

# Governance Study

State of Wyoming  
Joint Interim Education Committee

September 10, 2014

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# Presentation Outline

- Introductions
- Purposes of the Study and of this Hearing
- Online Survey Results
- Interview Results
- Major Areas of Agreement  
Across the Survey and Interviews



# Introductions of Presenters

- Dave Nelson, Legislative Service Office
- Christopher Cross, Chairman, Cross & Joftus
- Nancy Doorey, Senior Associate, Cross & Joftus



# Introduction to the Study

- Charge: A review of state-level governance and administration of Wyoming public education
- Engagement of Wyoming education stakeholder groups and citizens
  - In-depth interviews of major stakeholder groups
  - Online survey for all citizens
- Purposes of this Hearing

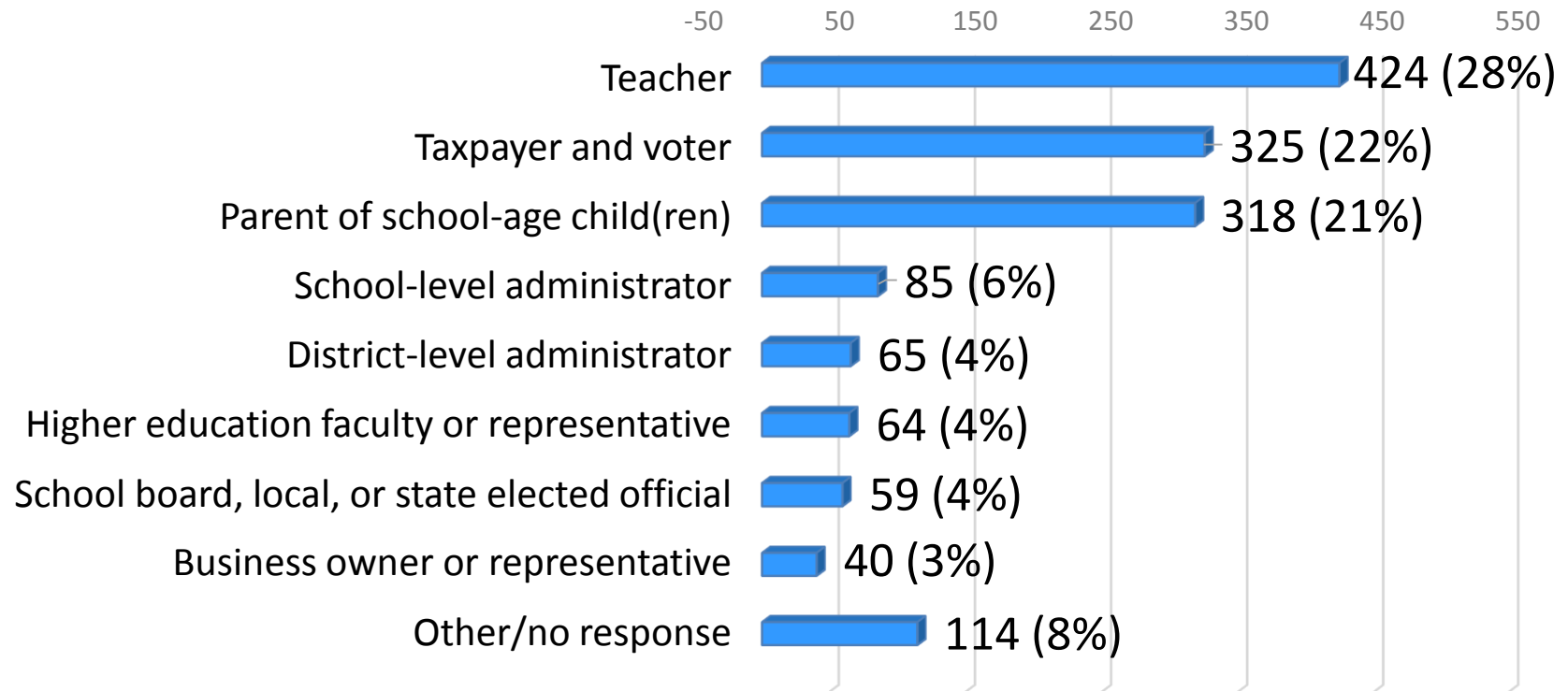


# ONLINE SURVEY RESULTS

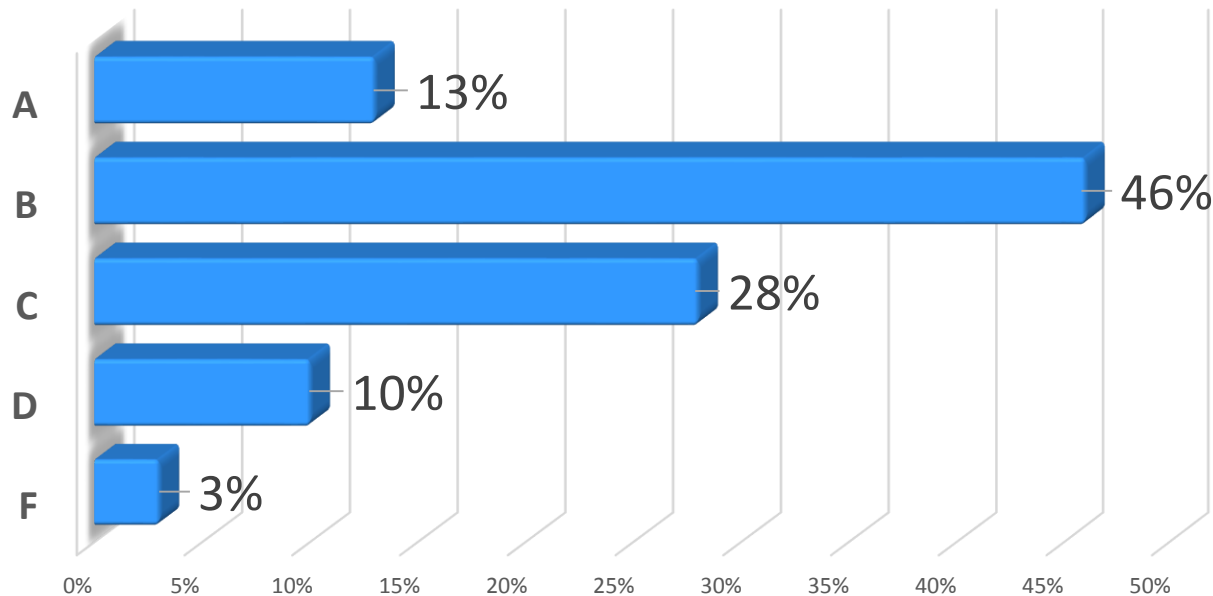


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# Survey Respondents: 1,494 Wyoming Citizens

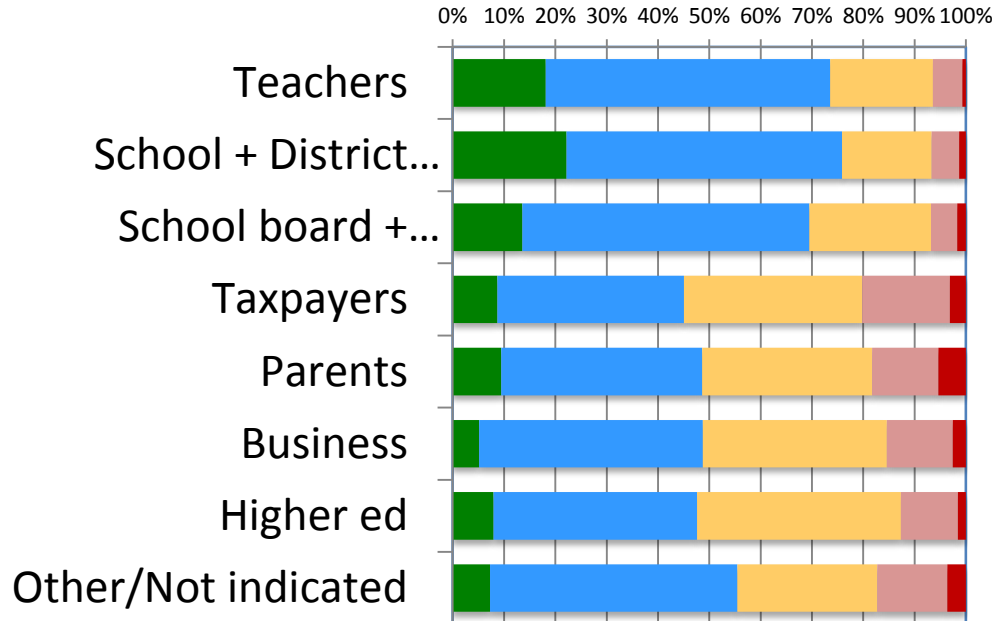


# What grade would you give to our statewide system of K-12 education?



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## Responses by Stakeholder Group

