

Average Daily Membership

*Proposed Change to
Chapter 8 Rules and Regulations
for the
Wyoming School Foundation Program*



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The Wyoming Department of Education (WDE) is proposing to make changes to the Chapter 8 Rules and Regulations for the School Foundation Program. The proposed rules have gone through the public comment period (July 6, 2007 – August 19, 2007) and the WDE held a public hearing on September 6, 2007 regarding the proposed rules. The most significant change to the proposed rules is the process by which ADM (Average Daily Membership) is calculated.

What is the ADM Calculation?

ADM is the process of determining the number of students in a school for purposes of funding in the Wyoming funding model. Membership, for purposes of counting and reporting ADM, is the appropriate inclusion of a student in a school's student accounting records for all or part of a day when the school is regularly in session, whether the student is physically in attendance or absent on that day.

Current ADM Calculation

For school year 2007-08, school districts can calculate their ADM using one of the following three methods for students who are enrolled in one or more, but not all of the normally scheduled daily periods available in a school:

1. Calculate the ADM by using the major fraction method:
 - a. Include in membership a student in membership for a major fraction of a half school day as if the student had completed a half school day. E.g., a student in membership three periods of the normally scheduled eight periods (37.5%); the student would be counted as 0.5 in the district's ADM. A student who doesn't attend at least 25.01% of the normally scheduled periods is not included in the district's ADM.
 - b. Include in membership a student in membership for a major fraction of a school day as if the student had completed a school day. E.g., a student in membership five periods of the normally scheduled eight periods (62.5%); the student would be counted as 1.0 in the district's ADM. A student who attends 50.01% of the normally scheduled periods is counted as 1.0.
2. Calculate the ratio of periods in membership to the total periods normally offered at that school. E.g., a student in membership three periods a day in a school that offers eight periods per day would generate a $\frac{3}{8}$ aggregate membership, or 0.375 ADM for the number of days over which the aggregation occurred.
3. Calculate the ratio of hours in membership for the period of time under aggregation (regular or alternative schedule) to the total possible hours normally scheduled for the period of time under aggregation for the closest district-operated non-alternative school offering instructional services at the grade level of the student under consideration. E.g., a student in membership for 200 days in classes that provide 120 minutes (2 hours) per day of pupil-teacher contact time (i.e., 400 hours), and measured against a school that normally provides 1100 contact hours during the 200-day period would generate a $\frac{400}{1100}$ aggregate membership, or 0.364 ADM for the 200-day period).

Proposed ADM Calculation

The proposed change for the Chapter 8 Rules and Regulations is for school year 2008-09 and each year thereafter. If the change is adopted, school districts could only calculate their

ADM based on options 2 and 3 as mentioned above, for students enrolled in one or more, but not all of the normally scheduled daily periods. Options 2 and 3 measure a full-time equivalency (FTE) for all Wyoming students. By eliminating option 1, school districts would calculate ADM based on the fraction of the day the student is enrolled. Option 1 allowed districts to receive either a half ADM (0.5) or a full ADM (1.0) for a part-time student, depending on how many periods the student was enrolled in when compared to the normal schedule. **The fractional method encourages school districts to ensure student attendance is maximized throughout the school day.**

Why the Change?

The change was made to the School Foundation Program rules and regulations for the following reasons:

- Improve the accuracy of school district ADM data. This is part of the natural out-growth of the funding model with ADM being school-based and technology allowing for more accurate methods of calculating ADM.
- **The state's school finance consultants, LOP and Associates, support this more accurate method of counting ADM.**
- In school year 2007-08 all school districts are required to report their ADM at the student level (WISER-ID). Since districts are required to report ADM at the student level, it's logical to require each district to report the FTE membership for each of their students.
- Consistency among how ADM is calculated and reported. Currently there are three ways to calculate ADM, two of which are fractional methods. Requiring only options 2 and 3 will create consistency among the ADM calculation.
- **This change makes the calculation of ADM more cost-based because the state would fund districts based on their actual full-time equivalency of student membership.**

