

State of Wyoming

Consolidated State Application Accountability Workbook

2005-2006 Revisions

for State Grants under Title IX, Part C, Section 9302 of the Elementary and
Secondary Education Act (Public Law 107-110)

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2006-2007 REVISED SUBMISSION July 19, 2006



**U. S. Department of Education
Office of Elementary and Secondary Education**

Washington, D.C. 20202
Instructions for Completing Consolidated State Application
Accountability Workbook

By January 31, 2003, States must complete and submit to the Department this Consolidated State Application Accountability Workbook. We understand that some of the critical elements for the key principles may still be under consideration and may not yet be final State policy by the January 31 due date. States that do not have final approval for some of these elements or that have not finalized a decision on these elements by January 31 should, when completing the Workbook, indicate the status of each element which is not yet official State policy and provide the anticipated date by which the proposed policy will become effective. In each of these cases, States must include a timeline of steps to complete to ensure that such elements are in place by May 1, 2003, and implemented during the 2002-2003 school year. By no later than May 1, 2003, States must submit to the Department final information for all sections of the Consolidated State Application Accountability Workbook.

Transmittal Instructions

To expedite the receipt of this Consolidated State Application Accountability Workbook, please send your submission via the Internet as a .doc file, pdf file, rtf or .txt file or provide the URL for the site where your submission is posted on the Internet. Send electronic submissions to conapp@ed.gov.

A State that submits only a paper submission should mail the submission by express courier to:

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400 Maryland Ave., SW
Room 3W300
Washington, D.C. 20202-6400
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PART I: Summary of Required Elements for State Accountability Systems

Instructions

The following chart is an overview of States' implementation of the critical elements required for approval of their State accountability systems. States must provide detailed implementation information for each of these elements in Part II of this Consolidated State Application Accountability Workbook.

For each of the elements listed in the following chart, States should indicate the current implementation status in their State using the following legend:

- F:** State has a final policy, approved by all the required entities in the State (e.g., State Board of Education, State Legislature), for implementing this element in its accountability system.

- P:** State has a proposed policy for implementing this element in its accountability system, but must still receive approval by required entities in the State (e.g., State Board of Education, State Legislature).

- W:** State is still working on formulating a policy to implement this element in its accountability system.

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Summary of Implementation Status for Required Elements of State Accountability Systems

Status	State Accountability System Element	
Principle 1: All Schools		
F	1.1	Accountability system includes all schools and districts in the state.
F	1.2	Accountability system holds all schools to the same criteria.
F	1.3	Accountability system incorporates the academic achievement standards.
F	1.4	Accountability system provides information in a timely manner.
F	1.5	Accountability system includes report cards.
F	1.6	Accountability system includes rewards and sanctions.
Principle 2: All Students		
F	2.1	The accountability system includes all students
F	2.2	The accountability system has a consistent definition of full academic year.
F	2.3	The accountability system properly includes mobile students.
Principle 3: Method of AYP Determinations		
F	3.1	Accountability system expects all student subgroups, public schools, and LEAs to reach proficiency by 2013-14.
F	3.2	Accountability system has a method for determining whether student subgroups, public schools, and LEAs made adequate yearly progress.
F	3.2a	Accountability system establishes a starting point.
F	3.2b	Accountability system establishes statewide annual measurable objectives.
F	3.2c	Accountability system establishes intermediate goals.
Principle 4: Annual Decisions		
F	4.1	The accountability system determines annually the progress of schools and districts.

STATUS Legend:

- F – Final state policy
- P – Proposed policy, awaiting State approval
- W – Working to formulate policy

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Principle 5: Subgroup Accountability

F	5.1	The accountability system includes all the required student subgroups.
F	5.2	The accountability system holds schools and LEAs accountable for the progress of student subgroups.
F	5.3	The accountability system includes students with disabilities.
F	5.4	The accountability system includes limited English proficient students.
F	5.5	The State has determined the minimum number of students sufficient to yield statistically reliable information for each purpose for which disaggregated data are used.
F	5.6	The State has strategies to protect the privacy of individual students in reporting achievement results and in determining whether schools and LEAs are making adequate yearly progress on the basis of disaggregated subgroups.

Principle 6: Based on Academic Assessments

F	6.1	Accountability system is based primarily on academic assessments.
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Principle 7: Additional Indicators

F	7.1	Accountability system includes graduation rate for high schools.
F	7.2	Accountability system includes an additional academic indicator for elementary and middle schools.
F	7.3	Additional indicators are valid and reliable.

Principle 8: Separate Decisions for Reading/Language Arts and Mathematics

F	8.1	Accountability system holds students, schools and districts separately accountable for reading/language arts and mathematics.
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Principle 9: System Validity and Reliability

F	9.1	Accountability system produces reliable decisions.
F	9.2	Accountability system produces valid decisions.
F	9.3	State has a plan for addressing changes in assessment and student population.

Principle 10: Participation Rate

F	10.1	Accountability system has a means for calculating the rate of participation in the statewide assessment.
F	10.2	Accountability system has a means for applying the 95% assessment criteria to student subgroups and small schools.

STATUS Legend:

- F – Final policy
- P – Proposed Policy, awaiting State approval
- W– Working to formulate policy

PART II: State Response and Activities for Meeting State Accountability System Requirements

Instructions

In Part II of this Workbook, States are to provide detailed information for each of the critical elements required for State accountability systems. States should answer the questions asked about each of the critical elements in the State's accountability system. States that do not have final approval for any of these elements or that have not finalized a decision on these elements by January 31, 2003, should, when completing this section of the Workbook, indicate the status of each element that is not yet official State policy and provide the anticipated date by which the proposed policy will become effective. In each of these cases, States must include a timeline of steps to complete to ensure that such elements are in place by May 1, 2003, and implemented during the 2002-2003 school year. By no later than May 1, 2003, States must submit to the Department final information for all sections of the Consolidated State Application Accountability Workbook.

PRINCIPLE 1. A single statewide Accountability System applied to all public schools and LEAs.

CRITICAL ELEMENT	EXAMPLES FOR MEETING STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS	EXAMPLES OF NOT MEETING REQUIREMENTS
<p>1.1 How does the State Accountability System include every public school and LEA in the State?</p>	<p>Every public school and LEA is required to make adequate yearly progress and is included in the State Accountability System.</p> <p>State has a definition of “public school” and “LEA” for AYP accountability purposes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The State Accountability System produces AYP decisions for all public schools, including public schools with variant grade configurations (e.g., K-12), public schools that serve special populations (e.g., alternative public schools, juvenile institutions, state public schools for the blind) and public charter schools. It also holds accountable public schools with no grades assessed (e.g., K-2). 	<p>A public school or LEA is not required to make adequate yearly progress and is not included in the State Accountability System.</p> <p>State policy systematically excludes certain public schools and/or LEAs.</p>

STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS

Element 1.1

Wyoming’s accountability system includes every public school and LEA in the state. According to Wyoming Statute 21-2-304 (a), beginning with spring 2006, every Wyoming public school student enrolled in grades three (3) through eight (8) and grade eleven (11) is required to participate in the Proficiency Assessments for Wyoming Students (PAWS) and be assessed in reading, writing, and mathematics. The final administration of the previous assessment system, Wyoming Comprehensive Assessment System (WyCAS) was in the spring 2005. Beginning in spring 2007 all Wyoming public school students enrolled in fourth, eighth, and eleventh grades are required to participate in the state science assessment. This requirement is further supported by Wyoming State Board Rules, Chapter 6. All institutions serving neglected and delinquent populations are subject to accreditation requirements of the Wyoming State Board of Education and are also required to have their students participate in PAWS each year.

In Wyoming there are schools that are K-2 grade configurations. These schools are “paired” with a school that includes a tested grade for purposes of accountability. For example, several LEAs have organized their elementary schools so that students attend grade K-2 in one building and then move to a different building for grades 3-5. In this case, the AYP results for the 3-5 school

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are used to hold the K-2 school accountable as well. The rationale for this is quite simple; teachers in the two different schools need to be communicating across buildings to plan their curricular and instructional sequences. Holding both schools equally accountable for the 3-5 school results should help foster this communication.

The following is a list of Wyoming schools that do not contain any of the currently assessed grades and the school with which they are paired for accountability purposes.

School ID	School Name	Grades Served	Accountability Related School	School ID
501002	Douglas Primary School	K-2	Douglas Intermediate School	501010
801007	Lincoln Elementary	K-2	Trail Elementary	801006
1101021	Lebhart Elementary	K-2	Fairview Elementary	1101013
1601003	Libbey Elementary	K-2	West Elementary	1601005
2001010	Jackson Elementary	K-2	Colter Elementary	2001009
2104001	Mountain View Elementary	K-2	Fort Bridger Elementary	2104002
2301003	Newcastle Elementary K-2	K-2	Gertrude Burns Intermediate	2301001

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CRITICAL ELEMENT	EXAMPLES FOR MEETING STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS	EXAMPLES OF NOT MEETING REQUIREMENTS
1.2 How are all public schools and LEAs held to the same criteria when making an AYP determination?	<p>All public schools and LEAs are systematically judged on the basis of the same criteria when making an AYP determination.</p> <p>If applicable, the AYP definition is integrated into the State Accountability System.</p>	Some public schools and LEAs are systematically judged on the basis of alternate criteria when making an AYP determination.

STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS

Element 1.2

Wyoming uses the same PAWS test data, the same AYP computational formula, and the same decision-making processes regarding accountability decisions for every school and LEA in Wyoming. See Principle 3 for an explanation of Wyoming’s AYP methodology. Beginning in 2006, test data will come from the PAWS.

At present, Wyoming’s AYP system constitutes the state’s accountability system, and is used to hold every public school and LEA accountable effective with the 2004-2005 school year and each school year thereafter. (W.S. 21-2-304 (a)(vi)).

Wyoming is continuing its work to build a broader statewide accountability system that fully merges AYP and additional state systems. PAWS is a statewide assessment system that can ensure the most valid and reliable accountability determinations to improve student achievement and will provide data to determine both absolute performance and progress of the same students over time. Furthermore, the Wyoming State Legislature enacted legislation that requires the establishment of a statewide assessment system that can best measure individual student performance, including progress over time, and a statewide accountability system based on AYP as well as data from Wyoming’s Body of Evidence system and other related sources that can improve the reliability of accountability determinations. These revised statewide assessment and accountability systems will be developed as Wyoming develops and implements its annual state assessments for grades 3 through 8 and grade 11. Wyoming is continuing to explore the feasibility of this broader accountability system.

CRITICAL ELEMENT	EXAMPLES FOR MEETING STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS	EXAMPLES OF NOT MEETING REQUIREMENTS
<p>1.3 Does the State have, at a minimum, a definition of <i>basic</i>, <i>proficient</i> and <i>advanced</i> student achievement levels in reading/language arts and mathematics?</p>	<p>State has defined three levels of student achievement: <i>basic</i>, <i>proficient</i> and <i>advanced</i>.¹</p> <p>Student achievement levels of <i>proficient</i> and <i>advanced</i> determine how well students are mastering the materials in the State’s academic content standards; and the <i>basic</i> level of achievement provides complete information about the progress of lower-achieving students toward mastering the <i>proficient</i> and <i>advanced</i> levels.</p>	<p>Standards do not meet the legislated requirements.</p>

STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS

Element 1.3

Wyoming’s standards and assessment system was fully approved in February 2000 by the U.S. Department of Education under the Improving America’s Schools Act of 1994 and has been included in Wyoming State Board of Education Rules, Chapter 31, since that time as well. Wyoming’s new statewide assessment system (PAWS) underwent peer review by the USED in February 2006 and will be reviewed again in May 2006. Wyoming’s achievement standards currently include four levels of performance—below basic, basic, proficient, and advanced—in nine content areas. These achievement descriptors were constructed and endorsed by representative groups of Wyoming educators and stakeholders to represent how well students are performing in relation to the Wyoming content standards. Wyoming believes that the state’s achievement standards meet the criterion set forth by USED with regard to rigor and clarity.

