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SECRETARY OF EDUCATION

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GOVERNOR

November 29, 2022

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Superintendents, Charter School Administrators, School Counselors, District Test Coordinators

**FROM:** Kurt Steinhaus, Ed.D., Secretary of Education DS  
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**RE:** Cohort 2024 Demonstration of Competency

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Given the recent results from the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) and data from our district-level and state assessments, it is undeniable that the historic pandemic disruption has had a profound impact on students' learning.

Recently, the U.S. Department of Education has advised all states to "take additional steps to reduce the high stakes of assessments in such State decisions as graduation or promotion requirements."

In light of this guidance, PED is waiving the additional demonstration of competency graduation requirements for cohort 2024 students. However, students are still required to meet course requirements. Therefore, passing the subject area courses aligned with the five areas of competency demonstration (i.e., mathematics, reading, writing, science, and social studies) and fulfilling all course requirements satisfies the state's requirement for graduation. Additionally, cohort 2024 students must have participated in their required Title I assessments as previously announced in this August [memorandum](#).

This decision was not made lightly. Given the impact of the pandemic, this decision will afford our schools time to focus on quality instruction and more meaningful balanced assessment practices— both of which are necessary for acceleration. With the waning of the pandemic, beginning with cohort 2025, we will realign with pre-pandemic requirements &/or in alignment with any developments out of the 2023 legislative session.

**Cc:** Jacqueline Costales, Deputy Secretary of Teaching, Learning, and Assessment (Interim)  
Angelo Gonzales, Ph.D., Deputy Secretary of School Transformation and Innovation (Interim)  
Vickie Bannerman, Ed.D., Deputy Secretary of Identity, Equity, and Transformation  
Lynn Vásquez, Division Director of Assessment and Learning Management System