. 21-31 Summary of mathematics findings: pp. 12-20 Summary of overall findings: pp. 32-34</p>	<p>Previous request: For the MCAS mathematics and reading/language arts: •Evidence of the adequate alignment between the State’s MCAS assessments and the academic content standards the assessments are designed to measure in terms of content (i.e., knowledge and process), the breadth and depth of the State’s academic content standards, balance of content, and cognitive complexity (this may include the results of the AIR NAEP- MCAS alignment study, when the results of that study are available, in order to demonstrate support for the cognitive complexity of the MCAS assessments).</p> <p>-----</p> <p>The state should provide a systematic process and timeline to address any gaps or weaknesses identified in the alignment study. See related comment about study recommendations and need for a plan and timeline to address issues of alignment in 2.1.</p> <p>More detail in the test blueprint--see relevant comment in CE 2.1. As previously mentioned, the study presented demurs to a single year of assessment, in addition the technical manual has little discussion of cognitive level of test items nor the level demanded by the blueprint, nor the percent of forms that have complete alignment to blueprint.</p>

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR Massachusetts

in test design to be appropriate for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.		
Section 3.1 Summary Statement		
<p><u>X</u> The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A systematic process and timeline to address any gaps or weaknesses identified in the alignment study.• Related to comments in CE 2.1, test blueprints that describe the structure of the current tests with greater clarity and specificity.		

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR Massachusetts

Critical Element 3.2 – Validity Based on Cognitive Processes

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>The State has documented adequate validity evidence that its assessments tap: <u>the intended cognitive processes</u> appropriate for each grade level as represented in the State’s academic content standards.</p>	<p>3.2.1 Findings from a Content Alignment Study of the 2017 Massachusetts Grades 3-8 English Language Arts and Mathematics Next- Generation MCAS Tests (June 2019) The alignment study found strong alignment overall with respect to the DOK expressed in the standards and on the MCAS items, providing evidence that the cognitive processes required by the MCAS test items were in alignment with the expectations expressed in the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks.</p>	<p>Previous request: For the MCAS mathematics and reading/language arts: •Adequate validity evidence that its assessments tap the intended cognitive processes appropriate for each grade level, as represented in the 2011 academic frameworks (the State’s academic content standards). ----- The studies do not support the intended purpose of the assessment in that the purpose of instructional improvement is not served by having three ELA subscales that all are highly correlated to the point that the subscale does not identify specific areas of student performance for improvement. There is a dearth of discussion of cognitive demand in the blueprint nor the actual assessment so it is impossible to discuss the validity based on cognitive processes. The alignment study is a piece of evidence, but is insufficient-- cognitive labs, expert judgment, and/or other empirical evidence to show that intended cognitive processes are being measured is needed. The body of evidence needs to be robust (not just one of the aforementioned). Evidence for cognitive complexity does not adequately address cognitive processes.</p>
<p>Section 3.2 Summary Statement</p>		
<p><u> X </u> The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cognitive labs, expert judgment, and/or other empirical evidence to more directly show that intended cognitive processes are being measured. The body of evidence must be robust (not just one of the aforementioned examples of evidence). 		

