

**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.**

The following example is what a **course-based, common assessment approach** section for alignment might look like:

## **Section 2: Alignment**

In order to meet the alignment criterion on the BOE Peer Review Scoring Guide, the submitted plan must include evidence of the following:

- There is documentation of **adequate sampling** of benchmarks as well as all the standards within the two representative content areas.
- There is evidence of a **two-way alignment process**: all assessment items and tasks align to standards and are represented in the assessments within the two representative content areas.
- The assessments from the representative content areas reflect the **cognitive depth** of the content standards and the types of student performance described in the performance standards.

### **Evidence in plan to support required criteria for alignment:**

- Assessment samples for the representative content areas (1 core & 1 non-core) are included.
  - Blueprints for the assessment samples are included in the plan.
  - Matrices indicating all the assessments in the representative content areas (1 core & 1 non-core) and the standards and benchmarks assessed by each are included.
  - The processes used by the district to ensure alignment of current standards and benchmarks as well as future changes are described.
  - If the district Body of Evidence system includes course-based information (e.g., grades), the process for assuring alignment among the course curriculum, standards, assessments, and grading practices are described and appropriate policies included.
  - Evidence of the processes used to ensure alignment of assessment items/tasks to the levels of cognition called for in the performance standards is present.
  - Evidence of “think aloud” protocols and/or careful examination of student work is used to evaluate/document, and revise, if necessary, the alignment of its standards and assessment system.
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## Section 2: Alignment

### ***Curriculum Alignment to Wyoming State Standards and Benchmarks***

In Sublette County School District #1 course is aligned to the Wyoming Content Area Standards and Benchmarks. Evidence of this is supported by course syllabi, course standards matrices, course unit plans and standards based assessments (Appendix B).

### ***Three Way Alignment***

Effective student performance and ongoing improvement in a standards-based curriculum requires that standards and benchmarks, instruction and assessments all be aligned. The three components are interdependent; each enables the other to perform its function and is part of its function. A common assessment - course-base model is founded on clear, clean alignment across these three components.

#### **Curriculum and instruction are aligned to:**

- Standards and benchmarks taught at the cognitive level of difficulty implied in the standards.
- Assessments that measure the standards and benchmarks in each content area at the cognitive level of difficulty implied.

#### **Assessments are aligned to:**

- Curriculum and instruction in standards and benchmarks at the cognitive level of difficulty implied
- Standards and benchmarks, clear statements of what a student would know and be able to do in each content area.

#### **Standards and Benchmarks are aligned to:**

- Assessments that reflect the cognitive demands implied in the standards;
- Curriculum and instruction focused on mastering the content and concepts at the cognitive demand implied.

### ***Blueprinting and Matrices for Common Assessments***

The Sublette County School district #1 Body of Evidence Plan utilizes common assessments aligned to Wyoming standards and benchmarks. Content area standards are taught and assessed in required courses or “gatekeeper” courses. Alignment is evidenced through the use of assessment blueprints and matrices (Appendix B).

- Pinedale High School utilizes activities from the Wyoming Activities Consortium in math, language arts, science and social studies. Blueprints/Matrices for each assessment or content area indicate the cognitive level of complexity, the number of items as well as detailing the standards and benchmarks assessed. Examples of Math assessments are available in Appendix B.
- SCASS based assessments are utilized in the areas of Health and Physical Education. In order to ensure alignment to Wyoming state standards and benchmarks the assessments

were reviewed for alignment and completeness using the district standards based assessment template (Appendix C). Blueprints for each assessment indicate the cognitive level of complexity, the number of items as well as detailing the standards and benchmarks assessed. Examples of Health assessments are available in Appendix B.

- The Wyoming Arts Assessment Consortium met for a little over one year. Our arts assessments are modeled after the assessments developed by this group. In order to ensure alignment to Wyoming state standards and benchmarks the assessments were reviewed for alignment and completeness using the district standards based assessment template. Blueprints for each assessment indicate the cognitive level of complexity, the number of items as well as detailing the standards and benchmarks assessed.
- Self Developed Assessments were developed in the areas of foreign language and career technical education. In order to ensure alignment to Wyoming state standards and benchmarks the assessments were reviewed for alignment and completeness using the district standards based assessment template. Blueprints for each assessment indicate the cognitive level of complexity, the number of items as well as detailing the standards and benchmarks assessed.