In the summer of 2002, Wyoming’s standards in all nine content areas were reviewed and revised, and the “partially proficient” achievement standard was renamed to “basic.” Further, because Wyoming’s standards were benchmarked at grades 4, 8, and 11, committees drafted grade-level expectations in language arts and mathematics for grades K-8 so grade-level, standards-based assessments could be designed to fulfill the requirements of NCLB. These revisions were formally adopted by the Wyoming State Board of Education at its July 2003 meeting as part of Wyoming State Board of Education Rules, Chapter 31.

¹ System of State achievement standards will be reviewed by the Standards and Assessments Peer Review. The Accountability Peer Review will determine that achievement levels are used in determining AYP.

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CRITICAL ELEMENT	EXAMPLES FOR MEETING STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS	EXAMPLES OF NOT MEETING REQUIREMENTS
1.4 How does the State provide accountability and adequate yearly progress decisions and information in a timely manner?	<p>State provides decisions about adequate yearly progress in time for LEAs to implement the required provisions before the beginning of the next academic year.</p> <p>State allows enough time to notify parents about public school choice or supplemental educational service options, time for parents to make an informed decision, and time to implement public school choice and supplemental educational services.</p>	Timeline does not provide sufficient time for LEAs to fulfill their responsibilities before the beginning of the next academic year.

STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS

Element 1.4

In 2006, Wyoming’s new Proficiency Assessments for Wyoming Students (PAWS) will be administered during the first three weeks of April. The assessment results will be returned by the testing contractor to the State by June 6, 2006. Because this is the first administration of PAWS, the final standards setting process will have to be conducted. This process will be held on June 13 & 14, 2006. The final PAWS results will be delivered to the State and the LEAs by, early August, 2006. Wyoming will then release the results of the 2006 “preliminary” AYP determinations to schools and LEAs by August 1, 2006. The AYP determinations are considered “preliminary” in the sense that each LEA has the opportunity to review its AYP data and appeal its AYP determinations, if appropriate, prior to those determinations being released as “final.” LEAs will have a fifteen-day review period beginning August 1 and ending August 15, 2006. With Wyoming’s new assessment system, the two-week window for LEAs to review their data will be sufficient as the Wyoming Department of Education will already be working with the LEAs during the previous two months to clean all student demographic data; therefore, there will be fewer discrepancies to be reviewed during the two-week window. AYP determinations will become final after August 15, and the final school/LEA AYP determinations will be released to the public on August 18, 2006.

Beginning with the 2007 PAWS and each year thereafter, the testing contractor will deliver the PAWS results to the State and the LEAs by June 1. LEAs will receive their preliminary AYP determinations by July 15. The LEAs will have a fifteen-day review period beginning July 15, and ending July 30 in which to appeal the AYP data and the AYP determinations. AYP determinations will become final after July 30, and the final school/LEA AYP determinations will be released to the public on August 5. Again, with Wyoming’s new assessment system, the two-week window for LEAs to review their data will be sufficient as the Wyoming Department

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of Education, working with the LEAs, will have two (2) months to clean all student demographic data. Therefore, there will be fewer discrepancies to be reviewed.

LEAs containing schools identified for improvement notify parents approximately one month before the beginning of the school year regarding public school choice and/or supplemental service options as applicable.

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CRITICAL ELEMENT	EXAMPLES FOR MEETING STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS	EXAMPLES OF NOT MEETING REQUIREMENTS
<p>1.5 Does the State Accountability System produce an annual State Report Card?</p>	<p>The State Report Card includes all the required data elements [see Appendix A for the list of required data elements].</p> <p>The State Report Card is available to the public at the beginning of the academic year.</p> <p>The State Report Card is accessible in languages of major populations in the State, to the extent possible.</p> <p>Assessment results and other academic indicators (including graduation rates) are reported by student subgroups</p>	<p>The State Report Card does not include all the required data elements.</p> <p>The State Report Card is not available to the public.</p>

STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS

Element 1.5

Wyoming fulfills the reporting requirements of No Child Left Behind by producing an annual state report card. The reporting mechanism entitled *Every Student Counts* is Wyoming’s web-based annual report card which contains the required NCLB data elements. Table 1 provides an element-by-element analysis of the Wyoming state report card in terms of the NCLB requirements, and indicates where each NCLB requirement is reported .

In Wyoming, a draft-embargoed report card is sent electronically to each LEA and school by the first week of September each year so that the report and data are used for school improvement planning. LEA personnel are then requested to submit a narrative to explain their data and the actions the LEA plans to take based on the patterns in the data. Additionally, LEA personnel use this time to ensure the accuracy of the data in the reports. A final web-based report that includes these narratives is produced by the end of November each year. LEAs are required to distribute these final reports to their parents and community. Providing the report and data to the LEAs at the beginning of the school year serves the important purpose of providing data for school improvement planning at a time in the year when LEAs are writing their school improvement plans. The state report card is available at:
https://wdesecure.k12.wy.us/stats/wde.esc.show_menu

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Table 1. Wyoming’s Progress Toward Including the Required Data Elements In *Every Student Counts (ESC)*, the Wyoming State Report Card

Required Element	Wyoming (WDE) Department of Education Response
Information, in the aggregate, on student achievement at each proficiency level on the state academic assessments (disaggregated by race, ethnicity, gender, disability status, migrant status, English proficiency, and status as economically disadvantaged, except that such disaggregation shall not be required in a case in which the number of students in a category is insufficient to yield statistically reliable information or the results would reveal personally identifiable information about an individual student).	The information is currently reported in the school, LEA, and state WyCAS reports and WDE made these data initially available in <i>ESC</i> in early 2003. New reports are released in November of each year. Beginning with 2006, PAWS test results will be reported.
Information that provides a comparison between the actual achievement levels of each student subgroup and the State’s annual measurable objectives for each such group of students on each of the academic assessments.	WDE reports disaggregated results with the comparison to the annual targets.
The percentage of students not tested (disaggregated by the student subgroups), except that such disaggregation shall not be required in a case in which the number of students in a category is insufficient to yield statistically reliable information or the results would reveal personally identifiable information about an individual student.	This is currently in the disaggregated report for LEAs and the state as the percent tested.
The most recent two-year trend in student achievement in each subject area, and for each grade level, for the required assessments.	The WyCAS Performance Level Trend Report includes this information. It displays as much as six years of data. Beginning with 2006, PAWS test results will be used.
Aggregate information on any other indicators used by the state to determine the adequate yearly progress of students in achieving state academic achievement standards disaggregated by student subgroups.	WDE reports subgroup graduation trends in <i>ESC</i> at the state level and added a report with trends in the percentage of students performing at the below basic level in reading (our additional academic indicator) in the 2004 <i>ESC</i> report and thereafter.

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Table 1 (continued)

Required Element	Wyoming (WDE) Department of Education Response
Graduation rates for secondary school students disaggregated by student subgroups.	WDE reports, via <i>ESC</i> , subgroup graduation trends at the school, LEA, and state level. WDE currently does not include ELL, Free/Reduced Lunch or Migrant data because one more year of drop-out data are needed for these subgroups to be able to report graduation rates.
Information on the performance of local educational agencies in the State regarding making adequate yearly progress, including the number and names of each school identified for school improvement under Section 1116.	WDE produces a memorandum and press release each year with the list of schools and LEAs that have not made Adequate Yearly Progress. This list is also available on our web site at www.k12.wy.us .
The professional qualifications of teachers in the state, the percentage of such teachers teaching with emergency or provisional credentials, and the percentage of classes in the state not taught by highly-qualified teachers, in the aggregate and disaggregated by high poverty compared to low-poverty schools which (for this purpose) means schools in the top quartile of poverty and the bottom quartile of poverty in the state.	The profile report provides the percentage of classes taught by highly-qualified teachers in each school. The state profile report shows the disaggregated results for low and high poverty schools.

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CRITICAL ELEMENT	EXAMPLES FOR MEETING STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS	EXAMPLES OF NOT MEETING REQUIREMENTS
<p>1.6 How does the State Accountability System include rewards and sanctions for public schools and LEAs?²</p>	<p>State uses one or more types of rewards and sanctions, where the criteria are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set by the State; • Based on adequate yearly progress decisions; and, • Applied uniformly across public schools and LEAs. 	<p>State does not implement rewards or sanctions for public schools and LEAs based on adequate yearly progress.</p>

STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS

Element 1.6

Wyoming has a system of rewards and consequences in place for all public schools and LEAs, including NCLB required consequences for Title I schools and LEAs. Pursuant to W.S. 21-2-304(a)(vi) and Chapter 6 Wyoming State Board of Education Rules on Accreditation, Wyoming has finalized its system of rewards and consequences for both Title I and non-Title I schools whereby the continuous improvement of student achievement at all schools and appropriate educational interventions fostering continuous improvement serve as the basis for statewide accountability system design. This legislation established a system of rewards and consequences that meets Title I requirements and is largely the same for both Title I and non-Title I schools based on their performance under Wyoming’s accountability system. (Appendix B: Chapter 6 Wyoming State Board of Education Rules Accreditation, Section 9 and 10).

² The state must provide rewards and sanctions for all public schools and LEAs for making adequate yearly progress, except that the State is not required to hold schools and LEAs not receiving Title I funds to the requirements of section 1116 of NCLB [§200.12(b)(40)].

PRINCIPLE 2. All students are included in the State Accountability System.

CRITICAL ELEMENT	EXAMPLES FOR MEETING STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS	EXAMPLES OF NOT MEETING REQUIREMENTS
2.1 How does the State Accountability System include all students in the State?	All students in the State are included in the State Accountability System. The definitions of “public school” and “LEA” account for all students enrolled in the public school district, regardless of program or type of public school.	Public school students exist in the State for whom the State Accountability System makes no provision.

STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS

Element 2.1

All Wyoming public school students enrolled in fourth, eighth, and eleventh grades were required to participate in the Wyoming Comprehensive Assessment System (WyCAS) and be assessed in reading, writing, and mathematics (W.S. 21-2-304(a)). The final administration of WyCAS was in spring 2005. Beginning with spring 2006, every Wyoming public school student enrolled in grades three through eight and grade eleven is required to participate in the statewide assessment system called Proficiency Assessments for Wyoming Students (PAWS) and be assessed in reading, writing, and mathematics. Beginning in spring 2007 all Wyoming public school students enrolled in fourth, eighth, and eleventh grades are required to participate in the state science assessment. This requirement is further supported by Wyoming State Board Rules, Chapter 6. All Neglected and Delinquent Institutions subject to accreditation requirements of the Wyoming State Board of Education are also required to have their students participate in WyCAS and PAWS beginning in 2006.

All students who have been in the school for a full academic year are included in the school’s AYP determination. Those who have been in the school for less than a full academic year, but in the LEA for more than a year will be included in the LEA AYP accountability determination. All students, regardless of how long they have been in the state, will be included in the state AYP determination.

