



LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

March 17, 2020

The Honorable Betsy DeVos
Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D. C. 20202

Subject: Request for Waivers Due to School Closures in Response to COVID-19

Dear Secretary DeVos,

On Friday, March 13, 2020, Governor John Bel Edwards issued a proclamation that closed all Louisiana public schools until April 13, 2020, because of growing concerns around the transmission of COVID-19. Due to a substantial loss of quality instructional time and uncertainty regarding when it will be safe to allow students to return to school, the Louisiana Department of Education is requesting that the following requirements outlined in ESEA be waived for the 2019-2020 academic year consistent with your authority under Section 8401 of ESEA.

- **ESEA Section 1111(b)(2) Annual State Academic Assessment Requirements**

Waive all requirements for annual statewide assessment administration for mathematics and reading or language arts to all students in grades 3-8 and at least once in grades 9 through 12, as well as annual testing in science and social studies as outlined in Louisiana's approved state plan. This waiver request includes all assessment related requirements, including, but not limited to alternate assessments, ELA assessments, and individual student assessment reporting.

Please note, the LDOE is committed to working to offer optional state assessments, as desired by parents and schools.

- **ESEA Section 1111(c) Statewide Accountability Systems Requirement**

Waive all requirements relating to administering Louisiana's approved state accountability system. This one-year waiver would include, but not be limited to: the release of school performance scores, subgroup performance scores and school letter grades, 95% participation rate requirements, and identification of new schools under the accountability system.

Louisiana Believes

- **ESEA Section 1111(h) Annual Public Report Card Requirement**

Waive all requirements to publish and disseminate annual state and LEA public report cards no later than December 31, 2020.

Louisiana for many years has been an advocate for a strong assessment and accountability system. Our commitment to these valuable systems remains unchanged. However, the health and well-being of our state's most vulnerable populations must be our first priority in the coming months.

Sincerely,



Beth Scioneaux
Acting State Superintendent

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