### ***Designing the Pinedale BOE System for Alignment***

In general four main activities took place with review and revisions as necessary for SCSD #1 to have an aligned Body of Evidence assessment system.

1. Writing standards and benchmarks for the nine content areas.

This process includes using the state standards and benchmarks as a model and aligning the district standards and benchmarks to them.

Teachers, parents, and community members provide(d) input, and the local Board of Trustees approved the district standards and benchmarks.

Participants: Administration, teachers, parents and community

2. Developing instructional activities that cause students to learn the skills and knowledge described in the standards and benchmarks.

The process includes professional development for teachers and administrators, the design of teacher evaluation systems, purchase of new materials plus a focus on teaching the standards and benchmarks.

Teachers are responsible for designing unit plans and activities, etc. focused on standards and benchmarks.

Participants: Administration, teachers

3. Developing assessments that measure the standards and benchmarks at the appropriate level of cognitive difficulty and provide instructionally relevant data: What do students know or not know?

The process includes professional development for teachers and administrators, the design of an assessment system, participation in the Body of Evidence Consortium and the development of activities, plus a focus on assessing standards and benchmarks at their cognitive level of difficulty. Teachers are fully involved in designing required standards

based assessments, creating scoring rubrics, conducting bias review, developing blueprints and matrices, etc. focused on standards and benchmarks. The district uses a consistent process that guides the development of blueprints, assessments and rubrics (Appendix C, Assessment Template.)

Participants: Administration, teachers

4. Evaluating, revising and improving the BOE system is an ongoing process.

Teachers, administrators, the school board, students, parents and community must continually work at improving the system. Internal and external forces require this, but more importantly we are learning as we go. It is imperative to put to work knowledge and skills that will improve student learning and the ability to correctly diagnose learning issues.

Participants: Administration, teachers, Board

### ***Steps for Alignment and Design of Assessments***

The district ensures alignment between the standards, benchmarks and assessments for each content area by

1. Establishing at which grade level or in which course(s) the standards will be taught and assessed;
2. Developing a content area course matrix at the high school that shows where the standards are taught and which aligns with the required Carnegie units;
3. “Think Aloud” collaborative sessions for what type and how many assessments need to be required to establish student competency on the standards and benchmarks at the cognitive level of difficulty;
4. Developing assessment blueprints for each course’s assessments which describe the type of assessment item, the number of items and the cognitive level of difficulty. The blueprint can be used to design new, comparable assessments as well as show the level of assessment coverage for all of the benchmarks in each standard;
5. Identification of **cognitive complexity** for assessments begins with identification of the cognitive complexity of the standard(s) or benchmark(s) selected for assessment. This is done by:
  - Identifying the verbs and adjectives in the standard or benchmark
  - Reviewing the performance descriptors for the standard
  - Establishing the cognitive demand implied in the standard or benchmark
  - Embedding the action from the standard or benchmark into the assessment
  - Developing the task utilizing as closely as possible the wording from the standard or benchmark and establishing the cognitive complexity required for the task or item.

6. Utilizing an assessment design tool that guides the process of developing an assessment activity that can measure the standard as directly as possible, with a clear, clean scoring system or rubric;
7. “Think Aloud” collaborative sessions for each assessment with an independent committee of skilled and knowledgeable teachers to look for bias, quality, alignment to standards and benchmarks and cognitive demand;
8. “Think Aloud” collaborative sessions for examining student work among content area teachers; scoring, reporting, editing and revising assessments as necessary;
9. Requiring teachers to administer the Body of Evidence assessments to all students, score the assessments and report the results in the student data management system (Appendix D, All Means All Regulation);
10. Revising assessments as needed to reflect new standards, replace outdated or memorable items, improve the quality of data, eliminate bias and meet new requirements. No more than one-third of the items on a given test may be revised in one year. An application for revising items is included in Appendix.

Participants: Administration, teachers

### **Standards Updates, Revision and Alignment of Assessments**

As the state of Wyoming updates their standards and benchmarks for the nine content areas Sublette County School District #1 reviews the impact of these changes on their assessments. As needed the assessments are revised to meet the new standards and benchmarks. We resist wholesale changes to assessments if possible in order to ensure comparability of judgments on student performance from year to year. See Comparability Section for full information.