



Statement on states canceling testing during a national emergency

March 25, 2020

On March 20, the [U.S. Department of Education](#) (USDOE) announced flexibilities for states to cancel testing during a national emergency. We support this decision and believe it enables schools, parents and students to focus on what matters most, staying healthy and safe. We also believe that assessments used for evaluation should be heavily reconsidered if not cancelled altogether this spring. Instruction has been considerably disrupted, some families are dealing with overwhelming stress and anxiety and many teachers have been called upon to teach in challenging or unfamiliar environments – like online. Using assessments for high-stakes purposes, such as determining school rankings, teacher evaluation, program placement, grade advancement or school selection, is not, we believe, fair or equitable during a prolonged national emergency.

But there is another type of assessment to consider: the assessments used for understanding that inform instruction. Many schools use these assessments to measure how a student is doing and what they are ready to learn next. Given the disruption to learning, there may be value in a teacher deciding to assess where their students are at after they return to school to determine how best to move forward. Whether they to test or not, we support the decisions of educators to do *what's best for students to reduce their anxiety, return to normalcy, and help them refocus on learning.*