

EDUCATION (EDU)

Resolution EDU-24-31

REMOTE TESTING FOR STUDENTS IN ONLINE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

WHEREAS, the National Black Caucus of State Legislators is committed to ensuring all public schools' students are treated fairly and equally regardless of the public school they attend;

WHEREAS, tens of thousands of public-school students are enrolled in full-time online public schools in states across the U.S., including high and growing populations of students with disabilities, economically disadvantaged students, at-risk students, and students who live in rural areas;

WHEREAS, African American students comprise more than 15% of the overall population of students enrolled in full-time online schools, with several statewide online public schools serving even higher percentages of African American students;

WHEREAS, since the pandemic, more families are choosing home based learning models, including full-time online public schools, micro schools and homeschools for their children;

WHEREAS, the most dramatic increase was seen with black families, with the number of homeschooled Black children rising from 3% to 16% in 2020.

WHEREAS, online public school students receive a comprehensive public education outside traditional school buildings, typically from their homes, with instruction, direction, and supervision from state-certified public school teachers;

WHEREAS, public school students attending online schools must meet many of the same requirements as students attending traditional, brick-and-mortar public schools, including participating in state standardized tests;

WHEREAS, the federal Every Students Succeeds Act, requires all states to administer state standardized tests in mathematics and English language arts annually in grades three through eight, and where state laws require additional standardized tests for public school students in grades K-12;

WHEREAS, most states require students to take standardized tests in proctored, in-person settings, which, for the vast majority of students are administered in traditional school buildings during regular school hours;

WHEREAS, because of these state testing regulations, online public schools are therefore required to set up multiple in-person testing locations across the state to accommodate all students, regardless of where they live in the state;

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WHEREAS, unlike traditional students who take state tests in their classrooms during a regular school day, online public school students (and parents or guardians) face significant hardships with having to take time off from work and lose income in order to travel to testing locations, often far from where they live, and over multiple days and nights, especially for those in rural and remote areas in order to comply with in-person state testing;

WHEREAS, online public school students must take state assessments in unfamiliar locations away from where they typically learn, which, research indicates, negatively impacts performance and lower participation rates;

WHEREAS, at-risk students, low-income students, and students with disabilities attending online public schools face even more challenges and inequitable hardships with in-person state testing mandates, including out-of-pocket travel costs, accessibility challenges for students with disabilities, and other accommodations for students with special needs;

WHEREAS, statewide online public schools face high costs and logistical challenges to secure and pay for testing facilities, and must use resources that could be used for student support and services, in order to comply state and federal testing regulations;

WHEREAS, online public school teachers are diverted away from teaching to serve as proctors at testing facilities across the state to comply with in-person state testing requirements;

WHEREAS, student instruction is interrupted over multiple days and weeks which adversely impacts student learning;

WHEREAS, standardized assessments, including state tests, can be safely and successfully administered to students remotely using modern software and technology that is secure, safe, and effective, and ensures test integrity;

WHEREAS, some states operated under waivers to administer state testing remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic and proved that the remote testing could be administered with fidelity and using best practices;

WHEREAS, many other high stakes standardized tests, including Law School Admission Tests (LSAT) and Graduate Record Examinations (GRE), are administered to students remotely using safe and secure technology;

WHEREAS, [research](#) indicates that allowing for remote testing for public school students who learn from home results in greater participation, which provides more reliable and accurate performance data;

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WHEREAS, public school students in online public schools should not continue to face inequitable and undue hardships in order to comply with federal and state testing mandates; and

WHEREAS, remote state testing is a proven solution to addressing the inequities and unnecessary burdens that online public school students and teachers face.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the National Black Caucus of State Legislators encourages state governments to enact policies to permit full-time online public school students, and other students receiving a public education outside of a traditional school building, to be given the option to take K-12 state tests remotely using technology that ensures safe, secure, and accurate test administration in line with current best practices; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States, the Vice President of the United States, members of the United States House of Representatives and the United States Senate, and other federal and state government officials as appropriate.

Resolution ID: EDU-24-31

Sponsored by: Rep. Laura V. Hall (AL)

Policy Committee: Education (EDU)