



Indiana Department of Education

Dr. Katie Jenner, Secretary of Education

To: Corporation Superintendents, Building Administrators, Test Coordinators

From: Dr. Charity Flores, Chief Academic Officer

Date: February 12, 2021

Subject: Updated: 2021 Test Administration Clarifications

The Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) offers the following guidance related to upcoming test administration windows based on questions received in recent weeks. Schools and corporations are required to assess students as defined in the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). IDOE recognizes and appreciates the complexities and concerns with onsite testing during COVID-19. Spring 2021 assessment data is critical to identifying and analyzing student learning gaps to remediate the learning needs of all students. IDOE is committed to identifying and closing the learning gaps as a result of challenges from COVID-19. Summative assessment is one data point available to schools and corporations to support remediation efforts, in combination with other measures available to local schools.

- Will test administration windows occur as scheduled?
 - Yes, the IDOE intends to deliver the assessments aligned to the posted 2020-2021 Indiana Assessment Windows published on this site:
<https://www.doe.in.gov/sites/default/files/assessment/2020-2021-test-windows.pdf>.
- Why are state assessments needed in Spring 2021?
 - In addition to following federal requirements, assessment data provides an opportunity to discern learning for an individual student, including potential gaps associated with instruction delivered in various scenarios during COVID-19. This data can be used to inform remediation efforts and supports for students, schools and corporations once collected and analyzed. IDOE supports conversations which ensure the data is used for informational purposes only, and not for high stakes implications.
 - NOTE: IDOE acknowledges the complexity of participation and achievement reflected in Spring 2021 assessment data. IDOE is evaluating which data points may be posted publicly for transparency related to participation and achievement (e.g., student participation, instructional modes, and attendance).
- Are test administration windows required?
 - Yes, schools and corporations are required to offer state- and federally-mandated assessments to students. ILEARN, WIDA, I AM, ISTEP+, IREAD-3 and ISPROUT fulfill state and/or federal assessment requirements.
- How do schools manage students that are unable to participate in the assessment?
 - Federal law requires schools and corporations to assess 95% of the student population.



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- However, students may not be able to participate in the assessment based on local health requirements. Schools must document locally the associated reason for non-participation including, but not limited to: COVID-19 related quarantine, COVID-19 related health issue, parental refusal for onsite or homebound test administration.
 - IDOE is committed to engaging with federal leadership regarding student participation concerns based on the COVID-19 pandemic.
- How will students be evaluated for student-specific consequences associated with ISTEP+?
 - IDOE will collaborate with state policymakers on guidance for flexibility of an annual test event to fulfill the current Graduation Qualifying Examination requirements for cohorts prior to 2022.
- How will accountability be measured for 2021 assessments?
 - IDOE requested a federal waiver for calculating accountability determinations.
 - IDOE is collaborating with state legislators during the current session to reduce and eliminate high stakes implications for state accountability measures. IDOE is advocating that a null accountability grade be assigned to all schools.