



WDE Assessment Updates

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Preparation for the SAWS

The Student Assessment of Writing Skills (SAWS) window opens April 22, 2013. This year's writing assessment at grades 5 and 7 will contain a new item type which addresses the legislative requirement of students responding to text. The test remains an assessment of writing, so accessibility to the item via the reading passage may be difficult for those students reading below grade level. Just as with the PAWS science and mathematics test, if a student has read-aloud as a testing accommodation in his or her IEP, then the test administrator may read the passage and prompt aloud to the student.

Because the prompts on the writing test are lengthy, any student who asks may have the prompt only read aloud. This applies to all students – those with IEP's and those who do not have IEP's. This should be done quietly and discretely so other students testing are not disturbed. Generally, though, we expect that students will read the associated passage by themselves. Please contact Tammy Schroeder at 307-777-3618 or tammy.schroeder@wyo.gov if you have any questions.

Transition of PAWS and ACT: Cut Scores

The Wyoming Department of Education (WDE) is currently transitioning the state assessment system to more fully assess students' proficiency of the newly adopted Common Core State Standards (CCSS). The transition plan includes a process to re-set cut scores defining proficiency levels for the Proficiency Assessments for Wyoming Students (known as PAWS) in grades 3 - 8 in the summer of 2014. As a result of this process, called standard-setting, it's likely that overall proficiency rates will decline because the new CCSS are more rigorous and set higher expectations for students. Since the Department plans to raise performance expectations for students and schools in 2014 with PAWS, grades 3 - 8, a similar process will be conducted for the ACT in 2014 as well. The Department will conduct standard-setting on the ACT to ensure continuity in high expectations through the high school grades; like PAWS, this process will result in higher cut scores for 2014 but lower proficiency rates.

With assistance from experts on its Technical Advisory Committee and the Center for Assessment, WDE has established interim proficiency levels for the grade 11 ACT for 2013. Since the PAWS at grade 11 was replaced with the ACT Plus Writing in 2013, it is necessary to develop cut scores and associated proficiency levels on the ACT that are comparable to the PAWS from 2012. The cut scores and proficiency levels for the ACT are in the table below.

ACT Cut Scores and Proficiency Levels, 2013			
	Reading	Math	Science
Basic	11	13	14
Proficient	15	16	20
Advanced	24	24	25

If you have any questions about this information, please contact Deb at 777-8753.

ALT Standards—Extensions to the CCSS for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities

The Wyoming Department of Education needs interested Wyoming teachers and administrators, K-12, to participate in the development of CCSS-aligned standards extensions for students with significant cognitive disabilities. Committee work has been scheduled for June 11-14, 2013 in Cheyenne.

We have created a survey for educators to indicate interest in this professional development opportunity. Note that responding with an interest does not commit you to anything at this time. Standards committee members will be selected from the list of those interested. Please widely disseminate so that all educators are aware of this opportunity.

The link below will take you to the survey which will be open from March 22nd to April 12th.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/C5387Q2>

For more information, contact Pari Swanson at pari.swanson@wyo.gov or call 777-5292.

Upcoming Professional Development from WDE Standards and Assessment Teams

On Friday, April 12, 2013, the Wyoming Department of Education will be offering a workshop on *Teaching and Assessing Common Core Standards*. The purpose of this workshop is to provide information about resources available around assessment and CCSS in the areas of language arts and mathematics. The training will be especially helpful to those who are just starting the implementation process. Interested parties should register at the following link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/W22KFF5>

There will be two identical sessions offered; one will be in the morning from 8:30 – 11:30 a.m. and another will be from 1:00 – 4:00 p.m. at the McMurry Training Center in Casper, WY (2220 N. Bryan Stock Trail). Please note that the two workshops are identical, so participants need only attend one session.

A block of 20 rooms has been reserved at the Holiday Inn McMurry Park under the “Wyoming Department of Education – Standards Division.” The rate is \$77 per night. Participants are responsible for their own lodging expenses. If you have any questions or problems registering, please contact Laurie Hernandez at Laurie.Hernandez@wyo.gov or at 777-3469.

Important Upcoming Dates:

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| NOW | -- ACT Plus Writing Training is posted |
| | ♦ Standard Time Room Supervisor/Proctor Training Webcast |
| | ♦ Accommodations Room Supervisor/Proctor Training Webcast |
| | -- EXPLORE and PLAN Administration Training is posted |
| April 5 | -- PAWS and PAWS-ALT Windows Close |
| April 8 | -- MAP Window Opens |
| April 15 | -- SAWS-ALT Window Opens |
| April 22 | -- SAWS Window Opens |
| | -- EXPLORE and PLAN Windows Open |
| April 23 | -- ACT Plus Writing |
| April 24 | -- WorkKeys |