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CRITICAL ELEMENT	EXAMPLES FOR MEETING STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS	EXAMPLES OF NOT MEETING REQUIREMENTS
<p>2.2 How does the State define “full academic year” for identifying students in AYP decisions?</p>	<p>The State has a definition of “full academic year” for determining which students are to be included in decisions about AYP.</p> <p>The definition of full academic year is consistent and applied statewide.</p>	<p>LEAs have varying definitions of “full academic year.”</p> <p>The State’s definition excludes students who must transfer from one district to another as they advance to the next grade.</p> <p>The definition of full academic year is not applied consistently.</p>

STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS

Element 2.2

Wyoming has defined “full academic year” as being enrolled in the same school and/or LEA on October 1 and on the first day of the official PAWS testing window. All students who are enrolled in a public school or LEA on October 1 and are enrolled on the testing date of the official testing window are considered to have been in the school or the LEA for a full academic year. Using the October 1 date provides a reasonable balance in addition to fitting with existing data collections from LEAs. The enrollment information is provided by the school for each student on the demographic section of the state assessment. Also included in this information is if the student has been enrolled in the LEA for a full academic year. This information is provided in order to determine if the student is included in the AYP determination for a school as well as the LEA. For example, a student may transfer within schools in an LEA and therefore, did not reside in any one school for a full academic year but did reside in the LEA for a full academic year. While this student would not be included in the AYP calculations for the schools attended, the student would be included in the AYP calculation for the LEA. This definition is applied statewide.

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CRITICAL ELEMENT	EXAMPLES FOR MEETING STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS	EXAMPLES OF NOT MEETING REQUIREMENTS
<p>2.3 How does the State Accountability System determine which students have attended the same public school and/or LEA for a full academic year?</p>	<p>State holds public schools accountable for students who were enrolled at the same public school for a full academic year.</p> <p>State holds LEAs accountable for students who transfer during the full academic year from one public school within the district to another public school within the district.</p>	<p>State definition requires students to attend the same public school for more than a full academic year to be included in public school accountability.</p> <p>State definition requires students to attend school in the same district for more than a full academic year to be included in district accountability.</p> <p>State holds public schools accountable for students who have not attended the same public school for a full academic year.</p>

STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS

Element 2.3

The demographic section of the WyCAS Student Response Booklet—which is required to be completed by test administrators—includes a field to indicate whether the student has been enrolled in the school and in the LEA since October 1. This demographic section is required for all students enrolled at the beginning of the testing window.

The Wyoming Department of Education collects an October 1 “snapshot” (WDE Form 606-School Building Demographics) of school and LEA enrollments in Wyoming that includes enrollment data on the total number of students and data disaggregated by ethnicity/race, LEP, and free/reduced lunch. Through the Principal’s Certification Form, required as part of the WyCAS administration, school principals are required to explain any discrepancies between the counts on the WyCAS assessment and the October 1 data collection to the Department’s satisfaction. The summary information gathered from WyCAS and the October 1 data collection is compared for aggregate student counts.

With the administration of PAWS, the demographic information will be gathered electronically through the Wyoming Integrated Statewide Education Data System (WISE) and provided electronically to the testing vendor for pre-ID labels. The WISE will also be used to monitor any discrepancies between the October 1st count and students tested on the PAWS assessments. The individual student results on PAWS will be available to teachers and administrators through the Wyoming Education Gateway (WEdeGate). These results will include both current and

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longitudinal results by skill, by content area. Teachers will be able to use these results to improve instruction and student learning for students enrolled in their classes.

PRINCIPLE 3. State definition of AYP is based on expectations for growth in student achievement that is continuous and substantial, such that all students are proficient in reading/language arts and mathematics no later than 2013-2014.

CRITICAL ELEMENT	EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS	EXAMPLES OF NOT MEETING REQUIREMENTS
<p>3.1 How does the State's definition of adequate yearly progress require all students to be proficient in reading/language arts and mathematics by the 2013-2014 academic year?</p>	<p>The State has a timeline for ensuring that all students will meet or exceed the State's proficient level of academic achievement in reading/language arts³ and mathematics, not later than 2013-2014.</p>	<p>State definition does not require all students to achieve proficiency by 2013-2014.</p> <p>State extends the timeline past the 2013-2014 academic year.</p>

STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS

Element 3.1

Wyoming's definition of and timeline for Adequate Yearly Progress requires 100 percent of Wyoming students to be proficient by the 2013-2014 school year (see Elements 3.2a and 5.5 for more details on Wyoming's AYP methodology).

³ If the state has separate assessments to cover its language arts standards (e.g., reading and writing), the State must create a method to include scores from all the relevant assessments.

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CRITICAL ELEMENT	EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS	EXAMPLES OF NOT MEETING REQUIREMENTS
<p>3.2 How does the State Accountability System determine whether each student subgroup, public school and LEA makes AYP?</p>	<p>For a public school and LEA to make adequate yearly progress, each student subgroup must meet or exceed the State annual measurable objectives, each student subgroup must have at least a 95% participation rate in the statewide assessments, and the school must meet the State's requirement for other academic indicators.</p> <p>However, if in any particular year the student subgroup does not meet those annual measurable objectives, the public school or LEA may be considered to have made AYP, if the percentage of students in that group who did not meet or exceed the proficient level of academic achievement on the State assessments for that year decreased by 10% of that percentage from the preceding public school year; that group made progress on one or more of the State's academic indicators; and that group had at least 95% participation rate on the statewide assessment.</p>	<p>State uses different method for calculating how public schools and LEAs make AYP.</p>

STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS

Element 3.2

Under NCLB, schools, LEAs, and the state are required to make AYP on the basis of, among other things, subgroup performance. Wyoming's definition of AYP follows closely the specifications laid out in Section 1111 of the No Child Left Behind Act and reiterated in Sections 200.13-200.21 of the final accountability regulations.

For each school and LEA to meet the annual AYP performance targets, they must pass several tests. Each school/LEA is evaluated to ensure that at least 95 percent of students in all required subgroups are tested and included in the accountability system. Once the school/LEA meets the 95 percent participation requirement, Wyoming's AYP definition requires each school and LEA to be judged against the status achievement target overall and for each subgroup above the minimum group size requirement. Finally, the school/LEA must demonstrate success on the

additional academic indicator. If the school/LEA (or any subgroup above the minimum group size requirement) does not meet the AYP status target, the safe harbor provision is examined. Additional details of Wyoming's AYP methodology are found under Elements 3.2a (specific calculation methodology for the primary indicator) and 5.5 (minimum group sizes and confidence intervals).

One can think of this process as having basically three indicators for a school/LEA in each annual determination of AYP. A school/LEA will be classified as having not met AYP if any one of these indicators is found to not meet the stated AYP goals. These three indicators are:

1. language arts participation rate and language arts percent proficient and advanced
2. mathematics participation rate and mathematics percent proficient and advanced
3. other academic indicator

The language arts and mathematics indicators (participation rate and percent proficient and advanced) can be activated if any of nine groups fail to meet the stated AYP goals. These groups are:

1. All students
2. Free/reduced lunch (economically disadvantaged)
3. Native American
4. Hispanic
5. Asian
6. African American
7. White
8. IEP (students with disabilities)
9. LEP

In addition, the school/LEA will be examined using the additional indicator to determine AYP, with subgroup data examined where safe harbor is examined.

For a school to be placed into the school improvement cycle it must miss AYP for two consecutive years for *any* subgroup based on the *same* indicator. For example, if a school does not meet AYP in mathematics in year 1 (in terms of either participation rate or percent proficient and advanced), the school fails to meet AYP based on that indicator. However, if in year 2 the school meets AYP in mathematics, but does not meet AYP in language arts or the other academic indicator, the school would fail to meet AYP based on that indicator in year 2 but has not failed to meet AYP for two *consecutive* years such that the school improvement cycle would be initiated. This rule will help ensure the reliability of AYP judgments by reducing the likelihood of a single, invalid judgment placing a school in improvement status. It also ensures that schools have one year to focus on a specific AYP issue and address that issue before being placed in improvement.

This data regarding school/LEA accountability is managed through data systems to accommodate the requirements of examining schools and LEAs for AYP determinations.

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CRITICAL ELEMENT	EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS	EXAMPLES OF NOT MEETING REQUIREMENTS
<p>3.2a What is the State's starting point for calculating Adequate Yearly Progress?</p>	<p>Using data from the 2001-2002 school year, the State established separate starting points in reading/language arts and mathematics for measuring the percentage of students meeting or exceeding the State's proficient level of academic achievement.</p> <p>Each starting point is based, at a minimum, on the higher of the following percentages of students at the proficient level: (1) the percentage in the State of proficient students in the lowest-achieving student subgroup; or, (2) the percentage of proficient students in a public school at the 20th percentile of the State's total enrollment among all schools ranked by the percentage of students at the proficient level.</p> <p>A State may use these procedures to establish separate starting points by grade span; however, the starting point must be the same for all like schools (e.g., one same starting point for all elementary schools, one same starting point for all middle schools...).</p>	<p>The State Accountability System uses a different method for calculating the starting point (or baseline data).</p>

STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS

Element 3.2a

1. In order to calculate a more stable baseline estimate of a school's performance, Wyoming combined two years of data to calculate the starting points for AYP. The baseline is based on school's average percent proficient and advanced across 2001 and 2002.
2. Instruction and assessment of writing, as one of the language arts standards, has a long history in Wyoming; therefore, it is felt that it is appropriate to include writing results in a language arts composite score instead of having a result that focuses solely on reading.

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This language arts composite score is the average of each student’s reading and writing scores. Because the scale scores for reading and writing have slightly different standard deviations, simply averaging the two scores is not as accurate as standardizing the scores first. This standardization was completed utilizing equipercentile equating as follows:

- a. Two hundred forty (240; the cutscore for proficient) was subtracted from each student’s WyCAS scale score and divided by the standard deviation for that specific WyCAS distribution (done separately for reading and writing). This has the effect of creating a score distribution where the zero point is the cutscore proficient and advanced/basic and below basic (this is like a z-score). In mathematical terms:

$$\text{WyCAS Std Score} = \frac{(\text{WyCAS score} - 240)}{\text{WyCAS Std. Dev.}}$$

This procedure converts each of the two scales to a scale where a score of zero or above is considered proficient and a negative score is below proficient. This procedure is completed for each of the three WyCAS tests (reading, writing, and mathematics).

- b. The two WyCAS language arts standardized scores (reading and writing) are averaged to create a language arts composite score.
- c. The percentile rank for reading and writing at the boundaries of the cut scores for the proficiency levels are located. These specific percentiles for reading and writing are then averaged to locate on the distribution of the standard scores where the boundaries would be for the achievement levels of the language arts composite score.
- d. With the cut scores located for the language arts composite scores, a student’s individual performance is classified as below basic, basic, proficient, or advanced.

The procedures outlined above will also be utilized with the PAWS assessment results.

3. The law requires that students be in a particular school or LEA for a “full academic year” to be included in the calculation of AYP for the school or LEA, respectively. This filter is applied based on information collected on the WyCAS student response booklets for the baseline year but, as described above, Wyoming intends to use additional means for collecting this information in subsequent years.
4. Starting points (initial achievement targets) were calculated using the 20th percentile method as outlined in Section 1111 of NCLB. Schools were rank-ordered by percent proficient and above and then the enrollment was counted from the lowest-performing school until 20 percent of the students were counted. The percent proficient and advanced in the school where the 20th percentile student was located was considered the starting point. The starting points for language arts and mathematics were calculated separately. The calculated starting points for percent proficient and advanced in

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mathematics and language arts was used to hold all subgroups accountable. The following table provides the specific starting points for schools and LEAs in language arts and mathematics.

AYP Starting Points for Wyoming Schools (% Proficient and Advanced)

	Language Arts	Mathematics
4 th Grade	30.4%	23.8%
8 th Grade	34.5%	25.3%
11 th Grade	48.4%	35.8%

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CRITICAL ELEMENT	EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS	EXAMPLES OF NOT MEETING REQUIREMENTS
<p>3.2b What are the State's annual measurable objectives for determining adequate yearly progress?</p>	<p>State has annual measurable objectives that are consistent with a state's intermediate goals and that identify for each year a minimum percentage of students who must meet or exceed the proficient level of academic achievement on the State's academic assessments.</p> <p>The State's annual measurable objectives ensure that all students meet or exceed the State's proficient level of academic achievement within the timeline.</p> <p>The State's annual measurable objectives are the same throughout the State for each public school, each LEA, and each subgroup of students.</p>	<p>The State Accountability System uses another method for calculating annual measurable objectives.</p> <p>The State Accountability System does not include annual measurable objectives.</p>
<p>STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS</p>		

Element 3.2b

See the discussion of annual measurable objectives within the context of the discussion of Element 3.2c.

