

**Wyoming Department of Education
General Information**

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Other Locations: Laramie, Riverton, Casper, Rawlins, Sheridan, and Powell

Statutory Reference: Wyoming Constitution and W.S. § 21-2-201 and 21-2-202

Clients Served: The public including students, parents, educators and legislators

Budget: This agency operated with a 2008 budget of \$733,580,916 of which \$10,517,442 were in general funds.

Wyoming Department of Education

Quality of Life Result

The Wyoming Department of Education's mission is to model the highest possible character, integrity, and leadership focused on the support of continuous academic achievement. The mission statement can be summarized in the following three big themes: professionalism, continuous improvement, and effective teamwork. The Department's slogan is: One team one effort.

Agency

Wyoming Department of Education

Contribution to Wyoming Quality of Life

This agency is focused on the Governor's Goal/Result #5. It is the Department's intent to ensure that all students are successfully educated and prepared for life's opportunities. Working with the Wyoming State Board of Education, the Wyoming Department of Education has identified one statewide supporting goal to achieve the Governor's goal/result. The one statewide public education goal is "To build capacity of the state legislature, USED, SBE, districts, and institutions by providing quality customer service".

Basic Facts

This agency has 141 employees and operated with a 2008 budget of \$733,580,916 of which \$10,517,442 were in general funds.

The seven primary units of our department include:

Administration – focuses on education policies and procedures and their impacts.

Federal Program – focuses on the administration and review of federal education programs and funding for the state

Finance – focuses on funding procedures and models for state education programs, projects, and initiatives.

Health, Safety and Transportation – focuses on issues that affect preserving a healthy learning environment, the well-being of students and the safe transportation to and from school.

Special Education – focuses on monitoring and analyzing programs for students with special needs in Wyoming.

Standards, Assessment and Accountability – focuses on measuring and tracking of student achievement; assists schools in improving their student achievement programs.

Technology, Careers and Data – focuses on career and technical education programs, as well as student, school and district data collections and education technology.

Together, these programs serve all of Wyoming citizenry, to include 85,578 students 15,105 education professionals such as teachers, instructional aides, administrators, and support staff at

354 schools in 48 school districts. The Wyoming Department of Education also works with 145 preschools, daycares and headstarts, and 31 private institutions or schools.

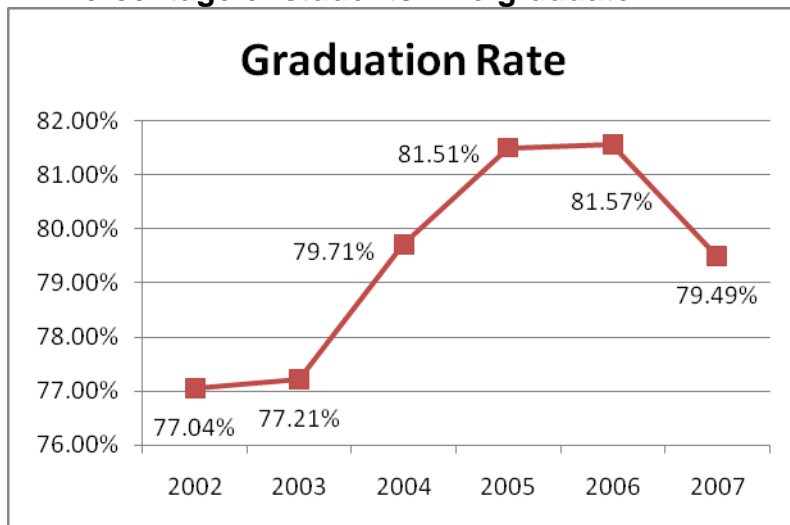
In addition the department participates in the funding and program oversight of the statewide Child Development Centers that serve children ranging in age from birth to 5 years old.

Performance Measures

The department monitors statewide, work unit and employee performance goals. All of these performance items/goals support the Governor's goal/result. For this strategic plan, the Wyoming Superintendent of Public Instruction has identified five critical measures that represent the work of the Department and the State Board of Education.

The five measures include:

#1: Percentage of students who graduate.



