



# WDE Assessment Updates

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## **PAWS Pre-ID Diagram**

At the PAWS Building Coordinator trainings, many requested a sample of how to place the Pre-ID labels on the Student TABS. Attached to this newsletter is an example of the proper placement of Pre-ID labels. Should you have any questions please contact the ETS Helpline at 1-877-327-9415 or by email at [Wyoming-support@ets.org](mailto:Wyoming-support@ets.org).

## **USE of Non-Certified Staff in PAWS Test Administration**

We've received a number of questions from school district staff regarding the use of non-certified staff in PAWS administration. In order to ensure that students with disabilities experience testing in an environment that optimizes their chance for success, we are modifying our position related to the use of non-certified paraprofessionals/classroom aides.

In the vast majority of test administration situations, only trained and certified teachers are permitted to administer PAWS. However, in situations where a para/classroom aide assigned to a student with disabilities:

- a. works closely with the student 1:1 and has the best rapport with him, and
- b. routinely implements the student's required accommodations and know those accommodations best, and
- c. has been trained on both test administration and test security practices (and has signed the test security agreement),

then the para/classroom aide IS ALLOWED to administer the test to the student.

We hope this will alleviate concerns in the field about providing the best testing situation for students with disabilities while maintaining high expectations for test administration throughout the state. Please note that non-certified staff are permitted to administer the test ONLY under these conditions.

## **New: Recruitment for Wy-ALT Item Review**

We are looking for 3-4 teachers to participate in item and bias reviews for the Wyoming Alternate Assessment. Participants must have at least 2 years of experience working with students with significant cognitive disabilities and must have administered the Wy-ALT this year. The reviews will take place in Columbus, Ohio in mid-June and WDE will pay for participants' travel. Interested teachers should contact Deb Lindsey at 307-777-8753

## **2015 SAWS Administration CANCELLED**

Enrolled Act 50 was signed into law on Monday, March 2nd by Governor Mead. The new statute eliminates the Student Assessment of Writing Skills (SAWS) at grades 3, 5, and 7 from the statewide assessment system effective immediately. This means that the SAWS test scheduled fro April 13—May 1, 2015 is cancelled.

In terms of accountability under WAEA, the Achievement indicator at the elementary and middle school levels will be calculated without data from SAWS. The elimination of SAWS has no effect on AYP calculations since writing data are not used for federal accountability.

## **Supporting Writing Instruction in Wyoming**

Using prompts and anchor papers already developed under the SAWS program, WDE Standards and Assessment teams are planning professional development sessions in order to continue support standards-based instruction in writing. These sessions will follow a range-finding approach similar to what Wyoming teachers, WDE staff, and ETS facilitators have employed with SAWS prompts and student papers. The two day sessions will be held in various locations throughout the state.

Participants will first need to administer selected 2015 SAWS prompts to students and bring student writing samples to these range-finding professional development sessions. The sessions will begin with an informative and interactive presentation focused on the following topics: on-demand writing, the writing process, essential skills, effective prompts, and quality writing assessments.

Participants will then break into grade band groups and analyze student writing samples in relation to the scoring guides. Their discussion will examine students' writing strengths and shortcomings; it will outline teacher responses, concerns, expectations, and determine areas of instructional focus. When teachers complete discussing/scoring all papers and convene as a large group, the discussion will then turn to instructional intent. How do we nurture essential writing skills? What strategies might we use to combat poor writing habits? How do we create sensitive, fair, and consistent local writing assessments of high quality? How do we continue to use results from writing assessments to guide our instruction?

Individuals who would like to participate in this professional development are asked to register their interest by completing a brief survey, found here:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/2015WritingPD>

The survey information will be used to determine the best dates and locations for the PD opportunities. If you have questions about the sessions, please contact Catherine Reeves at [Catherine.Reeves@wyo.gov](mailto:Catherine.Reeves@wyo.gov) or 307-777-8595

## **Released Test Questions Now Available!**

The WDE Standards and Assessment teams are pleased to announce that the newest set of Released Test Questions (RTQs) are now available on the WDE Assessment website. You can use these items to illustrate the nature of PAWS test items. Each RTQ has information about the item difficulty and its depth of knowledge and identifies the standard that is addressed. To the greatest extent possible, we have now released at least one item per reporting category and grade in reading, math, and science. We hope you will find these useful. The RTQs can be found here:

