



Wyoming Education Authority & Accountability

What Parents Need to Know

This section explains how state-level education authority works in Wyoming, who sets education policy, who implements it, and how parents can stay informed and hold decision-makers accountable.

Wyoming has three connected state-level education authorities:

1. The State Superintendent of Public Instruction – elected by voters
2. The Wyoming Department of Education – led by the Superintendent
3. The Wyoming State Board of Education – appointed, not elected

They work together, but they do not have equal roles.

Even though authority is split, all of them are paid with tax dollars and exist to serve Wyoming families.

What the State Superintendent of Public Instruction is

The State Superintendent of Public Instruction is Wyoming's elected statewide education leader and the chief executive officer of the Wyoming Department of Education. The Superintendent is responsible for carrying out public education law, administering state and federal education programs, and directing the work of the state education agency.

The authority of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction is established in [Wyoming Statute Title 21, Chapter 2, Article 2](#) which assigns the Superintendent duties related to administering the state educational system, adopting rules and regulations as authorized by law, managing statewide education accountability responsibilities, and serving as the state agency for accepting and administering federal education funds as provided in statute.

The State Superintendent cannot directly manage or take over local school districts. However, the office has significant authority to shape policy implementation, influence district behavior, determine enforcement priorities, and decide whether transparency and accountability are emphasized statewide.

How the State Superintendent Is Chosen

The State Superintendent of Public Instruction is elected statewide by Wyoming voters. Candidates run in statewide elections, and the winner serves a set term. Because this is an elected position, parents and taxpayers can hold the Superintendent accountable through elections and public pressure between elections.

What the Wyoming Department of Education Is

The Wyoming Department of Education is the state agency responsible for overseeing and applying public education law in Wyoming. The State Superintendent of Public Instruction oversees this entire agency.

The authority of the Wyoming Department of Education is established in [Wyoming Statute Title 21, Chapter 2, Article 2](#), which directs the Department of Education to administer and implement state and federal education laws, oversee education programs and funding, collect and report statewide education data, and carry out policies and rules adopted under Wyoming law.

Who Leads and Operates the Wyoming Department of Education

The Wyoming Department of Education is led by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, who serves as the chief executive officer of the Department. Under Wyoming law, the Superintendent has authority to organize the Department, hire staff, and delegate duties as necessary to carry out the responsibilities assigned in statute.

Department staff are state employees who administer education programs, manage funding, collect and report education data, and perform other functions required by state and federal law. While the Superintendent has discretion to assign roles and responsibilities within the Department, the structure and staffing of the Department must remain within positions authorized by law and funded by the Legislature.

What the State Board of Education Is

The [Wyoming State Board of Education](#) is the state body responsible for setting statewide education policy for public schools. The Board is separate from the Wyoming Department of Education and is composed of members appointed by the Governor rather than elected by voters.

The authority of the Wyoming State Board of Education is established in [Wyoming Statute Title 21, Chapter 2, Article 2](#), which directs the Board to adopt statewide academic standards, establish graduation requirements, approve statewide assessment and accountability systems, and set accreditation standards for public schools and school districts under Wyoming law.

Who Serves on the State Board of Education

The State Board of Education is made up of eleven voting members appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Wyoming Senate. State law requires that these members represent a range of education-related and public perspectives, but they are not elected by voters and do not represent specific geographic districts.

In addition to the voting members, the Board includes three non-voting, ex-officio members: the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, the President of the University of Wyoming, and the President of the Wyoming Community College Commission (or their designee). These members participate in discussions but do not vote on Board decisions.

Because voting members are appointed rather than elected, the State Board of Education exercises substantial influence over Wyoming education policy without direct voter accountability. This makes

transparency, public participation, and legislative oversight especially important for parents and taxpayers.

Stay Informed: State-Level Updates and Public Participation

Parents and taxpayers can stay informed and engaged by following official state-level communications and monitoring public decision-making processes. Many important education policies are discussed and shaped at the state level before they appear in local schools.

Parents can sign up for updates and announcements from all three of the state level education agencies and offices.

These sources often provide information about:

- Statewide education priorities and implementation decisions
- Proposed policies and rules that school districts may be required to follow
- Transparency and accountability initiatives
- Public meeting schedules and materials
- Opportunities for public comment on proposed rules, regulations, and statewide education policies

The State Board of Education, in particular, posts public meeting agendas, supporting documents, and notices related to rulemaking and policy decisions that affect schools across Wyoming. Monitoring these materials helps parents understand where policies originate and how decisions are made.

Staying informed at the state level allows parents to participate early in the process, ask informed questions, and provide public input before decisions are finalized, rather than reacting after changes have already been implemented locally.

State Board Sign up:

https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/WYDE/subscriber/new?topic_id=WYDE_15

WDE sign up: https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/WYDE/subscriber/new?qsp=CODE_RED

Superintendent updates: <https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/WYDE/subscriber/new>

Why This Matters for Parents and Taxpayers

Understanding how education authority works at the state level helps parents move from frustration to clarity. Many of the policies that affect classrooms, curriculum standards, testing, and school accountability are shaped long before families see changes at the local level. Knowing who sets those policies and who is responsible for carrying them out allows parents to ask better questions and engage more effectively.

State-level education leadership matters because it influences what school districts are required to do, what options districts are given, and how laws are applied across Wyoming. While local school boards manage day-to-day operations, state decisions often set the boundaries within which districts operate.

Elections play an important role in this system. The Governor appoints members of the State Board of Education, which sets many of the rules and standards that affect schools statewide. The State Superintendent of Public Instruction is elected by voters and leads the Wyoming Department of Education, shaping priorities, enforcement, and transparency across the state education system. These offices influence far more than administrative details. They affect the long-term direction of public education in Wyoming.

For parents and taxpayers, staying informed and participating in these processes is not about politics. It is about stewardship, transparency, and accountability. When families understand how decisions are made and who is responsible, they are better equipped to advocate for their children, engage, and ensure that Wyoming's education system remains responsive to the people it is meant to serve.