CRITICAL ELEMENT	EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS	EXAMPLES OF NOT MEETING REQUIREMENTS
<p>3.2c What are the State’s intermediate goals for determining adequate yearly progress?</p>	<p>State has established intermediate goals that increase in equal increments over the period covered by the State timeline.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first incremental increase takes effect not later than the 2004-2005 academic year. • Each following incremental increase occurs within three years. 	<p>The State uses another method for calculating intermediate goals.</p> <p>The State does not include intermediate goals in its definition of adequate yearly progress.</p>
<p>STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS</p>		

Element 3.2c

Wyoming’s intermediate goals (in bold) and annual measurable objectives are presented in Table 2. Wyoming has chosen to use six (6) intermediate goals so that each expected increase in performance is one-sixth of the difference between 100 percent and each starting point for language arts and mathematics by grade span. Recognizing that building school and LEA capacity is generally non-linear, and organizations engaged in reform often experience a “performance dip” prior to substantial improvement (Fullan, 2001), Wyoming has decided to use a non-linear approach for increasing performance expectations for Wyoming schools and LEAs. Therefore, Wyoming increases performance targets one-sixth of the difference between the starting point and 100 percent for the 2004-2005 school year and again each year in 2007-2008, 2010-2011, 2011-2012, 2012-2013, and 2013-2014 so that the approach reflects 100 percent of the students being proficient or advanced in both content areas for all three grade spans. The annual measurable objectives are the same performance targets as the most proximate prior intermediate goal.

The non-linear approach for intermediate goals is appropriate due to the multiple demands that were initially placed on the Wyoming educational system in a short time frame. Wyoming has adopted revised content and achievement standards for mathematics and language arts for grades kindergarten through eight and eleven. The prior standards were for grades four, eight, and eleven and these new expanded standards will take time for adoption and integration into the classroom. Student achievement results that relate to these standards are expected to increase less in the initial stages of implementation and alignment of classroom instruction, with greater increases in later years.

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Wyoming has developed and is implementing additional assessments to ensure annual testing grades 3-8. This new system will also be more likely to perceive change after schools and classrooms have had time to fully align their educational programs with the content and achievement standards. By allowing for a steeper trajectory in later years, professional development and school based interventions will have an opportunity to take effect, and the AYP accountability system in Wyoming will be more valid, reliable, and meaningful.

Due to Wyoming’s small student numbers, the original starting points baseline was calculated by averaging two years of school data. Even with the 3-8 and 11 assessments, Wyoming’s numbers are still very small. Wyoming will leave its current Intermediate Goals in place for the 2006 AYP decisions and revisit this issue in 2007.

Table 2. Wyoming’s AYP Intermediate Goals (bold) and Annual Objectives.

Year	Elementary School		Middle School		High School	
	Language Arts	Mathematics	Language Arts	Mathematics	Language Arts	Mathematics
2002	30.40	23.80	34.50	25.30	48.40	35.80
2003	30.40	23.80	34.50	25.30	48.40	35.80
2004	30.40	23.80	34.50	25.30	48.40	35.80
2005	42.00	36.50	45.42	37.75	57.00	46.50
2006	42.00	36.50	45.42	37.75	57.00	46.50
2007	42.00	36.50	45.42	37.75	57.00	46.50
2008	53.60	49.20	56.33	50.20	65.60	57.20
2009	53.60	49.20	56.33	50.20	65.60	57.20
2010	53.60	49.20	56.33	50.20	65.60	57.20
2011	65.20	61.90	67.25	62.65	74.20	67.90
2012	76.80	74.60	78.17	75.10	82.80	78.60
2013	88.40	87.30	89.08	87.55	91.40	89.30
2014	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

PRINCIPLE 4. State makes annual decisions about the achievement of all public schools and LEAs.

CRITICAL ELEMENT	EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS	EXAMPLES OF NOT MEETING REQUIREMENTS
4.1 How does the State Accountability System make an annual determination of whether each public school and LEA in the State made AYP?	AYP decisions for each public school and LEA are made annually.	AYP decisions for public schools and LEAs are not made annually.
STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS		

Element 4.1

Wyoming established a baseline for AYP using two years of data and makes AYP decisions using annual student achievement data obtained from the state assessment system. The establishment of the baseline utilized two years of data to ensure a reliable initial target for all Wyoming schools. Annual decisions for school and LEA accountability use the current year’s assessment data obtained in the assessment window. The use of one year of assessment data allows the AYP indicator to be more sensitive to annual changes in classrooms and schools and more meaningfully reflect adequate *yearly* progress. In cases where a school or LEA does not meet AYP based on one year of data, Wyoming makes a secondary examination based on averaged data from the current year and the prior year to determine if the given school/LEA made AYP. This helps correct for potential anomalies based on cohort variability where such performance may not be indicative of the overall school/LEA performance (which is especially important in states such as Wyoming that have small group sizes). This secondary examination will not be performed for the 2005-2006 school year.

Beginning in 2006 with the first PAWS assessment administration, grades 3-8 and 11 within a school will be combined for adequate yearly progress determinations using a proficiency index. This proficiency index provides the fairest method of evaluating schools taking into account differing annual measurable achievement objectives (AMAO) for elementary, middle, and high school grades across Wyoming’s wide variety of school grade configurations. Within AYP calculations, the elementary school AMAO applies to grades 3 through 6 (the majority of Wyoming 6th grade students attend classes in the K-6 elementary school environment), the middle school AMAO applies to students in grades 7 and 8, and the high school AMAO applies to students in 11th grade. An example of the proficiency index for a hypothetical school serving grades 6 and 7 is illustrated below by both a tabular representation and a step by step description:

Hypothetical Example: Language Arts Proficiency Index for the Asian Subgroup in a School

		A	B	C	D	E	F	G
				= B / A		= C - D	= A / ΣA	= E * F
Education Level	Grade	# Tested	# Proficient	% Proficient	Annual Measurable Achievement Objective (AMAO)	Difference between the % Proficient and the AMAO	Proficiency Index Weighting Constant	Proficiency Index
Elementary	6	20	8	40.00%	42.00%	-2.00%	0.40	-0.80%
Middle	7	30	15	50.00%	45.42%	4.58%	0.60	2.75%
TOTAL		50	23					1.95%
		ΣA	ΣB					ΣG

Gray Cells = Variable Designations and Formulas

1.95% = Proficiency Index for the Subgroup in the School

- # Tested, # Proficient, and % Proficient
 - 8 of 20 Asian students in 6th grade tested proficient, or 40% (= 8 / 20).
 - 15 of 30 Asian students in 7th grade tested proficient, or 50% (= 15 / 30).
- Annual Measurable Achievement Objective (AMAO)
 - The 6th grade language arts AMAO is 42.00% for 2006.
 - The 7th grade language arts AMAO is 45.42% for 2006.
- Difference between the % Proficient and the AMAO
 - For 6th grade students, the difference between the actual percent proficient and the AMAO is -2.00% (= 40.00% - 42.00%).
 - For 7th grade students, the difference between the actual percent proficient and the AMAO is 4.58% (= 50.00% - 45.42%).
- Proficiency Index Weighting Constant
 - The weighting constant for the 6th grade is equal to the number of 6th grade students divided by the total number of students in the school, or 0.40 (= 20 / 50)
 - The weighting constant for the 7th grade is equal to the number of 7th grade students divided by the total number of students in the school, or 0.60 (= 30 / 50)
- Proficiency Index
 - The 6th grade proficiency index component is the Difference between the % Proficient and the AMAO multiplied by the Proficiency Index Weighting Constant, or -0.80% (= -2.00% * 0.40)
 - The 7th grade proficiency index component is the Difference between the % Proficient and the AMAO multiplied by the Proficiency Index Weighting Constant, or 2.75% (= 4.58% * 0.60)
 - The Proficiency Index for the school is the sum of all individual grade level proficiency index components, in this case, 1.95% (= -0.80% + 2.75%)
 - A Proficiency Index of zero or higher indicates that the AMAO has been met by the subgroup in the school. In this example, the Asian subgroup in this school meets the AMAO with a proficiency index of 1.95%.
 - When the Proficiency Index is less than zero, a 95% confidence interval is applied to determine if the gap is statistically significant. If the gap (% below zero) is not calculated to be significant, the subgroup will be considered to have made AYP. In this case, the confidence interval for n = 50 (total tested) and x = 23 (total

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proficient) would have been applied if the Proficiency Index had been less than zero.

The official testing window for the new statewide assessment system (PAWS) will be the last week of March and the first three weeks of April in reading, writing, and mathematics. Each of these subject areas will contain two subtests which will be combined to determine proficiency in the subject area. In 2006 all Wyoming public school students in grades three through eight and grade eleven will test during the April testing window. AYP determinations will be made using the data received from the April 2006 assessments. In subsequent years Wyoming will provide an early testing window opportunity during January by subtest in each subject area for grades three through eight. Students who perform well will be able to “bank” the scores and will not be required to repeat the subtest(s) for which the score is “banked” during the official testing window in April. Students who do not perform well will have the opportunity to take a parallel form of any subtest during the official April testing window. AYP will be determined by using “banked” scores or scores during the official testing window in April, whichever is higher. Students in grades nine through eleven will be allowed to take advantage of early testing opportunities during January and April of grades nine and ten as well as January of grade eleven. Students may “bank” their scores during the early testing windows. AYP will be determined only for students in grade eleven using their “banked” scores or scores achieved during the official April testing window, whichever is higher.

PRINCIPLE 5. All public schools and LEAs are held accountable for the achievement of individual subgroups.

CRITICAL ELEMENT	EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS	EXAMPLES OF <i>NOT</i> MEETING REQUIREMENTS
5.1 How does the definition of adequate yearly progress include all the required student subgroups?	Identifies subgroups for defining adequate yearly progress: economically disadvantaged, major racial and ethnic groups, students with disabilities, and students with limited English proficiency. Provides definition and data source of subgroups for adequate yearly progress.	State does not disaggregate data by each required student subgroup.
STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS		

Element 5.1

NCLB requires an intense focus on all subgroups of students, and the AYP results for each school and LEA are based upon all subgroups meeting the target performance levels. All subgroups use the same achievement targets for mathematics and language arts. These achievement targets are presented in Table 2 and in element 3.2a.

Since Wyoming’s definition of AYP follows closely the specifications of Section 1111 of NCLB and Sections 200.13-200.21 of the final accountability regulations, the definition of AYP is based on the performance of all required subgroups.

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CRITICAL ELEMENT	EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS	EXAMPLES OF <i>NOT</i> MEETING REQUIREMENTS
5.2 How are public schools and LEAs held accountable for the progress of student subgroups in the determination of adequate yearly progress?	Public schools and LEAs are held accountable for student subgroup achievement: economically disadvantaged, major ethnic and racial groups, students with disabilities, and limited English proficient students.	State does not include student subgroups in its State Accountability System.
STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS		

Element 5.2

Schools and LEAs are required to meet the achievement targets or safe harbor requirements for all required subgroups as specified in Section 1111 of NCLB. Further, by reporting disaggregated performance for each school and LEA, Wyoming citizens are also able to hold schools and LEAs accountable for the performance of all identifiable subgroups.