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR Massachusetts

Critical Element 3.3 – Validity Based on Internal Structure

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>The State has documented adequate validity evidence that the scoring and reporting structures of its assessments are consistent with the sub-domain structures of the State’s <u>academic content standards</u>.</p>	<p>3.3.1 3.3.2 3.3.3 3.3.4 2017 Next-Generation MCAS and MCAS-Alt Technical Report, p. 59 Appendix M – Classical Reliability CFA Presentation to the Technical Advisory Committee (May 2019) MCAS CFA Executive Summary The 2017 MCAS tests were reported according to overall student results and results by reporting category, where each reporting category represents content standards described in the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. Although there is ample evidence in the MCAS technical report to establish unidimensionality in the test construct, a confirmatory factory analysis (CFA) was conducted on the grade 3-8 MCAS tests in ELA and Mathematics to establish concordance among the MCAS items and the reporting category (factors). Overall, the CFA study found strong evidence of model fit supporting the claim that the MCAS items were associated with their relevant factors (reporting categories); all factor loadings were positive and average factor loadings were in the moderate range. following Inter-factor correlations were very high, indicating a strong unidimensional model for all tests.</p>	<p>Previous request: For the MCAS mathematics and reading/language arts: •Adequate validity evidence that the scoring and reporting structures of its assessments are consistent with the sub-domain structures of the State’s academic content standards on which the intended interpretations and uses of results are based. ----- Additional validity evidence based on the internal structure of the assessments is needed (e.g., evidence that ancillary constructs needed for success on the assessments do not provide inappropriate barriers to measuring the achievement of all students, reports of differential item functioning (DIF) analyses that show whether particular items function differently for relevant student groups, other studies demonstrating the assessment consistently measures the construct it was designed to measure with limited impact from extraneous factors like student demographics, evidence that the subscales reported actually measure discrete dimensions in the state academic content standards and are meaningful for the intended purposes of the assessment). The studies do not support the intended purpose of the assessment in that the purpose of instructional improvement is not served by having three ELA subscales that all are highly correlated to the point that the subscale does not identify specific areas of student performance for improvement. Additionally, the results suggest there was a small but significant mode effect for each test, and ELA tended to have a larger effect size than mathematics. P.61 What is the follow-up here if any?</p>

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR Massachusetts

Section 3.3 Summary Statement		
<p><u> X </u> The additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Validity evidence that the scoring and reporting structures of its assessments are consistent with the sub-domain structures of the State’s academic content standards on which the intended interpretations and uses of results are based.		

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR Massachusetts

Critical Element 3.4 – Validity Based on Relations to Other Variables

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>The State has documented adequate validity evidence that the State’s assessment scores are related as expected with other variables.</p>	<p>3.4.1 MCAS and Student Achievement Presentation to the Technical Advisory Committee (May 2019) The Department conducted a study of the relationship between next-generation MCAS achievement, course-assignment and grade point averages. The study follows 64,000 students who took the grade 8 MCAS tests in ELA and math in 2017 through their first year of high school where they took 80,000 different ELA and 77,000 different mathematics courses. Results show that between 27% (ELA) and 32% (Mathematics) of the variation in placements and student grades in grade 9 was associated with the MCAS scores from the grade 8 summative assessment. As an illustration, students scored at the Meeting Expectations level in grade 8 were, for example, twice as likely as students at who scored Partially Meeting Expectations to earn a B or higher in general math courses (68% v. 33%). The correlation between MCAS scores and course grades provides evidence that the MCAS achievement level descriptors and standards are aligned with the teaching and learning expectations at the next level. It also serves as validation for the claims in the achievement level descriptors that students who meet expectations are well prepared for academic work at the next level. Results from this study were presented to the Massachusetts TAC and will be included in the MCAS technical report.</p>	<p>Previous request: For the MCAS mathematics and reading/language arts: •Adequate validity evidence that the State’s MCAS assessment scores are related as expected with other variables, especially those expected to be more directly related to student achievement. ----- Additional evidence and information to support relationship to other variables is needed (reports of analyses that demonstrate positive correlations between assessment results and external measures that assess similar constructs, positive correlations between academic assessment results and other variables, such as academic characteristic of test takers), including the State's plan to address findings from the study. Regarding the latter, for example, the study shows a low correlation between the performance on 8th grade MCAS and 9th grade course level and student performance. This does not support assessment validity based on other variables. Such evidence would include strong relationships to the external measure such as high correlations (not just significant) to a clear external measure, possibly student success in the next course or grade in the subject....and a low correlation with measures of extraneous variables (high correlation between ELA 4 score and ELA 5 class performance with a substantially lower correlation between ELA 4 score and 5th grade math class performance)</p>
<p>Section 3.4 Summary Statement</p>		
<p><u> X </u> The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale: • Validity evidence that the State’s assessment scores are related as expected with other variables, especially those expected to be more directly related to student achievement.</p>		

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR Massachusetts

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Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR Massachusetts

