



Contact your legislator now to ask for emergency policy changes to help schools deal with the impact of coronavirus

As public school officials continue to deal with the impact of coronavirus (COVID-19), PSBA needs you to ask your legislators to act immediately to pass emergency legislation that provides adjustments and consistent state-level policy in several key areas. PSBA worked with key education associations to send a [joint letter](#) yesterday to legislative leaders asking for urgent action that will provide clarity and relief to schools and students.

Although state offices, including the Capitol, are affected by the shutdown, the House and Senate have adopted temporary rule changes that allow legislators to vote remotely on bills in committee or the floor. In addition, changes were approved that shorten the time requirements for a bill to be voted on. These rule changes will expire at the end of the emergency declaration but can be used now to conduct session.

PSBA has received numerous questions and concerns from districts across the state regarding the next steps in what may be a long battle against coronavirus. As of now, the following are the issues we believe should be addressed in any emergency legislation dealing with the current response to the coronavirus. We have worked with the House and Senate to push a package that includes:

1. One-year waiver of the state mandated instruction for 180 days/alternative hours.
2. Expanded ability to use flexible instruction days (FIDs) which would minimally increase the number of permissible days during this pandemic to a number determined by the secretary of education (beyond the five days currently allowed to be used). In doing so, the application and deadline requirements should be eliminated during the crisis to allow simple notification by the Department of Education (PDE) to school entities without the need for prior PDE approval.
3. One-time waiver or one-year extension of educator and school leader requirements for professional development (required by Acts 45 and 48).
4. Waiver of the twelve-week student teacher requirements for those individuals impacted by the current crisis.

5. Require PDE to apply for waivers to federal requirements for standardized assessments (PSSAs and Keystones), 95% participation rate requirements, and regular attendance indicators for accountability purposes.
6. Authorize the secretary to waive NOCTI and NIMS exams for Career and Technical Education students.

Take action

Capitol offices may be closed, but you can still take action now. At this time, we are asking you to:

TAKE ACTION

Send an email today to your members of the Senate and House by clicking the [Take Action](#) button. **We need to let our elected representatives know this is a priority.**

In addition:

- Make a phone call. Explain the need for continuity for the entire education community and ask them to take immediate action to address the six issues noted above. Get contact information for [Senate](#) and [House](#) members.
- Use Twitter or other social media to call greater attention to the urgent need for legislators to address these issues so that schools may best serve their students.

Sample tweets you can use today

- Public schools need flexibility and one-year waivers on instructional time and testing mandates.
- Public schools are calling on the General Assembly to provide help and leadership during the COVID-19 crisis.
- Give public schools expanded ability to provide instruction by extending Flexible Instruction Day rules.
- Flex the 180! Grant public schools a one-year waiver on the 180-day requirement #mandated instructional days
- Don't penalize students and schools. Pennsylvania needs a waiver from standardized assessments.

A final word

We've heard from many of you and want to assure you that we continue to work hard to provide you with the information and resources you need. Make sure you check out PSBA's [coronavirus resource page](#) for updates, answers to frequently asked questions, a place to ask questions, and more. All questions asked are being answered. Also make sure to see [PDE's coronavirus resource page](#) for additional guidance.

Click the link below to log in and send your message:

<https://www.votervoice.net/BroadcastLinks/RAB1p0xQFx0A0hjpgcpIBA>