

## Minuteman Regional High School English Language Arts MCAS Analysis, Goals, Targets, Rationale

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### I. Goals

#### A. Discipline

Students at the Minuteman Regional High School will increase their Composite Proficiency Index on the English Language Arts section of the MCAS test from 85.4 (2006) to 87.2 by 2007, and from 87.2 to 89 by 2008.

#### B. Test-Taking

The percentage of Minuteman students will increase in the Proficient category from 55% to 58.4% in 2007 and to 61.8% in 2008. In addition students in the Advanced category will increase from 8% in 2006 to 9% in 2007 and 10% in 2008. Open-Response will improve by 5% in 2007 from 56%-61%, and in 2008 from 61% to 65%.

### II. Data Analysis

#### A. Discipline Specific

A review of student performance data from the 2004-2006 administration of the ELA MCAS showed a positive trend. Students scoring in the Proficient and Advanced categories combined increased 14% (49%-63%). In addition, scoring in the Needs Improvement category during the same period has declined 13% (48%-35%). The percentage of students in the Failure category declined 5% (7%-2%).

Our concern centers on more consistent student progress in the areas of topic development and conventions in the long composition section of the test. Success in those areas will increase as instruction places more emphasis on full substantiation, or the construction of better topic sentences and supporting details. We have also noticed inconsistent performance in the interpretation of poetry, the identification of genres, and the analysis of nonfiction selections.

A review of student responses, local assessments, and teacher feedback confirms the need to intensify instruction on higher-order thinking skills not only in English classes, but also across the disciplines.

## B. Test Taking

Open Response percentage increased 5% 2005-2006 (51%-56%).

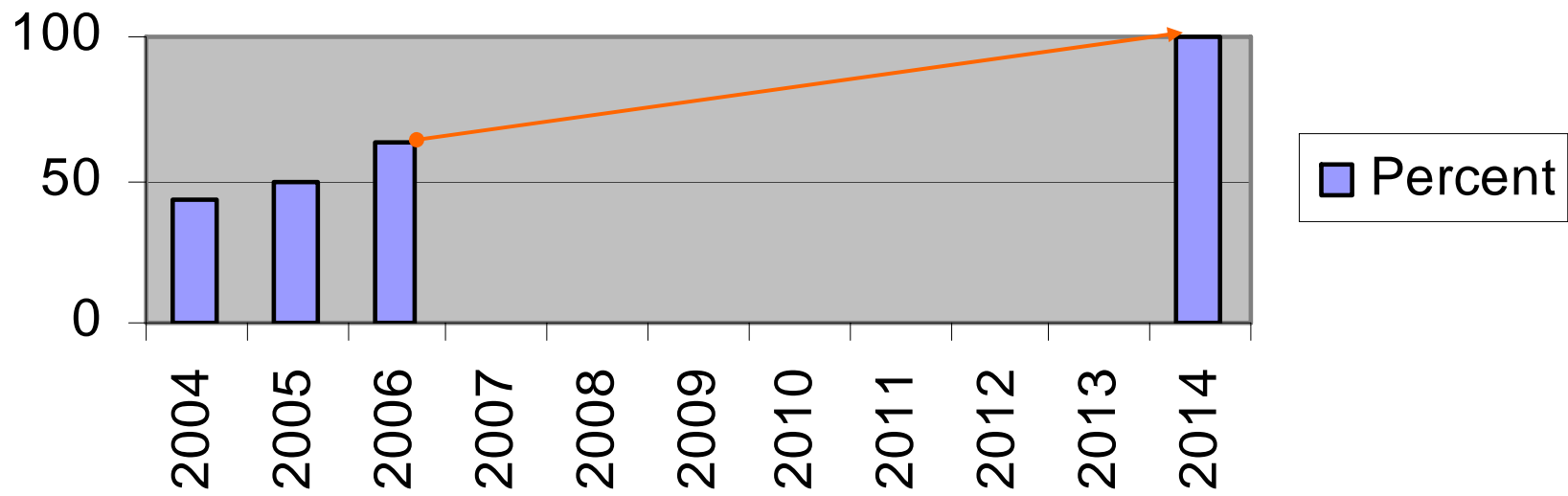
During the last three years student performance was somewhat inconsistent in the Open-Response and Multiple-Choice questions as well as in the Topic Development and Conventions sections of the long composition. The English Department is concerned about maintaining consistent progress in those areas.

Again, a review of student responses, local assessments, and teacher feedback confirms the need to intensify instruction in reading and writing school wide. For instance, students should preview questions prior to reading the selections in any part of the test. In addition, students should mark the text as they read to identify relevant and specific details.

Toward that end Professional Development activities will continue in study strategies, reading comprehension, and writing across the curriculum, both academic and vocational. In addition to the teachers in the English Department, all teachers have implemented or are being trained to implement the Collins writing system with an emphasis on focus correction and rewriting. In addition, all teachers are participating in the reading-across-the-curriculum workshop series.

**Minuteman Regional High  
School English Language Arts  
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# MCAS Advanced & Proficient



# MCAS English/Language Arts Test

Frameworks = 27 Standards

14 standards used 2001-06

Multiple Choice (37 questions)

Open-Response (4 questions)

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Long Composition = Topic Development

English Conventions

# **MCAS English/Language Arts Test**

## **Evaluation Categories**

Advanced

Proficient

Needs Improvement

Failure (high)

Failure (low)

# Minuteman Strengths 2004-2006

- Advanced + Proficient = up
- Needs Improvement + Failing = down
- Multiple Choice = consistent
- Open-Response = improving (up 5%)
- Composition = Topic Dev. = inconsistent  
Conventions = steady

# Minuteman Concerns

- 2-4% points below state average in all tested categories
- Topic Development in Long Composition and Open Response questions
- Most Frequently Tested Learning Standards  
Standard 13 = nonfiction  
Standard 8 = identify facts and basic ideas
- Most Frequently Tested Standards that need work  
Standard 4 correct use of vocabulary  
Standard 13 nonfiction  
Standard 14 poetry

# What to do?

- Open-Response practice  
<http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/student/>
- Nonfiction/Informational
- Library databases for trade-specific readings
- Reading Across the Curriculum
- Collins Writing types I-III
- Vocational Journals