SECTION 4: TECHNICAL QUALITY – OTHER

Critical Element 4.1 – Reliability

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>The State has documented adequate reliability evidence for its assessments for the following measures of reliability for the State’s student population overall and each student group consistent with nationally recognized professional and technical testing standards. If the State’s assessments are implemented in multiple States, measures of reliability for the assessment overall and each student group consistent with nationally recognized professional and technical testing standards, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test reliability of the State’s assessments estimated for its student population; • Overall and conditional standard error of measurement of the State’s assessments, including any domain or component sub-tests, as applicable; • Consistency and accuracy of estimates in categorical classification decisions for the cut scores, achievement levels or proficiency levels based on the assessment results; • For computer-adaptive tests, evidence that the assessments produce test forms with adequately precise estimates of <u>a student’s academic achievement</u>. 		<p>No additional evidence requested.</p>
<p>Section 4.1 Summary Statement</p>		
<p>No additional evidence is required or</p>		

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR Massachusetts

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>___ The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [list additional evidence needed w/brief rationale] 		

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR Massachusetts

Critical Element 4.2 – Fairness and Accessibility

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p><i>For all State academic assessments,</i> assessments should be developed, to the extent practicable, using the principles of universal design for learning (UDL) (see definition¹).</p> <p><u>For academic content assessments,</u> the State has taken reasonable and appropriate steps to ensure that its assessments are accessible to all students and fair across student groups in their design, development and analysis.</p>	<p>4.2.1. DIF Presentation to the Technical Advisory Committee (May 2019)</p> <p>4.2.2 Appendix I – Differential Item Functioning Results Massachusetts evaluates operational test items for DIF among students with disabilities (SWD). However, SWDs are not a focal group during the item bias review process each year <i>prior</i> to testing. This is a result of concerns with sampling the large variation in types and severity of disabilities and levels of students’ needs. The sampling variation is of greater concern before testing when only field test samples are available (Buzick & Stone, 2011). Massachusetts discussed methods for identifying DIF for SWDs at the May 2019 Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meeting. The TAC endorsed continuing the use of evaluating item DIF on operational (common) items. They made the following suggestions that Massachusetts is currently addressing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First, Massachusetts will identify methods for sampling SWDs in conducting DIF analyses on this group. One promising sampling proposal being studied involves identifying the group of SWDs a) by the “level of need” variable reported in the Student Information Management System (SIMS), and analyzing DIF only for students in levels of need 1 and 2, rather than for those in levels 1 through 4; and b) include students with disability codes that are most likely to take the general assessment and achieve the grade-level content standards, such as students with health, 	<p>Previous request: For the MCAS mathematics and reading/language arts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of reasonable and appropriate steps to ensure that its assessments are accessible to all students and fair across student groups in the design, development and analysis of its assessments. (e.g., summary analysis of results for students with disabilities versus students who do not have disabilities on each of the MCAS tests (e.g., DIF, subgroup summary statistics and estimates of reliability, decision consistency). <p>-----</p> <p>More detail and information needed regarding implementation of UDL principles in design and development.</p> <p>The evidence focuses on identifying, documenting, and remediating item DIF between SWD students and non-SWD students. The evidence does not address subgroup performance differences and accessibility of the assessments across the subgroups.</p> <p>Evidence of implementation of the planned studies, their findings, and how findings will be addressed are needed.</p> <p>More information needed about qualifications of those involved in design and development--unclear about specialization/experience with students who are ELs and/or students with disabilities.</p>

¹ see page 28 of “*A State’s Guide to the U.S. Department of Education’s Assessment Peer Review Process*”, September 24, 2018 available at: www.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/saa.html

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR Massachusetts

	<p>communication, specific learning, and emotional disabilities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second, the TAC recommended that Massachusetts conduct forensic studies each year on the operational items using the DIF analyses and other quantitative and qualitative item codes (such as item difficulty, discrimination, and qualitative item characteristics) to identify item characteristics associated with higher DIF statistics. These forensic examinations are intended to inform item development and improve item accessibility. • Third, the TAC recommended that Massachusetts continue investigating DIF methodologies to identify methods that are sensitive to DIF detection for all item types. Currently, the state is investigating the use of two DIF methodologies: SIBTest and an IRT- based approach to identify non-uniform DIF. These two methods will be compared to the current Standardization DIF method currently being used. <p>Timelines for these studies and their findings will proceed as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2019, the Massachusetts will complete its initial investigation into methods for sampling SWDs and for use of alternate DIF methods. • Massachusetts will use the findings of this initial study to conduct its first forensic evaluation of DIF for SWDs on the 2018 MCAS items. Any findings, if relevant, will be employed in future item development. • Changes to the business rules calculating DIF for the subgroup of SWDs and other subgroups will be reflected in the business rules for calculating DIF in the 2018 MCAS Technical Report and in subsequent reports. 	
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Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR Massachusetts