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Link</b>
Grade 3	<a href="http://edu.wyoming.gov/educators/assessment/paws/grade-3/">http://edu.wyoming.gov/educators/assessment/paws/grade-3/</a>
Grade 4	<a href="http://edu.wyoming.gov/educators/assessment/paws/grade-4/">http://edu.wyoming.gov/educators/assessment/paws/grade-4/</a>
Grade 5	<a href="http://edu.wyoming.gov/educators/assessment/paws/grade-5/">http://edu.wyoming.gov/educators/assessment/paws/grade-5/</a>
Grade 6	<a href="http://edu.wyoming.gov/educators/assessment/paws/grade-6/">http://edu.wyoming.gov/educators/assessment/paws/grade-6/</a>
Grade 7	<a href="http://edu.wyoming.gov/educators/assessment/paws/grade-7/">http://edu.wyoming.gov/educators/assessment/paws/grade-7/</a>
Grade 8	<a href="http://edu.wyoming.gov/educators/assessment/paws/grade-8/">http://edu.wyoming.gov/educators/assessment/paws/grade-8/</a>

School staff are responsible for ensuring maximum student participation in the statewide assessment system. School staff are also responsible for ensuring test security. As noted in the PAWS Building Coordinator's Manual, district staff may transport test booklets between buildings (including to a student's home) with permission from the Wyoming Department of Education to facilitate student participation in exceptional circumstances. In order to grant approval, WDE will need to review and approve the plan the district or school will implement while moving the testing materials in question.

This plan should describe:

1. An assessment calendar which includes the administration dates and testing locations and names of Test Administrators (TAs)
2. The processes and method that ensure the security of PAWS materials while being distributed, transported, and re-collected/returned
3. Practices that ensure the optimal test environments for students
4. Any accommodations required for addressing needs of students with disabilities, per their IEP
5. Assurance that the TAs have been trained.

If you need to transport materials, please submit your plan to Deb Lindsey (deb.lindsey@wyo.gov) via email. We recognize and appreciate the effort of districts to safeguard test materials and maintain standardized assessment protocols while ensuring maximum participation.

### **ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 Field Test Updates and Reminders**

Thank you to the districts that are participating in the ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 Field Test. WIDA is close to reaching most of their goals, but are still seeking 3,000 participants in Reading (grades 4-12), 4,700 participants in Writing (all tiers, grades 1-3; grades 4-12 Tier A). In addition to these areas, we are seeking Tier A participants in all grade clusters and domains. The final date for field testing is April 10th, 2015, so it is not too late to sign up to participate. As a reminder, Field Test sites already registered should begin setting up test sessions at least one week prior to field testing in eDIRECT—the online test administration portal. Data Recognition Corp (DRC) Customer Services is available to help any sites with technological questions and can be reached at (855) 787-9615 or

[WIDA@datarecognitioncorp.com](mailto:WIDA@datarecognitioncorp.com)

### **Compass Testing Information**

Compass testing will remain on the old platform for this spring. Use the link below to locate information about the Compass assessment. The login site and slides about the setup of the assessment can be found at the bottom of this page:

<http://edu.wyoming.gov/educators/assessment/act/>

### **Explore and Plan Information & Ordering**

Please find information about the testing timeline for Explore and Plan at the following link: <http://www.act.org/aap/wyoming/files/MilestoneSchedule-WDE-ExplorePlan.pdf>

Initial counts for test materials were given to ACT Inc. based on the WDE684 file submitted by schools in October. School staff should check this file to make sure that they will be receiving enough materials for their 9th and 10th graders. This information is available on the Fusion website in Statistical Report Series 2 under Data Reporting. ACT will include an overage for

EXPLORE and PLAN (except for accommodated formats).

- a. Orders of 1-10 units will receive an overage of 1
- b. Orders of 11-50 units will receive an overage of 3
- c. Orders of 51-200 units will receive an overage of 5
- d. Orders of 201-500 units will receive an overage of 10
- e. Orders of 501-1000 units will receive an overage of 15
- f. Orders of 1001+ units will receive an overage of 20

Any school needing additional materials not covered in the overage or a special form should contact ACT at 1-877-789-2925 or [customerservices@act.org](mailto:customerservices@act.org).

