



# Wyoming Department of Education **PRESS RELEASE**

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**Contact:**

**Tom Lacock**

(307) 777-5399

[tom.lacock@wyo.gov](mailto:tom.lacock@wyo.gov)

[edu.wyoming.gov](http://edu.wyoming.gov)

## **Wyoming juniors see ACT scores increase**

**CHEYENNE** - Results of Wyoming students who took the ACT suite of tests were made public today in Cheyenne by the ACT as well as the Wyoming Department of Education (WDE).

Scores for Wyoming junior class of 2013 saw improvement over a year ago, going from an average composite score of 19.4 in 2012 to a 19.7 this year. This year is the first in which the ACT acts as the state assessment for high school juniors, which meant all juniors in Wyoming were required to take the test to measure academic performance of the state's students. According to ACT, Wyoming is one of 12 states nationwide which has a statewide ACT testing program.

The 2013 scores represent a new benchmark for student performance reporting due to a policy change by ACT. For the first time, ACT has included students who received ACT-approved time accommodations in the state's average score. These students typically score lower than their peers who do not requiring time accommodations.

### **ACT Suite for Underclassmen**

The Wyoming Department of Education released this spring's district and school scores on the ACT suite of exams - EXPLORE (for 9th graders), PLAN (administered in 10th grade) and ACT (taken by 11th graders).

As required by the Wyoming Accountability in Education Act (WAEA), Wyoming districts administered the EXPLORE, PLAN, and ACT assessments to nearly all 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, and 11<sup>th</sup> graders in the spring of 2013. EXPLORE and PLAN assessments help predict college and career readiness, as well as performance on the 11th grade ACT. The EXPLORE and PLAN tests are both multiple choice tests administered to students using paper and pencil.

Although there are no comparative data for grades 9 and 10 statewide, results from the junior class this year show increases since 2012 in ACT performance in English, reading, science, and the overall composite, while the math average score remained unchanged (Chart 1). These increases were evident even though there are proportionately more juniors testing with the ACT than ever before; over 5,700 juniors tested on April 23 this year, with a participation rate of 97 percent (ACT and the state alternate assessment combined).

The juniors from Washakie District 2 had the state’s highest average composite score with a 22.4. Big Horn District 2 (21.5), Sublette District 1 (21.8), Teton District 1 (21.6), Sheridan 1 (21.3), Sheridan District 2 (21.2) and Fremont District 24 (21.1) all had an average composite score above 21.

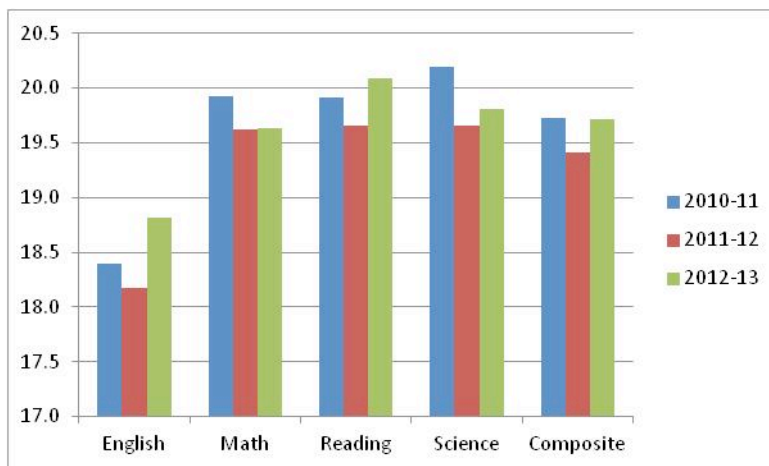
Results from the 2013 assessments are displayed in Table 1 below.

Table 1. ACT Suite Scale Scores, Spring 2013: Grades 9, 10, and 11

Test	English		Math		Reading		Science		Composite	
	# Tested	Score	# Tested	Score	# Tested	Score	# Tested	Score	# Tested	Score
Gr. 11 -- ACT	5724	18.8	5729	19.6	5724	20.1	5727	19.8	5722	19.7
Gr. 10 -- Plan	6052	17.6	6053	18.5	6050	17.9	6047	19.2	6046	18.4
Gr. 9 -- Explore	6566	16.2	6566	17.0	6561	16.1	6555	18.2	6549	17.0

Data from these assessments will be used by WDE in the new school accountability system required under WAEA, and they provide useful information to school districts as they gauge the rigor of their instructional programs and the alignment of those programs to the overall goal of college and career readiness. Chart 1.

