

Appendix B: Decision-Making Tool for MCAS Participation by Students with Disabilities

Use the definition and questions below to guide discussions of how students will participate in MCAS testing.

Massachusetts defines “students with the most significant cognitive disabilities” as those who meet **all** of the following criteria:

- have cognitive disabilities evidenced by significant delays in attaining age-level academic achievement standards, even with systematic, extensive individually designed instruction, related services, and modifications
- have cognitive disabilities that significantly impact their educational performance and ability to apply learning from one setting to another
- require extensive, direct individualized instruction and substantial supports to achieve measurable gains on the challenging State academic content standards for the grade in which the student is enrolled
- perform significantly below average in general cognitive functioning and adaptive behavior
Note: “Significantly below average” is defined as a student functioning two or more standard deviations below the mean on commonly accepted norm-referenced assessments in both cognitive functioning and adaptive behavior (e.g., two or more adaptive skill areas such as daily living skills, communication, self-care, social skills, and academic skills).