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If results warrant the inclusion of DIF for SWDs for item review, the Department will begin using these item evaluation criteria for the development of MCAS items starting in the 2020-2021 school year. <p>References Buzick, H., & Stone, E. (2011). Recommendations for Conducting Differential Item Functioning (DIF) Analyses for Students with Disabilities Based on Previous DIF Studies. Educational Test Service Report # RR-11-34. Dorans, N. J., & Holland, P. W. (1992). <i>DIF Detection and Description: Mantel-Haenszel and Standardization</i>. Education Testing Service. Martinkova, P., Drabinova, A., Liaw, Y-L, Sanders, E., McFarland, J.L., & Price, R. M. (2017). Checking equity: Why differential item functioning analysis should be a routine part of developing conceptual assessments. <i>CBE Life Science Education</i>, 16;2.</p>	
Section 4.2 Summary Statement		
<p><u> X </u> The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of reasonable and appropriate steps to ensure that its assessments are accessible to all students and fair across student groups in the design, development and analysis of its assessments (e.g., summary analysis of results for students with disabilities versus students who do not have disabilities on each of the MCAS tests, subgroup summary statistics and estimates of reliability, decision consistency), including how principles of universal design for learning (UDL) are addressed. 		

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR Massachusetts

Critical Element 4.3 – Full Performance Continuum

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
The State has ensured that each assessment provides an adequately precise estimate of student performance across the full performance continuum for academic assessments , including performance for high- and low-achieving students.		No additional evidence requested.
Section 4.3 Summary Statement		
<p><input type="checkbox"/> No additional evidence is required or</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [list additional evidence needed w/brief rationale] 		

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR Massachusetts

Critical Element 4.4 – Scoring

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>The State has established and documented standardized scoring procedures and protocols for its assessments that are designed to produce reliable and meaningful results, facilitate valid score interpretations, and report assessment results in terms of the State’s <u>academic achievement standards</u>.</p>		<p>No additional evidence requested.</p>
<p>Section 4.4 Summary Statement</p>		
<p>___ No additional evidence is required or</p> <p>___ The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [list additional evidence needed w/brief rationale] 		

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR Massachusetts

Critical Element 4.5 – Multiple Assessment Forms

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>If the State administers multiple forms of <u>academic assessments</u> within a content area and grade level, within or across school years, the State ensures that all forms adequately represent the State’s <u>academic content standards</u> and yield consistent score interpretations such that the forms are comparable within and across school years.</p>		<p>No additional evidence requested.</p>
<p>Section 4.4 Summary Statement</p>		
<p>___ No additional evidence is required or</p> <p>___ The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [list additional evidence needed w/brief rationale] 		

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR Massachusetts

Critical Element 4.6 – Multiple Versions of an Assessment

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>If the State administers any of its assessments in multiple versions within a subject area (e.g., online versus paper-based delivery; or a native language version of the academic content assessment), grade level, or school year, the State:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Followed a design and development process to support comparable interpretations of results for students tested across the versions of the assessments; • Documented adequate evidence of comparability of the meaning and interpretations of the assessment results. 		<p>No additional evidence requested.</p>
<p>Section 4.6 Summary Statement</p>		
<p>___ No additional evidence is required or</p> <p>___ The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [list additional evidence needed w/brief rationale] 		

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR Massachusetts

Critical Element 4.7 – Technical Analysis and Ongoing Maintenance

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>The State:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has a system for monitoring, maintaining, and improving, as needed, the quality of its assessment system, including clear and technically sound criteria for the analyses of all of the assessments in its assessment system (i.e., general assessments and alternate assessments), and • Evidence of adequate technical quality is made public, including on the State’s website. 		<p>No additional evidence requested.</p>
<p>Section 4.7 Summary Statement</p>		
<p>___ No additional evidence is required or</p> <p>___ The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [list additional evidence needed w/brief rationale] 		

