

## Preparing for the MCAS in Mathematics

As spring approaches, so does the math MCAS test – testing dates are May 17 and May 18. Both the teachers and students have been doing their part to prepare for the test. You might be wondering what you can do to help your child. The most basic things are (1) ensure that your child gets a good night's sleep the night before testing and (2) provide your child with a healthy breakfast before coming to school the day of the test. You can also help your child by reinforcing the information below that is being shared with students in their math classes. However, the most important thing you can do is feel confident that your child will be successful on the math MCAS. Our students have been fully prepared by their teachers and we are confident of their pending success! Good Luck!

### **Know the format of the test**

- Two days of testing – first day no calculator, second day calculator allowed.
- The test consists of three types of problems – multiple choice, short answer and open response.
- Students will be scored on a total of 42 problems – 32 multiple choice, 4 short answer and 6 open response
- This is an un-timed test. Do not rush to finish. If you get stuck on a question, skip it, but make sure you go back to it!

### **Open Response**

- Try to answer all parts of the open response.
- The parts generally increase in difficulty
- Sometimes you will need an answer from part (a) to answer parts (b) or (c). Even if your answer to part (a) is incorrect, but it is used correctly to answer parts (b) and (c), you will earn points for the open response question.
- Show your work! You might earn partial credit.
- Even if you can't answer part (a), try the other parts for partial credit.

### **Short Answer**

- These are the types of math problems you see most of in your daily math classes – your homework and test questions are typically short answer questions.
- Write an answer for every one of the short answer questions
- There is no penalty for wrong answers, so guess if you have to.

### **Multiple Choice**

- The answer is there! Don't leave any problems blank – you are not penalized for incorrect answers.
- Try to eliminate wrong answer choices.
- Plug the answer choices into the problem to see what works

Some websites you might find helpful:

- To view released MCAS questions <http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/testitems.html>
- MCAS Overviews & Guides: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/guides.html>
- MCAS Sample Student Work & Scoring Guides: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/student/>
- Answering multiple choice [http://teachingcircles.lacoe.edu/resources/addl\\_info/navigating\\_multiple\\_choice.pdf](http://teachingcircles.lacoe.edu/resources/addl_info/navigating_multiple_choice.pdf)