



For Immediate Release

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U.S. Department of Education Approves South Carolina Assessment Suspension Waiver

COLUMBIA, S.C. – State Superintendent of Education Molly Spearman and the S.C. Department of Education (SCDE) have received notice that the U.S. Department of Education has approved the agency's assessment and accountability suspension waiver that was submitted as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"The suspension of South Carolina's student assessments will allow educators to focus on meeting the needs of students and relieve undue anxiety faced by parents and students," said State Superintendent of Education Molly Spearman. "Our efforts must be concentrated on addressing this unprecedented public health pandemic. I appreciate Secretary DeVos and the U.S. Department of Education recognizing this and swiftly approving our waiver request."

On March 17, 2020, Superintendent Spearman [sent a letter](#) to U.S. Department of Education Deputy Secretary of Education, Mick Zais, indicating South Carolina's intent to suspend federally required assessments and giving notice of submitting additional accountability measure waivers. On March 20, 2020, the U.S. Department of Education released a form for states to request such waivers. The SCDE completed and submitted [the waiver](#) form on the same day, and the U.S. Department of Education reviewed and gave South Carolina approval to suspend assessments and waived certain accountability measures.

For spring 2020, South Carolina will **not** administer any of the following assessment programs:

- SC READY (English language arts and mathematics in grades 3–8);
- SCPASS (science in grades 4 and 6);
- End-of-Course Examination Program (English, Algebra, Biology, United

States History and the Constitution) the requirement that these examinations count 20 percent has been waived;

- Prekindergarten assessments; and
- Alternate Assessments

The SCDE is working closely with the vendors of college entrance, college credit, and workforce readiness assessments to explore innovative approaches, such as testing online. To the extent possible, districts may administer these assessments to students who may need them for post-secondary or employment aspirations. These assessments include Advanced Placement, SAT, ACT, and WIN Ready to Work. Should these assessments be able to be administered, they will continue to be paid for by the state.

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All students graduate prepared for success in college, careers, and citizenship. By 2022, districts will have available a system of personalized and digital learning that supports students in a safe learning environment to meet the [Profile of the South Carolina Graduate](#).

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