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## For Immediate Release

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### ATPE Statement on U.S. Department of Education Guidance on Standardized Testing Flexibility

*"Relieving educators of the burden of standardized testing requirements is the least our state and federal governments could do as schools struggle to return to normalcy," says state's largest educator association.*

AUSTIN, Texas—The [Association of Texas Professional Educators](#) (ATPE)—the largest educator association in Texas—shares the following statement in response to the [Feb. 22 guidance from the U.S. Department of Education](#).

"Alleviating the burden of standardized testing and related accountability requirements is one of ATPE's legislative priorities this session. Accordingly, ATPE is pleased that the U.S. Department of Education agrees that there is a need for flexibility regarding standardized testing this year.

Although the Biden administration is not offering all states a blanket waiver of federal testing requirements, the department is signaling its willingness to consider the circumstances and challenges each state continues to face amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

Texas educators and students have been under tremendous stress this past school year due to the myriad disruptions brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic—and most recently by last week's catastrophic winter storm.

ATPE has for months called for the waiver of the state and federal testing requirements because any standardized testing data gathered during this tremendously difficult school year won't be reliable.

Educators should be able to focus on ensuring the significant student learning gaps created due to the pandemic are properly addressed, not simply teaching for the test. Relieving them of the pressure of standardized testing requirements is the least that our state and federal governments could do as schools struggle to return to normalcy.

Based on the latest communication from the federal government, ATPE once again urges Texas Gov. Greg Abbott and Commissioner of Education Mike Morath to take advantage of the flexibility being offered and take immediate steps to request necessary waivers of testing and accountability requirements for 2020-21."

[Read the letter that ATPE shared with Gov. Abbott in Nov. 2020 about the STAAR test.](#)

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#### About the Association of Texas Professional Educators (ATPE)

Founded in 1980, ATPE is the leading educators' association in Texas with approximately 100,000 members statewide. With its strong collaborative philosophy, ATPE speaks for classroom teachers, administrators, and future, retired, and para-educators and works to create better opportunities for Texas' five million public school students. | [atpe.org](http://atpe.org)

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