

Validating Performance Standards for the MCAS-Alt

Daniel J. Wiener, Administrator of Inclusive Assessment

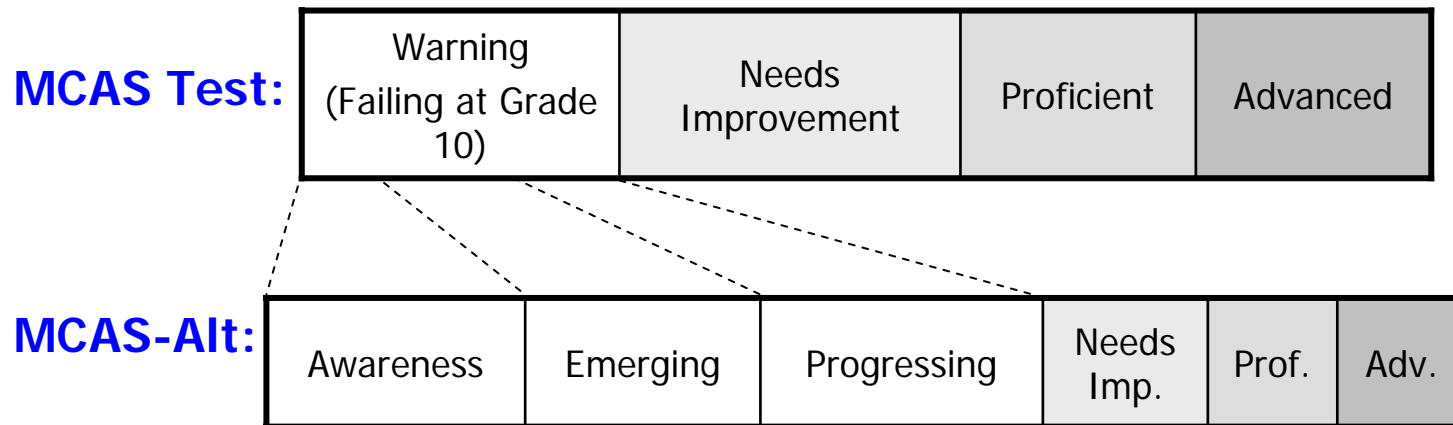


2008 CCSSO - Orlando

Thinking Differently About Alternate Assessment

- ◆ Honest and meaningful performance levels reported for alternate assessment based on *alternate* achievement standards
- ◆ Some students can attain “real” proficiency on the alternate assessment based on *grade-level* achievement standards

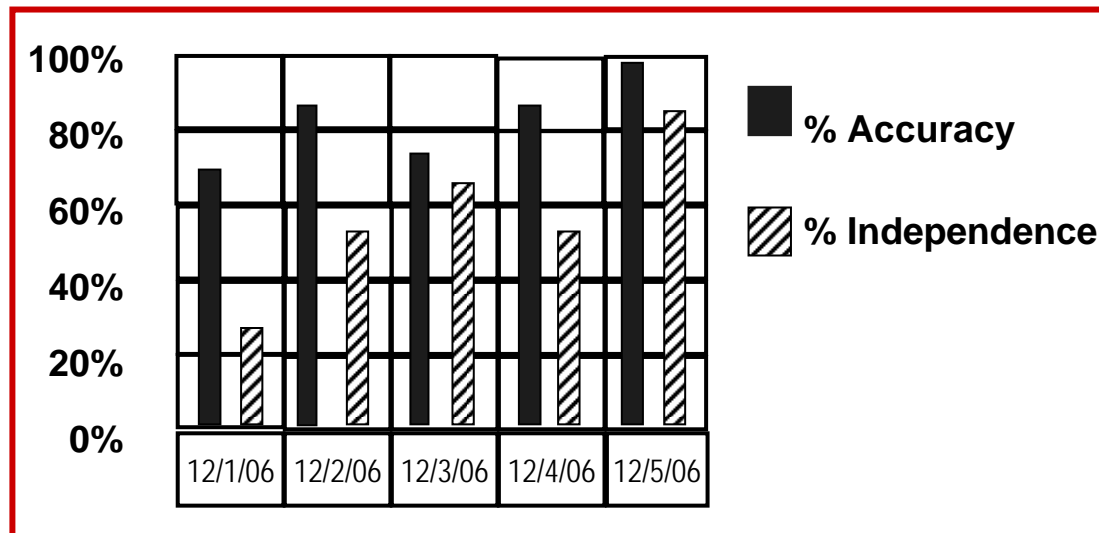
Performance Levels



MCAS-Alt: A structured portfolio

- ◆ Work samples (performance), and data charts (progress) are compiled in an annual portfolio
- ◆ Evidence shows **complexity** of tasks, and student's **accuracy** and **independence** in performing tasks aligned with required subjects/strands/standards

Data chart



Access to the General Curriculum: **Mathematics**

Essence of standard:
*Represent information
in different formats*

Collect, sort,
and organize
objects by
different
characteristics

Gather data
on familiar
objects, and
represent
them on a
simple graph,
table, or chart

Compare and
contrast different
graphical
representations
of a set of data

Example:
Compare same set
of data shown on a
table, line graph,
and circle graph.

