Tasks and Guidance for Technology Coordinators
(Appendix A, excerpted from the Winter 2025 PAM)

Appendix A

Tasks and Guidance for Technology Coordinators

Appendix A—Tasks and Guidance for Technology Coordinators

Ⓐ Background and Overview

Principals, test coordinators, and technology coordinators should become familiar with the terminology describing the components of computer-based testing:

- **The MCAS Portal** is the online management system. Note that users will be signed out of the MCAS Portal after 20 minutes of inactivity.

- **The MCAS Student Kiosk** is the online testing platform for students. Note that students will be signed out of the MCAS Student Kiosk after 1 hour of inactivity.

- **The MCAS Training Site** can be used by schools to practice tasks required in the MCAS Portal and to administer practice tests to students.

- **Site Readiness Test:** Site Readiness is a tool for schools and districts to assess their readiness for online testing via the MCAS Student Kiosk and to identify any potential technology-related issues before testing begins to ensure a smooth testing experience. The Site Readiness tool is used to verify that testing devices meet the minimum requirements and have been properly configured.

Steps that apply to any technology problems that may occur during testing:

- Resume testing on the same device, if possible.

- Do not turn off the device.

- Make a note of which testing device the student was using.

- If the error persists, move the student to a new device.

- If there is a situation in which a student is waiting for more than 15 minutes, then schedule the student to complete testing at a later time.

In the rare occurrence that the MCAS Student Kiosk or the MCAS Portal experiences an outage, the MCAS Service Center will email a notification to principals, district and school test coordinators, and technology coordinators. The MCAS System Status page at mcas-status.emetric.net will be updated until the issue has been resolved. A second email will be sent to schools and districts when service is restored.

Ⓑ Tasks for Technology Coordinators to Complete

Tasks to Complete in Winter 2024

1. **Review the technology specifications, and prepare the school's infrastructure.**

   The *Technology Guidelines for MCAS Computer-Based Testing* and the *Guide to Installing the MCAS Student Kiosk and Conducting Site Readiness* provide security requirements, minimum and recommended specifications for computer hardware and devices, and suggest recommended levels of bandwidth that will support schools' instructional and assessment needs. Schools should review the documents listed above and update operating systems as necessary. See mcas.onlinehelp.cognia.org/technology-setup.

   - The *Guide to Installing the MCAS Student Kiosk and Completing Site Readiness* provides instructions for configuring the school network to allow for student devices to access secure test content through the MCAS Student Kiosk.

   - Identify any gaps in technology capacity (e.g., test-taking devices that do not meet technology specifications, potentially insufficient bandwidth), and address those gaps.

Appendix A—Tasks and Guidance for Technology Coordinators

- Plan to have enough devices for test administrators and students, including back-up devices that can be used if needed.
  - › Schools may want to use this device planner to determine the number of devices needed at a time. See www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/testadmin/devicecalculator.xlsx (download link).

2. **Review the Department's cybersecurity guidance and establish a cybersecurity plan for your school.**

   Technology teams are encouraged to review resources for cybersecurity planning to avoid issues that could arise during MCAS testing. Districts are highly suggested to review the Massachusetts Municipal Cybersecurity Roadmap in its entirety to take full advantage of all of the embedded resources. The Massachusetts Office of Municipal and School Technology: www.mass.gov/orgs/office-of-municipal-and-school-technology

   Additional resources include:

   - Protecting Our Future: Partnering to Safeguard K–12 Organizations from Cybersecurity Threats: www.cisa.gov/protecting-our-future-cybersecurity-k-12
   - National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Cybersecurity Framework. The NIST Framework: nvlpubs.nist.gov/nistpubs/SpecialPublications/NIST.SP.1299.pdf

   Schools and districts should consider information as it relates to their technology infrastructure for MCAS testing and overall district plans, and email the Department's Center for School and District Partnership team at k12edtech@mass.gov with any questions.

3. **Determine whether your school will participate in "Bring Your Own Device" (BYOD) for MCAS testing.**

   A BYOD policy allows students to use their own devices for instruction. Schools with students using their own devices for instruction that would also like to use these devices for MCAS testing will need to inform the Department of this decision because there may be additional steps to complete in preparation for MCAS testing.