Story Behind the Performance

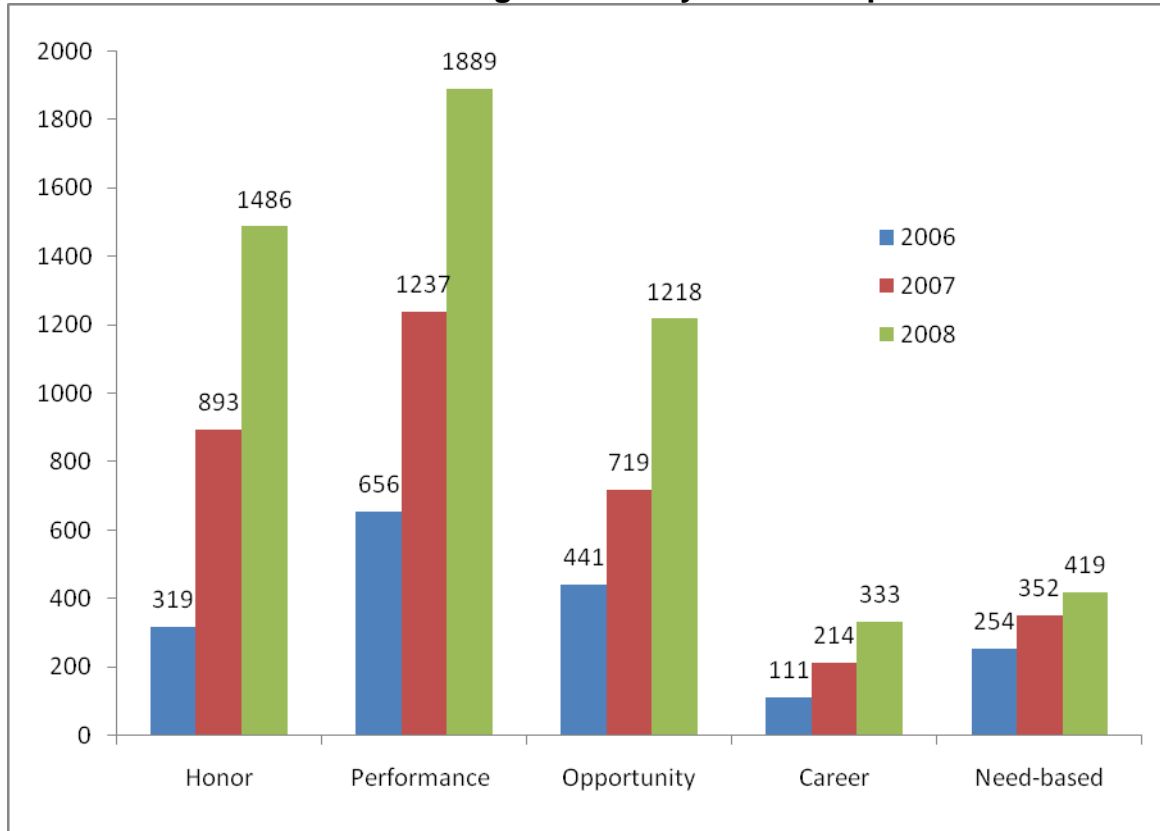
The department has worked with the Wyoming State Board of Education to identify student graduation rate as a primary public education improvement area. As part of the State Board of Education accreditation process for all schools and districts, there is an accreditation requirement for the development of a district and school profile. All schools and districts must report several performance areas including the graduation rates of their students. If a district or school has a low graduation rate, they are encouraged to identify possible interventions to improve the graduation rate. The department also requires all districts to report their graduation rates annually.

What Has Been Accomplished

The contributing efforts of the various units at the Wyoming Department of Education have had a positive and, in many cases, significant impact on the student achievement through the measures recorded by the department. For 2007, the graduation rate has dipped slightly, but the department continues to work on identifying interventions to improve Wyoming's graduation rate. Resources such as early intervention, summer school, afterschool programs, instructional facilitators and establishment of a P-16 have the result of directly impacting and engaging

students which, in turn, affects Wyoming graduation rate. The rate calculation is closely aligned to National Governor's Association formula so the numbers are both reliable and comparable.