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CRITICAL ELEMENT	EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS	EXAMPLES OF NOT MEETING REQUIREMENTS
<p>5.3 How are students with disabilities included in the State’s definition of adequate yearly progress?</p>	<p>All students with disabilities participate in statewide assessments: general assessments with or without accommodations or an alternate assessment based on grade level standards for the grade in which students are enrolled.</p> <p>State demonstrates that students with disabilities are fully included in the State Accountability System.</p>	<p>The State Accountability System or State policy excludes students with disabilities from participating in the statewide assessments.</p> <p>State cannot demonstrate that alternate assessments measure grade-level standards for the grade in which students are enrolled.</p>
<p>STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS</p>		

Element 5.3

All students, including students with disabilities, are included in Wyoming’s accountability system for calculating AYP. Students with disabilities must participate in the Proficiency Assessments for Wyoming Students (PAWS) in one of three ways:

1. In the general assessment with no accommodations;
2. In the general assessment with accommodations; or
3. In the alternate assessment (PAWS-Alt) for the most significantly cognitively disabled students.

The PAWS-ALT is designed to measure academic skills in reading, writing, and mathematics of students who are enrolled in Special Education programs and who are significantly cognitively disabled. The PAWS-ALT is based upon the Wyoming Alternate Content Standards and proficiency determinations are made on the basis of Alternate Achievement Standards. The test is comprised of three components: (1) Student Performance Events, (2) Teacher Observation of Academic Skills, and (3) Data Collection of Student Work. Each component has an identified skill emphasis. Student Performance Events are on-demand and Teacher Observation of Academic Skills and Data Collection of Student Work are instructionally oriented.

Performance Events are on-demand solicitations of actual student performance on given Alternate Content Standards in reading, writing, and mathematics. Each Performance Event addresses several alternate benchmarks.

The Teacher Observation of Academic Skills provides an opportunity for the teacher to observe and evaluate the acquisition of a range of difficulty of academic skills in reading, writing, and mathematics during instruction.

The Data Collection of Student Work includes the collection of data of a teacher-specified skill, which is selected from a specified Alternate Content Standard and Benchmark and is aligned with the Assessment Targets. Data will be collected in each of the three content areas being assessed: reading, writing, and mathematics. The collection of data of a teacher-specified skill provides an additional opportunity to assess student performance within the context of daily academic instruction.

Scores earned by the student on the three test components are combined to evaluate student performance. The Student Performance Events have an inherent weighting in them. The teacher marks a response which indicates at what level the student participated in the task, and each of the levels is assigned a different score point. The Data Collection of Student Work record keeping forms and submitted primary evidence are independently scored by trained scorers at Harcourt Assessment, Inc. using the Rubric for Scoring Data Collection of Student Work. With each item in the Teacher Observation of Academic Skills, there is an inherent level of complexity in the list of assessed skills. The skills are weighted along a spectrum of complexity. The accuracy of the student performance on the skill plus the level of complexity yield a score for each content area.

In accordance with USED regulations, Wyoming uses its alternative achievement standards in language arts and mathematics to calculate AYP only for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, who take the alternate assessment. These alternative standards are aligned with Wyoming's academic content standards and reflect the professional judgment of the highest learning standards possible for those students. Wyoming includes up to 1 percent of students with disabilities in the accountability system based on performance on the state's alternate assessment at the LEA and state levels (with requests for LEA exceptions reviewed by the Wyoming Department of Education on a case-by-case basis per USED regulations). (In 2005, less than 0.77 percent of Wyoming's student population was assessed with the alternate assessment.)

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CRITICAL ELEMENT	EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS	EXAMPLES OF NOT MEETING REQUIREMENTS
<p>5.4 How are students with limited English proficiency included in the State's definition of adequate yearly progress?</p>	<p>All LEP student participate in statewide assessments: general assessments with or without accommodations or a native language version of the general assessment based on grade level standards.</p> <p>State demonstrates that LEP students are fully included in the State Accountability System.</p>	<p>LEP students are not fully included in the State Accountability System.</p>
<p>STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS</p>		

Element 5.4

All students, including LEP students, are included in Wyoming's accountability system for calculating AYP. No students are exempted from participating in the statewide assessment system on the basis of LEP status. Similar to the rules for students with disabilities, all LEP students must participate in the PAWS with accommodations as appropriate.

The majority of LEP students participate in the PAWS with appropriate accommodations. There are no alternative-language versions of the PAWS. All LEP students are included in the statewide assessments in language arts and mathematics, *including* those LEP students who have been enrolled in U.S. schools for less than one year, and must be assessed with accommodations when appropriate. These directions were reiterated to all LEAs through statewide assessment administration workshops prior to the state assessment. Per recent USED guidance, "States may, but are not required to, include results [of LEP students in their first year in U.S. schools] from the mathematics and, if given, the reading/language arts content assessments in Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) calculations." Therefore, Wyoming does not include the scores of first year LEP students. Such LEP students, however, are included in participation rate determinations.

Wyoming uses the definition of LEP contained in NCLB §9101 for purposes of determining what students are included in the LEP subgroup for AYP accountability. Wyoming utilizes an identification process which includes an assessment to determine whether a student falls within that LEP definition. For AYP calculations, per recent USED guidance, Wyoming includes in the LEP subgroup the scores of students who have attained English proficiency within the last two years.

CRITICAL ELEMENT	EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS	EXAMPLES OF <i>NOT</i> MEETING REQUIREMENTS
<p>5.5 What is the State's definition of the minimum number of students in a subgroup required for reporting purposes? For accountability purposes?</p>	<p>State defines the number of students required in a subgroup for reporting and accountability purposes, and applies this definition consistently across the State.⁴</p> <p>Definition of subgroup will result in data that are statistically reliable.</p>	<p>State does not define the required number of students in a subgroup for reporting and accountability purposes.</p> <p>Definition is not applied consistently across the State.</p> <p>Definition does not result in data that are statistically reliable.</p>
<p>STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS</p>		

Element 5.5

Reporting Purposes

The minimum number of students in a subgroup required for reporting purposes in Wyoming is six (6). This definition of subgroup size is used consistently across the state for reporting purposes.

Accountability Purposes

For accountability decisions, the minimum number of students is set at thirty (30). This minimum sample size assures that reliable and valid decisions are made about school and LEA effectiveness. Subgroup results with fewer than thirty (30) students in the assessed grade level are not included in AYP calculations based on the performance of that particular subgroup. The members of the subgroup are included in the AYP calculations for the entire school and LEA. This definition of group size of thirty (30) is used consistently across the state for accountability purposes.

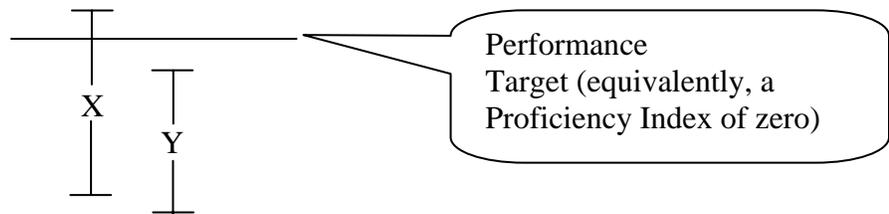
Schools with fewer than thirty (30) students assessed among all students would fall below the minimum number, therefore precluding a reliable AYP determination. Wyoming is creating a broader system of assessment and accountability that includes AYP and additional data resources for making more valid and reliable accountability decisions for these small schools containing less than 30 students in the assessed grades. In addition, the number of schools with fewer than 30 students assessed will decrease substantially once state assessments are in place for grades 3-8 in the 2005-2006 school year. However, recognizing that Wyoming has a sizable number of schools below the minimum number at the present time, Wyoming has adopted a rule for small schools, whereby schools with fewer than 30 assessed students are evaluated to determine AYP for the school overall based on a minimum number of six. Schools with fewer than six test

⁴ The minimum number is not required to be the same for reporting and accountability.

scores are reviewed based on averaged data over the previous 2-3 years, which is designed to reach at least six test scores. If any schools remain, they will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis so that all schools are included in AYP. (Per Element 1.1, schools with no grades tested will be paired with other schools for AYP accountability.)

The WDE uses a confidence interval approach to determine AYP to account for small sample sizes, to ensure the most valid and reliable accountability decisions, and to assure that decisions are based on statistically significant results. Wyoming believes that this approach allows all schools and LEAs to be held accountable in the most reliable and valid way possible.

- a. Wyoming uses a one-tailed, 95 percent confidence interval to judge whether schools are significantly different than the performance target⁶. To approximate this calculation, the following formula is utilized to first calculate the standard error (*SE*) of the proportion⁷:
 - i. $SE = \sqrt{\frac{p(1-p)}{n}}$
 - ii. Where *p* is equal to the proportion (ranging from 0 to 1) scoring proficient and advanced and *n* is the number of students tested
 - iii. Multiply the standard error by 1.645 to arrive at the one-tailed, 95 percent confidence interval. Add (or subtract) this standard error to the percent proficient and advanced for the schools to arrive at the confidence interval.
- b. If the confidence interval (margin of error) reaches above the statewide performance target, the school would be considered to have “met AYP.” The following diagram illustrates how this works.



In this example School X would have “made AYP” and School Y would have “not met AYP.” This confidence interval approach is used for AYP status decisions for the school and LEA overall as well as the subgroup AYP decisions.

- c. For schools and LEAs not meeting the state AYP achievement targets, the next step in the methodology is to examine “safe harbor” provisions. Wyoming incorporates a 75% confidence interval with a .25 alpha for the safe harbor examination in order to make this provision more reliable and valid for the unique circumstances encountered in Wyoming.

The use of a confidence interval in safe harbor takes into account the inherent variability that is exhibited from year to year in the percent of students scoring

proficient and non-proficient, which is particularly important given the relatively small group sizes in Wyoming where extreme changes can be seen with only a “real” change of 2 or 3 students.

The use of a confidence interval would basically address the question, “Has the school/LEA made a decrease in the number of non-proficient students that is statistically equivalent to 10 percent?” One potential (although not technical) problem with this approach is that it might permit a school that actually had an *increase* in the number of non-proficient students to meet “safe harbor.” To prevent this occurrence, and promote the most valid, reliable, and appropriate AYP safe harbor determinations, Wyoming uses a confidence interval for the examination of safe harbor with the modification of only allowing the use of a confidence interval if the school/LEA has made an *actual decrease* in the percent of non-proficient students. Schools/LEAs that did not decrease the percent of non-proficient students would not qualify for the safe harbor provision in alignment with federal law. It is believed that this is a more valid method of utilizing the safe harbor provision rather than the broad application of a confidence interval to all entities under safe harbor. Keep in mind also that in order to qualify for safe harbor, a school/LEA must have made progress on the additional indicator, which in Wyoming means, reducing the percentage of the lowest performing students in reading in elementary and middle school and/or on improving graduation rate in high school.

To calculate safe harbor in the first year of PAWS administration a proficiency percentage equating procedure will be utilized to account for differing proficiency standards on WyCAS and PAWS. A hypothetical example is illustrated as follows:

1. Suppose 40% of 4th grade students tested proficient in math on the 2004-05 WyCAS administration (statewide). This, of course, equates to 60% of students testing non-proficient.
2. Within the 2005-06 PAWS data set, the math scale score for elementary grades 3 through 6 (denoted S in this example) is identified for at which 40% of students scored at or above (statewide).
3. Still considering 2005-06 PAWS results, for each subgroup in an elementary school, the percentage of students with a scale score below S is then calculated and identified as the percentage of students testing non-proficient (denoted N in this example).
4. The percentage of students testing non-proficient, N, in 2005-06 is then evaluated to identify if a decrease in the number of non-proficient students that is statistically equivalent to 10 percent exists from 2004-05 to 2005-06. Continuing the example, a decrease of 10 percent in non-proficient students would require no more than $60\% - (.10 * 60\%) = 60\% - 6\% = 54\%$ of students testing non-proficient in 2005-06.
 - a. In the case where $N = 50\%$, safe harbor is met (if the Additional Indicator for the subgroup was also met.)
 - b. In the case where $N = 58\%$, a reduction in the percentage of students testing non-proficient was realized, but is less than 10%. In

this case, a confidence interval is applied, as outlined previously, in making a safe harbor determination (if the Additional Indicator for the subgroup was also met.)

