



March 26, 2020

COVID-19 Guidance: Federally Mandated Assessments

Previous Guidance

Accountability and Assessment

The U.S. Department of Education notified states in new guidance that it will consider targeted, one-year waivers of the assessment requirements for those schools impacted by extraordinary circumstances due to COVID-19. In addition, the U.S. Department of Education will consider a targeted, one-year waiver of the requirement to identify a school for comprehensive or targeted support and improvement under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) if the reason for the identification was related to the school being closed for a significant portion of the school year. The Department will pursue any waivers necessary to assist Iowa schools.

Participation in Alternate Assessment

When the district is closed as noted in the Department's March 16 guidance, the U.S. Department of Education is considering a variety of approaches to the assessment requirements for those schools impacted by extraordinary circumstances due to COVID-19. This could include districts that are unable to complete data gathering as part of an alternate assessment aligned to alternate academic achievement standards. The Department will pursue all appropriate means necessary to assist Iowa schools.

New Guidance

Federally Mandated Assessments

Due to the extraordinary circumstances created by the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting school closures, Iowa is providing flexibility to all districts regarding the assessment requirements under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) section 1111(b)(2), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Given the widespread, extended school closures, many districts will be unable to administer federally mandated statewide assessments to all students in the spring of 2020. Therefore, the State of Iowa will request to waive the requirements to administer all federal required assessments in the 2019-2020 school year from the United States Department of Education. Guidance on accountability under the Every Student Succeeds Act will be forthcoming.

Administration of the Iowa Statewide Assessment of Student Progress (ISASP)

The administration of the Iowa Statewide Assessment of Student Progress will be waived for the 2019-2020 school year. Please return all secure testing material to Iowa Testing Programs following the procedures in the [ISASP Test Administration Manual](#).

Administration of Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM)

The administration of the Dynamic Learning Maps will be waived for the 2020 spring window. Please destroy all secure testing material following DLM policy. For data-based decisions, please refer to the completed assessment results from fall 2019.

Administration of the English Language Proficiency Assessment for the 21st Century (ELPA21)

If school resumes for the 2020 school year, the testing window will be closed. Please return any testing materials using the provided [shipping label](#). The non-participation code that should be used for students who have not completed testing due to district closures is “Code 6, School/district logistical issues.” Student screening as defined in Iowa Code 281—60.3(1) doesn’t fall under this waiver. Screening should resume when districts are back in session. Continue to follow [Iowa English Learner Assessment Procedures](#). Further guidance on exit criteria for untested English Learner (EL) students will be forthcoming.