



**WYOMING**  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

*Creating Opportunities  
for Students to Keep  
Wyoming Strong*

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## March 17-18, 2016 Update from Superintendent Balow

Dear Chairman Gosar and Members of the SBE:

I plan to provide information in this update in-person on March 17-18 in Hulett. Here are a handful highlights from each of the WDE divisions.

### ***Finance:***

The School Foundation Team is adjusting the statewide payment model incorporating the external cost adjustments (ECA) implemented through 2016 session law.

The Budget Team will work closely with teams across the WDE (and SBE if desired) in the coming weeks to analyze budget cuts realized during the 2016 legislative session. Additionally, I requested this team continue to analyze the budget for additional voluntary reductions in travel, duplicated work, and the 900 series (contracts).

### ***Accountability:***

The Assessment Team is gearing up to provide phase II of assessment literacy training. The purpose is to help educators really understand the different types of assessments and their purposes as well as to provide guidance on developing a more valid, reliable, and robust assessment system for their district. Phase I of this training was widely attended.

The Hathaway Team is excited to appeal to younger students and their families in a variety of ways in the coming months.

### ***Individual Learning:***

A collaborative partnership between the Individual Learning Division and University of Wyoming ECHO project kicked off with a statewide ECHO conference. Close partnerships with schools and districts across the state enable WDE staff to plan deliver professional development and technical assistance according to stakeholder needs and data.

### ***Information Management:***

The upcoming Wyoming School District Technology Directors Conference is hosted by WDE and the Information Management Division.

### ***Communications:***

The Comms Division will continue to enhance the content and delivery of information coming from the WDE and the SBE. Our digital presence has been improved by making the websites we manage more mobile friendly, migrating more communications onto the GovDelivery platform, and continuing to build on efforts through social media.

***Student Support:***

The Consolidated Grants/Grants Management System team within the Student Support Division is on track to release competitive grants ahead of schedule so that districts have time to review grant requirements and complete applications. In addition, this team has received initial guidance and is preparing for transition to ESSA. The new law will significantly impact specific federal grants.

Once again, I look forward to answering questions about this update in Hulett.

My Best,

*Jillian*

Jillian Balow, State Superintendent

### **Major Assessment Components of EA 55:**

- Implement standards-based assessment system in English language arts (not only reading) and mathematics in grades 3-10 to promote coherence across grade spans
- Assess science in grades 4, 8, and 10
- Assess writing at least once in each grade span
- Implement a college entrance assessment in grade 11
- Implement an optional work readiness assessment in grades 11 and 12
- Initiate new system in the 2017-18 school year and ensure total time in testing is no more than 1% of total student-teacher time
- Include multiple item types to better address the standards
- Include optional interim assessments for district use, aligned to summative assessment in terms of content
- Include a “best practices” reporting system to support improvement strategies
- Assess as late in the year as practical (Task Force Report suggests last two weeks of April and first week of May)
- Assess online, to the extent practical (Task Force Report suggests an infrastructure audit prior to first administration)
- Measure student performance on a comparative basis in other states

### **Specialty Assessments in EA 55:**

- Assessment Task Force did not have sufficient time or requisite expertise to consider application of assessment framework to “specialty” assessments, including
  - Alternate assessments for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities
  - English proficiency assessments
  - Career technical assessments
  - Early literacy assessments
  - K – 2 assessments
- EA 55 requires the state board, through the WDE, to convene committees of “assessment specialists, including district personnel” to review recommendations of the Task Force and make recommendations to the Select Committee regarding these assessments no later than September 30, 2016

### **Timeline for Procurement:**

April – June 2016: Develop RFP, with assistance of external vendor

July 2016: WDE sends RFP to LSO for review and approval

October: WDE receives and evaluates responses to RFP

November – December 2016: WDE negotiates contract with vendor(s)

January 2017: WDE begins work with vendor(s) and districts to get ready for new assessment system

March – April 2017: PAWS, Aspire, Wy-ALT, and ACT administration

April-May 2017: New assessment system implemented

## **Progress to Date: Procurement:**

*Objective:* Ensure a transparent, inclusive, and unbiased process for procurement of the new statewide assessment system

- Collected sample RFPs from other states
- WDE will identify a vendor to
  - Develop scope of work for RFP, including detailed technical specifications to address Joint Standards, applicable peer review requirements, Task Force recommendations, Wyoming law, and best practices
  - Develop an evaluation framework & associated rubrics
  - Train members of the proposal review committee
  - Assist WDE in developing the scope of work in the new vendor contract(s)
- Proposal review committee will include WDE and school/district staff

## **Specialty Committees:**

- Solicit school/district interest in the committees via the WDE Assessment Newsletter
- Review list of interested participants and identify members of each committee jointly with Board's Coordinator
- Conduct meetings separately, given very different backgrounds and knowledge base
- Include at least one member from Task Force, if possible, in each of the committees
- Include individuals from various roles, including classroom teacher, curriculum director, special education director, assessment director, principal
- Facilitate meetings using Regional Education Lab (REL) expertise to foster independence and bring national perspective to the various assessment discussions

## **Other Activities:**

- Infrastructure audit
  - Will leverage intended work with the Digital Learning Plan and conduct survey of all districts' technology infrastructure, including bandwidth (to and within district), number and types of devices, and operating systems
  - Will build on work being done now for Aspire readiness in high schools
- Peer review process
  - New guidelines released late September, 2015
  - Wyoming submission no later than April 6, 2016
  - Feedback from ED will come too late to inform RFP but may come soon enough to inform contract provisions
  - Waiver for speaking and listening for 2016-17 school year

**WYOMING DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

State Board of Education

FY15 Budget

1 JULY 2014 thru 11 MARCH 2016

DESCRIPTION	BUDGETED	EXPENDED	ENCUMBERED	REMAINING	
				BALANCE	Percentage
<b>Personal Services (0100 series)</b>					
[App Unit 001]	60,000.00	45,609.76		14,390.24	23.98%
<b>Supportive Services (0200 series)</b>					
[App Unit 001]	154,840.00	135,171.59		19,668.41	12.70%
<b>Data Processing Charges (0400 series)</b>					
[App Unit 001]	6,031.00	5,089.83		941.17	15.61%
<b>Professional Services (0900 series)</b>					
[App Unit 001]	62,841.00	45,439.61	8,529.75	8,871.64	14.12%
	<b>283,712.00</b>	<b>231,310.79</b>	<b>8,529.75</b>	<b>43,871.46</b>	<b>15.46%</b>
<b>Personal Services (0100 series)</b>					
[App Unit 009]	250,000.00	228,243.91		21,756.09	8.70%
<b>Supportive Services (0200 series)</b>					
[App Unit 009]	80,000.00	39,454.78		40,545.22	50.68%
<b>Professional Services (0900 series)</b>					
[App Unit 009]	120,000.00	55,957.16		64,042.84	53.37%
	<b>450,000.00</b>	<b>323,655.85</b>		<b>126,344.15</b>	<b>28.08%</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>733,712.00</b>	<b>554,966.64</b>	<b>8,529.75</b>	<b>170,215.61</b>	<b>23.20%</b>