



# WDE Assessment Updates

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## 2015 Test Materials/Resources for PAWS & SAWS

Like last year, the WDE Assessment and Communications teams worked together to videotape the PAWS/SAWS Building Coordinator Training. We are pleased to announce that the video from our January 29th session is now available on the WDE YouTube site. District and school leaders may find the video useful for training test administrators and building coordinators on appropriate test security and administration procedures.

The video can be found here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JoUcfXRWNM&feature=youtu.be>

Other resources for the 2015 test administration can be found on the WDE Assessment website, including .pdf copies of the *Directions for Test Administration* for both PAWS and SAWS as well as the *Building Coordinator's Manual*. To locate these materials, please click below:

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

Thanks, and please let us know if you have any questions!

## PAWS & SAWS Pre-ID Diagram

At the PAWS/SAWS 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).

## Word Walls and Graphic Organizers During PAWS & SAWS

Reminder: Audio of digital dictionaries and spell checkers, including printouts from these resources, are **not** allowed on the assessment. Graphic organizers are **not** allowed; students may use blank paper to generate their organizers, but pre-printed graphic organizers are **not** to be provided. Word walls are limited to those that are used in regular classroom instruction, and are to remain posted during testing for the **SAWS** assessment **only**. Posters and charts with writing process guidelines, tips, or instructions should be removed or covered during testing. Failure to follow these guidelines is a violation of test administration protocols and may result in disqualification of student scores.

For further information concerning allowable resources please refer to the *Allowable Resource Guidelines*: <http://edu.wyoming.gov/download/assessments/AllowableResourcesGuidelines.pdf>

## PAWS FAQs

### Can I read through the test booklet while my students are taking the test?

**NO:** Test booklets and the test items are secure documents. Only the test takers are allowed to view the contents of the test booklets. The only time a test administrator should be reading the test booklet is when a student uses an accommodation that requires a reader or a scribe. If test administrators are interested in the questions used on the test, they can review the released test questions found on our website or attend one of the item, bias, or data review sessions hosted by WDE each summer.

### Can test administrators provide definitions of words that are in a reading passage or test items?

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777-8753

-Jessica Steinbrenner-  
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-Michelle Carroll-  
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**NO:** All test questions have been through bias and content review with Wyoming teachers. The items, including the vocabulary, on the test have been deemed to be grade level appropriate. Test administrators may not provide definitions to words in a test item or passage.

**Can you please clarify this for me - I know that sections must be done in order (Reading 1, Reading 2, Reading 3) but if a student misses the day their class does Reading 1 and then comes the day the class does Reading 2, he or she would take Reading 1 (not 2 like the rest of the group), correct?**

**YES:** Testing sections must be administered in the numerical order. Each student must take section 1 first, then 2, and then 3. Students who miss a section must start with the first (or next) section in the series. **Do not skip sections.**

For more FAQs and resources about PAWS visit <http://edu.wyoming.gov/educators/assessment/materials/>.

### **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:

<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>

### **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.

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

**ELA and Math Standards Extensions NOW Available:**

The WDE Standards and Assessment teams are please to announce that the final, approved set of standards extensions in ELA and math for students with significant cognitive disabilities are now available. Beginning in early 2013, Wyoming teachers reviewed various options and developed recommendations that were presented to the State Board of Education in July of 2014. Following a public comment period that included public hearings in various parts of the state, they were ultimately approved by Governor Mead in late December.

The 2014 Standards Extensions in English Language Arts and Mathematics can be found in two different places on the WDE website. You can find them under the Resources section of the Wy-ALT webpage, found here:

<http://edu.wyoming.gov/educators/assessment/wy-alt>

and on the Extended Standards page found here:

<http://edu.wyoming.gov/educators/standards/extended-benchmarks/>

**Use of Non-Certified Staff During Testing:**

As previously communicated, WDE requires that every Test Administrator be trained to administer the tests and be certified as a teacher (even if s/he isn't currently serving as a classroom teacher). If it's been decided locally that it would be beneficial to have an additional staff member (e.g. aide or para) in the room during testing to assist with proctoring/classroom management, then it's ok if that second person is not certified, so long as the individual a.) has been trained on test security and b.) does not actually administer the test.

**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 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.

### **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: district-name studentWISERID (e.g. Laramie 1\_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](mailto: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.

### **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**

**Feb./Mar.** — Standards Extensions Kick Off

**March 2** — PAWS Test Window Opens

**March 16** — Supplemental 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 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

**April 13-May 1** — SAWS Test Window (expected)

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

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

#### **Ability**

The knowledge, skills, or other characteristics of a test taker measured by the test.

### **Student Assessment of Writing Skills**

As many of you are probably aware, the Wyoming Legislature has passed a bill that eliminates the SAWS, effective immediately. Assuming the Governor signs the bill next week, there will NOT be a SAWS test in April. Please watch the newsletter for further information. If you have questions, please don't hesitate to call.