Grade 9-10
Learning
Standard
#10.D.1 for
Data &
Statistics:

Use graphical
representations
and statistics to
communicate
information
about, and
compare, sets of
data.



Setting Performance Levels

- ◆ Use score combinations to describe characteristics of student's performance: ***Reasoned Judgment***

Example:

LC=3, Acc=4, Ind=3 shows student's performance is **primarily accurate and independent**, although **below expectations for grade level**.

Example:

LC=3, DSC=2, Ind=2 shows student's performance is **limited/inconsistent** and student **requires frequent prompting/assistance**.

Score Combination Tables

- ◆ Level of Complexity=2

Demo of Skills:

1 2 3 4

Independence:

1	Aw	Aw	Aw	Aw
2	Aw	Aw	Aw	Aw
3	Aw	Aw	Em	Em
4	Aw	Aw	Em	Em

(0-25%) 1

(26-50%) 2

(51-75%) 3

(76-100%) 4

- ◆ Level of Complexity=3

Demo of Skills:

1 2 3 4

Aw	Aw	Aw	Aw
Aw	Aw	Em	Em
Aw	Em	Pg	Pg
Aw	Em	Pg	Pg

Score Combination Tables *(continued)*

- ◆ Level of Complexity=4

Demo of Skills:

1 2 3 4

Independence:

1
2
3
4

Aw	Aw	Aw	Aw
Aw	Aw	Em	Em
Aw	Em	Pg	Pg
Aw	Em	Pg	Pg

- ◆ Level of Complexity=5

Demo of Skills:

1 2 3 4

1
2
3
4

Aw	Aw	Aw	Aw
Aw	Em	Em	Em
Em	Pg	Pg	Pg
Em	Pg	NI	NI+

Validity and Reliability: Some **Tricky Areas** for Portfolios

- ◆ “Test item inter-relationship”
 - Little standardization across portfolios, and
 - Tasks are selected and/or designed by teachers
- ◆ “Reliability of scores” when responses are so diverse
- ◆ “Assessment reflects full range of content standards”
 - But non-regulatory guidance says these students won’t access all the standards, and
 - Portfolios only assess standards that were taught
- ◆ Are targeted skills shown in the portfolio really based on grade-level content standards?
 - Is an external alignment study really necessary?
- ◆ One purpose of MCAS-Alt: Instructional improvement
 - Did this occur?



“Did the MCAS-Alt Meet Its Intended Purposes?” *Consequential Validity*

- ◆ Was the student provided access to curriculum?
- ◆ Were new, challenging skills taught?
- ◆ How well did student learn new skills, concepts, content?
- ◆ Did teaching and learning improve as a result?

Tell our story:

- ◆ Did the assessment do what we said it would do?
- ◆ If not, did we fix it?

Documenting the Process

Procedural Validity

- ◆ *We kept careful records each time we met to...*
 - Determine purpose(s) of the alternate assessment
 - Decide what we want to measure (scoring rubric)
 - Describe the student's performance (descriptors)
 - Calculate a score (scoring rules)
 - Translate scores into performance levels (standard setting)
 - Show where one PL ends and another begins (cut scores)
 - Align content and validate the alignment
 - Make continuous improvements to the system
- ◆ *We had the right people at the table...*



Who Was There? *Content Validity*

- ◆ **Curriculum Framework writers (content experts)** developed *Resource Guide to the Frameworks for Students with Disabilities*
 - Defined the “essence” of standards and “entry points” at various levels of complexity
- ◆ **Special educators** pushed them to go lower
- ◆ **Diverse stakeholders** shared their perspectives
- ◆ **Technical advisors** helped set performance standards, using reasoned judgment of each “score combination”
- ◆ **Contractors** told us what others had tried, and what might work
- ◆ **Scorers** linked the evidence to the standards, using the *Resource Guide*



Resources

MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (781-338-3625)

- Dan Wiener – dwiener@doe.mass.edu
- MCAS-Alt Website – www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt