



WDE Assessment Updates

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REGISTER NOW! Standards Extensions Kick Off

The Wyoming Department of Education Special Programs staff is providing a two day training to introduce the Wyoming Extended Standards in ELA and Math. The training will cover several topics including discussing the changes in instructional expectations, the communication needs of students with significant cognitive disabilities, and linking effective literacy and mathematics instruction with the Wyoming Extended Standards. A range of resources and strategies will also be shared. For more information see the attached flyer or register at:

Training Date	Location
February 23-24, 2015	Laramie
February 25-26, 2015	Rock Springs
February 27-28, 2015	Dubois
March 2-3, 2015	Cody
March 4-5, 2015	Buffalo

IMPORTANT: Administration of the new Wy-ALT

This is a reminder that all Test Administrator (TA) and Second Scorer (SS) TIDE accounts must be created in advance of the Wy-ALT test window opening on February 23rd. Creating these TIDE accounts is the responsibility of the Building Coordinator (BC). If you are a TA or SS and do not have a TIDE account, please contact your BC.

If TAs and SSs do not have an account, they will not be able to enter data into the Data Entry Interface. Building Coordinators must log in to TIDE and add these users. To add a user, click the Manage Users tab in TIDE, and select Add User. Select the user's role and school, enter his/her first and last name, phone number, and email address. Click Add User. The user will receive an email from TIDE. This email contains a secure link that the user must click on to establish her/her password. The TA or SS must be added to every school where they will be administering the test. Only Wy-ALT personnel who attended one of the January face-to-face trainings will be certified to enter scores in the Data Entry Interface.

As you prepare for the test administration window to open, please refer to the [Building Coordinator's Manual](#) and [Directions for Administration Manual](#) to review policies and procedures.

If you have any questions regarding the TIDE system, please refer to the TIDE User Guide and FAQs located on the [Resources](#) section of the Portal, or view the TIDE [walkthrough demo located at this link](#). You may also contact the Wy-ALT Helpdesk at 1-888-897-8024.

ACT Suite Question and Answer Session

Have questions about the ACT Suite? ACT is holding an additional Q&A session to answer your questions. To register for the Q&A session, visit the URL from the table below. Please register by **the Friday, February 13th**.

Date	Time	Registration URL
Wednesday, February 18	3:00 - 4:00 p.m.	https://act.ilinc.com/register/kfpfcv

For more information and additional training resources, visit <http://www.act.org/aap/wyoming/act.html>.

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/>

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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.

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 and SAWS 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:

Grade	Link
Grade 3	http://edu.wyoming.gov/educators/assessment/paws/grade-3/
Grade 4	http://edu.wyoming.gov/educators/assessment/paws/grade-4/
Grade 5	http://edu.wyoming.gov/educators/assessment/paws/grade-5/
Grade 6	http://edu.wyoming.gov/educators/assessment/paws/grade-6/
Grade 7	http://edu.wyoming.gov/educators/assessment/paws/grade-7/
Grade 8	http://edu.wyoming.gov/educators/assessment/paws/grade-8/

Moving Testing Materials Within Districts

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/SAWS 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.

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 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 and SAWS Building Coordinator Training

Thank you to everyone who joined us in Afton and Casper this past week for the PAWS and SAWS Building Coordinator Training! For those of you who were unable to attend, we will be posting a video of the training for you to view; the 2015 PAWS/SAWS PowerPoint has already been posted. Please continue to watch the newsletter for updates. If you are looking for materials to review until the video is posted, visit:

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

IMPORTANT: Exemptions for the 2014-15 School Year

Earlier this fall, we announced via this newsletter that all assessment exemptions were being eliminated. After careful consideration and review of historical data, it's been decided that the only exemptions that will be eliminated are those for students who are medically fragile. The three other exemption categories will remain in place. This means that WDE will be accepting exemption requests in the following three categories:

- ◆ Students who are expelled but still receiving services from the district
- ◆ Students who are served in out of state placements, and
- ◆ Students who are ELs who have been in US schools for less than a year (students must participate in the ACCESS in order to receive the exemption, and they are still required to participate in math and science (if applicable))

Attached to this newsletter is the updated WDE673 form. In order to ensure confidentiality of these sensitive materials, please note that the submission process has changed from prior years. The ONLY method for submission of the WDE673 form and associated documentation is via the Wyoming Transcript Center. Faxes and mail are NOT acceptable methods of submission.

At least one person in each district has rights to upload files and/or documents to the Wyoming Transcript Center. In most districts, this person is the WISE Coordinator. Please check in your district to determine who has the appropriate rights.

To upload an exemption request for a student, first scan and save each request, including associated documentation, as a single .pdf file. Do not upload multiple .pdfs for a single request. Use the following naming convention when saving and submitting a request: districtname studentWISERID (e.g. Laramie1_87654321.pdf). Then, log into the Transcript Center, and click on Send Documents. At the next screen, click on Upload, then Choose File, and Send to WDE Administration.

If your WISE Coordinator does not see the Documents section of the Transcript Center after logging in, s/he will need to contact Elizabeth Foster, Data Collection Specialist at the WDE, who can adjust roles in the Transcript Center (Elizabeth.foster@wyo.gov)

Exemption requests will be accepted and processed through the 15th day of the testing window (March 20 for students in grades 3-8 on PAWS); for students in high school grades, exemption requests will be accepted and processed through May 8. Note the change in dates given student mobility, we have extended the submission dates into each assessment window.

Home School Students and Assessment/Accountability in Wyoming

We've received a number of calls so far this year regarding home school students and testing/accountability. The Assessment team, conferring with the Data team at WDE, is providing guidance on this topic for districts. According to the WDE684 Guidebook, "StudentHomeSchooled" means the following:

"Student Home Schooled - Is this student receiving their primary educational instruction in a home environment for reasons other than health and attending public school 50% or less of the school day? Yes or No."

If an enrollment record is submitted with a value of Yes (Y) in the StudentHomeSchooled field, the student is NOT required to be tested, and s/he will NOT be included in accountability determinations nor in aggregate public assessment reporting. This has been the case historically as well.

Another WDE684 field with implications for reporting is the WDE684 StudentConcurrentEnrollment field. The WDE684 guidebook currently states that any student reported with StudentConcurrentEnrollment = No (N) will be included in "public reporting and AYP determinations". But, this is NOT (and has NOT been) the case when StudentHomeSchooled is reported as Yes (Y), in which case the student is NOT required to be tested and is NOT included in "public reporting and AYP determinations". This specific situation will be more completely described in future guidebooks.

NOTE: Most home schooled students who also take one or two supplemental classes at a local school are properly reported on the WDE684 with StudentHomeSchooled = Y and StudentConcurrentEnrollment = N because the school at which each student is taking a course or two is the only school at which the student has an enrollment.

NOTE: Students who are court order placed into institutions or who are enrolled in Wyoming's distance education programs hosted by Niobrara #1 and Big Horn #1 are NOT "home school" students. Please contact Brian Wuerth at [307-777-6748](tel:307-777-6748) or brian.wuerth@wyo.gov with any WDE684 reporting questions.

Important Upcoming Dates

Feb./Mar. — Standards Extensions Kick Off

Feb. 23 — ACCESS for ELLs Testing Window Closes

Feb. 23 — Wy-ALT Test Window Opens

March 2 — PAWS Test Window Opens

March 20 — Spring 684 Snapshot

March 20 — Exemption deadline for grades 3-8

March 27 — PAWS Test Window Closes

April 13-May 1 — SAWS Test Window

May 8 — Exemption deadline for high school

-Word of the Week-

Reliability

The tendency of test scores to be consistent on two or more occasions of testing, if there is no real change in the test takers' knowledge. If a set of scores has high reliability, the test takers' scores would tend to agree strongly with their scores on another occasion of testing.