

Performance Standards (reported in Quantile® measures)

Test. Proficiency Assessments for Wyoming Students (PAWS).

Test Publisher. Wyoming Department of Education (Educational Testing Service)

Test Information. In the spring of 2006, the Proficiency Assessments for Wyoming Students (PAWS) in reading, writing and mathematics were administered for the first time to Wyoming students in grades 3 through 8 and 11. Science was added in spring 2008 in grades 4, 8, and 11. During 2011, the writing assessment was renamed Student Assessment of Writing Skills (SAWS). In June 2012, Wyoming adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) as its newest standards in English/Language Arts and Math, under the name “Wyoming Content and Performance Standards (2012 WyCPS).” Subsequent legislative action, 2012 Wyoming State Enrolled Act 65, removed grade 11 from the 2013 PAWS and future administrations. PAWS state-level assessments are aligned with the Wyoming Content and Performance Standards in Reading, Writing, Mathematics, and Science. PAWS is designed to provide information for use as federal, state, and local indicators of the extent to which students satisfy academic performance standards.

Beginning with the 2013 administration, PAWS reading, mathematics, and science assessments are composed of all four-response multiple choice items, with each item measuring a single skill-reporting category within a content standard. The reading and science items are grouped together into item sets that refer to a common passage. The PAWS assessments are administered through a paper/pencil test. The SAWS assessment is composed of a single writing prompt.

The 2014 PAWS assessments utilize the Common Core Strands as reporting categories and have become the new scale measuring students’ academic performance on the 2012 WyCPS. In 2014, these new content standards were implemented for state assessments, so new reporting scales were established for the PAWS Reading and Math tests for grades 3 through 8. Because the common set of items between the 2013 and 2014 assessments were field test items, they could not be used to perform equating between the 2013 and 2014 PAWS tests. As a result, concordance tables were developed to link the 2013 and 2014 test scores.

The 2012 WyCPS ask students to demonstrate basic computational skills along with the higher-level thinking skills of reasoning and problem solving. The 2012 WYCPS are organized into domains, which vary by grade level. In grades 3-5 the domains include Operations and Algebraic Thinking, Number and Operations – Base Ten, Number and Operations – Fractions, Measurement and Data, and Geometry. In grades 6-7, the domains include Ratios and Proportional Relationships, The Number System, Expressions and Equations, Statistics and Probability, and Geometry. Grade 8 replaces Ratios and Proportional Relationships with Statistics and Probability. The PAWS assessments ask students to analyze, reason, and communicate ideas effectively as they pose, formulate, solve, and interpret mathematical problems in a variety of real-world situations.

The items on the PAWS have been calibrated using the Rasch model. Scale scores for Grades 3 through 8 range from 375 to 925.

Method. A linking study was conducted in 2006 in conjunction with the Wyoming Department of Education and Harcourt Assessments (now Pearson) using linear equating methodology: (A) vertical scale for Grades 3 through 8; (B) within grade for Grade 11. The Wyoming Department of Education discovered scoring errors by their testing contractor for the 2006-07 and 2007-08 administrations of the PAWS requiring a revision in the raw score to scale score conversion formula, which then necessitated a revision in the scale score to Lexile conversion table. Further updates to the PAWS assessments were conducted by Educational Testing Service and a concordance table was developed between the 2013 and 2014 PAWS scale scores. An update to previous PAWS scale score to Lexile measure conversion tables was needed to align the Lexile measures with the 2014 scale scores established for the 2014 PAWS Reading tests for grades 3-8.

Performance Standards. Revised in 20012 (adopted April 27, 2012). Performance level descriptors are statements about how well students must perform the benchmark standards. The “proficient” level is required to meet the standards. Policy level performance level descriptors were developed to align with the 2014 PAWS assessments. Detailed performance level descriptors organized by domain and cluster are available on the Wyoming Department of Education web site (<http://edu.wyoming.gov/>) Three policy level performance level descriptors are provided. A descriptor for the Below Basic level has not been published.

- **Advanced:** Superior academic performance indicating an in-depth understanding and exemplary display of the knowledge and skills included in the Wyoming Content and Performance Standards.
- **Proficient:** Satisfactory academic performance indicating a solid understanding and display of the knowledge and skills included in the Wyoming Content and Performance Standards.
- **Basic:** Marginal academic performance, work approaching, but not yet reaching, satisfactory performance, indicating partial understanding and limited display of the knowledge and skills included in the Wyoming Content and Performance Standards.

Table 1. PAWS performance standards in the Quantile measure.

Grade	Below Basic	Basic	Proficient	Advanced
3	470Q and Below	475Q to 710Q	715Q to 980Q	985Q and Above
4	450Q and Below	455Q to 750Q	755Q to 1040Q	1045Q and Above
5	590Q and Below	595Q to 795Q	800Q to 1135Q	1140Q and Above
6	670Q and Below	675Q to 910Q	915Q to 1210Q	1215Q and Above
7	775Q and Below	780Q to 990Q	995Q to 1240Q	1245Q and Above
8	805Q and Below	810Q to 980Q	985Q to 1260Q	1265Q and Above

Test Administration. PAWS will be administered between March 2nd and March 27th, 2015.