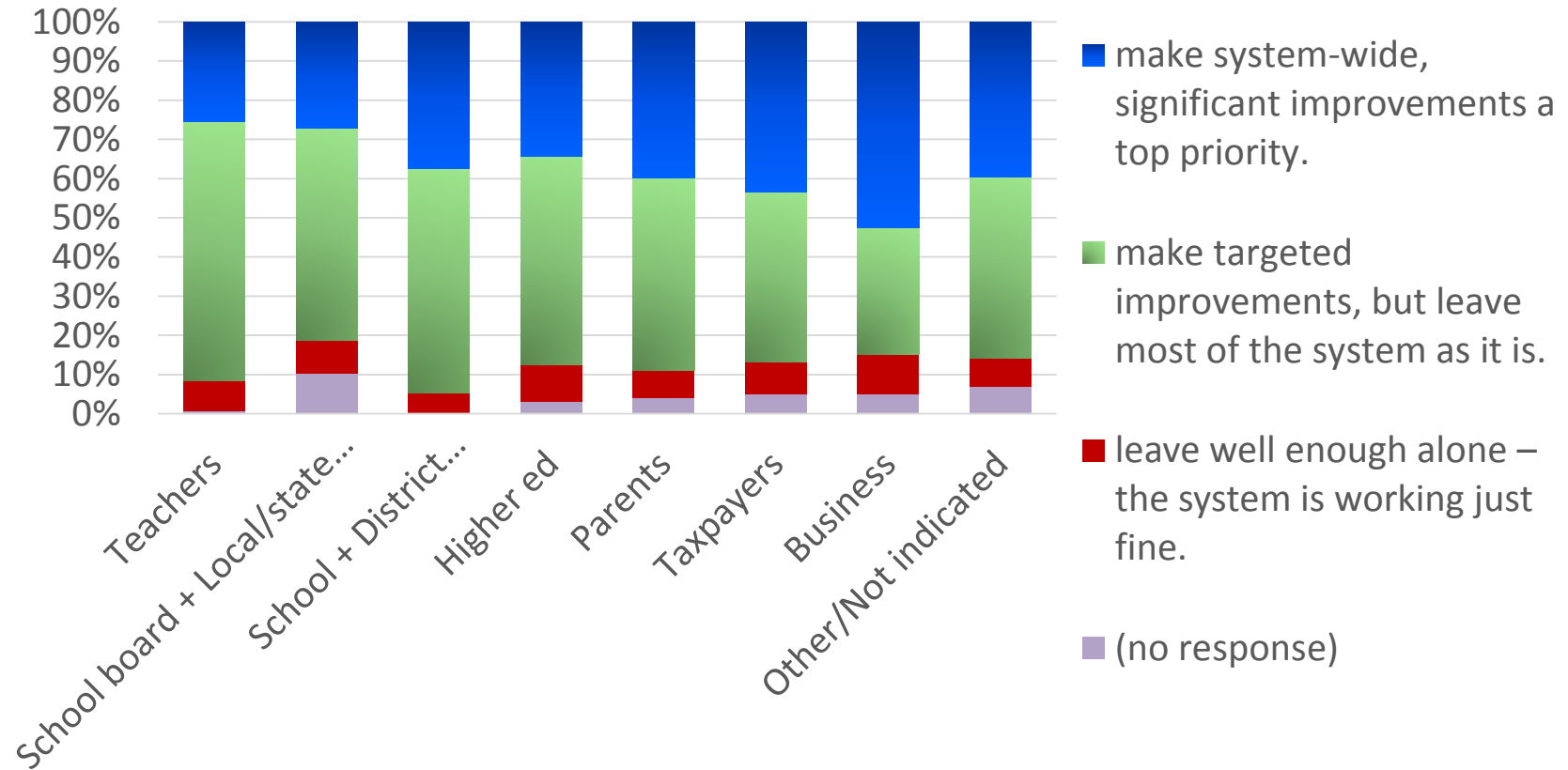


- The employees of the system had the highest percentage of A's and B's
- Roughly half of parents, business representatives and higher education leaders gave the system an A or B, and the other half a C, D, or F





# How would you complete this sentence? "State leadership in Wyoming should..."



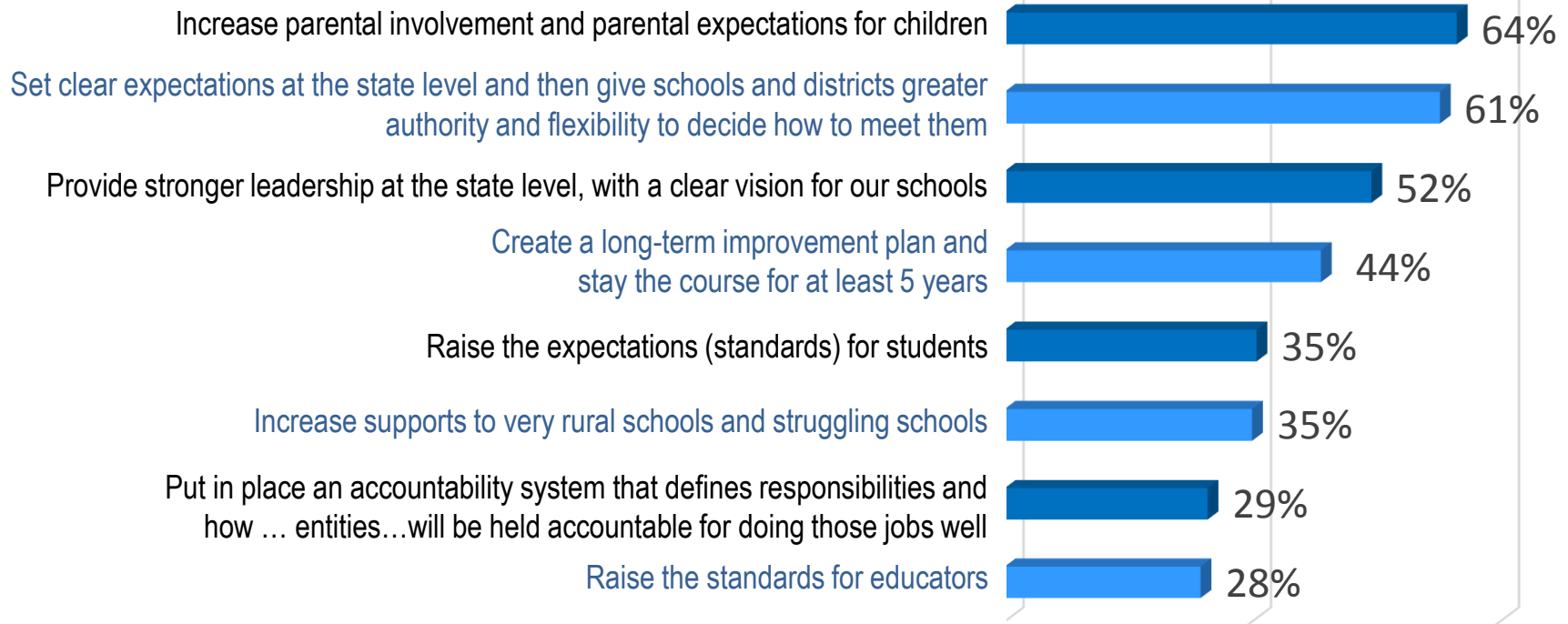
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# What are the most important things Wyoming should do to improve the educational system?

