

The Wyoming Department of Education would like to thank all the districts that willingly shared their current Body of Evidence plans for this project. The intent of posting sample BOE plans is to provide clear examples of different approaches that satisfied the criterion when reviewed during the 2009 BOE Peer Review. Since the BOE plans are the property of the identified districts, please contact the individual district directly should you want to use any part of their plan.

Although not a “scored” component of a Body of Evidence Plan during the Peer Review Process, the district overview provides reviewers with a clear understanding of the approach a district has chosen and *why* the adopted approach fits the district philosophy and demographics. The following example is what a **common assessment approach** Overview Section might look like:

Section 1: Overview

The purpose of this section is to explain the overall Body of Evidence plan. After reading this section, reviewers should have an understanding of your district, and the approach taken.

For example, an overview may include the following:

- Demographics about the district (enrollment, # of high schools, etc.),
- Clearly define for students/parents the process by which a student graduates,
- Describe the approach your district is using (e.g., course based) and the reasons for selecting that approach
- An explanation of adjustments to the BOE system since implementation, and rationale for changes.

Body of Evidence Plan Sweetwater School District #1

Section 1: Overview

A. District Demographics

Sweetwater County School District #1 (SSD#1) is in the high desert country of southwestern Wyoming. Student enrollment is approximately 5000 with a certified staff of approximately 400. There are a total of 12 schools located in the towns of Rock Springs, Farson, and Wamsutter. Rock Springs has grown to a community of nearly 28,000 over the last 3 years. The gas, oil, trona, and coal industries continue to be the major driving force in our economy. Three high school sites currently grant diplomas under policy set by the local Board of Trustees. High school teachers, principals and department chairpersons at these sites are the immediate partners in the design and implementation of the district's Passport (BOE) system. High school department teams range in size from approximately six to twenty members, including resource room and special program teachers. The district's K-12 approach to meeting state standards includes curriculum mapping in all content areas, therefore providing a guaranteed curriculum.

Rock Springs High School (RSHS) serves the majority of the students in the district, providing instruction in grades 9-12 in a traditional high school setting. RSHS has an enrollment of approximately 1200 students and more than 80 teachers comprise the school faculty. In most cases teachers share course assignments within each common core area. Students at RSHS attended one 7/8 junior high, one 5/6 elementary building and six K-4 sites.

Farson-Eden High School, located in a rural community 40 miles north of Rock Springs, has a high school enrollment of approximately 55 students in a 9-12 setting employing a modified semester block schedule. A dozen teachers provide course work in all common core areas. Teachers at Farson-Eden participate in district professional development and department initiatives. Farson-Eden graduates generally complete their K-8 program at Farson

Elementary and Middle School.

Independence High School in Rock Springs provides a 9-12 alternative school setting for students and has an enrollment of 60 students at any time during the school year. Students are accepted at Independence High via an application process. Flexible scheduling and contracts provide students with the opportunity to earn course credits and demonstrate proficiency. A faculty of 18 teachers delivers instruction in all common core areas. Many of these teachers have assignments in more than one building. Teachers at Independence participate in district professional development and department initiatives.

Roosevelt Learning Center, a nonresidential, intensive intervention program serves students with special needs in a highly supervised, alternative setting. Roosevelt serves students from Sweetwater County School Districts #1 and #2 under the supervision of Region V BOCES. Any student enrolled in Roosevelt Learning Center on track to earn a SSD#1 diploma must complete all Body of Evidence requirements.

In addition, approximately 80 students attend Desert School in Wamsutter, 67 miles east of Rock Springs, through eighth grade. These students attend Rawlins high school by agreement of the respective boards of trustees.

B: Graduation Requirements

To earn a Wyoming High School Diploma a student must earn course credits based on Carnegie Units and demonstrate proficiency on state standards.

Between grades 9 and 12, each student must successfully complete:

- four credits in Language Arts,
- three credits in Mathematics,
- three credits in Science,
- three credits in Social Studies,
- one-half credit in Health,
- one-half credit in Physical Education,
- one-half credit in Career/Technical,
- one-half credit in Fine/Performing Arts,

- one-half credit in Foreign Language,
- remainder of credits in elective courses

Graduation requirements are periodically reviewed and revised by the District Policy Committee (Appendix 1A).