## **Test Security in Wyoming**

Test security is important. Any violation of test security, whether intended or accidental, can compromise our ability to make inferences about student performance on state assessments. We emphasize proactive practices—before, during, and after testing—as the primary method of ensuring test security. Following appropriate procedures regarding preparing for testing, handling test booklets, and administering tests is fundamental to ensuring public confidence in the results we report.

### **Before Testing**

Once received in a school, test materials should immediately be opened by the Building Coordinator and inventoried. This will ensure that there's sufficient time to order additional materials before the test window actually opens and ensure that no materials are missing. Once inventoried, materials are to be stored in a locked cabinet inside a locked room. Prior to testing, other than the Building Coordinator, no students or staff should have access to the test materials.

The Building Coordinator is responsible for training all test administrators on test administration. The WDE provides resources to support this training, including a PowerPoint, electronic and paper copies of the Building Coordinator's Manual and the Directions for Administration, and a posted video from our annual face-to-face Building Coordinator training. In addition to test administrators, any staff member who otherwise handles the test booklets (e.g. a school secretary who may assist with packing up completed test booklets) must be trained on test security. All individuals involved in testing are required to review and sign the Test Administrator Security Agreement found on Page 33 of the Building Coordinator's Manual. These Agreements are to be retained by the building principal for at least one year following the assessment.

The best preparation for statewide assessments is high quality instruction aligned to the state's adopted content standards at each grade level. The WDE neither endorses nor recommends any formal or informal test preparation activities or programs as these typically detract from routine instructional activities. School and district staff can use released test questions to learn more about how specific standards are addressed in the state test, but these are not intended as "practice" items. They are provided as illustrative items to demonstrate how specific domains are assessed.

### **During Testing**

Test booklets are to be distributed by the Building Coordinator to classrooms on the day of testing. Test Administrators (TAs) distribute the test booklets to students in the classroom. At no time should students handle other students' test booklets, even to help the teacher distribute the booklets in the classroom. Once that day's testing is concluded, the Building Coordinator is expected to pick up the test booklets from each classroom and return them to locked storage. Test booklets should be re-inventoried each time they are collected to account for all of the test booklets in the building.

TAs must follow the Directions for Administration as written. Although PAWS is an untimed test, WDE provides suggested times for each section of the test. TAs are expected to exercise professional judgment when stopping the test; if most students have completed the test when the suggested time has elapsed, then the TAs should indicate to the group that that the test will conclude within 10 minutes and then collect the test booklets for return to the Building Coordinator. During testing, students are to be monitored at all times.

Students with disabilities must be provided accommodations consistent with the IEP team recommendations *and* with the allowable accommodations list on 20-22 in the Building Coordinator's Manual. English learners may also receive accommodations as noted on page 22 of the Manual. All students may use resources outlined on page 23 of the Manual. Students must complete each section of the test in a single sitting. School staff are expected to schedule the assessments early enough in the morning or afternoon so that students can finish a section before any extended breaks like recess or lunch. A brief stretch or drink break is permitted, however.

**Test Security in Wyoming (continued)**

In the event of a potential security breach (e.g. students copying others' responses, disruption of testing, inappropriate disclosure of a test item, inappropriate test preparation), the Building Coordinator must be notified. S/he is responsible for completing an Irregularity Report Form (page 32 of the *Building Coordinator's Manual*) and immediately notifying the ETS Wyoming Customer Support Center (877-327-9415). Depending on the nature of the irregularity, WDE may invalidate test scores for individual students or for entire student groups.

**After Testing**

The Building Coordinator is responsible for packing up test booklets (and answer documents for grades 6-8) consistent with instructions in the Building Coordinator's Manual. Improper packing may result in scoring delays. All test booklets must be returned, including unused test materials. No test booklets are permitted to remain in school/district offices as reference materials since they contain secure items. Test booklets should not be packed up for shipment until near the end of the window to allow for testing of newly enrolled students.

Please contact Wyoming Customer Support (877-327-9415) or the WDE Assessment Team (307-777-2906) if you have questions about test security.

