

# CAMBRIDGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

159 THORNDIKE STREET CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02141



April 11, 2016

Dear CPS Families & Community,

I am writing to share some updates and information about Statewide Assessments that students in Grades 3-10 take each year in the Spring. For 18 years, CPS students have taken a pencil-and-paper test called MCAS (Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System) during the Spring semester. The following Fall, families received a report indicating whether their student's test scores met grade-level expectations. The State also used this assessment to help school districts identify groups of students who need more or different types of support to be successful.

Over the next two years, all Massachusetts public schools will transition to a computerized assessment, which is informally known as MCAS 2.0. Still in development, MCAS 2.0 is based on a nationally-developed assessment called PARCC (Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career).

MCAS 2.0 will not be ready for implementation until Spring 2017. To prepare for the transition, school districts were given a choice of whether to administer the old MCAS this year, or to administer PARCC. The Cambridge School Committee has voted to administer PARCC this year, to better prepare our students to take MCAS 2.0 in 2017.

On the reverse of this letter is the Spring 2016 assessment schedule, including which schools are taking PARCC via computer, and which have chosen to remain with a pencil-and-paper option for one more year.

## Statewide Assessments: CPS Transition Plan

2014-15: MCAS

2015-16: PARCC ELA & Math  
• 10th Grade: MCAS  
• Science: MCAS

2016-17: MCAS 2.0

The subject of standardized testing raises many questions and concerns for us all, and so we have created a centralized website with further information and frequently asked questions. The link is posted on our main website, [www.cpsd.us](http://www.cpsd.us). If you have questions about your child's participation in the statewide assessments, please contact your school principal.

As always, I want to express my great pride in the hard work of our teachers and administrators to prepare for these changes. I also appreciate all that you do to support your student's learning and future success.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeffrey M. Young".

Jeffrey M. Young  
Superintendent of Schools

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## Statewide Assessments: Timeframe & Format by School

Amigos Baldwin Cambridgeport Cambridge Street Fletcher Maynard Graham & Parks Kennedy-Longfellow King Open Morse Peabody Rindge Avenue Tobin Vassal Lane	} Paper-based Math & ELA PARCC 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade Science & Technology MCAS Schedule varies but will take place between April 25-May 27
Haggerty Martin Luther King Putnam Avenue	} Computer-based Math & ELA PARCC 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade Science & Technology MCAS Schedule varies but will take place between April 25-June 6
Cambridge Rindge & Latin School	} 9 <sup>th</sup> Grade Science & Technology MCAS 10 <sup>th</sup> Grade MCAS – Graduation Requirement

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## Required Testing by Grade Level

Grade	Subject
3	Reading, Math
4	English Language Arts Reading Comprehension and Composition, Mathematics
5	English Language Arts Reading Comprehension, Mathematics, and Science and Technology/Engineering
6	English Language Arts Reading Comprehension, Mathematics
7	English Language Arts Reading Comprehension and Composition, and Mathematics
8	English Language Arts Reading Comprehension, Mathematics and Science
10	English Language Arts Reading Comprehension and Composition, Mathematics, Science and Technology/Engineering (see *)
*	Biology, Chemistry, Introductory Physics, or Technology/Engineering

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More Information: [www.cpsd.us](http://www.cpsd.us)