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR Massachusetts

SECTION 5: INCLUSION OF ALL STUDENTS

Critical Element 5.1 – Procedures for Including Students with Disabilities

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>The State has in place procedures to ensure the inclusion of all public elementary and secondary school students with disabilities in the State’s assessment system. Decisions about how to assess students with disabilities must be made by a student’s IEP Team under IDEA, the placement team under Section 504, or the individual or team designated by a district to make that decision under Title II of the ADA, as applicable, based on each student’s individual abilities and needs.</p> <p>If a State adopts alternate academic achievement standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities and administers an alternate assessment aligned with those standards under ESEA section 1111(b)(1)(E) and (b)(2)(D), respectively, the State must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish guidelines for determining whether to assess a student with an AA-AAAS, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A State definition of “students with the most significant cognitive disabilities” that addresses factors related to cognitive functioning and adaptive behavior; • Provide information for IEP Teams to inform decisions about student assessments that: 		<p>No additional evidence requested.</p>

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR Massachusetts

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provides a clear explanation of the differences between assessments aligned with grade-level academic achievement standards and those aligned with alternate academic achievement standards, including any effects of State and local policies on a student's education resulting from taking an AA-AAAS, such as how participation in such assessments may delay or otherwise affect the student from completing the requirements for a regular high school diploma; • Ensure that parents of students assessed with an AA-AAAS are informed that their child's achievement will be measured based on alternate academic achievement standards; • Not preclude a student with the most significant cognitive disabilities who takes an AA-AAAS from attempting to complete the requirements for a regular high school diploma; and • Promote, consistent with requirements under the IDEA, the involvement and progress of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities in the general education curriculum that is based on the State's academic content standards 		

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR Massachusetts

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>for the grade in which the student is enrolled; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop, disseminate information on, and promote the use of appropriate accommodations to ensure that a student with the most significant cognitive disabilities who does not take an AA-AAAS participates in academic instruction and assessments for the grade in which the student is enrolled. • The State has in place and monitors implementation of guidelines for IEP teams to apply in determining, on a case-by-case basis, which students with the most significant cognitive disabilities will be assessed based on alternate academic achievement standards, if applicable. Such guidelines must be developed in accordance with 34 CFR § 200.6(d).² 		
<p>Section 5.1 Summary Statement</p>		
<p>___ No additional evidence is required or</p> <p>___ The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [list additional evidence needed w/brief rationale] 		

² See the full regulation at 34 CFR § 200.6(d) (online at https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=07e168e9e7a6c5931b4549cc15547ee9&mc=true&node=se34.1.200_16&rgn=div8)

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR Massachusetts

Critical Element 5.2 – Procedures for Including English Learners in Academic Content Assessments

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>The State has in place procedures to ensure the inclusion of all ELs in public elementary and secondary schools in the State’s academic content assessments and clearly communicates this information to districts, schools, teachers, and parents, including, at a minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procedures for determining whether an EL should be assessed with a linguistic accommodation(s); • Information on accessibility tools and features available to all students and assessment accommodations available for ELs; • Assistance regarding selection of appropriate linguistic accommodations for ELs, including to the extent practicable, assessments in the language most likely to yield accurate and reliable information on what those students know and can do to determine the students’ mastery of skills in academic content areas until the students have achieved English language proficiency. 		<p>No additional evidence requested.</p>
<p>Section 5.2 Summary Statement</p>		
<p>___ No additional evidence is required or</p> <p>___ The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [list additional evidence needed w/brief rationale] 		

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR Massachusetts

Critical Element 5.3 – Accommodations

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>The State makes available appropriate accommodations and ensures that its assessments are accessible to students with disabilities and ELs, including ELs with disabilities. Specifically, the State:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures that appropriate accommodations, such as, interoperability with, and ability to use, assistive technology, are available to measure the <u>academic achievement</u> of students with disabilities. • Ensures that appropriate accommodations are available for ELs; • Has determined that the accommodations it provides (1) are appropriate and effective for meeting the individual student’s need(s) to participate in the assessments, (2) do not alter the construct being assessed, and (3) allow meaningful interpretations of results and comparison of scores for students who need and receive accommodations and students who do not need and do not receive accommodations; • Has a process to individually review and allow exceptional requests for a small number of students who require accommodations beyond those routinely allowed. • Ensures that accommodations for all required assessments do not deny 		<p>No additional evidence requested.</p>