4. **Verify access to the MCAS Portal and the <u>MCAS Training Site</u>.**

   If you do not have an MCAS Portal or MCAS Training Site account or are unable to access your account, contact your school or district test coordinator.

5. **Download and install the MCAS Student Kiosk on all testing devices and conduct Site Readiness.**

   Schools should download and install the MCAS Student Kiosk according to the instructions in the *Guide to Installing the MCAS Student Kiosk and Completing Site Readiness*. It is recommended to conduct Site Readiness directly after installing the MCAS Student Kiosk in order to verify that devices will be ready for testing.

6. **View online training modules and attend training sessions.**

   See mcas.onlinehelp.cognia.org/training for training modules and recorded webinars.

Appendix A—Tasks and Guidance for Technology Coordinators

Tasks to Complete at Least Two Weeks BEFORE Testing

1. **Configure internet firewalls, content filters, and spam filters.**
   - Review the *Guide to Installing the MCAS Student Kiosk and Completing Site Readiness* available on the MCAS Resource Center (mcas.onlinehelp.cognia.org/technology-setup) and configure your network appropriately. Test delivery URLs should be "exempted" or "excluded" from inspection and filtering.
   - Configure the common applications and functions listed below so that they will not launch on any student testing devices during practice tests or during operational testing:
     › anti-virus software performing automatic updates
     › power management software on laptops warning of low battery levels
     › screen savers and sleep mode
     › email with automessage notification
     › calendar applications with notifications, such as Google Calendar
     › pop-up blockers
     › set automatic updates (iTunes)
     › Windows Accelerator
     › MacOS three finger tap gesture on Macintosh computers with trackpads
     › Siri and Dictation (MacOS)
     › Cloud Clipboard
     › Cortana and Game bar (Windows)
     › international keyboards
     › translation software or extensions
     › writing extensions (e.g., Grammarly)
     › OneDrive
     › any other application that could have a pop-up message

2. **Conduct additional Site Readiness checks on devices as needed.**
   If your school has made any technology changes since conducting Site Readiness in the fall, conduct Site Readiness again.

   Note: ChromeOS devices: Peer-to-peer (P2P) networking should be disabled on ChromeOS devices. If it is available, devices can automatically update Chrome from nearby devices of the same model, resulting in an interruption in testing. Turn off this option in the Google Admin Console; it will help reduce errors and/or interruptions during testing.

   Note: ChromeOS devices should have accessibility features disabled prior to testing.

3. **Prepare devices and materials.**
   - Ensure that devices will be charged prior to each test session.
   - Have the following materials available, and confirm if they are in working order:
     › power cords, power strips, extra batteries, extra computers
     › if using tablets: external keyboards
     › if students are using text-to-speech or screen reader: headphones (Students do not need headphones otherwise.)

Appendix A—Tasks and Guidance for Technology Coordinators

Tasks to Complete One Week BEFORE Testing

1. **Familiarize yourself with common issues that may arise during testing and how to troubleshoot, as described in sections C, D, E, and F of this Appendix.**
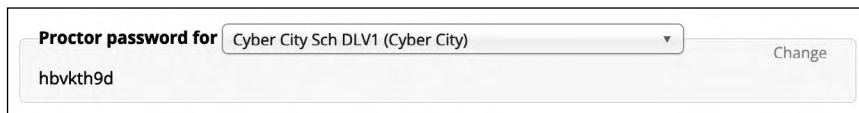
Ⓒ Using the Proctor Password

A proctor password is required to be entered in the MCAS Student Kiosk if one of the four following conditions is met:

1. A student is idle in the test for more than 60 minutes. A student is "idle" if they do not interact in any way with the kiosk. This includes the use of any accommodation or tool, navigating through the test, or interacting with any of the on-screen widgets and answer choices.

2. If a student pauses or exits the test and attempts to log back in to the test after more than 60 minutes have passed.

3. The MCAS Student Kiosk has experienced an abrupt closure, such as a loss of power, or the device is turned off while testing.

