

WDE FAQ

Standards *updated 8/15/2022*

What Are Content Standards?

Content Standards, aka Standards, define what students are expected to know and be able to do by the end of the grade band or grade level in each subject. They explain the knowledge, concepts, and skills that students should acquire. Standards are built foundationally and then in learning progressions. They do not dictate the methodology or the instructional materials to be used, nor how the material is delivered. Standards do not define all that can or should be taught; they simply outline end-of-year expectations. For example: In science, a student should be able to develop a simple model that mimics the function of an animal dispersing seeds or pollinating plants by the end of 2nd grade.

What Are Performance Standards?

Performance Standards (PS) are developed after the Standards Review Committee finalizes the Content Standards and Performance Level Descriptors (PLDs). The PS are a subset of the Content Standards which all students are expected to learn and be assessed on through the District Assessment System (DAS) by the end of the grade band or grade level. The PS specify the specific degree of understanding or demonstration of the knowledge and/or skill for a particular content standard. As such, they employ clear action verbs and describe “how good is good enough.”

The Proficient PLD is the Performance Standard expectation by which to measure student achievement. For the PS, the Content Standard code is marked with an asterisk (*) and blue highlight, and the Proficient PLD statement is highlighted in blue.

Districts are expected to give students multiple opportunities to demonstrate proficiency on the PS through the DAS and to provide appropriate supports for student success. Teachers should provide extra focus, targeted supports, and offer multiple opportunities to demonstrate student understanding and proficiency. These PS can be assessed through the DAS in a variety of ways, including through formative assessments, benchmark and interim assessments, as well as summative assessments.

The 2019 Computer Science Performance Standards need to be fully implemented by the 2022-23 school year. The Math and Science Performance Standards need to be implemented by the 2024-25 school year.

What are Performance Level Descriptors?

Performance Level Descriptors (PLDs) describe the performance expectations of students for each of the four performance level categories: advanced, proficient, basic, and below basic. These are a description of what students within each performance level are expected to know and be able to do.

What Are Extended Standards?

The Wyoming Extended Standards (WYES, aka Extended Standards) define the essential knowledge and skills that allow students with the most significant cognitive disabilities to achieve high academic expectations and to access the general academic curriculum. The WYES are linked to the grade-level Wyoming Content and Performance Standards (WYCPS). The Extended Standards provide a common set of goals and expectations for all students with the most significant cognitive disabilities in Wyoming.

Who Uses the Extended Standards?

The Extended Standards provide a framework for instruction of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities and assists school districts, schools, and communities in developing and strengthening curriculum, rather than prescribing courses, materials, or instructional methodology. The Extended Standards specify the essential learning for all students with significant cognitive disabilities. Teachers use the Extended Standards to ensure students can access academic content using a wide range of instructional strategies, assistive technology, and other accommodations based on a student's individual learning characteristics and present levels of performance.

Which Subjects Are Tied to State Standards?

In Wyoming, there are currently 10 content areas: science, mathematics, language arts, health, fine & performing arts, physical education, social studies, career & vocational education, foreign language, and computer science. Each content area has its own set of standards. The Wyoming Department of Education has a page dedicated to the [Wyoming Content and Performance Standards](#). On this page, under Resources, both the WYCPS and the WYES can be found in a Microsoft Excel workbook.

Who Has Authority Over Wyoming's Standards?

The State Board of Education (SBE) oversees the review of, and approves, the Wyoming Content and Performance Standards. The SBE determines the school year by which new standards are to be fully implemented, but local school boards, district and building administrators, and teachers determine how they will be implemented. This includes curriculum choices and instructional methods.

How Often Are the Content Standards Reviewed in Wyoming?

The state standards are reviewed every nine years at a minimum. The SBE-approved [Standards Review Timeline](#), [Implementation Timeline](#), and other resources can be found on the [Standards Webpage](#).

What is the Process to Change or Adopt New Standards in Wyoming?

When the standards in a content area are up for review, the SBE convenes a committee comprised of Wyoming teachers, leaders, post-secondary educators, parents, and business and community members. This committee reviews the standards and makes proposed changes to be presented to the Board. Following a 45-day public review, the SBE can ask for further review, decide to make changes based on public and educator input, or vote to move the standards forward to rules promulgation, which triggers a 45-day public comment period. After considering all public comments, the SBE votes on whether to adopt the proposed standards. If they vote in the affirmative, the rules and the standards proceed to the Governor, who then has 75 days to review and sign them.

What is Curriculum?

Curriculum refers to the methods and materials used to deliver instruction related to the standards. This includes locally approved textbooks, worksheets, lab kits, novels, software programs, and other materials used by teachers.

Who Has Authority Over Curriculum And Instruction in Wyoming?

Local school boards, district and building administrators, and teachers make decisions related to curriculum and instruction. Neither the Wyoming Department of Education nor the United States Department of Education has the authority to make these decisions for school districts.