

Dear Colleagues,

On Friday, February 12, the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) issued an interim update on planning around federally-required statewide assessments. In that communication, we committed to a further update before the end of February to provide the certainty and clarity you need.

On Monday, February 22, the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) provided [new guidance](#) regarding assessment administration for the spring of 2021. This guidance offers an avenue that PDE will pursue, one that complies with Federal law and prioritizes student and public health. You can read about our proposed approach [here](#). **PDE will file the communication with USDE by Friday, February 26.**

We recognize this approach is novel and not without drawbacks; however, we believe it preserves time and space to ensure that you can maintain an appropriate focus for the balance of this school year. Further, we know this plan is likely to generate many questions. We will send additional details as they emerge in the days and weeks ahead.

As always, thank you for your extraordinary leadership on behalf of students, educators, and families.

-Matthew Stem