Check all that are high priorities




Out of 1,437 respondents

0 500 1000



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# Priorities for improvement: Strong agreement across stakeholder groups

 #1 for group  #2 for group  #3 for group	Teachers	School + District Administrator	Local, + state electeds	Taxpayers	Parents	Business	Higher ed	Other/Not indicated
1. Increase parental involvement and parental expectations for children	Blue		Blue	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow
2. Set clear expectations at the state level and then give schools and districts greater authority and flexibility ...	Yellow	Blue	Yellow	Blue	Blue	Green	Blue	Green
3. Provide stronger leadership at the state level, with a clear vision for our schools	Green	Yellow			Green	Yellow		Blue
4. Create a long-term improvement plan and stay the course for at least 5 years		Green	Green	Green				

## Observations

These 4 items received 23 of the 24 “top 3 priorities” across all stakeholder groups\*

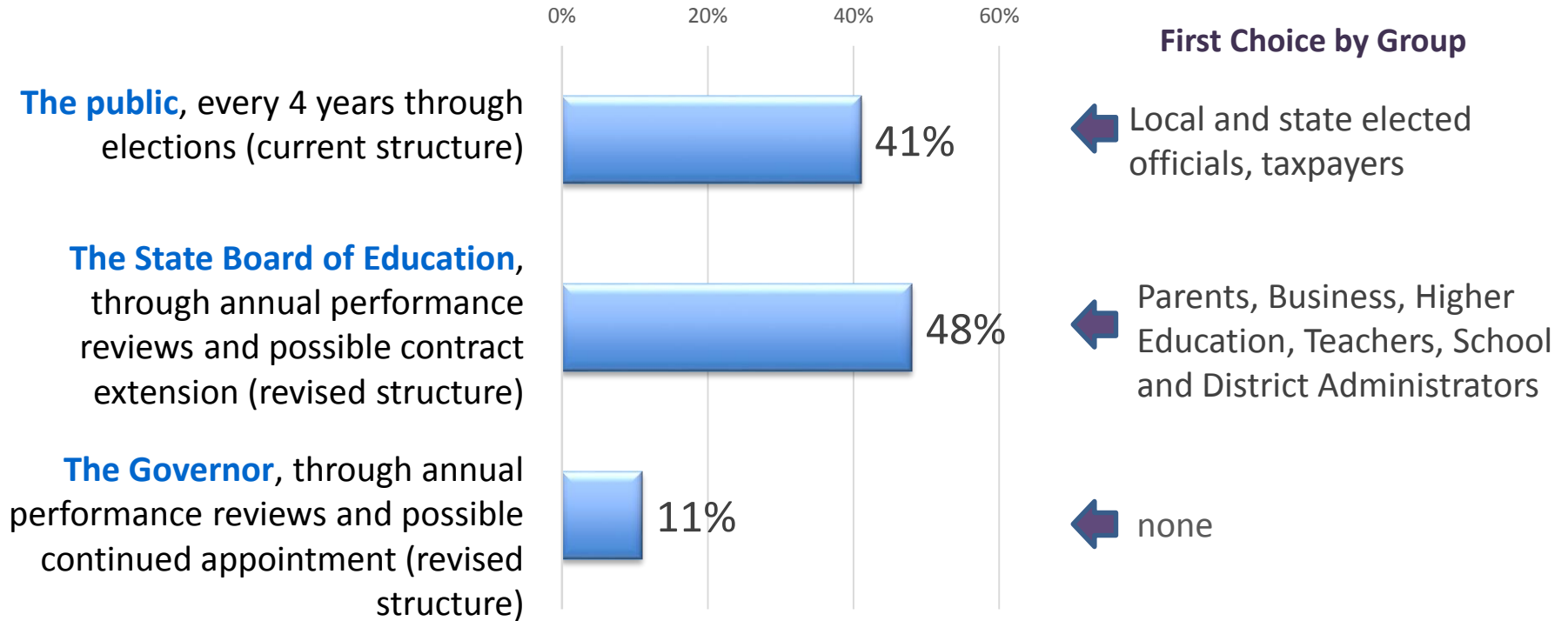
The first is a communication/ education issue for the State Superintendent

The other 3 reflect a leadership issue across State education governance entities

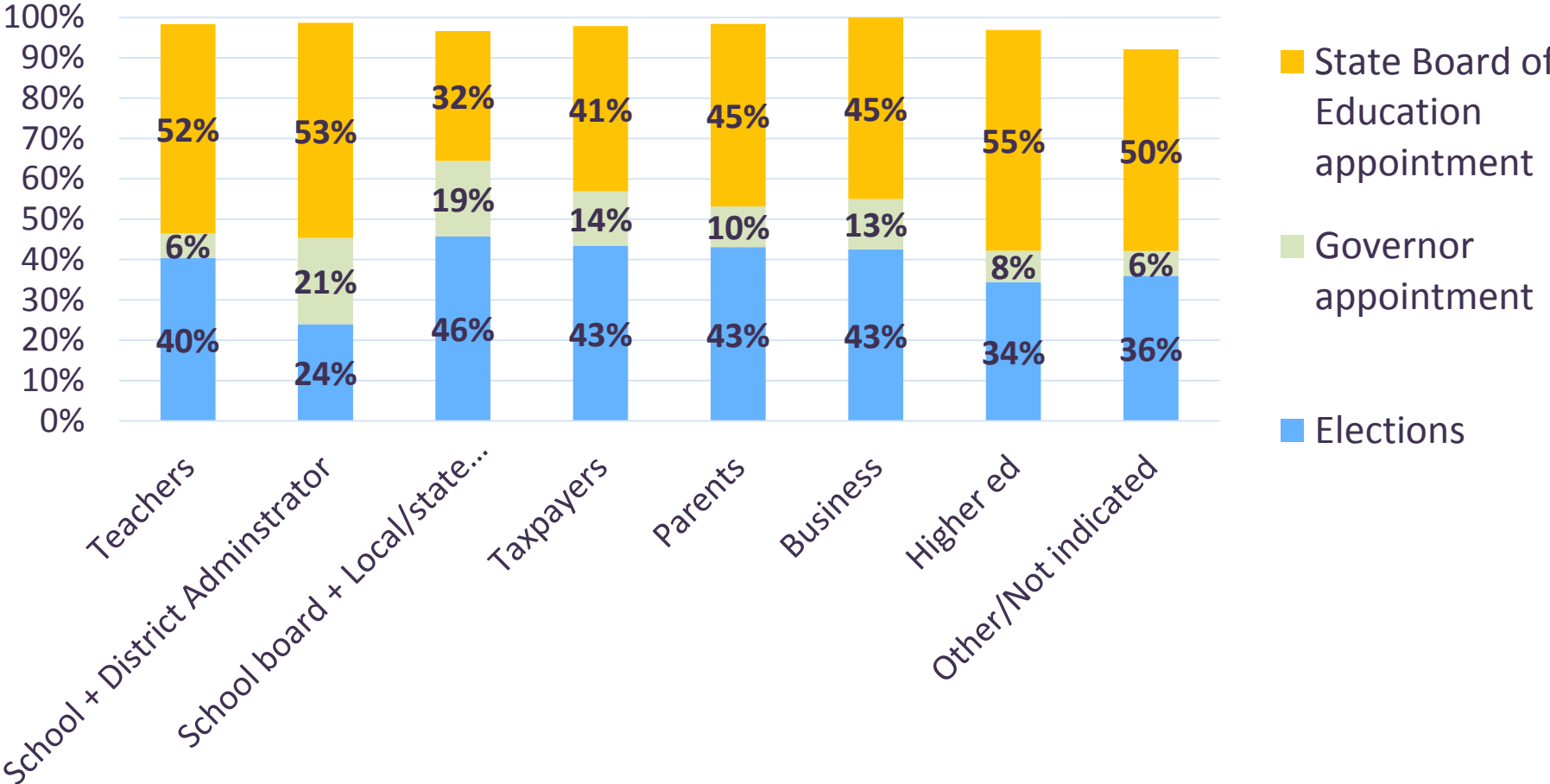
\* Prioritized by frequency of selection. Higher education’s 3<sup>rd</sup> priority not included here.