School District Concerns

As we anticipated, there were concerns from Wyoming school districts regarding the proposed change. We have received both written and public comments from the school districts expressing their concerns. The following are the most common concerns and the WDE's response to each of them:

- The change would impact students who take concurrent enrollment courses with local community colleges and the university.
 - *This is incorrect. If students are taking concurrent enrollment courses, they would be included in school's ADM because they are receiving high school credit. In addition to the ADM, districts, in most cases, receive \$500 per W.S. 21-13-330(b) for concurrent enrollment. .*
- The change would impact students who are released to attend work release programs outside of the public school.
 - *If students are involved in a work-release program and the students receive credit for it through the school, then they would be included in the school's ADM so the cost associated to the school can be covered.*

- *If students are leaving the school to go work, just to work, then they would not be included in the school's ADM because there is no cost associated to the school for the students.*
- The change would impact students in high school that are released for non-public school religious instruction.
 - *Options 2 and 3 would only count students who are enrolled in classes throughout the school day. If a student has a period off during the day, options 2 and 3 would not count the student among the school's ADM.*
- The change would impact at-risk programs in districts.
 - *The funding model provides several at-risk resources based on the number of at-risk students in each school. Each school is resourced one FTE teacher and one FTE pupil support for every 100 at-risk students. Schools are resourced a minimum of one FTE tutor for each prototypical elementary, middle and high school and an additional one FTE pupil support for every 250 students in middle and high schools. Schools are also resourced one FTE teacher for every 100 ELL students. Alternative schools are also resourced one FTE teacher for every seven students.*
- The change will require software updates to the districts' student information systems.
 - *The student information systems are capable of making this mathematical change. The change is not effective until school year 2008-09 to allow districts ample time to update their systems.*
- Inconsistent way of taking attendance in elementary grades and secondary grades.
 - *Since there are no periods at the elementary level, the WDE recommends that option 3 be used to compute the school's ADM. Attendance is only required to be taken twice a day at the elementary level.*
 - *Since middle and high schools have periods, the WDE recommends using option 2. Attendance should be tracked each period.*
- This change should happen during recalibration.
 - *This is a fundamental change to ensure accuracy, uniform accounting standards, procedures, and processes for districts to account for and report ADM data in accordance with W.S. 21-2-203.*
- Students who take a larger number of periods than the normal number offered.
 - *An example came from Campbell #1 that a student is enrolled in more than the normal class periods a day because they are taking additional classes for credit recovery. The state provides \$9 million statewide for summer school and extended day programs and this type of scenario would be resourced with those funds.*
- This change came from the Department of Audit.
 - *This is incorrect. The Department of Audit has asked for explanations of the existing rules on the computation of ADM. However, this proposed change to the rules and regulations is a WDE action as part of its statutory charge to administer data fairly and accurately.*

Funding Impact

It is difficult to determine the fiscal impact the rule change will have, but the impact will most likely occur in the high schools or alternative schools whose students do not enroll in a class each period of the day. A reduction to a school's ADM in the funding model will be gradual because the funding model uses the greater of the 3-year rolling average or the previous year's ADM. The WDE did run scenarios to estimate the funding impact for three school districts who asked us to.

Impact Scenarios

- Big Horn #2 (Lovell) – Estimated first year impact of \$40,960 for 135 students who take seven of the normal eight periods. (*Estimated impact of \$125,254 if three-year rolling average wasn't used.*)

- Lincoln #2 (Afton) – Estimated first year impact of \$123,886 for 340 students who take seven of the normal eight periods. (*Estimated impact of \$586,838 if three-year rolling average wasn't used.*)

- Uinta #6 (Lyman) – Estimated first year impact of \$43,340 for 133 students who take seven of the normal eight periods. (*Estimated impact of \$160,334 if 3-year rolling average wasn't used.*)