**PAWS Allowable Calculators**

Reminder: The Proficiency Assessment for Wyoming Students allows for calculators during specific portions of the grades 6-8 assessment. Although they are not considered necessary for students to complete the problems, they also do not interfere with the validity as long as the appropriate calculator is used. Here are the criteria for selecting an appropriate calculator:

Only four-function or scientific calculators are allowed on the calculator portions of the assessment.

The following calculators are **NOT** approved for use on PAWS:

- Grades 3-5: Calculators are **NOT** allowed on any part of the test.
- Grade 6-8: Calculators with the following features are NOT allowed:
  - Computer Algebra System (CAS), e.g., TI-89, TI-92 Plus, TI-Nspire, ALEFX2.0, ALGEX 2.0 Plus, CFX-9970
  - QWERTY keyboards (similar to typewriter keyboards)
  - Attached electronic pens
  - Graphing Calculators, e.g., TI-83, TI-83 Plus, TI-84, etc.

These allowable resources and others can be found at:

<http://edu.wyoming.gov/download/assessments/AllowableResourcesGuidelines.pdf>

**Assessment Literacy and Formative Assessment/Resource Development Training**

The Wyoming Department of Education is providing five regional two-day professional development opportunities for teachers on assessment literacy and formative assessment resource development. The training will be presented by Jan Hoegh, Associate Vice President of Marzano Research.

Gillette: April 13 & 14 Gillette College Tech Center

Cody: April 21 & 22 Holiday Inn

Riverton: April 23 & 24 Holiday Inn convention Center

Evanston: May 4 & 5 Roundhouse

Rawlins: May 6 & 7 Jeffrey Center

## **Thank You for Supporting 2015 NAEP in Wyoming**

The assessment window for the 2015 National Assessment of Educational Progress or NAEP closes in Wyoming today (3/6/15). Wyoming's results in fourth and eighth reading and mathematics will be released this September or October, and science results for both grades will be reported next spring.

We would like to express our gratitude to the school and district staff, teachers, students and parents who participated in this year's assessment. Your efforts on NAEP are absolutely critical and deeply appreciated. Because of your collaboration and support, Wyoming has an important yardstick for comparing its educational progress with the rest of the U.S. and world.

In the interests of continuous improvement we're very interested in getting your comments, process questions, concerns, or suggestions on how NAEP can be improved at your school or district. Any/all input you have is welcomed and valued, so please contact Will Donkersgood at [\(307\) 777-5133](tel:3077775133) or [william.donkersgoed@wyo.gov](mailto:william.donkersgoed@wyo.gov) to let us know what you think!...and again, a huge THANK YOU to ALL!

### **-Word of the Week-**

#### **Adaptive testing**

Type of testing in which the questions presented to the test taker are selected on the basis of the test taker's previous responses. Good performance by the test taker leads to harder questions; poor performance leads to easier questions. The purpose of adaptive testing is to use testing time more efficiently by not giving test takers questions that are much too easy or too difficult.

## **HEADS-UP! WDE Survey on Implementation of ELA/Math Standards**

In conjunction with our test vendor, ETS, we plan to launch a survey of Wyoming teachers, principals, and curriculum directors regarding supports for implementation of the 2012 Wyoming Content and Performance Standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics. Survey results will be analyzed along with results from the 2015 PAWS to better understand how implementation of the standards varies across the state and how the variation in implementation affects student achievement. The survey will be online and we expect to release it in mid-April. Please watch the newsletter for more information as we get closer to the opening of the survey window. Note: Only teachers in grades 3-8 who teach reading and math will be asked to participate. Meanwhile, if you have any questions, please contact Deb Lindsey at 307-777-8753.

## **Important Upcoming Dates**

**March 16** — Supplemental PAWS order window closes

**March 16- 20** — Non-secure shipments from ACT will arrive

**March 20** — Spring 684 Snapshot

**March 20** — Exemption deadline for grades 3-8

**March 27** — PAWS and Wy-ALT Test Window Closes

**March 27** — Deadline to request changes to preliminary accommodations roster for the ACT

**March / April** — Supplemental Orders for Explore/Plan (link coming soon)

**April 1** — Last day to ship materials back to ETS for scoring

**May 8** — Exemption deadline for high school