- b. In the case where $N = 61\%$, the actual percentage of students testing non-proficient increased, meaning safe harbor was not met (and disallowing use of a confidence interval, as outlined previously.)

References

⁶Arce-Ferrer, A., Frisbie, D.A., & Kolen, M.J. (2002). *Standard Errors of Proportions Used in Reporting Changes in School Performance With Achievement Levels*. Educational Assessment, 8(1), 59-75.

⁷National Institute of Standards and Technology/SEMATECH e-Handbook of Statistical Methods, <http://www.itl.nist.gov/div898/handbook/>, December 18, 2002.

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CRITICAL ELEMENT	EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS	EXAMPLES OF NOT MEETING REQUIREMENTS
5.6 How does the State Accountability System protect the privacy of students when reporting results and when determining AYP?	Definition does not reveal personally identifiable information. ⁵	Definition reveals personally identifiable information.
STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS		

Element 5.6

With a minimum group size for reporting of six (6) per year, Wyoming is able to protect the identity of individual students. The Wyoming Department of Education has developed “masking” approaches to hide the identity of students when all students score in the same performance category. On all of the disaggregated reports, performance levels are restricted to be within 5 percent and 95 percent proficient. This protects the individual identification of student performance when all students perform at the same level.

⁵ The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) prohibits an LEA that receives Federal funds from releasing, without the prior written consent of a student’s parents, any personally identifiable information contained in a student’s education record.

PRINCIPLE 6. State definition of AYP is based primarily on the State’s academic assessments.

CRITICAL ELEMENT	EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS	EXAMPLES OF <i>NOT</i> MEETING REQUIREMENTS
6.1 How is the State’s definition of adequate yearly progress based primarily on academic assessments?	Formula for AYP shows that decisions are based primarily on assessments. ⁶ Plan clearly identifies which assessments are included in accountability.	Formula for AYP shows that decisions are based primarily on non-academic indicators or indicators other than the State assessments.
STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS		

Element 6.1

The methodology for calculating AYP has been described elsewhere in this document and, as shown, Wyoming’s definition of AYP is based primarily (with the exception of graduation requirements) on the prior statewide academic assessment system, WyCAS. Beginning in 2006, Wyoming will use results from its new statewide assessment system, PAWS, in reading, writing, and mathematics and will add science beginning in 2007.

⁶ State Assessment System will be reviewed by the Standards and Assessments Peer Review Team.

PRINCIPLE 7. State definition of AYP includes graduation rates for public High schools and an additional indicator selected by the State for public Middle and public Elementary schools (such as attendance rates).

CRITICAL ELEMENT	EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS	EXAMPLES OF NOT MEETING REQUIREMENTS
<p>7.1 What is the State definition for the public high school graduation rate?</p>	<p>State definition of graduation rate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calculates the percentage of students, measured from the beginning of the school year, who graduate from public high school with a regular diploma (not including a GED or any other diploma not fully aligned with the state's academic standards) in the standard number of years; or, • Uses another more accurate definition that has been approved by the Secretary; and • Must avoid counting a dropout as a transfer. <p>Graduation rate is included (in the aggregate) for AYP, and disaggregated (as necessary) for use when applying the exception clause⁷ to make AYP.</p>	<p>State definition of public high school graduation rate does not meet these criteria.</p>

STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS

Element 7.1

Wyoming's graduation rate for AYP is defined as the total number of graduates divided by the total number of students who left school, including students who completed high school and drop-outs from that class over the past four years.

The rate incorporates 4 years worth of data and thus, is an estimated cohort rate. It is calculated by dividing the number of students who receive a regular diploma by the sum of dropouts from grade 9 through 12 in consecutive years, plus the number of students completing high school. If

⁷ See USC 6311(b)(2)(I)(i), and 34 C.F.R. 200.20(b)

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a hypothetical graduating class began as 9th graders in Year 1, this 4-year completion rate would look like:

$$\frac{\text{Students Receiving a Regular Diploma in Year 4}}{\text{Dropouts (Grade 9 Year 1 + Grade 10 Year 2 + Grade 11 Year 3 + Grade 12 Year 4) + Students Completing High School Year 4}}$$

This formula used by the Wyoming Department of Education for calculating graduation rates is an “exiter” rate. The denominator is the total of all “exiters” from a school over a 4 year period for a grade cohort. The exiters are the 9th grade drop-outs 3 years ago, the 10th grade drop-outs 2 years ago, 11th grade drop-outs last year, and this year’s 12th grade drop-outs plus completers. These are all the students that “exited” from education for that cohort. The numerator is the count of this year’s regular diploma recipients. The rate gives “What percent of students exiting education do so with a regular diploma?”⁹

Historically, Wyoming did not collect disaggregated graduation information to the extent prescribed by NCLB. Wyoming collected race/ethnicity and the gender of graduates and drop-outs, but did not gather disaggregated data for LEP or free/reduced lunch eligible students. Special education students have their own “exiter” collection. The department did implement the collection of additional disaggregation with the 2001-2002 school year data collection cycle. However, it will take one additional year for the Department to be able to calculate disaggregated graduation rates for LEP or free/reduced lunch eligible students.

If a school fails to meet the annual student performance goal for any subgroup, growth on the graduation rate for that subgroup is required for the school to make “safe harbor.” In those cases where disaggregated data are not yet available at the state level, the school failing to make AYP will have the opportunity to go back in time to compile the disaggregated drop-out data to calculate graduation rate for AYP.

LEAs currently report drop-outs using the above definition. Students who transfer are not currently included in the graduation rate calculation. Wyoming has developed a system that will allow the tracking of individual students that will allow the state to verify LEA reports and more accurately track transfers and drop-outs. The Wyoming Department of Education received initial funding from the Wyoming legislature to start implementing a state education data system. However, it will be several years before student level data is available at the department from all schools and districts. Until then the Wyoming Department of Education will continue to train LEA staff in how to report drop-out and completion data. The Department reviews the reported data for consistency within the collection (i.e., proportions within race/ethnic categories are reasonable, cell sizes are consistent with enrollments, etc.) and that trends are within reason.

Finally, Wyoming adopted a rule regarding graduation rate that is specific to students with disabilities. Per USED guidance, a student with disabilities who receives a regular diploma within the period specified by that student’s IEP team is considered to have received a regular diploma “within the standard number of years,” and is included in the graduation rate.

References

Wyoming Department of Education, Every Student Counts Report, Glossary of Terms, 2002.

U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Public High School Dropouts and Completers from the Common Core of Data: School Years 1998-99 and 1999-2000, NCES 2002-382, by Beth Aronstamm Young. Washington, DC: August 2002. URL for publication: <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?publid=2002382>

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CRITICAL ELEMENT	EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS	EXAMPLES OF NOT MEETING REQUIREMENTS
<p>7.2 What is the State's additional academic indicator for public elementary schools for the definition of AYP? For public middle schools for the definition of AYP?</p>	<p>State defines the additional academic indicators, e.g., additional State or locally administered assessments not included in the State assessment system, grade-to-grade retention rates or attendance rates.⁸</p> <p>An additional academic indicator is included (in the aggregate) for AYP, and disaggregated (as necessary) for use when applying the exception clause to make AYP.</p>	<p>State has not defined an additional academic indicator for elementary and middle schools.</p>
<p>STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS</p>		

Element 7.2

In reviewing other state plans, Wyoming became concerned about the efficacy and validity of using indicators such as attendance rates as the additional indicator for elementary and middle schools. Therefore, Wyoming has carried forward a very successful component of its IASA AYP system designed to focus attention on the lowest performing students.

Wyoming was concerned about the potential negative consequences that might result if schools/LEAs focus on those students scoring just below the proficient cut score and do not attend to the truly lowest scoring students. Therefore, Wyoming uses the reduction in the percentage of students scoring in the below basic performance category (the state's lowest category) in reading as the additional academic indicator for elementary and middle schools. A school will not be able to make safe harbor if it has a statistically significant increase in the percentage of students scoring in the lowest performance category in reading.

⁸ NCLB only lists these indicators as examples.

CRITICAL ELEMENT	EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS	EXAMPLES OF NOT MEETING REQUIREMENTS
7.3 Are the State’s academic indicators valid and reliable?	<p>State has defined academic indicators that are valid and reliable.</p> <p>State has defined academic indicators that are consistent with nationally recognized standards, if any.</p>	<p>State has an academic indicator that is not valid and reliable.</p> <p>State has an academic indicator that is not consistent with nationally recognized standards.</p> <p>State has an academic indicator that is not consistent within grade levels.</p>
STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS		

Element 7.3

Reliability of additional indicator in public elementary schools and middle schools

In order to reliably determine whether a school/LEA has had a reduction in the percentage of students scoring in the below basic category, Wyoming applies a statistical confidence interval to those schools failing to demonstrate a reduction in the percentage of students scoring in the below basic category to determine if the difference in the proportions is due to factors other than chance. Using this statistical methodology helps ensure the reliability of AYP decisions.

The methodology for determining if a school or LEA has made progress on the additional indicator for elementary school and middle school proceeds as follows:

1. The percent of students scoring below basic in reading in the prior year are subtracted from the school’s current year percent reading below basic. This indicator is negative for schools demonstrating a reduction in the percent of below basic (an indicator that is constant (zero) is considered as non-increasing and therefore adequate). A positive indicator shows that a school has had an increase in the percent reading below basic. In calculating the elementary and middle school additional indicator in the first year of PAWS administration, a proficiency percentage equating procedure (identical to the process outlined in the safe harbor overview) will be utilized to account for differing proficiency standards on WyCAS and PAWS.
2. Small schools with less than six (6) students in either year’s assessment are examined in comparison to past progress to ensure a valid decision has been made due to the possibility of high variability with small sample sizes.
3. If in both the current year and the prior year, a school’s percentage of students

scoring below basic in reading is below 15 percent, fluctuations in the percentage of students scoring below basic are not considered sufficient evidence to show failure on the additional indicator. Said differently, schools with 85 percent or more of students above below basic in reading in both years can meet the additional indicator regardless of fluctuations. This 15 percent bar can be justified by examining results from prior years NAEP assessment and the related percent of below basic students. In the 2003 NAEP reading results, approximately 38 percent of Wyoming 4th grade students were classified as below basic and approximately 28 percent of Wyoming 8th grade students were classified as below basic. Therefore, a school having below 15 percent of their students below basic in reading in consecutive years is superior in comparison to a large proportion of the state.

4. Schools that exhibit an increase in the percent of students scoring below basic are further examined utilizing a confidence interval. A confidence interval is appropriate because this determination is based on an assessment result that contains error due to annual variability in the student population. This is used to ascertain the error surrounding this estimator. If the calculated confidence interval spans into negative percentages, this provides evidence that the school's indicator may show reduction in the percent below basic with the aspect of sampling variability taken into account.

Reliability of additional indicator in public high schools

In order to reliably determine whether a school/LEA has made progress in the high school graduation rate, the Wyoming Department of Education examines the school's graduation rate in comparison to a set standard of 80 percent graduation. However, the major concern of this methodology is the over-identification of small schools and alternative schools. Small schools can have graduation rates that are highly variable due to small class sizes. Alternative schools, due to the nature of the population they serve, have a low graduation rate but make drastic differences in the educational careers of those they serve. Therefore, a second step of the methodology examines progress in the school's graduation rate.

