



## **Extenuating Circumstance for Waivers Under Section 121 of the Public School Code**

Under Act 158 of 2018 (Act 158), a chief school administrator may grant a waiver of the requirements for demonstration of statewide graduation requirements as set forth in Act 158 to accommodate a student who experiences extenuating circumstances.

Under Act 158, extenuating circumstances includes:

- serious illness
- death in the student's immediate family
- family emergency
- frequent school transfers or transfer from an out-of-State school in grade twelve
- another emergency as determined by the Secretary of Education and approved by the State Board of Education

On September 9, 2021, the State Board of Education approved the Secretary's recommendation to add COVID-19 as an extenuating circumstance for students graduating in 2023.

Because of the continuing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and because PDE has received significant feedback from school leaders that the effects of COVID mitigation, including the United States Department of Education's waiver of the requirement to administer statewide assessments during the 2019-20 school year and the enactment and implementation of Act 136 of 2020, Acting Secretary Hagarty has determined the COVID-19 pandemic to be considered an extenuating circumstance for students in the graduating classes of 2024 and 2025 and requests that the Board approve this modification.

*As approved by the State Board of Education on May 4, 2022*