



ASSESSMENT ROUNDUP

Biden Education Department Approves One Request to Cancel State Tests But Rejects Others |

Education Week

In a flurry of letters sent to state education agencies this week, the U.S. Education Department continued to carve a tightrope path through the contentious national topic of student assessment this spring. Most notably, [D.C.'s request to cancel the administration of summative annual tests was approved](#), with Deputy Assistant Secretary Ian Rosenblum citing the percentage of district students still learning virtually, a statistic that remains one of the highest in the nation.

A handful of other states who were also seeking blanket cancellation of tests, including [Georgia](#), [New York](#), [Michigan](#), [Montana](#), and [South Carolina](#), saw their [requests denied](#), with department officials saying the states did not demonstrate local conditions that would ultimately prevent test administration.

The Department provided a more [nuanced response](#) to California education officials, saying that districts may only [replace the data](#) from the statewide Smarter Balanced test with data from local benchmark assessments if local conditions prevented administration - and that that request would not require a federal waiver.

And in [Oregon](#) - where officials had initially sought to cancel tests this year - the Biden administration approved a revised plan to scale back testing to one subject per grade level, in a move similar to [Colorado's already-approved](#) assessment plan. And though Rosenblum, in his response to the state's request, said Oregon's plan "maintains the importance of the annual statewide assessments to provide data on all students," others are not as impressed. Testing 1-2-3 author Dale Chu, in a series of new Power Rankings evaluating state assessment plans this spring, said [Oregon's revised request sets a low bar](#) and that it's difficult to see how data from the "pared-down and haphazard testing scheme" would be useful in guiding pandemic recovery.



Opinion: Schools need standardized testing now more than ever | Washington Post

As the Biden administration ramps up its decision-making on the topic of assessments, prominent civil rights leaders, educators, and other stakeholders are stepping up their defense of collecting data on student learning during the pandemic. The National Urban League's President and CEO Marc Morial and UnidosUS President Janet Murguía issued a [joint op-ed in the Washington Post](#) underscoring the importance of student assessment data to efforts to advance equity in education, dismantle systemic racism, and continuously guide both instruction and the investment of resources in schools. "It's precisely because of the disruption to learning that we need a practical way to measure its impact on students — especially students from low-income backgrounds, students of color, students with disabilities and students learning English," Morial and Murguía stated.



ASSESSMENT QUICK LIST

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[First Day of State Testing Cancelled For Thousands of Students Experiencing Technical Issues Across Texas](#) | The 74 Million

[NYC prepares to administer state exams: 9 key questions answered](#) | Silive.com

[Massachusetts senators request MCAS testing be delayed until fall](#) | Boston Herald

[Michigan schools prep for a testing season like no other](#) | Lansing State Journal

[Ga. Education Officials Say Test Scores Won't Be Used To Penalize Schools This Year](#) | WABE

[Javurek: ESSA's Innovative Assessment Initiative Was a Great Idea, But the Execution Was Flawed. Here's How the Ed Department Can Fix It](#) | The 74 Million

[States Assess Accountability Requirements During COVID-19 - Part 2](#) | EdNote

[Scoppe: Remind me again why we have all these tests, anyway](#) | Post and Courier