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Frequently Asked Questions Regarding the 16:1 Student to Teacher Ratio Requirements

Q: What is the law or statute that requires calculating Student to Teacher ratio in Wyoming?

A: The implementation of the 16:1 Student to Teacher ratio is mandated by [W.S. § 21-13-307\(a\) \(iv\)](#).

Q: How is the ratio calculated?

A: Memo No. 2011-140 Calculation of 16 to 1 Student-to-Teacher Ratios under W.S. 21-13-307

(http://edu.wyoming.gov/wordpress/downloads/data/Memo_No_2011-140_Calculation_of_16_to_1_Student-to-Teacher_Ratios_under_W_S_21-13-307.pdf).

Q: Is the ratio calculated for all grades?

A: No, Student to Teacher Ratios are only calculated for grades Kindergarten through Three.

Q: Is the ratio calculated for all schools?

A: No, ratios are not calculated for charter schools established under [W.S. § 21-3-301 through 21-3-314](#). Additionally, schools that are designated as "Exceeding Expectations" pursuant to [W.S. § 21-2-204 \(e\) \(i\) \(A\)](#) are removed before the district ratio is calculated. K-2 schools that are paired with "Exceeding Expectations" schools will also be removed from the calculation.

Q: Is the average ratio calculated by district or by school?

A: This is a district average. [W.S. § 21-13-307\(a\)\(iv\)](#) requires the districts to provide evidence that the district has maintained an average student to teacher ratio of not greater than sixteen (16) to one (1) for the aggregate of all classes in kindergarten through

grade three (3) in the district.

Q: What date in the school year will the Department use to compute the student to teacher ratio?

A: October 1st for both core teachers and enrolled students.

Q: How does the Department get the data to make the calculations?

A: Education data are maintained by local school districts and reported to the Department. The Student to Teacher ratio is based on data submitted to the Department by each district through the WDE684 WISE Teacher/Course/Student and WDE602 WISE School District Staff Member Collections.

Q: Does the Department collect or use personally identifiable student or staff information in the 16:1 calculations?

A: Yes. The Department uses student and staff level information in the calculations. Everyone agrees on protecting identities, so the Department only reports aggregated data that do not reveal any personally identifiable information. Aggregated data are statistics that combine data from many students to allow for schools to make informed decisions about how to improve schools, while still protecting individual student or staff member privacy. For more information on how student privacy is protected, please see <http://edu.wyoming.gov/data/data-governance/>.

Q: When will district personnel have an opportunity to review the 16:1 calculation results?

A: A confidential embargoed release will begin on March 1, 2016. District administrators will have 10 business days to review their data. The data will be on the Wyoming Education Fusion portal and district users will need to log in to see their data.

Q: Will 16:1 class size ratios be publicly reported?

A: No, results will not be publicly distributed, however, aggregated results are shared with the Legislative Services Office and state legislators.

Q: Some districts have literacy tutors or math recovery and reading recovery teachers that serve kids within this grade range. Will these individuals be counted in the ratio or will the ratio be calculated strictly using “classroom” teachers?

A: The 16:1 computation will be based on core teachers only. Contributing professionals will not be used in the computation.

Q: Why is the 16:1 ratio based only on core teachers?

A: The 16:1 computation comes from the 16:1 funding for core teachers as defined in the Wyoming Education Funding Model.

Q: May the districts include other state funded teachers in this calculation?

A: No. The intent of this statutory requirement is for the Department to count only core teachers as calculated in the Wyoming Education Funding Model.

Q: May the districts include federally funded teachers in this calculation?

A: No. The Department will count only core teachers in this calculation.

Q: Are distance education students included in the calculations?

A: Yes, they are. The Wyoming Department of Education acknowledges two related requirements for K-3 classes in Wyoming. [W.S. § 21-13-307\(a\) \(iv\)](#) requires an average student-teacher ratio of 16:1 for the aggregate of all K-3 classes in your district. Per [W.S. § 21-2-202\(a\)\(xxxi\)](#) the Wyoming Department of Education promulgated Chapter 41 rules which also includes a maximum cap of 25:1 for each distance education course.

Q: Will the Department round the number or use a “major fraction”?

A: Yes, The WDE interprets this staffing requirement to read each school must achieve a 16.49 (or lower)-to-1 student to teacher ratio in grades K-3.

Q: What if a district does not meet the required ratio?

A: A district may apply for a waiver as outlined in [W.S. § 21-13-307\(a\) \(iv\)](#). Additional information on waivers can be found at: <http://edu.wyoming.gov/data/161-waiver/>

Q: When may a district apply for a waiver?

A: The Department encourages the districts to apply for waivers soon after they receive notification from the Department of their official ratio. However, a district must apply for a waiver no later than April 11, 2016.

For more information on the K-3 Student to Teacher Ratio, contact Julie Magee at (307) 777-8740 or julie.magee@wyo.gov.