

Chapter 10

Wyoming Content and Performance Standards

STATEMENT OF REASONS

Pursuant to Wyo. Stat. § 21-2-304(a)(iii), the Wyoming State Board of Education must prescribe uniform student content and performance standards for the common core of knowledge specified by Wyo. Stat. § 21-9-101(b)(i). The common core of knowledge includes Reading/Language Arts, Social Studies, Mathematics, Science, Fine and Performing Arts, Physical Education, Health and Safety, Humanities, Career/Vocational Education, Foreign Cultures and Languages, Applied Technology, and Government and Civics.

After careful consideration, and with support from members of the Standards Review Committee and input from school districts and the public at large, the Wyoming State Board of Education approved proposing the following amendments to the standards on April 20, 2018.

The Board is promulgating revised rules for the Wyoming Content and Performance Standards for the content areas of Mathematics and Social Studies. These standards define the knowledge and skills students should know and be able to do throughout their K-12 education so they can graduate from high school able to succeed in college and career. The Science Extended Standards for students with significant cognitive disabilities are also being promulgated. These standards were built from the general science standards which were approved in 2016 and extend the standards to make them accessible to those students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.

In developing the standards for each of the content areas of Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science Extended Standards, the Wyoming Department of Education, on the Board's behalf, convened a standards review committee composed of 18-40 members, which included educators, professors, parents, and business/community members. The Math Standards Review Committee had 40 members; the Social Studies Review Committee had 25 members; and the Science Extended Review Committee had 18 members. Prior to the committee's first meeting, the Department collected input online and held five community input meetings to inform the public of the upcoming review process and to solicit information for the standards review committees' consideration. Following the work of the committee, the Department also collected input online and held five public input hearings, plus an additional public meeting in Fremont County on the Social Studies Proposed Standards, to inform the public and gather feedback from the public for the Board's consideration when voting whether to adopt the proposed standards in the content areas of Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science Extended.

Additional changes to these rules include the following, which will ultimately simplify and reduce the length of these rules:

- removing past approval dates, which are no longer relevant and potentially confusing to readers (the date the standards were developed is more salient for users);

- removing the implementation dates, which are already explicit in the standards document;
- adding reference to the 2018 Science Extended Standards
- replacing reference to 2012 Math Standards with 2018 Math Standards
- replacing reference to 2014 Social Studies Standards with 2018 Additions to Social Studies Standards
- changing how standards are identified by including the year of adoption in the title of the content standards. Previously, they were identified in the rules by date of amendment. Moving forward, it is simpler and clearer to appropriately title the standards document being incorporated and identify the matter by its title. For example, the most recent science standards are identified as the “2016 Wyoming Science Content and Performance Standards.” The agency believes this practice is more logical and accessible to the public.

The Board previously revised the process for compiling public comments to more adequately inform the public of the nature of the comments and the reasons for either adopting or rejecting the comment. This process includes articulating comments separately even if they were part of a single submission that addressed several topics, grouping substantially identical comments together with a single response, and organizing the comments and responses into comment, discussion, and changes sections. These changes should make it easier to understand the comments received and the agency's response to those comments. Comments received in this rulemaking will be addressed accordingly.

These rules meet the minimum substantive state statutory requirements and are within the Board and Department's statutory authority. No part of this action should be interpreted as any attempt to dictate curriculum at the local or state level.