#2: Number of students receiving a Hathaway scholarship



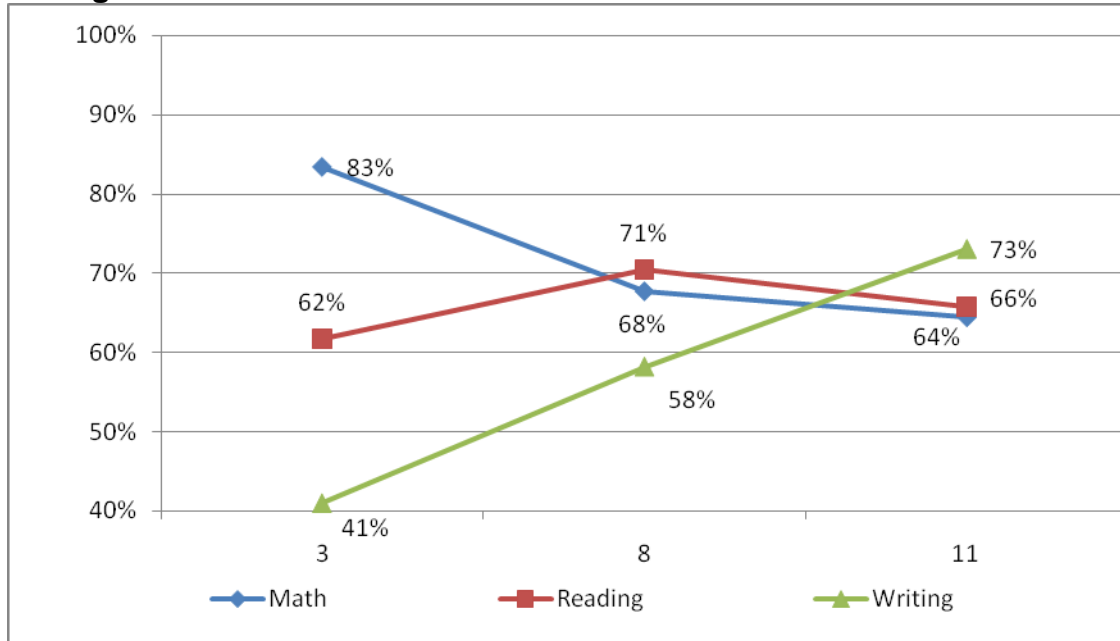
Story Behind the Performance

The department manages the new Hathaway Scholarship program. The legislature approved the Hathaway Merit Scholarship program in law for graduates of Wyoming public schools. The intent of the program is to encourage graduates to stay in Wyoming and to complete advance education opportunities, post high school. Currently 52% of Wyoming's high school graduates are staying in Wyoming for a post high school 2 or 4 year degree program.