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# Ideally, who do you think should hold the State Superintendent accountable for quality leadership of Wyoming's public school system, and how often?



# Chief Selection by Stakeholder Group



# MAJOR THEMES FROM INTERVIEWS



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# Interviews: Stakeholder Groups Represented

31 in-depth interviews conducted

## Public Education and Educator Organizations

- Wyoming Association of School Administrators and Regional Leadership
- Wyoming Curriculum & Instruction Leaders
- Wyoming Department of Education, current and former leadership
- Wyoming Education Association
- Wyoming Professional Teaching Standards Board
- Wyoming School Boards Association
- Wyoming School Facilities Department
- Wyoming State Board of Education

## Higher Education

- University of Wyoming, President's Office
- University of Wyoming, College of Education
- Wyoming Community College

## Stakeholder and Community Groups

- The Elbogen Foundation
- Wyoming Advisory Panel for Students with Disabilities
- Wyoming Association for Gifted Children
- Wyoming Association of Public Charter Schools
- Wyoming Business Alliance
- Wyoming League of Women Voters
- Wyoming Liberty Group



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## Context Setting:

# A Quick and Partial Snapshot of Wyoming K-12 Performance



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# NAEP 2007 and 2013, Grades 4 and 8

Rank of states, based on percent meeting or exceeding the Proficient score on NAEP

2013	Contiguous States								Highest-performing States		
	WY	US	MT	SD	CO	NE	ID	UT	MA	NH	MN
Mathematics 4th Grade	48	41	45	40	50	45	40	44	59	58	60
Mathematics 8th Grade	38	34	40	38	42	36	36	36	54	46	47
Reading 4th Grade	37	34	35	32	41	37	33	36	48	45	41
Reading 8th Grade	38	34	40	36	40	37	38	39	48	44	40

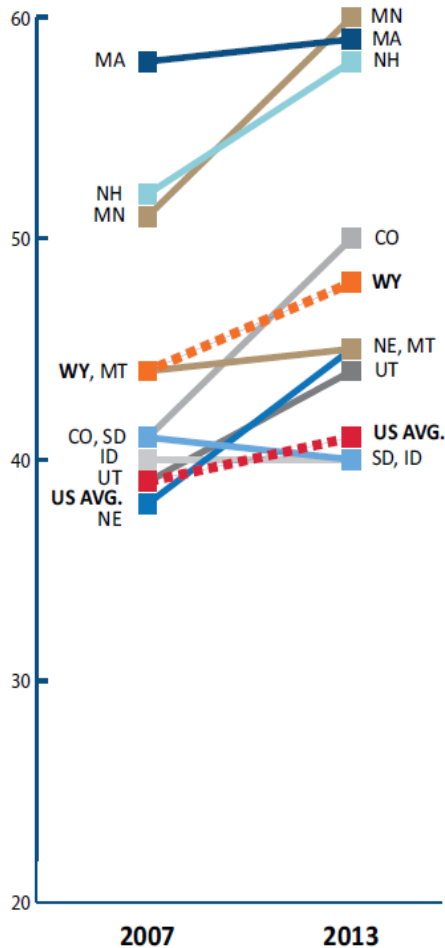
  

2007	Contiguous States								Highest-performing States		
	WY	US	MT	SD	CO	NE	ID	UT	MA	NH	MN
Mathematics 4th Grade	44	39	44	41	41	38	40	39	58	52	51
Mathematics 8th Grade	36	31	38	39	37	35	34	32	51	38	43
Reading 4th Grade	36	32	39	34	36	35	35	34	49	41	37
Reading 8th Grade	33	29	39	37	35	35	32	30	43	37	37

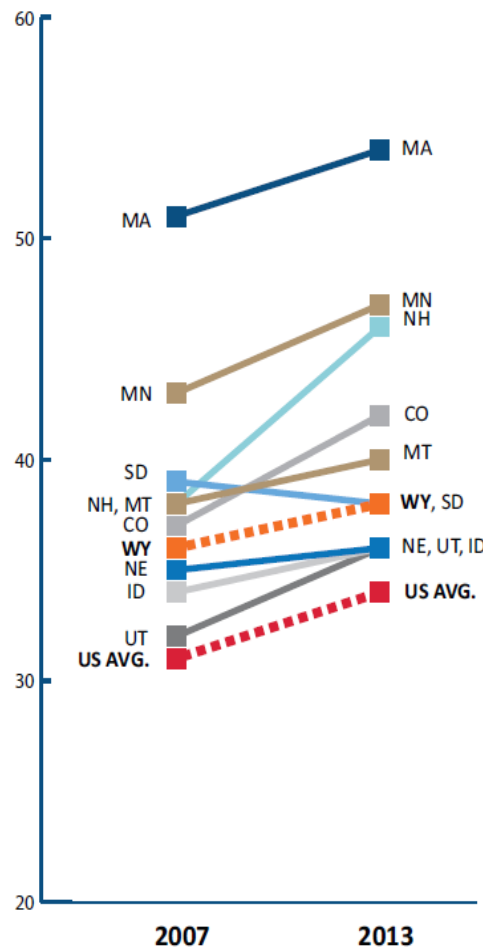
# NAEP continued: Rate of Improvement

Rank of states, based on percent meeting or exceeding Proficient score on NAEP

### 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Math



### 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Math



----- Wyoming  
----- US Average

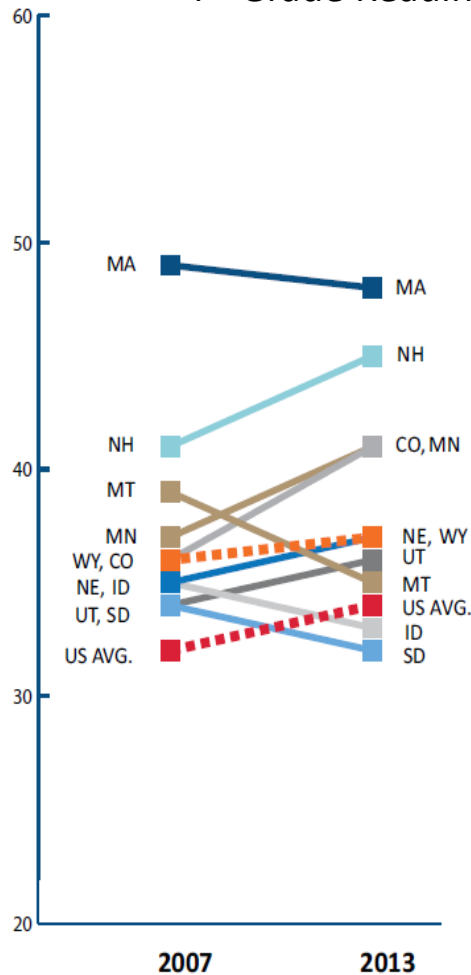
- Wyoming's rate of improvement in math is exceeded by several neighboring states, and by the US average at 8<sup>th</sup> grade