The methodology for determining if a school or LEA has made progress on the additional indicator proceeds as follows:

1. A high school's graduation rate is calculated in alignment with the formula described in Section 7.1.
2. Schools with a graduation rate of 80 percent or higher have satisfactorily met the additional indicator. Schools exhibiting a graduation rate below 80 percent are further examined for progress.
3. Schools with a graduation rate below 80 percent have their graduation rate compared to the graduation rate from the previous year. High schools showing a positive increase in graduation rate from the previous year have met the additional indicator.

4. Small schools with less than thirty (30) exiters in either year's graduation rate calculation (denominator) are examined individually to ensure a valid decision. This is crucial due to the possibility of high variability with small group sizes seen in Wyoming. This examination includes an examination of past trend data utilizing a trend line of three years data to ensure positive progress is being demonstrated in graduation rate over time as well as a determination of whether a small school missed the standard graduation rate standard by only one or two students. It is estimated that this further examination impacts fewer than ten schools.

Validity

Wyoming will not be able to truly evaluate the validity of the additional indicators for several years. However, it is believed that the use of the reduction in the percentage of students scoring in the lowest performance levels as the additional indicator helps improve the consequential validity of the accountability system for the lowest performing students. In addition, Wyoming believes the goal of reducing the number of below basic students in reading is well aligned with goals found in the state's elementary and middle schools and it is accepted by schools and teachers as having merit.

In utilizing graduation rate for public high schools, one would expect that this indicator is a valid measurement of the "success" of the school. In graduating students, schools are holding their students accountable for attainment of state content standards and endorsing that students have mastered the required content. Thus, graduation rate is a valid indicator for school accountability.

PRINCIPLE 8. AYP is based on reading/language arts and mathematics achievement objectives.

CRITICAL ELEMENT	EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS	EXAMPLES OF <i>NOT</i> MEETING REQUIREMENTS
8.1 Does the state measure achievement in reading/language arts and mathematics separately for determining AYP?	<p>State AYP determination for student subgroups, public schools and LEAs separately measures reading/language arts and mathematics.⁹</p> <p>AYP is a separate calculation for reading/language arts and mathematics for each group, public school, and LEA.</p>	<p>State AYP determination for student subgroups, public schools and LEAs averages or combines achievement across reading/language arts and mathematics.</p>
STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS		

Element 8.1

WyCAS included separate tests in reading, writing, and mathematics as does PAWS. Wyoming’s approach for calculating a language arts composite score from the reading and writing scores is described under Element 3.2a. Wyoming’s separate starting points for language arts and mathematics indicate that Wyoming measures student achievement separately for language arts and mathematics.

For a school or LEA to be considered to have made AYP, it must meet its performance targets in BOTH language arts and mathematics, as well as the other academic indicator. In order for a school to be classified as being in need of improvement, it must fail to make AYP for two consecutive years for the same content area, regardless of the subgroup. In order for a LEA to be classified as being in need of improvement, it must fail to make AYP for two consecutive years for the same content area or other academic indicator in all three grade spans (elementary, middle/junior high, and high school), regardless of the subgroup.

⁹ If the state has more than one assessment to cover its language arts standards, the State must create a method for including scores from all the relevant assessments.

PRINCIPLE 9. State Accountability System is statistically valid and reliable.

CRITICAL ELEMENT	EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS	EXAMPLES OF NOT MEETING REQUIREMENTS
<p>9.1 How do AYP determinations meet the State’s standard for acceptable reliability?</p>	<p>State has defined a method for determining an acceptable level of reliability (decision consistency) for AYP decisions.</p> <p>State provides evidence that decision consistency is (1) within the range deemed acceptable to the State, and (2) meets professional standards and practice.</p> <p>State publicly reports the estimate of decision consistency, and incorporates it appropriately into accountability decisions.</p> <p>State updates analysis and reporting of decision consistency at appropriate intervals.</p>	<p>State does not have an acceptable method for determining reliability (decision consistency) of accountability decisions, e.g., it reports only reliability coefficients for its assessments.</p> <p>State has parameters for acceptable reliability; however, the actual reliability (decision consistency) falls outside those parameters.</p> <p>State’s evidence regarding accountability reliability (decision consistency) is not updated.</p>
<p>STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS</p>		

Element 9.1

There are two aspects of reliability that need to be discussed in relation to this element: one minor and one major. The minor issue, classical test reliability, is one that measurement specialists have focused on for many years when thinking about tests for making decisions about individual students. Test reliability describes how much measurement error is associated with each student’s (actually, it is usually the average student’s) observed test score. The test reliability for WyCAS was very high for all tests with alpha coefficient values all greater than 0.90. PAWS will be administered for the first time in April 2006, and test reliability studies will be conducted in the future. There is no “standard” for satisfactory levels of reliability, but it is generally accepted in the measurement community (e.g., Ysseldyke, 1990) that when making high stakes decisions about students, a reliability coefficient of 0.90 or greater should be required. In Wyoming’s case, the state is not making high-stakes decisions about individual students, but the state still meets this unofficial reliability standard. Nevertheless, test reliability is only a minor component of the error variance associated with determinations of school ratings.

The major component of error variance associated with each school or LEAs yearly ranking is the sampling variability caused by testing different students each year. The accountability system is based on the inference that the test scores of any particular cohort of students tell us something about the quality or effectiveness of their school. Wyoming is not concerned, per se, with the collective scores of the cohort of students as an absolute, rather the scores of any

particular cohort are viewed as an indicator of the school. Therefore, the students tested in any one year should be considered a sample of all possible students who could have attended that school over the lifetime of the school. This means that sampling variability—the error associated with different students being tested in any one year—must be considered when evaluating the reliability of the accountability system. Many researchers have demonstrated that sampling variability overshadows any variance due to test reliability (e.g., Arce-Ferrer, Frisbie, Kolen, 2002; Cronbach, Brennan, Linn, and Haertel, 1997; Hill, 2001; Linn, Baker, and Betebenner, 2002).

This is a major problem for Wyoming because sampling variability is inversely related to sample size -- the number of students tested in any one year. For example, the standard (sampling) error with 25 students tested and 50 percent of them scoring proficient is equal to 10 percent, meaning that for an observed proportion of 50 percent, one could be 95 percent confident that the “true” proportion proficient would be between 30 percent and 70 percent. Clearly this is an unacceptable level of uncertainty especially since many of Wyoming’s schools test fewer than 25 students in any given year. It is precisely for this reason that Wyoming uses an AYP model that relies on modeling this sampling variability and applying confidence intervals (statistical tests) for every decision made. As described above (Element 5.5), Wyoming computes confidence intervals for each of the nine decisions (comparisons of each subgroup to the performance target) required for each of the two content areas (mathematics and language arts).

CRITICAL ELEMENT	EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS	EXAMPLES OF NOT MEETING REQUIREMENTS
9.2 What is the State's process for making valid AYP determinations?	State has established a process for public schools and LEAs to appeal an accountability decision.	State does not have a system for handling appeals of accountability decisions.
STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS		

Element 9.2

The question of whether Wyoming’s AYP determinations are valid can be examined in many different ways. Determining whether a process is valid depends on the overall goal of the accountability and assessment system. If the processes and decisions that come from the system align with this goal and aid in the progress towards the goal, it can be said they are valid.

Wyoming’s accountability goal is to ensure equitable educational opportunities throughout the state. No matter where a student resides in Wyoming, they should receive equitable opportunities to learn. Students’ opportunities to learn should be exclusive of a student’s race, ethnicity, disability, limited English proficiency, socioeconomic status, or other classifications. It is with this goal in mind that the accountability system and processes were developed.

The determination of whether the processes are valid must be based on evidence and will be evaluated regularly. Validity of the AYP decisions for schools and LEAs are examined yearly utilizing various data. The Wyoming Department of Education examines outcomes of the AYP decisions in order to insure the validity of the decisions. The questions that have to be asked to support the argument of validity of the accountability system include:

- Are measurable changes taking place in schools due to the impact of the accountability system?
- Is the desired impact on student achievement happening?
- Is the accountability system sensitive to appropriate reform actions?
- Are the appropriate schools being identified for action?
- Are the rewards and sanctions adequate and just for the related performance?
- Do the rewards and sanctions have the desired effect of influencing schools?

In order to examine validity, the Wyoming Department of Education examines outcomes of the system regularly. AYP decisions are validated by observing additional information and evidence in order to determine if the decision was correct. Wyoming participates in the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) SCASS projects and associated workshops that address the issues of examining validity in state accountability decisions. As a result of these learning opportunities, Wyoming is in a position to provide thoughtful validity investigations of our state’s accountability system.

Validity of decisions also are examined from the perspective of the school and LEA. Is the AYP determination viewed as valid from the school/LEA perspective? The Wyoming Department of Education provides workshops and other forms of communication detailing the AYP process and gathering feedback regarding improvements.

Specific pieces of the accountability system that can be referenced in regard to validity of AYP decisions are summarized below. These individual pieces help to insure the AYP decisions are as valid as possible.

- Any school or LEA may appeal decisions made regarding AYP to the Wyoming Department of Education (WDE) within fifteen (15) days of the AYP determination.
- The state assessment system (WyCAS) has been judged as valid, and several research studies have been completed to support this.
- A study is being conducted by the University of Wyoming regarding the measurable changes taking place in Wyoming schools due to the impact of our instructionally-supportive assessment system and AYP decisions.
- Utilizing a group size of 30 (except for the interim rule for small schools) should lend support to a valid decision being made regarding the schools achievement.
- The use of other indicators (percent reading below basic and graduation rate) align with the educational goals of the system.

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CRITICAL ELEMENT	EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS	EXAMPLES OF NOT MEETING REQUIREMENTS
<p>9.3 How has the State planned for incorporating into its definition of AYP anticipated changes in assessments?</p>	<p>State has a plan to maintain continuity in AYP decisions necessary for validity through planned assessment changes, and other changes necessary to comply fully with NCLB.¹⁰</p> <p>State has a plan for including new public schools in the State Accountability System.</p> <p>State has a plan for periodically reviewing its State Accountability System, so that unforeseen changes can be quickly addressed.</p>	<p>State's transition plan interrupts annual determination of AYP.</p> <p>State does not have a plan for handling changes: e.g., to its assessment system, or the addition of new public schools.</p>
<p>STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS</p>		

Element 9.3

Wyoming has anticipated changes in assessments and has planned accordingly to ensure continuity of AYP decisions. Standards committees were convened in 2002 to construct specific content and achievement standards for the newly included grade levels. With these finalized in January 2003, development of assessments began in the summer of 2004. The new assessments were field tested in the 2004-2005 school year and fully implemented in the 2005-2006 school year. Results obtained from the new assessments will be scrutinized to help ensure the continuity of valid AYP school decisions. When the information from the administration of PAWS is available, decisions will be made regarding possible recalculation of starting points and how assessment information over multiple grade spans will be aggregated to determine school AYP measures. Due to Wyoming's small student numbers, the original starting points baseline was calculated by averaging two years of school data. Even with the 3-8 and 11 assessments, Wyoming's numbers are still very small. Wyoming will leave its current Intermediate Goals in place for the 2006 AYP decisions and revisit this issue in 2007. With the new assessment system, it will be possible to incorporate student growth measures to determine school performance.

¹⁰ Several events may occur which necessitate such a plan. For example, (1) the State may need to include additional assessments in grades 3-8 by 2005-2006; (2) the State may revise content and/or academic achievement standards; (3) the State may need to recalculate the starting point with the addition of new assessments; or (4) the State may need to incorporate the graduation rate or other indicators into its State Accountability System. These events may require new calculations of validity and reliability.

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Wyoming includes all new schools in the AYP accountability process the first year that assessment data is available for that school. Since the AYP indicators are calculated using one year of data, after the school's first year of administering the state assessment the school will be held accountable for the achievement of its students.