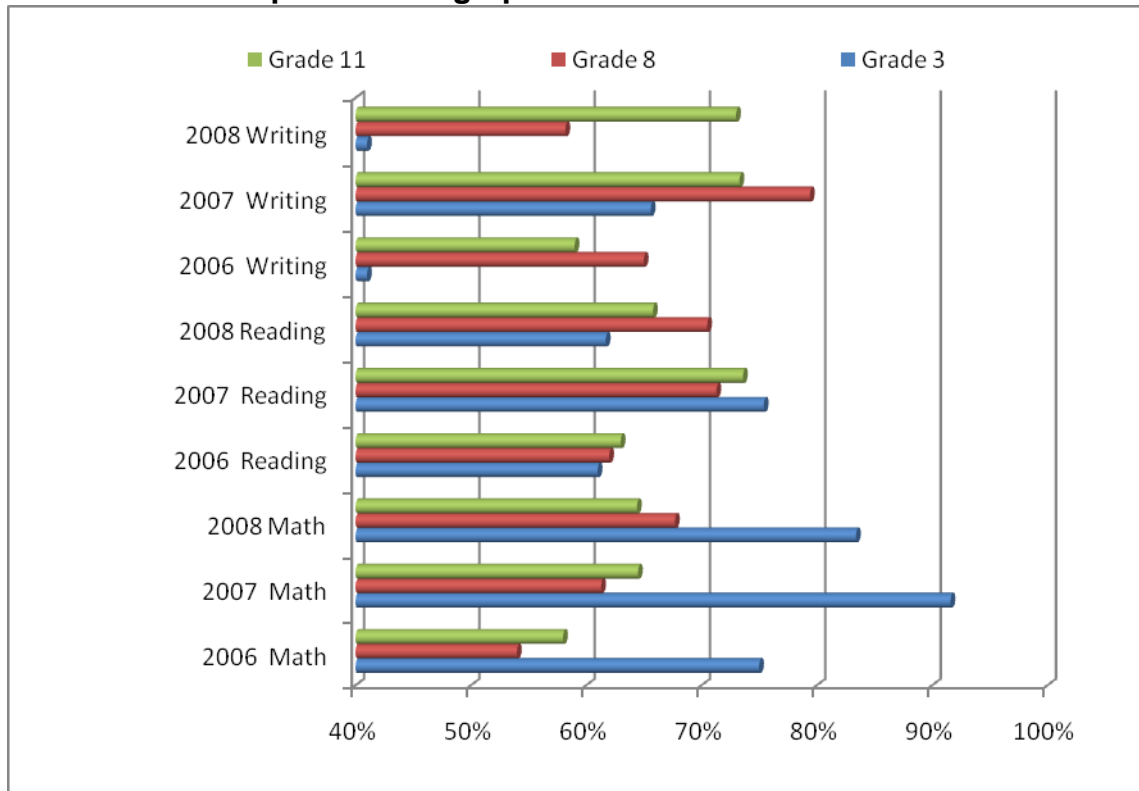
What Has Been Accomplished

The number of Hathaway Scholarships that have been distributed to Wyoming graduates has sharply increased over the past three years. We expect this increase to continue as least partially over the next two years. We will be instituting an aggressive marketing and promotion campaigns to increase awareness of the Hathaway Scholarship and its requirements. We still strive to get every graduating Wyoming senior to take advantage of the Hathaway Scholarship through the success curricula.

#3: Percentage of students 3, 8 and 11 who are proficient in math, reading and writing for 2008



#3a: 2006-08 comparative bar graph



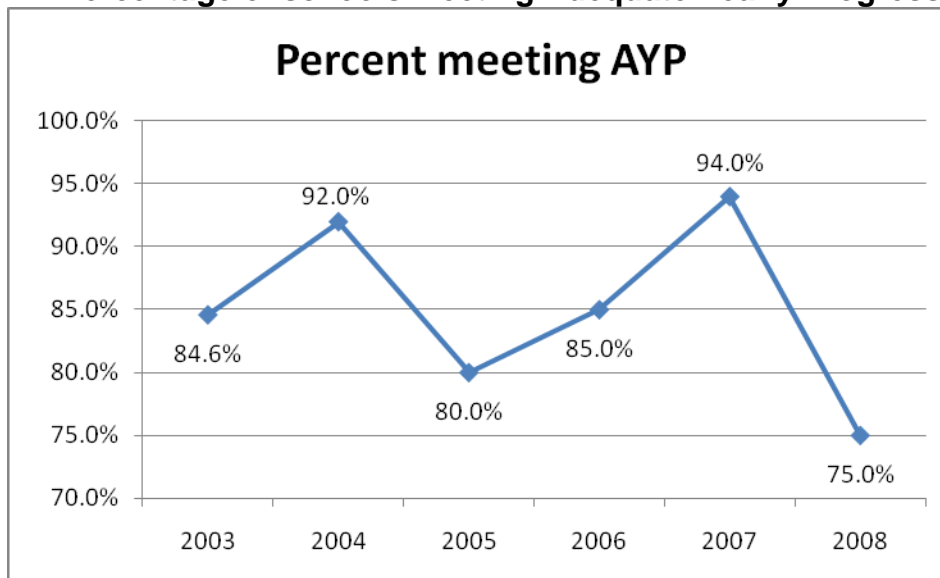
Story Behind the Performance

Currently there are state and federal requirements to annually assess all students' performance in the areas of mathematics, language arts, and science. The Performance Assessment for Wyoming Students (PAWS) is the state assessment for students in grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 11. The PAWS is a new statewide assessment that has only been given for the last three years. Of those three years, 2006 and 2008 were a single administration and 2007 was a dual administration. The dual administration was a change that occurred because of a task force of educational peers and other members of the public. In addition, the department released a new RFP for the statewide assessment system this year and a new vendor will be selected and in place for next year.

What Has Been Accomplished

From 2006 to 2007, there was a marked increase in scores. This jump is mainly contributed to the ability of a student to take the test or portions of the test, multiple times, hence the dual administration. As expected we saw a decrease in scores from 2007 to 2008 as we went back to a single administration. However, when you compare the 2006 results to the 2008 results, you notice that student achievement maintains a trend of continuous improvement in most areas. Writing continues to be a struggle for many students and the Wyoming Department of Education will be focusing on what programmatic development can occur in that area in the coming months. In addition, the department will be looking at the reading and math to ensure achievement continues in those subject areas. The department, with the support of North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (NCA CASI), provides two major statewide school improvement conferences annually for educators. The conferences will provide a opportunity to focus on writing and experts will be speaking and training with regards to this critical issue.