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR Massachusetts

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
students with disabilities or ELs the opportunity to participate in the assessment and any benefits from participation in the assessment.		
Section 5.3 Summary Statement		
<p><input type="checkbox"/> No additional evidence is required or</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [list additional evidence needed w/brief rationale] 		

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR Massachusetts

Critical Element 5.4 – Monitoring Test Administration for Special Populations

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>The State monitors test administration in its districts and schools to ensure that appropriate assessments, with or without accommodations, are selected for all students with disabilities and ELs so that they are appropriately included in assessments and receive accommodations that are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent with the State’s policies for accommodations; • Appropriate for addressing a student’s disability or language needs for each assessment administered; • Consistent with accommodations provided to the students during instruction and/or practice; • Consistent with the assessment accommodations identified by a student’s IEP Team under IDEA, placement team convened under Section 504; or for students covered by Title II of the ADA, the individual or team designated by a district to make these decisions; or another process for an EL; • Administered with fidelity to test administration procedures; • Monitored for administrations of all required academic content assessments and AA-AAAS. 		<p>No additional evidence requested.</p>
<p>Section 5.4 Summary Statement</p>		
<p><input type="checkbox"/> No additional evidence is required or</p> <p>The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:</p>		

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR Massachusetts

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• [list additional evidence needed w/brief rationale]		

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR Massachusetts

SECTION 6: ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT STANDARDS AND REPORTING

Critical Element 6.1 – State Adoption of Academic Achievement Standards for All Students

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p><u>For academic content standards:</u></p> <p>The State formally adopted challenging academic achievement standards in reading/language arts, mathematics, and science for all students, specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The State formally adopted academic achievement standards in the required tested grades and, at its option, alternate academic achievement standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities; • The State applies its academic achievement standards to all public elementary and secondary school students enrolled in the grade to which they apply, with the exception of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities to whom alternate academic achievement standards may apply; <p>The State’s academic achievement standards and, as applicable, alternate academic achievement standards, include: (1) at least three levels of achievement, with two for high achievement and a third for lower achievement; (2) descriptions of the competencies associated with each achievement level; and (3) achievement scores that differentiate among the achievement levels.</p>		<p>No additional evidence requested.</p>
<p>Section 6.1 Summary Statement</p>		
<p><input type="checkbox"/> No additional evidence is required or</p>		

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR Massachusetts

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>___ The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [list additional evidence needed w/brief rationale] 		

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR Massachusetts

Critical Element 6.2 – Achievement Standards Setting

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
The State used a technically sound method and process that involved panelists with appropriate experience and expertise for setting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Academic achievement standards and, as applicable, alternate academic achievement standards.</u> 		No additional evidence requested.
Section 6.2 Summary Statement		
<p>___ No additional evidence is required or</p> <p>___ The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [list additional evidence needed w/brief rationale] 		