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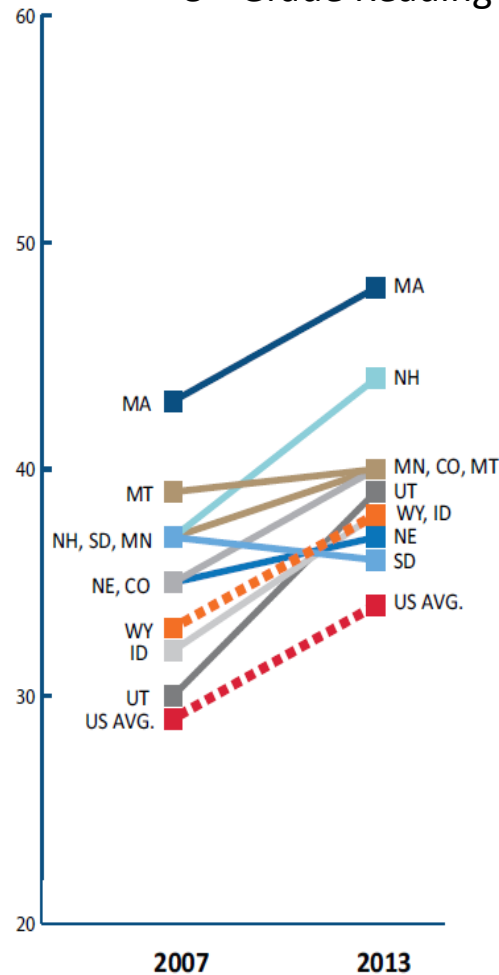
# NAEP continued: Rate of Improvement

Rank of states, based on percent meeting or exceeding Proficient score on NAEP

4<sup>th</sup> Grade Reading



8<sup>th</sup> Grade Reading



- - - Wyoming  
- - - US Average

- Wyoming's rate of improvement in reading is exceeded by several neighboring states, and by the US average at 4<sup>th</sup> grade

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# Cause for Celebration....

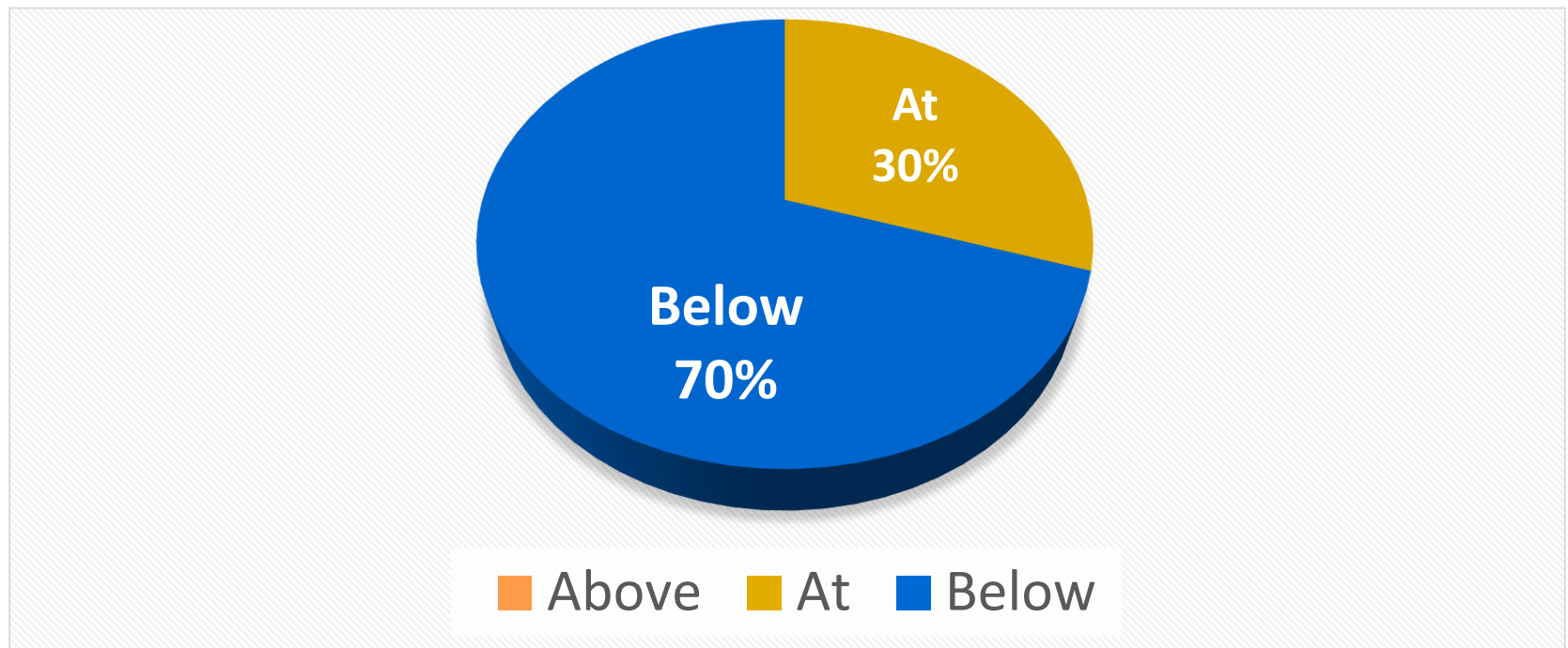
Rank of states, based on average score on NAEP

Reading 2013	Reading: 4th Grade			Reading: 8th Grade		
	All	FRL Eligible	Not Eligible	All	FRL Eligible	Not Eligible
Wyoming	13	4	34	13	1	32

Math 2013	Math: 4th Grade			Math: 8th Grade		
	All	FRL Eligible	Not Eligible	All	FRL Eligible	Not Eligible
Wyoming	8	3	34	18	5	35



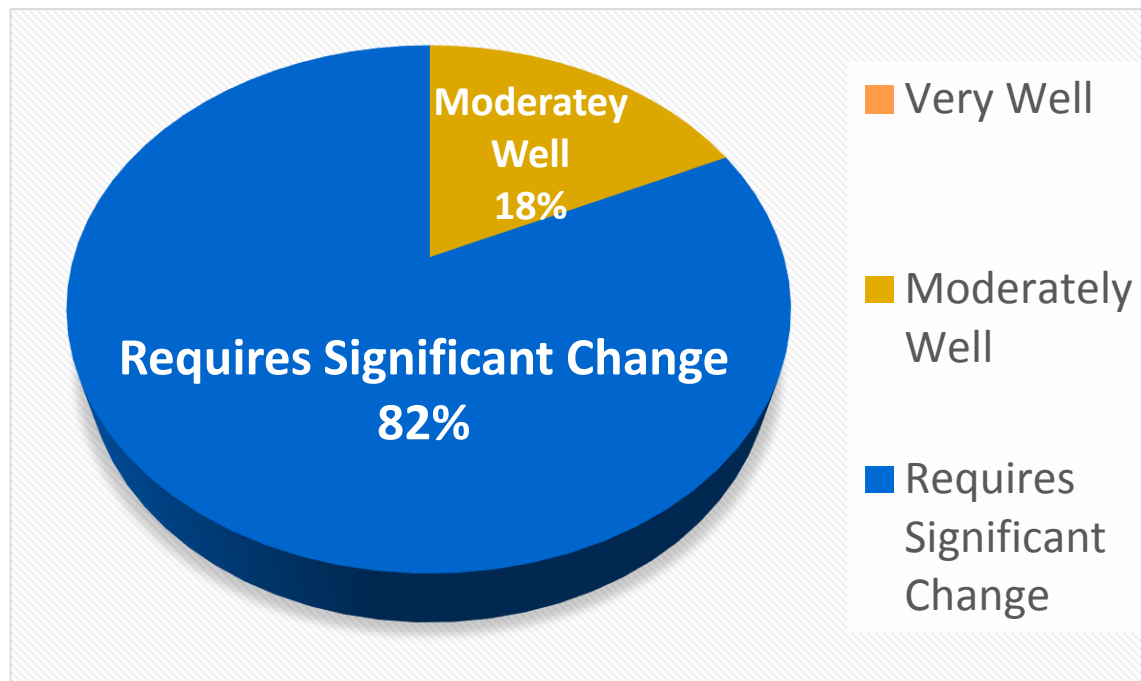
Is the Wyoming educational system currently performing ABOVE, AT, OR BELOW your expectations?