#4: Percentage of schools meeting Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)



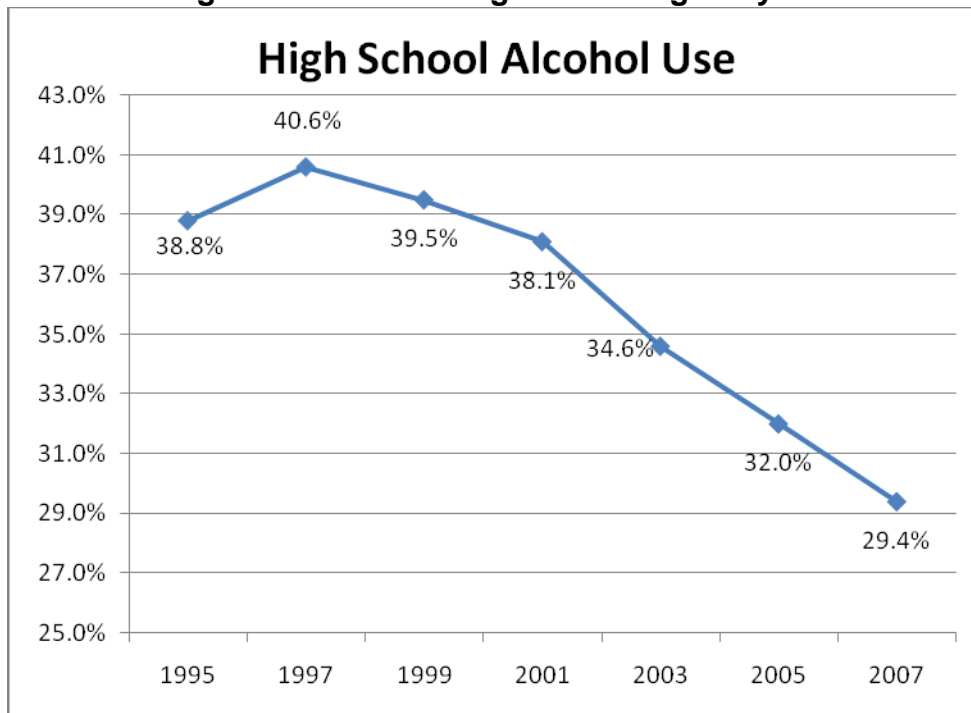
Story Behind the Performance

Currently the United States Department of Education requires that the department report on those schools and districts who receive federal funds that are making annual yearly progress (AYP) on the statewide assessment. The intent of the AYP requirement is for all students to continuously improve in core literacy areas. In 2008, target levels for achieving AYP were increased from 11 to 15 percent depending on grade level and subject area.

What Has Been Accomplished

As expected, the graph of percent schools meeting AYP shows a significant decrease for 2008 as target levels for meeting adequate yearly progress increased across the board. However, because of the diligence of the various units at the Wyoming Department of Education, the drop was mitigated as much as possible. A large percentage of the schools that did not make AYP in 2008 were on the list for the first time and many will likely meet the target level in the coming two years before the next target level jump. In the meantime, the department will be closely examining each school and district that did not meet AYP and working with them to develop programmatic reform to address any issues. In addition, the department has worked for two years to develop a new and improved district technical assistance model. Districts are categorized according to their needs and the district coaches are being assigned to the most at-risk districts.

#5: Percentage of students using alcohol regularly



Story Behind the Performance

The department is not only concerned with academic performance of students but also with non-academic indicators that impact student learning. Underage alcohol use is a major concern of the Governor and State Superintendent of Public Instruction. The department works with the department of health and other partners to make citizens aware of the issue of underage drinking, to provide education, and to develop intervention programs for students.

What Has Been Accomplished

Through the marked efforts of health education and various programs and initiatives of technical assistance and youth services, we continue to see a marked decrease in the use of alcohol in high school.

What Do You Propose To Do To Improve Performance in the Next 2 Years?

The department is committed, over the next 5 years, to improve all performance targets as identified in this plan. The department will continue to meet its legal compliance obligations and improve its capacity to better provide technical assistance services to school districts and institutions. The department has currently identified four improvement goals to better serve its customers. The goals include: 1. provide quality customer service, 2. improve the quality and delivery of technical assistance products and services, 3. improve internal processes, and 4. improve the operations (effectiveness & efficiency) of programs, projects, initiatives, and teams.

Over the past year, each of the four goal areas has been evaluated carefully and the department and its units are in the course of examining various processes and programs to evaluate efficiency and effectiveness and how each might be increased. The examinations are being conducted through the Baldrige evaluation methods.

