



Dear Colleagues,

Act 136 of 2020 (Act 136) has delayed the implementation of the use of the Keystone Exams as a state or local graduation requirement until the class of 2022-23 (current 10<sup>th</sup> graders). All students graduating prior to the 2022-23 school year must do so in accordance with Act 136 and their LEA's locally approved policies.

Additionally, all students who were not required to sit for one or more Keystone Exams in 2019-20 as a result of the waiver granted by the United States Department of Education (USDE), which waived all federal assessment requirements for the 2019-20 school year, should be considered PROFICIENT on each exempted test for the purposes of achieving graduation requirements, providing the students successfully completed the corresponding local grade-based course requirement. Some students who were exempted from a Keystone Exam may still benefit from the option to retest to achieve a numerical score for use in the Composite Pathway or to achieve local requirements. This cohort of students remains exempt from accountability calculations under the conditions of the waiver granted by USDE.

Act 136 also permits the Department of Education (PDE) to pursue any waiver of testing and accountability requirements that may be offered by USDE related to the 2020-21 statewide assessments, although it is important to note that USDE has indicated there is currently no such waiver planned for the current school year. In order to allow LEAs the flexibility to schedule safe, effective testing sessions, PDE will extend the Winter Keystone administration window from December 2, 2020 to March 30, 2021. LEAs may use as much time throughout the window to administer the assessments in a manner consistent with their local Health and Safety plans.

PDE will provide further updates and guidance in the weeks ahead. In the meantime, any questions or concerns can be directed to the Bureau of Curriculum, Assessment, and Instruction at [ra-pas@pa.gov](mailto:ra-pas@pa.gov) or 717-787-4234.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brian W. Campbell". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "B".

Brian W. Campbell  
Director, Bureau of Curriculum, Assessment, and Instruction