

WDE FAQ

Assessment *updated 8/15/2021*

What Tests do Students Take?

Wyoming students take a variety of tests that are used to measure student achievement and growth:

- **School-level:** Classroom quizzes and tests are given by teachers to assess general daily learning. Schools may also create school-wide or grade-level assessments.
- **District-level:** MAP, DIBELS, STAR, et. al. Districts use computerized tests to gauge how well students are learning reading, math, and science. Districts may also create district wide or grade-level assessments.
- **State-level:** **The State Assessment System** includes WY-TOPP, ACT®, WY-ALT (for students with significant cognitive disabilities), ACCESS for ELLs, and ALT ACCESS. Wyoming statewide tests are objective, standardized measures of student achievement on proficiency standards. Students, families, teachers, and administrators use statewide test results as part of a comprehensive system for evaluating learning.

What Statewide Tests Are Students Expected to Take?

Students in grades 3-10 take the Wyoming Test of Proficiency and Progress (WY-TOPP) in reading and math. Writing is tested in grades 3, 5, 7, and 9. Students in grades 4, 8, and 10 take the science portion of WY-TOPP. Students in grade 11 take the ACT. These standardized tests are indicators of college readiness and student achievement in English, math, reading, science, and writing.

How Are Statewide Test Results Used?

WY-TOPP and ACT results are used to help evaluate a school's strengths and weaknesses, and to produce a school performance rating. Parents receive an individual student report which outlines their child's performance level in each area tested.

WY-TOPP and ACT scores have no direct effect on student grades.

Who Decides What is on the Statewide Test?

The Wyoming Department of Education (WDE) works with Cambium Assessment Inc., (CAI) (formerly American Institutes for Research (AIR)) to craft WY-TOPP and WY-ALT. The WDE decides the content on each test to ensure the questions accurately measure [Wyoming Standards](#). ACT Inc. creates the ACT. Wyoming does not develop or have input in the content of this test.

Does the Every Student Succeeds Act Affect Statewide Testing?

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) reinforces the authority of states to decide which statewide assessments are the most appropriate for its students. It requires annual testing and reporting in reading and math in grades 3-8 and once in high school. Science is also assessed once each in elementary, middle, and high school. ESSA does not include provisions for opting out of statewide assessments, and it maintains the 95 percent student participation requirement.

What Tests do Students Learning English Take?

Students who are English Learners (EL aka ELL) take the ACCESS for ELLs which stands for “Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners.” States are mandated to identify and annually administer a standards-based English language proficiency exam in four domains: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. This assessment is given to students in grades K-12 to assess their progress in learning English. This does not replace the state English Language Arts (ELA) tests (WY-TOPP) required by state law.

Who Decides What is on the Access for ELLS?

The Wyoming Department of Education (WDE) works with WIDA (World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment), which is an educational consortium of state departments of education to obtain the ACCESS for ELLs. WIDA provides a flexible suite of tests that are suitable for all students. The content of the assessments align with the five WIDA English Language Development (ELD) Standards:

- Social & Instructional Language
- Language of Language Arts
- Language of Mathematics
- Language of Science
- Language of Social Studies

Where Can I Find Important Resources for the Test Administrators of Access for ELLS?

Test administrators can find the following information:

- WIDA Checklist on the WIDA website on the State webpage.
 - The WIDA Website: <https://wida.wisc.edu/>
- EL and Title III Guidebook found on the WDE English Learner webpage under Wyoming Guidance and Resources. A Home Language Survey (HLS) template can be found in the back of the Guidebook.
- WIDA Assessment Management System (AMS) User Guide.
- Test Administrator Manual which can be found in the Download Library in the secure portal on the WIDA website, under the header ‘ACCESS for ELLs’.
- English Learner (EL) webpage.
 - [English Learner Guidebook](#)