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR Massachusetts

Critical Element 6.3 – Challenging and Aligned Academic Achievement Standards

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p><u>For academic achievement standards:</u></p> <p>The State’s academic achievement standards are challenging and aligned with the State’s academic content standards and with entrance requirements for credit-bearing coursework in the system of public higher education in the State and relevant State career and technical education standards such that a student who scores at the proficient or above level has mastered what students are expected to know and be able to do by the time they graduate from high school in order to succeed in college and the workforce.</p> <p>If the State has adopted alternate academic achievement standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, the alternate academic achievement standards (1) are aligned with the State’s challenging academic content standards for the grade in which a student is enrolled; (2) promote access to the general curriculum consistent with the IDEA; (3) reflect professional judgment as to the highest possible standards achievable for such students; (4) are designated in the IEP for each student for whom alternate academic achievement standards apply; and (5) are aligned to ensure that a student who meets the alternate academic achievement standards is on track to pursue</p>	<p>6.3.1 MCAS and Student Achievement Presentation to the Technical Advisory Committee (May 2019)</p> <p>As described in 3.4, the state’s research shows high correlations between MCAS scores and course grades, providing evidence that the MCAS achievement level descriptors and standards are aligned with the teaching and learning expectations at the next level.</p>	<p>Previous request: For the MCAS mathematics and reading/language arts: •Evidence that the State’s academic achievement standards are challenging and aligned with the State’s academic content standards (e.g., evidence that students who score at the proficient or above level have mastered what students are expected to know and be able to do and are on track to succeed in college and the workforce by the time they graduate from high school). -----</p> <p>Evidence does not address the critical element and actually provides evidence that is not compelling. Evidence demonstrates that the relationship between student HS performance and ELA grade 8 performance is not as strong as one would hope.</p> <p>The evidence suggests that the math test is a better predictor of student HS English performance than the ELA test is. A 0.546 score to ELA GPA for math versus a 0.507 for ELA score to ELA GPA</p> <p>This evidence still does not address the original issue identified that the subscales being reported are highly correlated and there is no evidence that these subscales align to state content standards, nor does the state provide convincing evidence the grade level assessments are aligned to what a student needs to know and can do to be successful at (at least) the next grade level.</p> <p>The State's plan for addressing the findings of the study/analyses in a manner that addresses this critical element is needed.</p>

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR Massachusetts

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
postsecondary education or competitive integrated employment.		
Section 6.3 Summary Statement		
<p><u> X </u> The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence that the State’s academic achievement standards are challenging and aligned with the State’s academic content standards (e.g., evidence that students who score at the proficient or above level have mastered what students are expected to know and be able to do and are on track to succeed in college and the workforce by the time they graduate from high school), including how the State plans to address issues related to 8th grade math and ELA test score correlations to HS ELA GPA, for example. 		

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR Massachusetts

Critical Element 6.4 – Reporting

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>The State reports its assessment results for all students assessed, and the reporting facilitates timely, appropriate, credible, and defensible interpretations and uses of those results by parents, educators, State officials, policymakers and other stakeholders, and the public.</p> <p>The State reports to the public its assessment results on <u>student academic achievement for all students and each student group at each achievement level³</u></p> <p>For <u>academic content assessments</u>, the State reports assessment results, including itemized score analyses, to districts and schools so that parents, teachers, principals, and administrators can interpret the results and address the <u>specific academic needs of students</u>, and the State also provides interpretive guides to support appropriate uses of the assessment results.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The State provides for the production and delivery of individual student interpretive, descriptive, and diagnostic reports after each administration of its academic content assessments that: 	<p>6.4.1 Parent-Guardian Report Web Page Massachusetts provides assessment results in alternate formats (e.g., Braille or large print) upon request.</p>	<p>Previous request: For the MCAS mathematics and reading/language arts: •Evidence that assessment results are available in alternate formats (e.g., Braille or large print) upon request. -----</p> <p>The evidence appears sufficient to meet the request for this critical element; however, it is still unclear how a blind or non-English speaking parent would be alerted to the availability of the report simply by having a statement on a web page telling the parent in English on the screen who to contact to make such a request.</p> <p>There is no a discussion of alternate languages.</p> <p>A comment: Does the state provide the report directly to the parents or are LEAs involved?</p>

³ Although all students with disabilities must be included in a State’s assessment system, requirements for public reporting in ESEA section 1111(h)(1)(C)(ii) apply only to children with disabilities as defined in section 602(3) of the IDEA.

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR Massachusetts

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provide valid and reliable information regarding a <u>student’s academic achievement</u>; ○ Report the <u>student’s academic achievement</u> in terms of the State’s grade-level academic achievement standards; ○ Provide information to help parents, teachers, and principals interpret the test results and address the specific <u>academic needs of students</u>; ○ Are provided in an understandable and uniform format; ○ Are, to the extent practicable, written in a language that parents and guardians can understand or, if it is not practicable to provide written translations to a parent or guardian with limited English proficiency, are orally translated for such parent or guardian; ○ Upon request by a parent who is an individual with a disability as defined by the ADA, as amended, are provided in an alternative format accessible to that parent. ● The State follows a process and timeline for delivering individual student reports to parents, teachers, and principals as soon as practicable after each test administration. 		

