LOUISIANA SECURES FEDERAL WAIVER FOR REQUIRED STANDARDIZED TESTS AND ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEMS FOR 2019-2020 SCHOOL YEAR

Mar 20, 2020

BATON ROUGE, La. -- The U.S. Department of Education today approved via email Louisiana's waiver request of assessment, accountability, and reporting requirements under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act. This means Louisiana will not require standardized testing for the 2019-2020 school year. Moreover, since testing data is required to be used in accountability systems, like Louisiana's annual report cards, the state will also exclude testing data from performance measures for the current school year.

The approval follows an initial request (will open in new tab) submitted by the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) earlier this week, as well as an updated request (will open in new tab) submitted today, in response to the ongoing Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak across the state and nation. The COVID-19 outbreak in Louisiana closed all public school facilities to students through at least April 13. (will open in new tab)

"Our actions today provide turnkey flexibilities for state and local leaders to focus on the immediate needs of their students and educators without worrying about federal repercussions," wrote U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos in a news release (will open in new tab)preceding approval of Louisiana's request. "I've spoken with many local education leaders in the past days, and I'm inspired by their efforts to help their students continue to learn and grow. We're going to continue to provide every flexibility possible to help make that as simple as possible."

"Louisiana for many years has been an advocate for strong assessment and accountability systems. Our commitment to these valuable systems remains unchanged," said Acting State Superintendent Beth Scioneaux. "However, the health and well-being of our state's most vulnerable populations must be our first priority in the coming months. We greatly appreciate the U.S. Department of Education's expedient review and approval of our request."

Details about next steps will be communicated directly to school leaders, as well as posted to the LDOE's dedicated COVID-19 webpage. (will open in new tab)

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