



# Wyoming Department of Education

Cindy Hill, Superintendent of Public Instruction

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## MEMORANDUM NO. 2012-008

**TO:** School District Superintendents  
Curriculum Coordinators  
Principals  
Special Education Directors  
Directors of Private Residential Treatment Facilities  
Title I Directors  
Title III Directors

**FROM:** Jude Serrano, Assessment Project Manager  
Assessment Division

**DATE:** January 23, 2012

**SUBJECT:** WDE-673 Wyoming State Assessment System Exemption Request

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### IMPORTANT – TIME SENSITIVE INFORMATION

All students are required to participate in the 2012 Wyoming State Assessment System. The system includes the Proficiency Assessments for Wyoming Students (PAWS), Proficiency Assessments for Wyoming Students – Alternate (PAWS-ALT) and the Wyoming English language learners assessment, ACCESS for ELLs®. However, school administrators, on behalf of the student, may apply for exemption from participation in the Wyoming State Assessment System.

**Exemption requests and the required documentation must be submitted to the Wyoming Department of Education by February 28, 2012.** An exemption is only valid after obtaining written approval by the Wyoming Department of Education (WDE). Written approval will be provided by the WDE for those requests that meet exemption criteria in one of three categories and that include the required, current documentation. The three participation exemption categories are:

- **Medically Fragile Students**
- **Expelled Students**
- **English Language Learner (ELL) Students** (Reading Only)

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All **ELL Students** who meet exemption criteria **must** have the WDE-673 Wyoming State Assessment System Exemption Request submitted and approved on their behalf in order to be exempt from participating in the PAWS Reading test only. These students must participate in the 2012 PAWS Mathematics and Science content tests and ACCESS for ELLs®.

Full descriptions of these exemption categories and requirements for submitting documentation are provided on the WDE-673 form, which is attached and can also be located on the WDE website in the Data Collection Suite located at:

<http://edu.wyoming.gov/DataInformationAndReporting/DataCollectionSuite.aspx>

If you have any questions regarding the WDE-673 Wyoming State Assessment System Exemption Request, please contact Jude Serrano at [jude.serrano@wyo.gov](mailto:jude.serrano@wyo.gov) or at (307) 777-8568.

JS:al

Attachment

## WYOMING STATE ASSESSMENT SYSTEM PARTICIPATION EXEMPTION REQUEST

### EXEMPTION REQUEST PROCEDURES

All students are required to participate in the Wyoming State Assessment System. The system includes the Proficiency Assessments for Wyoming Students (PAWS), Proficiency Assessments for Wyoming Students – Alternate (PAWS-ALT) and the Wyoming English language proficiency assessment, ACCESS for ELLs®. However, school administrators on behalf of a student, may apply for exemption from participation from the Wyoming Assessment System. An exemption request must meet the criteria of one of the three categories listed below and current, required documentation must be submitted with each request.

#### **Exemptions must be submitted to the Wyoming Department of Education by February 28, 2012.**

The administration of PAWS is March 5 – March 30, 2012 and the administration of the PAWS-ALT is February 20, – April 3, 2012. An exemption is only valid after obtaining written approval by the Wyoming Department of Education. The request may be submitted by e-mail to [jude.serrano@wyo.gov](mailto:jude.serrano@wyo.gov), by fax to 307-777-6234, Attention: Jude Serrano, or by mail to the Wyoming Department of Education, 2300 Capitol Avenue, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Hathaway, Cheyenne, WY 82002 Attention: Jude Serrano. *Insufficient student information or lack of current documentation will result in the return of the exemption request and may result in insufficient time to review and process the request.*

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### PARTICIPATION EXEMPTION CATEGORIES

**Medically Fragile Students:** Medical exemptions are available for students who have medical needs prohibiting instruction and who are not receiving Special Education services as homebound instruction. All medical exemption requests must be accompanied by documentation substantiating the inability of the student to participate in the assessment due to a medically fragile condition. A statement by the physician that the student should not participate is not sufficient nor is the developmental level of the student or current level of academic performance criteria for this exemption category. **Medical conditions must be sufficiently documented by a physician and must be current.**

**Expelled Students:** A student must be expelled for the duration of the PAWS administration window, which is **March 5 – March 30, 2012**, in order to meet criteria for this exemption category. A special education student, who is expelled, but is still receiving services, must be tested. Any other student expelled for the duration of the administration window and who receives an approved exemption will not be counted in the district and school reports or for any accountability decisions. Official documentation of dates of expulsion must be provided along with the district expulsion policy.

