



Wyoming State Assessment System

2026 Exemption from Participation Request

All students are expected to participate in the Wyoming Assessment System. Every effort must be made to inform parents, guardians, and students about the testing calendar and to emphasize the importance of participation.

On behalf of a student, school administrators may apply for an exemption from participation in the ACCESS, WY-ALT, or WY-TOPP assessments.

Exemptions must be submitted in the SAER system no later than five business days before the close of the applicable assessment window.

An exemption is only valid after obtaining approval from the Wyoming Department of Education (WDE). Requests may ONLY be submitted via the SAER system found on the WDE website.

Current documentation (e.g., Student Information System (SIS) screenshots that show a student's expulsion, out-of-state placement, EL status, or other official communication regarding dates/locations of residency) must be included with each request. Requests for exemption that do not include the required documentation will not be processed. The student's WISER ID must accompany the exemption documentation (on the same page). Do not digitally enhance documentation. Please do not include HIPA protected student medical records with the exemption request.

Exemption Categories

An exemption request must meet the criteria in one of the three categories listed below. Current documentation must be submitted with each request. It is the district's responsibility to submit exemption requests in a timely manner.

Domain Exemption for ACCESS for ELs

Schools may request a domain (Reading, Speaking, Listening, and/or Writing) exemption from the ACCESS for ELs or ALT-ACCESS assessments for active English Learner students with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) if the student has a disability which affects participation. This exemption is consistent with the State Board of Education's (SBE) duty to provide appropriate accommodations or alternative assessments to enable the assessment of students with disabilities and students with limited English proficiency, as specified under W.S. 21-2-304(a)(v)(G). It ensures that the assessment process remains fair and valid by accounting for the impact of a student's disability on their ability to participate in specific domains of the English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA).

English Learners (ELs)

Schools may request an EL exemption from the ELA portion of the WY-TOPP and WY-ALT for students who:

- Have been enrolled in U.S. schools for less than one calendar year (cumulatively) from the start of the test window, and
- Participate in the Wyoming English Language Proficiency Assessment, WIDA ACCESS, (if enrolled after the end of the ELPA window, contact WDE).

Official documentation of EL status and enrollment in U.S. schools must be provided. Typically, the best documentation is a screenshot from your Student Information System (SIS).

The exemption for English Learners is well-supported by W.S. 21-2-304(a)(v), particularly through its directives to provide fair and unbiased assessments, and specifically to offer accommodations or alternative assessments for students with limited English proficiency. This approach ensures that EL students are assessed appropriately for their stage of language acquisition, rather than being unfairly penalized due to a language barrier on content tests.

Expelled Students

A student must be expelled for the duration of the test administration window to meet the criteria for this exemption category. Official documentation (e.g., SIS screenshot) of dates of expulsion must be provided along with the request. Students who are suspended from school pending expulsion are also eligible for exemption.

If an expelled student is receiving educational services from the district, a good faith effort should be made on the part of the district to assess the student. This effort should be pursuant to ensuring the safety and security of district staff. This expectation aligns with the SBE's overarching duty to implement a statewide assessment system that measures individual student performance, ensures fairness, and provides appropriate accommodations, as outlined in W.S. 21-2-304(a)(v).

Students Who are in an Out-of-State Placement

There are two types of Out-of-State student exemptions:

- **Placement:** for students placed in an out-of-state school, facility, or institution for the entirety of the assessment window. Official documentation of dates and placement must be provided (e.g., SIS screenshot or other official communication regarding dates/locations of placement). Any student who meets the requirements noted above and has a WDE-approved exemption request will not be counted as an enrolled student for any accountability decisions.
- **Residence:** for students who are residing out-of-state: (a) with a parent or guardian in active military service; or (b) while experiencing a severe/urgent medical condition or event in a medical facility. A student must be out of state for the entirety of the assessment window in order to meet the criteria for this exemption category. Official documentation of dates for out-of-state living arrangements/residence must be provided (e.g., official communication regarding dates/locations of residency). Any student who meets the requirements noted above and has a WDE-approved exemption request will not be counted as an enrolled student for any accountability decisions.

These exemptions align with the SBE's duty to establish and manage a coherent and valid statewide assessment and accountability system that accurately reflects the performance of Wyoming's public education system, as outlined in W.S. 21-2-304(a)(v). As assessments cannot be securely administered across state lines, and the system is designed to measure and improve education within Wyoming public schools, students who are entirely outside of the system's purview for the assessment window would naturally fall under an exemption category to prevent the skewing of results.