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR Massachusetts

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
Section 6.4 Summary Statement		
<p data-bbox="191 289 667 321"><u> X </u> No additional evidence is required or</p> <ul data-bbox="247 321 1965 435" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="247 321 1965 435">• Note: Though the State meets the resubmission requirement, Peers are unclear how a blind or non-English speaking parent, for example, would be alerted to the availability of the report simply by having a statement on a web page telling the parent in English on the screen who to contact to make such a request. A suggestion is to provide information on the report regarding availability of alternate formats and languages. 		

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR Massachusetts

SECTION 7: LOCALLY SELECTED NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED HIGH SCHOOL ACADEMIC ASSESSMENTS

(if applicable; evidence for this section would be submitted in ADDITION to evidence for sections 1 through 6)

Critical Element 7.1 – State Procedures for the Use of Locally Selected, Nationally Recognized High School Academic Assessments

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>The State has established technical criteria to use in its review of any submission of a locally selected, nationally recognized high school academic assessment. The State has completed this review using its established technical criteria and has found the assessment meets its criteria prior to submitting for the Department’s assessment peer review.</p> <p>The State’s technical criteria include a determination that the assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is aligned with the challenging State academic standards; and • Addresses the depth and breadth of those standards. <p>AND</p> <p>The State has procedures in place to ensure that a district that chooses to use a nationally recognized high school academic assessment administers the same assessment to all high school students in the district except for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who may be assessed with an AA-AAAS.</p> <p>AND</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR Massachusetts

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>The technical criteria established by the State in reviewing a locally selected, nationally recognized high school academic assessment must ensure that the use of appropriate accommodations does not deny a student with a disability or an EL—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The opportunity to participate in the assessment; and • Any of the benefits from participation in the assessment that are afforded to students without disabilities or students who are not ELs. 		
<p>Section 7.1 Summary Statement</p>		
<p>___ No additional evidence is required or</p> <p>___ The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [list additional evidence needed w/brief rationale] 		

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR Massachusetts

Element 7.2 –State Monitoring of Districts Regarding the Use of Locally Selected, Nationally Recognized High School Academic Assessments

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>The State must have procedures in place to ensure that:</p> <p>Before a district requests approval from the State to use a nationally recognized high school academic assessment, the district notifies all parents of high school students it serves—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the district intends to request approval from the State to use a nationally recognized high school academic assessment in place of the statewide academic assessment; • Of how parents and, as appropriate, students may provide meaningful input regarding the district’s request (includes students in public charter schools who would be included in such assessments); and • Of any effect of such request on the instructional program in the district. 	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Section 7.2 Summary Statement</p>		
<p><input type="checkbox"/> No additional evidence is required or</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [list additional evidence needed w/brief rationale] 		

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR Massachusetts

Element 7.3 –Comparability of the Locally Selected Nationally Recognized High School Academic Assessments with the State Assessments

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>The locally selected, nationally recognized high school academic assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is equivalent to or more rigorous than the statewide assessment, with respect to— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The coverage of academic content; ○ The difficulty of the assessment; ○ The overall quality of the assessment; and ○ Any other aspects of the assessment that the State may establish in its technical criteria; • Produces valid and reliable data on student academic achievement with respect to all high school students and each subgroup of high school students in the district that— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Are comparable to student academic achievement data for all high school students and each subgroup of high school students produced by the statewide assessment at each academic achievement level; ○ Are expressed in terms consistent with the State’s academic achievement standards; and ○ Provide unbiased, rational, and consistent differentiation among schools within the State for the purpose of the State determined accountability system including calculating the Academic Achievement indicator and annually meaningfully differentiating between schools. 	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Section 7.3 Summary Statement</p>		
<p>No additional evidence is required or</p>		

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.

STATE ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW NOTES FOR Massachusetts

Critical Element	Evidence (Record document and page # for future reference)	Comments/Notes/Questions/Suggestions Regarding State Documentation or Evidence
<p>___ The following additional evidence is needed/provide brief rationale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [list additional evidence needed w/brief rationale] 		

Consistent with the note on page 1, the evidence requested by the peer reviewers does not necessarily reflect the final set of additional evidence, if any, that a State may need to submit to demonstrate that its assessment system meets all of the critical elements for the assessment peer review. As a result, a State should refer to the letter to the State, including the list of additional evidence needed, if any, from the Department.