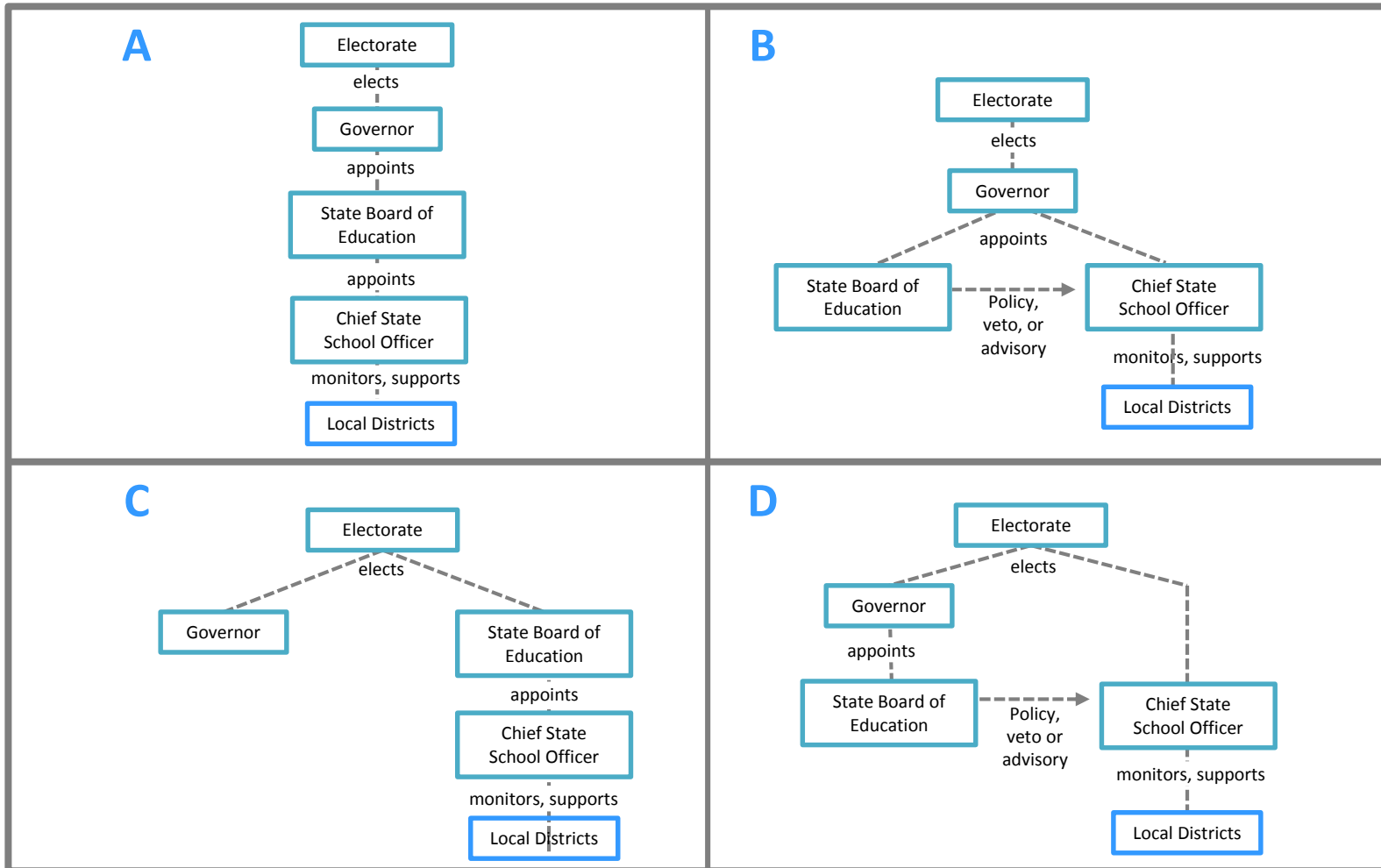
# Primary Roles Identified by Interviewees of State Governance Entities

State Entity	Primary Roles	Needs to Avoid
<b>Legislature</b>	Funding, overall expectations, system parameters, essential metrics	Micro-management, frequent changes in direction, lack of shared state vision
<b>State Board of Education</b>	Policies, standards, assessments, and accountability system metrics	Lack of shared state vision
<b>State Superintendent</b>	Vision, plan, implementation, advocacy, coordination across state entities	Lack of shared state vision, frequent changes in direction, hiring unproven leaders within WDE
<b>Wyoming Department of Education</b>	Support, clearinghouse for expertise, cross-district collaboration, monitoring	Over-emphasis on compliance, isolation from schools and classrooms
<b>Governor</b>	Advocacy, “bully pulpit”	Lack of shared state vision

The Current Governance Structure:  
How well does it support clear lines of  
responsibility and accountability?



# Sample State Governance Models



Based on models developed by ECS

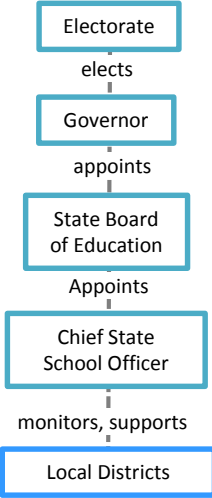
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# Wyoming Support for State Governance Models

