



# Wyoming Department of Education

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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**For Immediate Release:**  
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### **Adequate Yearly Progress List Released Friday**

Cheyenne – Schools across Wyoming and the nation are expected to improve each year, according to the federal law, “No Child Left Behind”.

In keeping with that goal, state officials are required to evaluate every school, every year according to these improvement goals. In Wyoming, the announcement about schools compliance will be made on August 1. Just over 50 Wyoming schools will receive a “high priority” designation and will begin to receive technical assistance in specific areas of need.

School and district status is based primarily on the results of the WyCAS, a statewide assessment given to 4<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grade students each year. Last year, these results provided a baseline for all schools in language arts and math.

That baseline provides a starting point with targets at specified intervals. The long-term goal is for 100 percent proficiency by 2014. For example, in 2003 all elementary schools are expected to achieve a goal of 30.4 percent proficient in language arts on their way to 100 percent.

Those schools with scores below that target will be designated as high priority schools and during the coming year, will receive concentrated technical assistance from the Wyoming Department of Education.

In addition to school wide performance, each school is evaluated on the basis of achievement by eight subgroups: White, Hispanic, American Indian, Black, Asian, free or reduced lunch eligible, Individual Education Plan (IEP) and Limited English Speaking (LEP) students.

Some schools may meet achievement targets as a school, only to find that the targets for one or more subgroups were not met. In this instance, the school will be identified as a high priority school.

Achievement scores are only one aspect of the No Child Left Behind evaluations. Schools are also evaluated on the basis of other indicators.

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These indicators include the participation rate of a school or district's students in WyCAS testing in language arts and math. Student participation rates must be 95 percent of the eligible population.

Elementary and middle level schools are also expected to decrease the number of students in the Novice category (lowest performance level) on the reading portion of WyCAS.

High Schools are expected to have graduation rates of 80 percent, or make improvement in the graduation rates over the previous year.

No Child Left Behind assists schools, district administrators, state policymakers and the community to better understand the details about student performance.

If the target is not reached in any of the above categories, a school will receive a high priority designation. The specificity of the indicators assists the state and schools in targeting assistance. Schools are given two years to meet targets before federally prescribed sanctions occur.

While no sanctions will be administered in the first year of the law, the Wyoming Department of Education will act immediately to begin to assist schools in meeting improvement targets.

In the event a school receives a "high priority" designation for two consecutive years in the same category, federal law requires that school to offer school choice to the students in that school. Sanctions become increasingly severe if targets are not met in consecutive years. A list of the federally prescribed sanctions is attached.

The Wyoming Department of Education will begin technical assistance efforts immediately, with regional team meetings beginning in mid-August. The state assistance team will begin making visits to high priority schools and districts in September to help them analyze programs, practices, and student performance data in order to determine the type of assistance needed. This assistance will continue throughout the school year.

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*If you would prefer to receive this and other announcements or press releases in electronic format, please contact Public Information Officer Tim Lockwood at (307) 777-6386 or by e-mail at [tlockw@educ.state.wy.us](mailto:tlockw@educ.state.wy.us)*

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