4. The proctor password will always be required on the Options page for students with the accommodation "Compatible Assistive Technology."

District test coordinators, school test coordinators, technology coordinators, and test administrators can view the proctor password on the Administration homepage of the MCAS Portal. To view the proctor password, follow the steps below:

1. Log in to the MCAS Portal with your username and password.

2. Click **Administration**.

3. Scroll down to view the **Proctor Password**. To view the Proctor Password for schools in your organization, select the school from the organization drop-down menu.

If individuals or a small group of students need to enter the proctor password, the test administrator should type it in for each student. If a larger group (such as a whole class) needs to enter the proctor password, then it can be read aloud or written on the board. If the proctor password is given to a large group of students, it should subsequently be changed in the MCAS Portal by the principal or test coordinator.

Changing the proctor password

The proctor password changes automatically every night. If it is necessary to change the proctor password manually (because it has been read to or put on the board for a large group of students as described above), this can be done by anyone with the school test coordinator or district test coordinator role in the MCAS Portal.

Clicking the "Change" link to the right of the proctor password (see screenshot above) will bring up a dialog box where a new password can be entered.

Appendix A—Tasks and Guidance for Technology Coordinators

Ⓓ Troubleshooting Situations that Can Occur in Test Sessions

1. Error Messages when launching the MCAS Student Kiosk

Error Message	Why did my student receive this error?	What should I do?
No internet connection found.	There is no internet connection on the device and the kiosk cannot launch.	Establish an internet connection and click **Try again**.
Please exit the kiosk and install the latest version.	You are launching an older version of the kiosk. The kiosk on this testing device will need to be updated.	Download and install the latest version of the kiosk from the MCAS Portal. For ChromeOS and iPadOS, verify that your MCAS app is up to date.
There was a problem while launching the kiosk. Please check your internet connection or your access permissions to the cache folder.	There is no internet connection on the device and the kiosk cannot launch, or the user profile for the device does not have access to the cache folder.	Establish an internet connection and select **Click Here to try again**. If there is internet connection for the device, then check the user profile cache folder permissions (see the *Guide to Installing the MCAS Student Kiosk and Conducting Site Readiness* for more information).
We could not establish a connection to our server. Please check your internet connection.	eMetric servers cannot reach the stored response folder location due to a network connectivity failure.	Check your network connectivity and connectivity to the stored response folder location and relaunch the kiosk. If the message appears again, call the MCAS Service Desk.
The offline student responses on this machine could not be processed. Please contact Support in order to continue. (ErrorCode:1003)	Stored responses could not be sent to the eMetric servers. The kiosk will not be able to launch until this is resolved.	Call the MCAS Service Center and provide them with the error message and error code.
A newer version of the app is available. Please update.	There was an update to the kiosk that was released while the kiosk was left open or already launched on the student testing device.	Click **Update**. The kiosk will update to the latest version and your student will be able to log in.

2. Error Messages when logging in to the MCAS Student Kiosk

Error Message	Why did my student receive this error?	What should I do?
Invalid username/ password.	The student is using the incorrect password or username when trying to log in to the MCAS Student Kiosk.	Verify the correct username and password in the MCAS Portal and have the student retry.
We could not establish a connection to our server, please check your internet connection.	Internet connectivity was lost after the student entered their username and password. The MCAS Student Kiosk detected the loss of internet connectivity and will not allow the student to log in until internet connectivity is reestablished.	1. Close the MCAS Student Kiosk. 2. Reestablish a connection to the internet. 3. Relaunch the MCAS Student Kiosk. 4. Check the connectivity indicator in the top right corner of the student testing interface login screen. If the connectivity indicator is green, the kiosk is connected to the internet and the student can log in and begin taking their test. If the connectivity indicator is gray, check the internet connection again. If the connectivity indicator is still gray and you are sure the internet is connected, move the student to a different testing device, launch the kiosk on the new testing device and verify the connectivity indicator is green.