The more likely scenario in Wyoming is schools closing and consolidating due to decreasing enrollment. When schools close, the affected grade levels are absorbed into other schools and these schools are held accountable for the achievement of those students (applying the state standard for full academic year determinations, as applicable). The school(s) are not penalized or benefited by the AYP status of the closed school. This also holds for schools that lose grades due to new schools being opened or grade reconfigurations among schools within an LEA.

PRINCIPLE 10. In order for a public school or LEA to make AYP, the State ensures that it assessed at least 95% of the students enrolled in each subgroup.

CRITICAL ELEMENT	EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS	EXAMPLES OF NOT MEETING REQUIREMENTS
<p>10.1 What is the State's method for calculating participation rates in the State assessments for use in AYP determinations?</p>	<p>State has a procedure to determine the number of absent or untested students (by subgroup and aggregate).</p> <p>State has a procedure to determine the denominator (total enrollment) for the 95% calculation (by subgroup and aggregate).</p> <p>Public schools and LEAs are held accountable for reaching the 95% assessed goal.</p>	<p>The state does not have a procedure for determining the rate of students participating in statewide assessments.</p> <p>Public schools and LEAs are not held accountable for testing at least 95% of their students.</p>
<p>STATE RESPONSE AND STATE ACTIVITIES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS</p>		

Element 10.1

Participation rates in the State assessments are calculated by dividing the number of students participating in the assessment by the total number of enrolled students in the school/LEA at the time of testing. When a school/LEA fails to meet the minimum annual participation rate of 95 percent based on current year data, Wyoming averages the participation rate data over the past three years to ensure a more reliable and valid decision of participation rate. Any student for whom there is not an assessment result or for whom there is an invalid assessment score will be counted as “not participating” in the statewide assessment system. However, students who have not participated the state assessment due to expulsion or medical emergencies are not used in the calculation of school or LEA participation rate. These circumstances of the non-participants are beyond the educational control of the school/LEA and thus should not unnecessarily degrade the related participation rate. In the 2005 assessment cycle, only 24 students in the entire state did not participate due to expulsion or medical emergencies. The participation rates are calculated separately for language arts and mathematics at an aggregate level and at the subgroup level for all schools and LEAs. In either content area, failure to assess 95 percent of the students enrolled, overall and in each subgroup, leads to the school or LEA being identified as not meeting AYP.

According to Wyoming Statute 21-2-304 (a), every Wyoming public school student enrolled in grades three through eight and grade eleven are required to participate in PAWS and be assessed in reading, writing, and mathematics. All Wyoming public school students in grades four, eight, and eleven are required to participate in the PAWS science assessment beginning in the spring of 2007. This requirement is further supported by Wyoming State Board Rules, Chapter 6. All

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Neglected and Delinquent Institutions subject to accreditation requirements of the Wyoming State Board of Education are also required to have their students participate in the assessment.

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CRITICAL ELEMENT	EXAMPLES FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS	EXAMPLES OF NOT MEETING REQUIREMENTS
10.2 What is the State's policy for determining when the 95% assessed requirement should be applied?	State has a policy that implements the regulation regarding the use of 95% allowance when the group is statistically significant according to State rules.	State does not have a procedure for making this determination.
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Element 10.2

Wyoming uses a minimum group size of forty (40) prior to applying the 95 percent participation rate test for all groups. No confidence interval is used with regard to this determination.

Appendix A

Required Data Elements for State Report Card

1111(h)(1)(C)

1. Information, in the aggregate, on student achievement at each proficiency level on the State academic assessments (disaggregated by race, ethnicity, gender, disability status, migrant status, English proficiency, and status as economically disadvantaged, except that such disaggregation shall not be required in a case in which the number of students in a category is insufficient to yield statistically reliable information or the results would reveal personally identifiable information about an individual student.
2. Information that provides a comparison between the actual achievement levels of each student subgroup and the State's annual measurable objectives for each such group of students on each of the academic assessments.
3. The percentage of students not tested (disaggregated by the student subgroups), except that such disaggregation shall not be required in a case in which the number of students in a category is insufficient to yield statistically reliable information or the results would reveal personally identifiable information about an individual student.
4. The most recent 2-year trend in student achievement in each subject area, and for each grade level, for the required assessments.
5. Aggregate information on any other indicators used by the State to determine the adequate yearly progress of students in achieving State academic achievement standards disaggregated by student subgroups.
6. Graduation rates for secondary school students disaggregated by student subgroups.
7. Information on the performance of local educational agencies in the State regarding making adequate yearly progress, including the number and names of each school identified for school improvement under section 1116.
8. The professional qualifications of teachers in the State, the percentage of such teachers teaching with emergency or provisional credentials, and the percentage of classes in the State not taught by highly qualified teachers, in the aggregate and disaggregated by high-poverty compared to low-poverty schools which (for this purpose) means schools in the top quartile of poverty and the bottom quartile of poverty in the State.

Appendix B

Chapter 6 School Wyoming State Board of Education Rules Accreditation, Section 9 and 10

Section 9. **Accountability System.** The state shall have a single statewide accountability system, with rewards and consequences, consistent with the requirements of state and federal law. The Accountability System shall be as defined in the Wyoming State Accountability Workbook, approved by the U.S. Department of Education, and shall include an annual Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) determination, based primarily on the results of state assessments, for every public school and public school district. (W.S. 21-2-304(a)(vi)). The Accountability System shall be designed to provide valid and reliable accountability determinations that can help promote continuous improvement in raising student achievement and closing achievement gaps.

Section 10. **Rewards and Consequences.** The state shall have a system of rewards and consequences for every public school and public school district, consistent with the requirements of state and federal law (W.S. 21-2-304(a)(vi)(C)(D)(E)).

(a) Rewards. Each public school and public school district shall be eligible for rewards based on its annual AYP determination and additional data. Rewards shall be administered by the Wyoming Department of Education and may include:

(i) Notification to eligible schools and districts, with the option to request further public recognition by the State Department of Education;

(ii) Encouragement for schools to seek awards (through districts) under Wyoming’s Innovative Trust Fund (or other funds established in state law) to support innovative education initiatives that improve student achievement to the extent state funding is available for such purpose;

(iii) Awards for Title I schools (through districts) under the provisions of NCLB to the extent federal funding is available for such purpose;

(iv) Consideration for increased local flexibility, consistent with state and federal law.

(b) Consequences. The state shall have a system of consequences that applies to all public schools and public school districts and that, consistent with state and federal law, are designed to provide options for appropriate interventions, escalating in nature over time, that can help improve student achievement and close achievement gaps. These consequences shall be based primarily on annual AYP determinations with the nature and degree of such consequences informed by subsequent analysis of AYP and additional data.

(i) School-Level Consequences

(A) Year 1. A school that does not meet AYP in any year shall be expected to undertake, with the participation of the school district, an examination of the AYP determination and an identification of reasons for underperformance. The school shall be

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expected to address identified issues as part of its annual review and School Improvement Plan development process. The school, at the option of the district, may receive targeted technical assistance to be provided by the state, to the extent available given state capacity and funding.

(B) Year 2. A school that does not meet AYP in the same subject for two consecutive years shall be subject to the following improvement consequences:

(1) If the school is a Title I school, the district shall provide written notice to the parents of each student enrolled in the school of the determination and the resulting consequences.

(2) For Title I and non-Title I schools, not later than 3 months after identification for improvement, the school with broad-based involvement of parents, school staff and others, shall review and revise its School Improvement Plan to address identified issues and shall obtain district approval of the revised plan. The School Improvement Plan shall cover a 2-year period and shall be implemented expeditiously and in no case later than the beginning of the school year following identification.

(3) Targeted technical assistance shall be provided by the Wyoming Department of Education and the district for all schools not meeting AYP.

(4) For Title I schools, consistent with federal law, the school shall target 10% of Title I funds to high-quality professional development. Non-Title I schools shall be encouraged to make professional development activities a focus of the school improvement plan.

(5) For Title I schools, consistent with federal law, the district shall provide students enrolled in the school the option to transfer to another public school within the district that has not been identified for improvement. The districts may elect to make public school choice available to students enrolled in non-Title I schools, with appropriate limitations established by the district.

(C) Year 3. A school that does not meet AYP in the same subject for three consecutive years shall be subject to all consequences applicable to schools of its type in Year 2 as well as the following requirements:

(1) For Title I schools, consistent with federal law, provide additional tutoring and support services for students, consistent with the supplemental educational services requirements of federal law.

(2) For Title I and non-Title I schools, utilize funds for summer school and remediation efforts to provide additional tutoring and support services for students most at-risk of not achieving proficiency goals.

(D) Year 4. Title I and non-Title I schools that do not meet AYP in the same subject for four consecutive years shall be subject to all consequences applicable to schools of its type in Year 3 as well as the following corrective action requirements:

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(1) The district shall take one or more corrective actions consistent with state and federal law that are substantially and directly in response to the academic, staffing, curriculum, or other high-priority areas in the school. Corrective actions shall include an appropriate educational intervention (including the review, revision, or expansion of a prior intervention) selected by the district from the following corrective action options: place an expert in the school; extend learning time; institute a new curriculum; decrease school management authority; restructure the school's internal organization; replace appropriate staff.

(2) The district shall publish and disseminate, to parents and to the public, information regarding the corrective action taken at each school.

(E) Year 5. Title I and non-Title I schools that do not meet AYP in the same subject for five consecutive years shall be subject to all consequences applicable to schools of its type in Year 4 as well as the following requirements:

(1) For Title I and non-Title I schools, the district shall undertake a review and revision of the corrective actions undertaken in Year 4, as appropriate, and continue with implementation of the corrective actions.

(2) For Title I schools, the district shall develop a restructuring plan for the school. The School Restructuring Plan shall follow NCLB guidelines and shall include a fundamental reform at a systemic, governance level that is to be taken by the district to improve student achievement. The district shall obtain approval of the School Restructuring Plan from the State Board of Education and shall prepare to implement the plan at the start of the next school year.

(3) For Title I and non-Title I schools, the district shall undertake a review and revision of the corrective actions undertaken in Year 4, as appropriate.

(F) Year 6. A school that does not meet AYP in the same subject for six consecutive years shall be subject to all consequences applicable to schools of its type in Year 5 as well as the following requirements:

(1) For Title I schools, the district shall implement the School Restructuring Plan developed and approved in Year 5.

(2) For non-Title I schools, the district shall review, revise, and expand, as appropriate, the corrective actions undertaken in previous years.

(ii) District-Level Consequences.

(A) Year 1. A district that does not meet AYP in any year shall be expected to undertake an examination of its AYP determination and an identification of reasons for not meeting AYP. The district shall have the option of receiving targeted technical assistance to be provided by the Wyoming Department of Education to the extent available given state capacity and funding.

(B) Year 2. A district that does not meet AYP in the same subject in

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any two consecutive years shall be subject to the following improvement consequences:

(1) Not later than 3 months after identification for improvement, the district, with broad-based involvement of parents, staff, and others, shall develop or revise a District Improvement Plan and shall obtain approval of the plan from the Wyoming Department of Education. The District Improvement Plan shall cover a 2-year period and shall be implemented expeditiously and in no case later than the beginning of the school year following identification.

(2) The district shall receive targeted technical assistance provided by the Wyoming Department of Education to the extent available given state capacity and funding.

(C) Year 3. A district that does not meet AYP in the same subject for three consecutive years shall, if not already undertaken, begin implementation of the District Improvement Plan developed and approved in Year 2.

(D) Year 4. A district that does not meet AYP in the same subject for four or more consecutive years shall be subject to the consequences applicable to districts in Year 3 as well as the following requirements:

(1) For Title I districts, the state shall take one or more corrective action, as required by federal law and acting consistent with state law, from a menu of possible corrective actions.