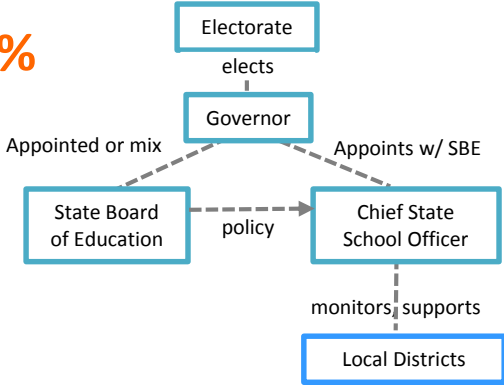
**A**

**20%**



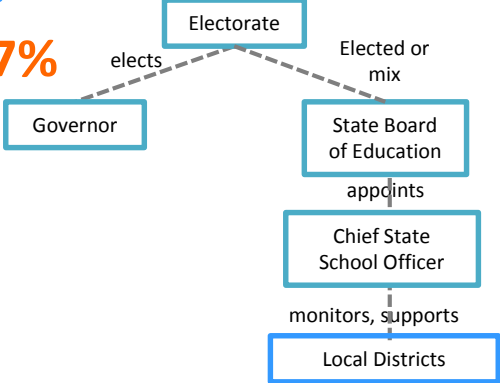
**B**

**27%**



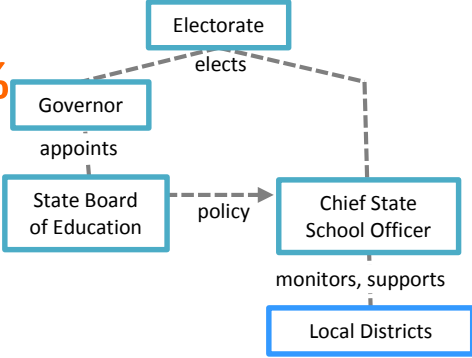
**C**

**27%**



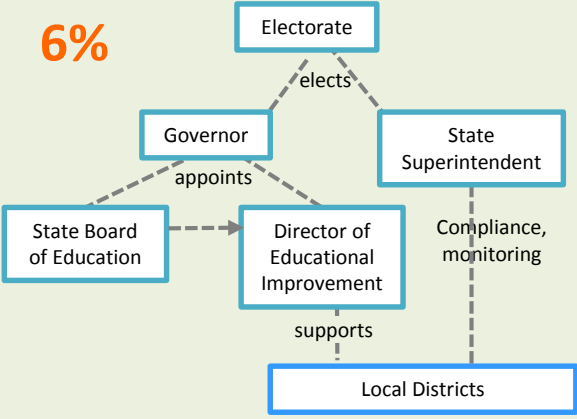
**D**

**20%**



**E**

**6%**



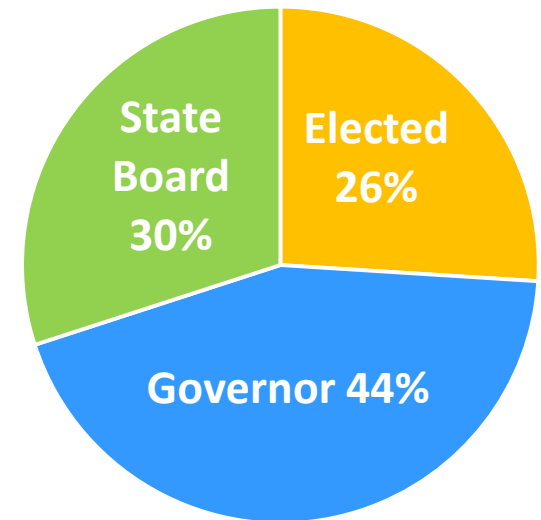
# The Chief State School Officer (CCSO): Areas of Agreement

- The **primary role** of the CSSO is to:
  - **forge agreement on a vision** for Wyoming's educational system, and
  - **put in place a strong plan** for reaching that vision
- 64% think the CSSO should be a member of the Governor's cabinet



# The Chief State School Officer, continued

- Selection:
  - **26% want to maintain the elected CSSO**
  - **74% prefer an appointed CSSO**
    - By Governor: 44% of all respondents
    - By State Board: 30% of all respondents
    - Majority want, in either case, for there to be a process through which both entities and Legislative leadership agree to support the selection



# The Chief State School Officer, continued

- The **qualifications for candidates should be increased\*** (86%) but little agreement on the specifics
  - College degree 43%
  - Advanced degree 10%
  - Proven track record as a leader in education 19%
  - Both a degree and a track record 24%

} Overlap of “advanced” responses

\* Current requirements: at least twenty-five (25) years of age, a citizen of the United States, qualified as an elector in the state of Wyoming.



# The Chief State School Officer, continued

- The **large salary differential** between district superintendents and the State Superintendent/ CSSO **needs to be addressed** in order to help draw proven educational leaders into the candidate pool.



# The State Board of Education: Areas of Very Strong Agreement

- The State Board should be **charged with policy setting and adoption of standards, assessments, accountability system and metrics** (90%)
- The State Board **needs either additional staff or budget** to ensure that they can fulfill their assigned responsibilities well (97%)
- The **Chair of the Board should be elected** from among the members (90%)

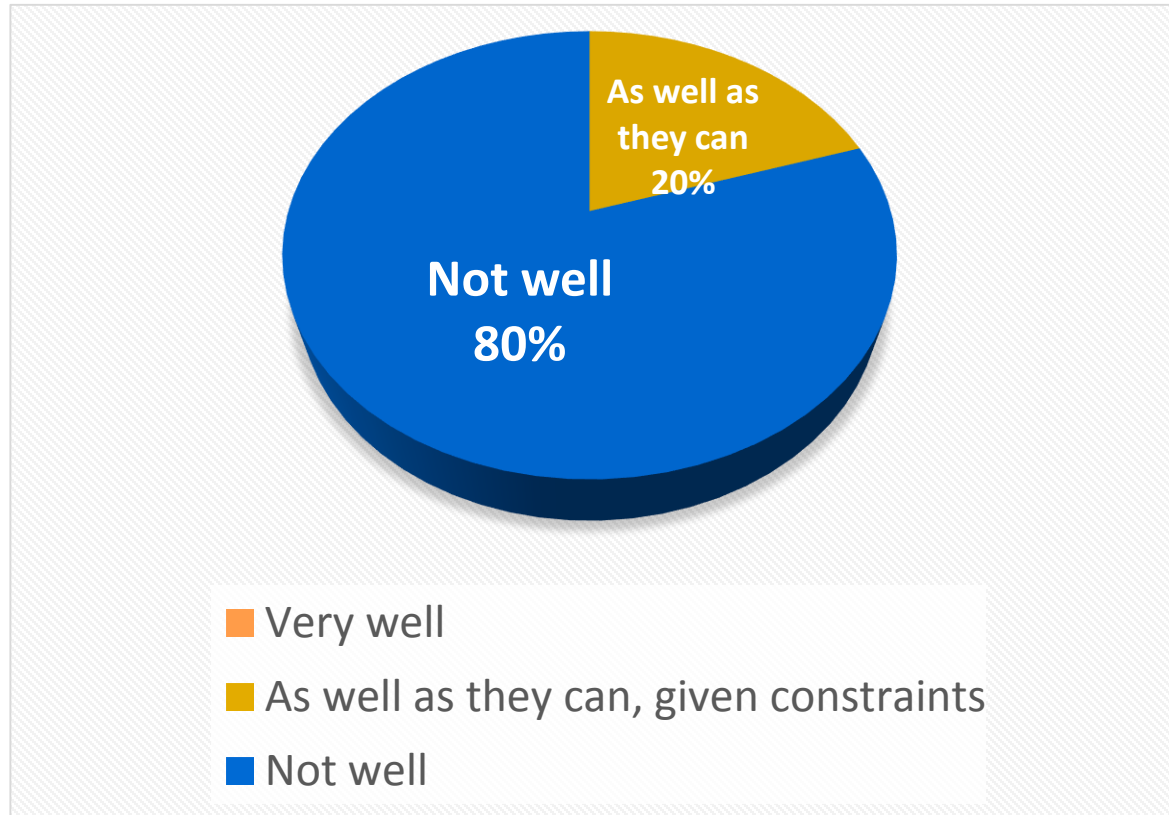


# The State Board of Education: Areas of Very Strong Agreement, continued

- The **provisions for representation** on the Board should be maintained (90%)
- The members should be **either appointed by the Governor or there should be a mix of appointed members and members who are elected by geographic region** with non-partisan ballots (90%)
- New Board member **training should be required** (81%)



# The Wyoming Department of Education: How well does it currently provide supports to schools and districts for educational improvement?





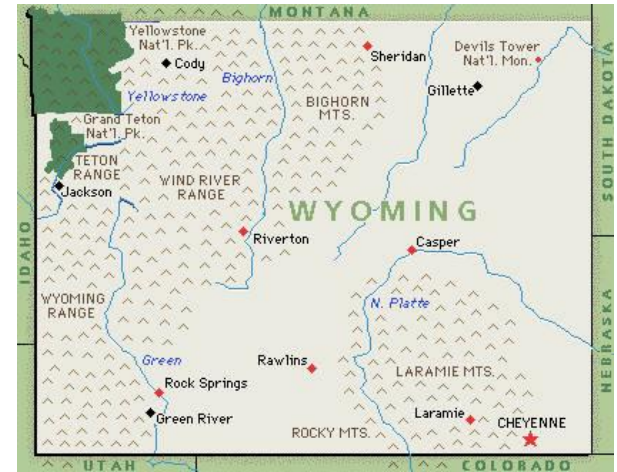
# WDE: Areas of Very Strong Agreement

- WDE needs to see their **primary mission** as:
  - **building district capacity to improve student learning,**
  - supporting **expansion of best practices,** and
  - providing **accurate, timely responses to inquiries**
- **Compliance monitoring,** while necessary, **needs to be streamlined** as much as possible so the majority of time and effort from the WDE and within District offices can be focused on student learning