**English Learners (ELs) Students:** English Learners (ELs) are not exempt from the Wyoming Assessment System except for those students who have been enrolled in U.S. schools for less than one year as of March 25, 2012. Students, who are in their first year and qualify as EL students, may be exempt from the PAWS Reading test. However, they

must participate in the Wyoming assessment of English language proficiency, ACCESS for ELLS®, which is administered February 3 – March 27, 2012, in place of the PAWS Reading test. They must also participate in the Mathematics (grades 3 – 8, & 11) and Science (grades 4, 8, & 11) PAWS content tests. These students are **not exempt** from the PAWS Mathematics and Science content tests. Students are only counted as exempt if an exemption request has been approved by the Wyoming Department of Education and they participate in ACCESS for ELLS®. Official documentation of the date by which the student was enrolled in a U.S. school is to be provided.

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### STUDENTS ***NOT*** ELIGIBLE FOR EXEMPTION

All students are expected to participate in the Wyoming Assessment System. Every effort must be made to inform parents, guardians, and students of the testing calendar and to stress the importance of participation. Students in the following categories will be included in the school and district reports.

**Alternate Assessment Participation:** Students who are assessed on the alternate assessment as determined and documented by their IEP teams are not exempt from testing.

**Parent and/or Student Refusal:** Refusal to participate is not a valid reason for exemption.

**Homebound Students:** Homebound students receiving instruction are not exempt from testing. Please see *Expelled* and *Medical* categories.

**Students with Disabilities:** Students with disabilities are not exempt from testing. The participation guidelines as specified in the Wyoming Accommodations Manual for Instruction and Assessment found on the WDE website, [edu.wyoming.gov](http://edu.wyoming.gov). Participation in the Wyoming Assessment System must be consistent with what is documented in the Individualized Education Program. If you have further questions, please contact Jude Serrano at [jude.serrano@wyo.gov](mailto:jude.serrano@wyo.gov).

**Foreign Exchange Students:** Foreign exchange students are not automatically exempt. Only those students qualifying under the EL exemption above may be allowed to **not** participate in the Reading test of the general assessment, PAWS. A foreign exchange student, fluent in English, regardless of the years of instruction received in the United States, is not exempt from testing.

**Suspended Students:** Suspended students are not exempt from testing and will be counted in district and school reports or for any accountability decisions.

**Transfer Students:** A student transferring from a school or district in Wyoming during the time of testing must participate. Every effort should be made to complete testing at the new school.

**Vacationing Students:** Vacation is not a valid exemption.

## EXEMPTION REQUEST

**This request must be completed in its entirety and submitted with the required documentation by February 28, 2012.** Requests will be accepted after this date only in exceptional circumstances. The request may be submitted by e-mail to Jude Serrano, [jude.serrano@wyo.gov](mailto:jude.serrano@wyo.gov), by fax to (307) 777-6234, or by mail to the Wyoming Department of Education, 2300 Capitol Avenue, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Hathaway, Cheyenne, Wyoming 82002, Attention: Jude Serrano. Insufficient student information or lack of current, required documentation will result in the return of the exemption request.

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### DO NOT USE ABBREVIATIONS-PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ District Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
School Name: \_\_\_\_\_ School ID Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Submitted By: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number: (307) \_\_\_\_\_ Fax Number: (307) \_\_\_\_\_

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### STUDENT INFORMATION

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Student Grade Level: \_\_\_3\_\_\_ \_\_\_4\_\_\_ \_\_\_5\_\_\_ \_\_\_6\_\_\_ \_\_\_7\_\_\_ \_\_\_8\_\_\_ \_\_\_11\_\_\_  
Student WISER ID: \_\_\_\_\_ Student's Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

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### TYPE OF EXEMPTION

Please indicate the type of exemption that is requested and provide appropriate, current, official documentation. The WDE may require additional documentation. Disposition of your request will be sent to you by fax, mail or e-mail in a timely manner.

\_\_\_ **Expelled Student**

Official District Expulsion Policy Attached

Official Documentation Attached

Expulsion dates: **From** \_\_\_\_\_ **To** \_\_\_\_\_

Documentation must be attached. Failure to submit documentation will result in a denial of the exemption request.

\_\_\_ **Medically Fragile Student**

Medical Documentation Attached

Documentation must be attached. Failure to submit documentation will result in a denial of the exemption request.

\_\_\_ **ELL Student:** As of March 25, 2012, the student has been enrolled in U.S. schools for less than one year and qualifies as an ELL student.

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### FOR WDE USE ONLY

Reviewed by: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Request Disposition: Approved \_\_\_ Denied \_\_\_