

Wyoming Department of Education 2014 State Plan for Nominating Schools for the Blue Ribbon Recognition Program

The Wyoming Department of Education will use a combination of ranking of schools based on performance on the state's Annual Content Assessment, (Performance Assessment for Wyoming Students – PAWS – for grades 3-8 and ACT for Grade 11), and the state's Wyoming Accountability in Education Act (WAEA) school ratings for the 2014 Blue Ribbon Schools Program nominations. The PAWS assessment tests Reading and Math in Grades 3-8 and Science in Grades 4 and 8. Act tests Reading, Writing, Math and Science. Ranking for all eligible schools for both PAWS and ACT is based on Reading and Math only. The methodology that is used for ranking schools is the same as was used for determining the Persistently Lowest Achieving (PLA) schools for the Title I 1003(g) School Improvement Grants. This methodology is described in Appendix A.

Wyoming does not have an ESEA Flexibility Waiver at this time. Wyoming does, however, have a state education accountability law, the WAEA. Thus, schools in Wyoming are held accountable under the ESEA requirements and under the state requirements in WAEA. The WAEA can be accessed at the following link: <http://legisweb.state.wy.us/statutes/statutes.aspx?file=titles/Title21/T21CH2AR2.htm>. Under WAEA, there are four categories of school ranking. These are: Exceeds Expectations, Meets Expectations, Partially Meets Expectations, and Does Not Meet Expectations. Only Exceeds Expectations schools will be eligible for Blue Ribbon School nomination.

Due to the unavailability of longitudinal data to determine achievement gap closure under WAEA, Wyoming will only be nominating schools in the "High Performing Schools" category in 2014. In order to be considered eligible for a Blue Ribbon Schools nomination under the High Performing School category, a school must be rated as an Exceeds Expectations School under WAEA, meet all the Blue Ribbon School qualifications and be one of the three top ranked schools based on performance ranking in the state. All schools will be ranked (see Appendix A for ranking methodology), but only those schools that have enrollment of 100 or more students with 10 or more students tested in each tested grade will be eligible for Blue Ribbon School nomination. Subgroups for 2014 will be the subgroups as defined under the ESEA and graduation rates will be using the most recently defined federal definition for Graduation Rates (see <http://edu.wyoming.gov/data/graduation-rates/> for information about graduation rates calculations in Wyoming).