3. Error Messages when logging in to a test session

Error Message	Why did my student receive this error?	What should I do?
Incorrect session access code. Please try again.	The student is using the incorrect session access code for the session selected or typing in the session access code incorrectly.	Verify the correct session access code in the MCAS Portal and have the student retry.
Invalid password (when entering the proctor password).	The proctor password that was entered is incorrect.	Verify the correct proctor password in the MCAS Portal. Proctor passwords are case sensitive. District test coordinators, school test coordinators, technology coordinators, and test administrators all have access to the proctor password.
We were unable to get your test session. Please check your internet connection and try again.	Internet connectivity was lost after the student logged in. The MCAS Student Kiosk detected the loss of internet connectivity and will not load the test sessions until a connection to the internet is reestablished.	Click **Retry**. If internet connectivity is established, then the student will be directed to the test session. If internet connection is not detected, close the MCAS Student Kiosk, reestablish a connection to the internet on the device, and relaunch the kiosk.

APPENDIX A—Technology Tasks

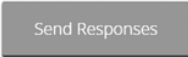| Error Message	Why did my student receive this error?	What should I do?
An error occurred while loading the test! Click here to retry, or contact an administrator.	Internet connectivity was lost before the test session completely loaded. The MCAS Student Kiosk detected the loss of internet connectivity and will not load the test session until a connection to the internet is reestablished.	Select **Click here** to load the test. If internet connectivity is established, the student will be directed to the test session. If internet connectivity could not be established, the student will be redirected to the directions page. If this occurs, reestablish an internet connection on the device.
An error occurred while loading the test!	Internet connectivity was lost after the student clicked Continue on the directions page. The kiosk detected the loss of internet connectivity and will not load the test sessions until a connection to the internet is reestablished.	Click **Retry Now**. If internet connectivity is established, then the student will be directed to the test session. If an internet connection is not detected, close the kiosk, reestablish a connection to the internet, and launch the kiosk again.

4. Error Messages during a test session

Error Message	Why did my student receive this error?	What should I do?
Please raise your hand; your test session has timed out.	The student has timed out of their test session, meaning they have been inactive in the test for 60 minutes.	Click **Exit** and you will be brought back to the student testing interface sign-in page. When the student is ready to continue testing, they will log back in to the student testing interface and select the session they wish to continue. They will resume testing where they left off.
There is a problem because somebody else has logged in to your test session. You have been logged out for security reasons.	The student has logged in to their test session on two separate devices or someone else has logged in to the MCAS Student Kiosk with the same credentials. The second login causes the first session (student) to be logged out.	Click **Exit** and have the student log back in to the test session. Verify the student's test resumes where they were exited.
The necessary support for audio playback is not detected on this device.	This error will appear when students have the text-to-speech accommodation and there is not a playback device (headphones, speakers, or internal speakers) set as default or connected to the device.	Connect headphones or speakers to the machine and set them as the default playback device. Verify that sound is coming from the playback device.

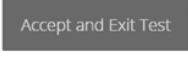| Error Message	Why did my student receive this error?	What should I do?
Please raise your hand and notify your proctor: Your response is not able to be stored. To avoid losing your response, your test cannot be continued until connection to the storage location is re-established.	Access to the storage location was lost after the student began testing due to loss of network connectivity. The MCAS Student Kiosk will not allow the student to continue testing until access to the storage location is restored.	Click **Retry Now**. If a connection to the storage location is reestablished, the MCAS Student Kiosk will return to the screen where the student was prior to loss of connectivity. If, after several attempts, the connection to the network storage location cannot be reestablished, either force-quit the MCAS Student Kiosk and move the student to a new device that has connectivity to the network and storage location or contact the MCAS Service Center for further assistance.
Please raise your hand and notify your proctor. A connection to the network could not be established. Your test has been saved offline.	Internet connectivity was lost after the student began testing and was not restored by the time the student completed the test. The student completed the test session and clicked **Turn in Test**. The student's responses will be saved to the local folder configured when the MCAS Student Kiosk was initially installed.	See the screenshot and instructions below.

What do I do next?

