



News Release

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State Education Leaders Urge Continuation of Federal Waivers

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LANSING – Michigan’s president of the State Board of Education and its state superintendent have [requested](#) U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos to continue waiving the federal requirements for student assessments and school accountability for the 2020-21 school year, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

State Board of Education President Dr. Casandra Ulbrich and State Superintendent Dr. Michael Rice prompted DeVos back in March to allow for nationwide waivers to federal laws requiring student testing and school accountability. DeVos and the U.S. Department of Education proceeded and approved the waivers for Michigan and other states.

Schools across the country, including in Michigan, were closed for all or large parts of the spring. State health officials across the country monitor daily the status of the pandemic and the pandemic’s spread. The COVID-19 virus continues to adversely affect the ways in which Americans live, work, and go to school.

“The long absence from in-person instruction will present challenges for many students as they return to class,” said Dr. Ulbrich. “The focus should be on tending to children’s immediate needs: physical, socioemotional, and academic.”

Dr. Rice explained that, given the last three months, students need more time next year to focus on the essential.

“Upon return to school, our focus should be on instruction, supports, the nurturing of students, and safe school environments,” Dr. Rice said, “and not on lengthy state summative assessments.”

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