# WDE: Areas of Very Strong Agreement

- Educators with proven track records should be hired and assigned as **Regional Support Coordinators** to:
  - get to know the strengths and needs of their assigned districts and schools well, and
  - coordinate supports and information sharing with the WDE, other districts, and other providers, as appropriate
- **Salaries for a small number of key WDE positions need to be increased** so that people with strong expertise and track records can be recruited



# The Professional Teaching Standards Board

- Strong majority agreed that it has improved recently and structure is working well
  - 90% support current process of alternating assignments by Governor and State Superintendent
  - 60% support the independence of the PTSB (as opposed to placing it under the WDE or State Board)
  - **Mechanism needed to ensure licensure/recertification requirements and new teacher accountability system are aligned**



# Noteworthy Theme: Role of the Legislature

Primary role concern: Well-meaning but prone to **“going outside their lane”** and **changing direction too often**

- Example 1: prohibition of item types other than multiple choice on state tests – perceived to limit the value of the assessments and have negative impacts on instruction
- Example 2: Charging the State Board to establish Standards, but then debating/over-ruling them

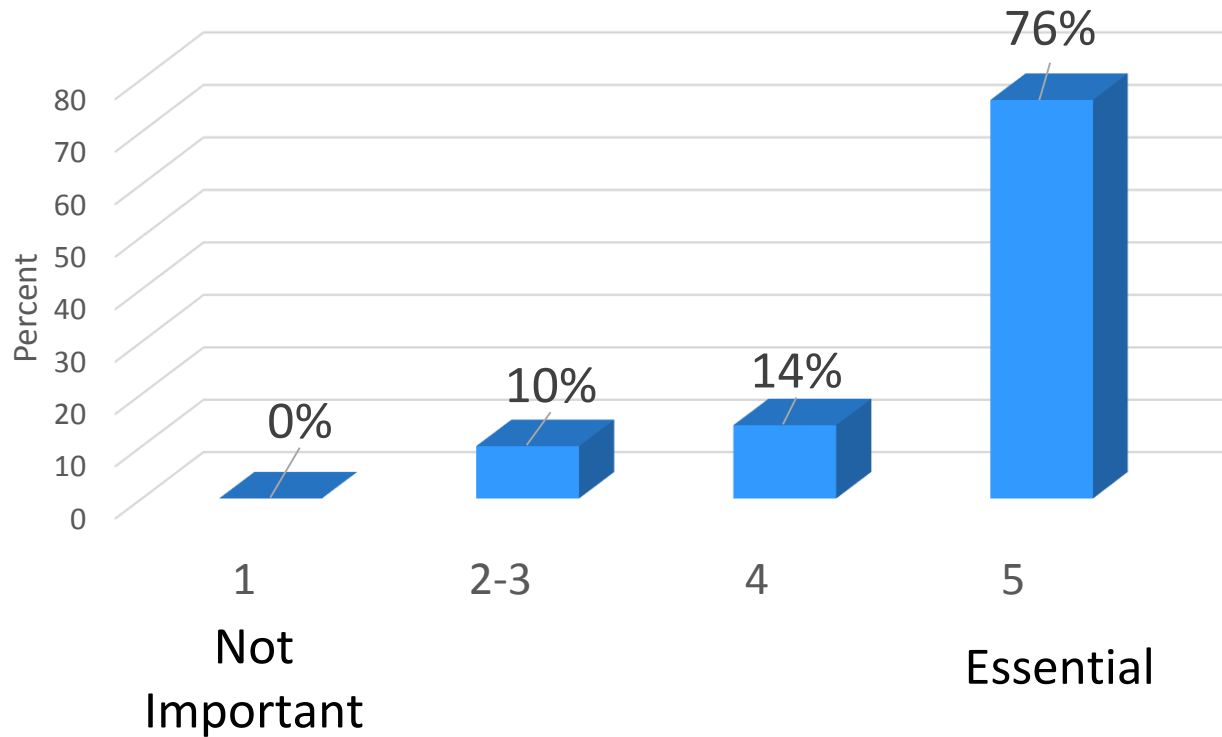


# Noteworthy Theme: Role of the Legislature, continued

- Recommended role (from cross section of interviewees):
  - **Define the high level goals** to be achieved by the system, **the resources** to be provided, the **system parameters**, and the **essential performance metrics** to be reported
  - **Stay the course** for sufficient time to achieve results (at least 5 years)
  - **Leave room for creative leadership and local customization**



# How important is this effort by the Legislature to improve educational governance?



# MAJOR AREAS OF AGREEMENT ACROSS THE SURVEY AND INTERVIEWS



# Major Areas of Agreement Across the Survey and Interviews

1. The last several years have led to a sense of state-level discord and chaos. The public wants state leadership to:
  - a) set **clear, shared expectations**,
  - b) develop a **long-term plan** for reaching them, and
  - c) **give districts time** (5+ years) **and local authority** to determine how best to accomplish them.





# Major Areas of Agreement

## Across the Survey and Interviews, continued

2. Greater clarity is needed concerning the roles and responsibilities of the state governance entities. Consensus views:
  - **Legislature:** Funding, high level expectations, system parameters, essential metrics
  - **State Board:** Policies, standards, assessments, and accountability metrics
  - **State Superintendent:** Consensus-building on vision and long-term plan, implementation, advocacy, coordination
  - **Department of Education:** Support, best practices clearinghouse, collaboration, compliance monitoring
  - **Governor:** Advocacy, “bully pulpit”

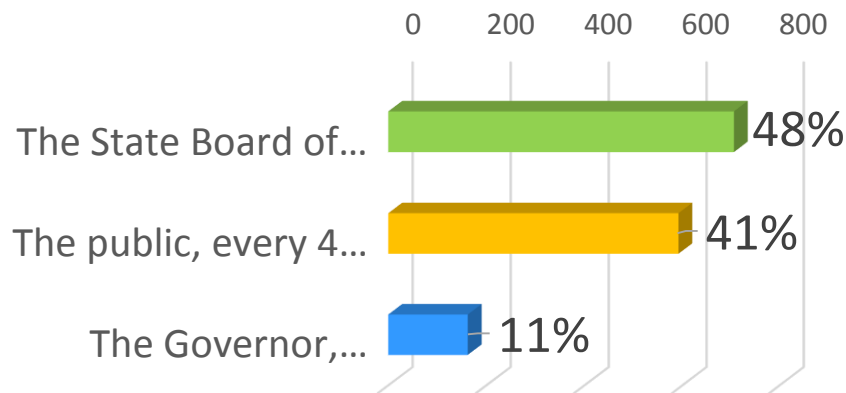


# Major Areas of Agreement

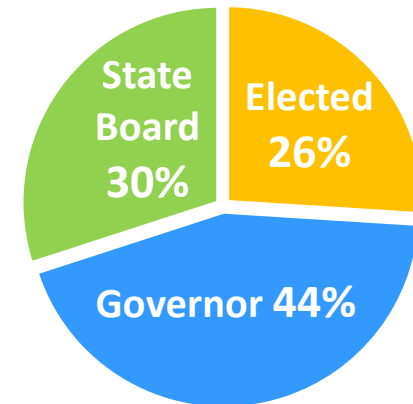
## Across the Survey and Interviews, continued

3. Approximately 60% of survey respondents and 75% of interviewees from major stakeholder groups believe a **shift to an appointed Superintendent** would be beneficial, with the large majority of those surveyed preferring appointment by the State Board of Education and majority of those interviewed preferring appointment by the Governor

Online Survey



Interviews of Stakeholder Group Leaders



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# Major Areas of Agreement

## Across the Survey and Interviews, continued

4. Statewide efforts are needed to **increase parental engagement and awareness** of the skills and knowledge needed today by the end of high school.



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