

# WDE PLA Definition

In an effort to blend State and Federal requirements and to create a unified comprehensive system for assisting persistently lowest-achieving schools, Wyoming has one definition and method of identifying Tier I, II, and III schools for School Improvement Grants and also for Race to the Top and State Fiscal Stabilization funding.

In the December 2009 School Improvement Grants Application for funding under Section 1003(g) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA):

School Improvement Grants, authorized under section 1003(g) of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (Title I or ESEA), are grants, through State educational agencies (SEAs), to local educational agencies (LEAs) for use in Title I schools identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring that demonstrate the greatest need for the funds and the strongest commitment to use the funds to provide adequate resources in order to raise substantially the achievement of their students so as to enable the schools to make adequate yearly progress and exit improvement status.

Selecting schools eligible for funding requires that the SEA identify three levels of need described as Tier I, II, and III schools, the basis for the identification of those schools is as follows:

## Identifying Tier I Schools

Tier I schools consist of the following:

Any Title I school in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring that —

1. Is among the lowest-achieving five percent of Title I schools in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring or the lowest-achieving five Title I schools in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring in the State, whichever number of schools is greater, based the ranking of the “all-students” group in reading and math on the School Academic Achievement and Progress Ranking of all Wyoming Schools; or
2. Is a high school that has had a graduation rate as defined in 34 C.F.R. § 200.19(b) that is less than 60 percent two out of the last three years.

## Identifying Tier II Schools

Tier II schools consist of the following:

Any secondary school that is eligible for, but does not receive, Title I funds that —

1. Is among the lowest-achieving five percent of secondary schools or the lowest-achieving five secondary schools in the State that are eligible for, but do not receive, Title I funds, whichever number of schools is greater, based the ranking of the “all-students” group in reading and math on the School Academic Achievement and Progress Ranking of all Wyoming Schools; or
2. Is a high school that has had a graduation rate as defined in 34 C.F.R. § 200.19(b) that is less than 60 percent two out of the last three years.

## Identifying Tier III Schools

# WDE PLA Definition

Tier III schools consist of the following:

Is any Title I school in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring; or

1. Is a Title I eligible school among the lowest quintile (20%) of performance based the ranking of the “all-students” group in reading and math on the School Academic Achievement and Progress Ranking of all Wyoming Schools; and
2. Does not meet the requirements to be a Tier I or Tier II school.

Calculation of a valid comparative metric for Wyoming schools’ Academic Achievement (performance) on PAWS (Wyoming’s state assessment) for each subject tested:

1. **Statewide Percent Proficient by Grade:** The statewide percentage of students testing proficient in each grade. All students tested in Wyoming public schools are included.
2. **Weighted Average Statewide Percent Proficient:** As testing for each grade level is independent of testing at other grade levels, the enrollment-by-grade makeup of each school must be taken into account to create a performance measure that will be valid for performance comparison of all Wyoming schools. To accomplish this need, the Statewide Percent Proficient by Grade values for each grade served by a school are averaged, weighted by the percentage of students enrolled in each grade served.
  - a. Examples:
    - i. Suppose that Statewide Percent Proficient by Grade is 50% for fourth grade and 60% for fifth grade.
    - ii. Example 1: A school serves only the fourth and fifth grades with enrollment of 50 fourth grade students and 50 fifth grade students.
      1. Half (50%) the students are enrolled in fourth grade, and half are enrolled in fifth grade.
      2. With equal enrollment weighting (half the 100 total students are in each grade), the weighted average target likewise becomes the halfway point between the fourth grade and fifth grade Statewide Percent Proficient by Grade values (50% and 60%, respectively). This halfway point, the Weighted Average Statewide Percent Proficient, is then 55%.
        - a. Mathematically, this 55% weighted average is calculated as [ (50 fourth grade students \* 50% Statewide Percent Proficient by Grade for fourth grade) + (50 fifth grade students \* 60% Statewide Percent Proficient by Grade for fifth grade) ] divided by 100 students total enrolled in the school.
    - iii. Example 2: A school serves only the fourth grade, with a total enrollment of 100 fourth grade students.
      1. With all 100 students enrolled in fourth grade, the Statewide Percent Proficient by Grade for fourth grade of 50% becomes the Weighted Average Statewide Percent Proficient for the school.

## WDE PLA Definition

3. **Relative Proficiency Performance:** The comparative final metric, this is the difference between the percent of students proficient in a school and the Weighted Average Statewide Percent Proficient applicable to the school's particular enrollment-by-grade makeup.
  - a. Relative Proficiency Performance values are calculated as positive or negative percentages. The higher a positive percentage, the better a school's performance on current year testing. The lower a negative percentage, the more a school is in need of improvement.
  - b. Relative Proficiency Performance values are then ranked. The higher the percentage, the lower the ranking, and the better the performance. The lower the percentage, the higher the ranking, and the more improvement is needed.

Calculation of a valid comparative metric for Wyoming schools' Progress in performance on PAWS (Wyoming's state assessment) for each subject tested:

1. As described within Wyoming's Academic Achievement metric overview, the Relative Proficiency Performance values are calculated by subject and school year for each Wyoming school.
2. **Performance Trend Value:** A three year performance trend value (linear regression slope) is then calculated for each school.
  - a. A positive Performance Trend Values indicates that a school has a positive three year performance trend (performance is increasing). Likewise, a negative value indicates a decreasing performance trend. The higher the Performance Trend Value, the larger the relative three year performance gain trend, and vice-versa.
  - b. Performance Trend Value figures are then ranked. The higher the figure the lower the ranking, and the better the performance. The lower the figure, the higher the ranking, and the more improvement is needed.

Overall ranking of schools for identification of "persistently lowest-achieving schools" then takes place for two groupings: all-schools, and by-school-category (secondary schools, etc.)

1. **School Academic Achievement and Progress Ranking:** The average of the four calculated Academic Achievement and Progress rankings:
  - a. Math Academic Achievement Ranking
  - b. Reading Academic Achievement Ranking
  - c. Math Progress Ranking
  - d. Reading Progress Ranking
2. Methodology remains the same across the four component rankings and the final School Academic Achievement and Progress Ranking in that the higher the ranking, the lower the performance and the greater the need for improvement.