1. Read the instructions in the message and click **Send Responses**. You will be notified to wait 10 seconds as the student testing interface tries to determine if there is internet connection. If internet connectivity was reestablished before clicking **Send Responses**, the stored responses on this device will be sent to the servers, the test will be submitted, and the student testing interface will exit the test. If there is no internet connection, the Send Response button will appear again. From here you can try to establish internet connection and click **Send Responses** again or move on to step 2.

2. Test administrator reads and acknowledges that they have read and understand the instructions by entering the proctor password.

3. Select **Accept and Exit Test**.

4. Contact your technology coordinator to reestablish a connection to the internet.

5. Relaunch the MCAS Student Kiosk. The student's stored responses will be synced, and the test will be submitted. As an option, the student can log in and navigate to the student profile page to confirm the test session has been submitted (it will be grayed and crossed out).
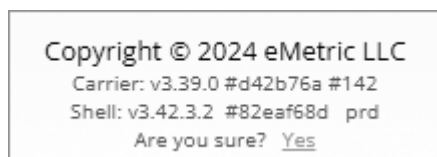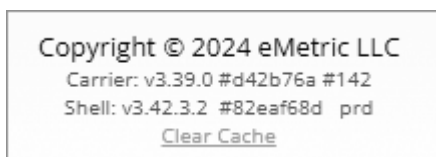
E Troubleshooting Tips for Test Administrators

Clearing the Application Cache

If any of the online testing files become corrupt, for instance the MCAS content and images are not rendering or the tools and accessibility features are not working as expected, deleting the application cache will force the MCAS Student Kiosk to download a new set of cache files.

Clearing the application cache:

1. From the MCAS Student Kiosk login screen, click **Clear Cache** in the lower right-hand corner.

2. You will be asked "Are you sure?" Click **Yes**, and the kiosk will close and then re-launch.

Copyright © 2024 eMetric LLC
Carrier: v3.39.0 #d42b76a #142
Shell: v3.42.3.2 #82eaf68d prd
Clear Cache

Copyright © 2024 eMetric LLC
Carrier: v3.39.0 #d42b76a #142
Shell: v3.42.3.2 #82eaf68d prd
Are you sure? Yes

Frozen Screen

Your student is taking their test in the MCAS Student Kiosk and the kiosk stops responding and becomes frozen.

What should I do?

Try to pause the test and log back in. If you are unable to pause, restart the device. Once the device has been restarted, log back in to the test, enter the proctor password, and continue testing.

Constructed-Response Box

Specific keys are not working on the keyboard for Windows, Mac, and Linux:

Your student is trying to answer an open-ended question and specific keys on the keyboard are not working.

What do I do next?

Pause the test and log in again. Try to type in the open-ended box with those specific keys.

If it does not resolve the issue, you will need to clear the application cache, as the files may have become corrupt.

Student cannot type in the constructed-response box:

Your student is trying to answer a constructed-response question but cannot type in the answer box.

What should I do?

1. If the student is unable to type, pause the test and have the student log in again. Have them try to type in the open-ended box.

2. If this does not resolve the issue, you will need to follow the steps for clearing application cache listed above.

Note: If the constructed-response box has a character counter and the student has reached the maximum characters allowed, they will not be able to type in the constructed-response box.

Intentionally Moving a Student to a Different Device

If a student needs extended time or must log off their device and move to another device in a different location to continue testing, test administrators should take the following steps:

What should I do?

1. Ensure the student's current testing device has an active internet connection.

2. Pause and exit the test.

3. Move the student to the new testing device.

4. Ensure the testing device in the new location has an active internet connection.

5. Launch the MCAS Student Kiosk.

6. Allow the student to log in to the MCAS Student Kiosk and resume testing.

7. Confirm the student's test has previously entered responses.

If you believe responses are missing, contact the MCAS Service Center for further assistance.

Appendix A—Tasks and Guidance for Technology Coordinators

1. **SITUATION: The MCAS Student Kiosk does not appear to be working properly but the student is actually experiencing an expected behavior.**

   RESOLUTION:

   Steps for the Test Administrator:

   The following are expected behaviors in the MCAS Student Kiosk:

   • A test question appears as "Not Answered" in the "Review" menu until all parts of that question have been answered.