Junior Class ACT Test Results, Three Year Trends



The Wyoming Department of Education’s release of student performance in grades 9, 10, and 11 can be found here:

ACT Suite Averages District Level

<https://portals.edu.wyoming.gov/Reports/Public/wde-reports-2012/public-reports/assessment/actsuiteaveragesdistrictlevel>

ACT Suite Averages School Level

<https://portals.edu.wyoming.gov/Reports/Public/wde-reports-2012/public-reports/assessment/actsuiteaverageschoollevel>

ACT Suite Averages State Level

<https://portals.edu.wyoming.gov/Reports/Public/wde-reports-2012/public-reports/assessment/actsuiteaveragesstatelevel>

### Graduating Class Data

Data released from the ACT for the “graduating class,” (or those who self-reported expecting to graduated with the 2013 class) showed scores have fallen in 2013 from an average composite score of 20.3 in 2012 to 19.8 in 2013. For the most part these students would have taken the test as juniors in 2012, but also may include students who voluntarily took the ACT as seniors.

The ACT is not mandatory for seniors in Wyoming and the state does not pay for the test to be taken by seniors.

Nationally, there was a decline in the average composite score, although performance of Wyoming graduates is lower across all subject areas as well as in the composite score.

In the information released by the ACT for Wyoming’s 2013 graduating class (Table 2, below), the average composite ACT score is 19.8. The national composite score is 20.9, with the highest average composite score in the country coming from Massachusetts, which tallied an average composite score of 24.1.

Year	Number of Students Tested		Average ACT Scores									
			English		Mathematics		Reading		Science		Composite	
	State	National	State	National	State	National	State	National	State	National	State	National
2009	5530	1480469	18.9	20.6	19.8	21.0	20.4	21.4	20.2	20.9	20.0	21.1
2010	5533	1568835	19.0	20.5	19.8	21.0	20.4	21.3	20.1	20.9	20.0	21.0
2011	5533	1623112	19.4	20.6	20.0	21.1	20.8	21.3	20.4	20.9	20.3	21.1
2012	5527	1666017	19.2	20.5	20.2	21.1	20.5	21.3	20.6	20.9	20.3	21.1
<b>2013</b>	<b>5896</b>	<b>1799243</b>	<b>18.6</b>	<b>20.2</b>	<b>19.7</b>	<b>20.9</b>	<b>20.2</b>	<b>21.1</b>	<b>20.0</b>	<b>20.7</b>	<b>19.8</b>	<b>20.9</b>

Table 2 below shows the percent of the 2013 graduating class who achieved scores that indicate “readiness” for college according to ACT’s research. Students meeting the readiness

benchmarks established by ACT have a 50 percent chance of obtaining a B or higher in college courses like English composition, biology, and algebra.

**Table 3. Five Years-Percent of 2013 Graduating Class Who Met College Readiness Benchmarks**

Year	Number of Students Tested		Percent Who Met Benchmarks									
			English		Mathematics		Reading		Science		Met All Four	
	State	National	State	National	State	National	State	National	State	National	State	National
2009	5530	1480469	57	67	33	42	45	53	22	28	17	23
2010	5533	1568835	58	66	34	43	45	52	23	29	17	24
2011	5533	1623112	61	66	36	45	49	52	24	30	18	25
2012	5527	1666017	60	67	38	46	46	52	28	31	20	25
<b>2013</b>	<b>5896</b>	<b>1799243</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>26</b>

Just one in five students taking the ACT in Wyoming’s graduating class of 2013 met the ACT college readiness benchmarks in all four content areas. While this percent is the same as last year’s graduating class, it compares to about one in four nationally. Wyoming’s seniors scored highest in English with 55 percent of ACT-tested graduates meeting college readiness in that subject. That number dropped to 39 percent in reading, which was impacted by the fact ACT raised its benchmark score from a 17 to an 18 in 2013, leading to an 8 point decline in reading nationwide.

Results of the ACT release of Wyoming data can be found at: <http://www.act.org/newsroom/data/2013/states/wyoming.html>. The ACT does not publish district or school data to the web - only statewide information is currently available.