Wyoming law directs local school districts to award one of three transcript endorsements. In addition to the credit requirements, a student who demonstrates proficiency in 5 of 9 common core areas earns a diploma with a General Endorsement; a student who demonstrates proficiency in all 9 common core areas earns a Comprehensive Endorsement; and a student may earn an Advanced Endorsement by demonstrating advanced proficiency in 5 of 9 common core areas. The common core areas are Career/Technical Education, Fine and Performing Arts, Foreign Language, Health, Language Arts, Mathematics, Physical Education, Science, and Social Studies.

The enforcement of the state statute mandating graduation requirements and transcript endorsements is located in Chapter 31 of the Wyoming Education Rules and can be accessed via the Wyoming Department of Education or Wyoming State Legislative websites.

C. Type of System

The SSD#1 Body of Evidence System (Passport System) is a common assessment model with assessments embedded in indicator courses. It is compensatory in core subject areas using higher scores on some measures to offset lower scores on other measures. In core subject areas, scores are aggregated on several standards-based assessments and compared to a cut score at the content level. In non-core subject areas, the score reflects work that can be done by students in a single semester. The system's primary purpose is to uncover, in a fair, equitable, systematic, understandable, and defensible manner, what students know and are able to do, in order to make decisions about student proficiency on state standards (Appendix 1B).

This system includes four key components:

- Sequenced Indicator Courses, which every student takes to meet district graduation requirements. For example, in Science all students take the Indicator Courses of Physical Science in grade nine and Biology

in grade ten. All Science Passport Assessments are administered in these two required courses. Students are required to take one semester course in Fine & Performing Arts. The Fine & Performing Arts Passport Assessment is incorporated into the introductory course in Art, Drama and Music. The requirement ensures that every student is enrolled in a course which provides the Passport Assessment(s).

- An adequate and comprehensive sampling of Wyoming State Standards using identified proficiency targets on district curriculum maps.
- Passport Assessments, which are complex, open-ended common performance assessments, measuring student performance aligned to the proficiency targets, State Standards and State benchmarks.
- Multiple opportunities in the classroom, before and after school and during the summer to allow students to demonstrate proficiency or advanced proficiency.

These key components form the basis of the SSD#1 compensatory model. The rationale for selecting a compensatory model is to obtain a holistic view of individual student performance on State Standards using complex performance assessments. The selection of the performance assessments honors the level of cognitive complexity consistent with Webb's Depth of Knowledge (DOK).

D. Adjustments

The SSD#1 Passport System required 5 years of work (2001-2006) both within the district and collaboratively with other Wyoming districts to fully implement a system consistent with the five criteria outlined in state rules and regulations. SSD#1 has made a commitment to implement the system with fidelity for 3 years before initiating a full review process.

During this 3-year period, the district has made only the necessary adjustments to ensure fidelity. Therefore, the following adjustments were necessary:

- 1). The establishment of a procedure for determining the status of students in relation to proficiency when they transfer into SSD#1.
- 2). The minor re-alignment of Language Arts assessments to reflect the proficiency targets on the curriculum maps.

- 3). The development of an on-line, accessible parent and student reporting system.
- 4). The development of a monitoring system ensuring teacher/building accountability for the implementation of the Passport System.
- 5). The identification of the pre-requisite knowledge, reasoning and skill underpinnings for the Passport assessments.
- 6). The initial development of common assessments for learning measuring student performance on the Passport underpinnings.
- 7). The development of teacher and student-friendly rubrics to increase the understanding of the criteria for proficiency.
- 8). The use of data analysis processes to determine strengths and gaps in student performance on the Passport assessments.
- 9). The development of Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Results-based, Time-bound (S.M.A.R.T.) goals and action plans designed to improve performance on Passport assessments.
- 10). The establishment of an interdisciplinary committee to begin the process of designing alternative ways to demonstrate proficiency on Passport assessments.

The rationale for these adjustments is based upon increasing rates of student mobility, demographic changes, increasing level of assessment literacy, results of curriculum mapping, and meeting the need for monitoring systems.