   If students encounter a situation not listed above, consult with your technology staff, who may then call the MCAS Service Center.

   Steps for the Technology Staff:

   Escalate the issue to the principal for a student who is waiting for 15 minutes.

2. **SITUATION: A student exits the MCAS Student Kiosk before completing a test session.**

   RESOLUTION:

   1. Have the student sign in to the MCAS Student Kiosk using the sign-in information on the student login. The student's test will resume from the point at which the test was interrupted.

   2. If the student resumes testing within 60 minutes, a proctor password is not required. If the student resumes testing after 60 minutes, a proctor password is required.

   Technology coordinators should contact the MCAS Service Center immediately if there is an issue that cannot be resolved. It is acceptable to contact the Service Center using a cell phone, but it is not permissible to photograph students' testing devices (e.g., to show an error message). Be prepared to provide logs from the testing devices if the Service Center requests them.

3. **SITUATION: A student accidentally turned in the session but did not actually finish a test session.**

   RESOLUTION: Only someone with the district test coordinator role can undo student test submissions—it cannot be done at the school level. Schools should contact their district test coordinator who can undo student test submissions with the following steps.

   1. In the MCAS Portal, go to **Test Scheduling**.

   2. Locate the correct test and scheduled class.

   3. Click **View Details/Student Logins**.

   4. Locate the student and click "**Reactivate**" for the session the student needs to resume taking.

F Resolving Situations that Involve Accommodations

1. **SITUATION: A student has the wrong accommodation assigned and the student has <u>not</u> signed in to the MCAS Student Kiosk yet (is still in "Not Started" status).**

   RESOLUTION: If the student is in a class that has not been scheduled to take the test, the accommodation can be updated by following these steps:

   1. In the MCAS Portal, go to **Administration > Students**.
   2. Search for the student and click **Edit**.
   3. Update the Accommodation and click **Save** (repeat if more than one test needs to be updated).

   If the student is in a class that has been scheduled to take the test, the student's test login may need to be updated in the session if one of the following accommodations is being used: screen reader, human read-aloud, or human signer. This can be done by following these steps:

   1. In the MCAS Portal, go to **Administration > Students**.
   2. Search for the student and click **Edit**.
   3. Update the Accommodation and click **Save**.
   4. Go to **Test Scheduling** and locate the student's original session.
   5. If the form assignment must be updated, a green button will appear called "**Add or Update Students**." Click this button and print out the new student logins.

2. **SITUATION: If the student has been scheduled to take the test and <u>has signed in to the test</u> without the correct accommodation, the student may need to be moved to a new class and rescheduled to take the test if one of the following accommodations is being used: screen reader, human read-aloud, or human signer. This can be done by following these steps:**

   1. In the MCAS Portal, go to **Administration > Students**.
   2. Search for the student and click **Edit**.
   3. Update the Accommodation and click **Save**.
   4. Go to the student's current class for this test and remove them from the class (**Class > Edit**).
   5. Create a new class or add the student to an existing class that is different than the class they were just removed from.
   6. Schedule the class to take the test. **Note:** Students requiring a Spanish/English accommodation must be assigned to a separate Spanish-only class, and scheduled for a Spanish test.

3. **SITUATION: Students' text-to-speech, human read-aloud, or human signer accommodations are not appearing correctly.**

    RESOLUTION: Instructions for correcting a large number of errors (Student Registration Import):

    1. In the MCAS Portal, go to **Administration > Student Registration** and click **Export Students**.

    2. In the .CSV file, identify all students who have both Text-to-Speech Standard (column S) and Human Read-Aloud Standard (column T) or Human Signer Standard (column U) selected for all non-ELA test codes. Identify all students who have both Text-to-Speech Special (column Y) and Human Read-Aloud Special (column Z) or Human Signer Special (column AA) selected for ELA test codes. Delete all other students from the file.

    3. Remove either the Text-to-Speech flag, or the Human Reader or Human Signer flag for those students.

    4. Save the file as a .CSV file.

    5. Follow the steps in the *MCAS Student Registration Guide* to import the updated file.