
APPENDIX A

Research methodology

Summary of Methodologies

This evaluation was conducted according to statutory requirements and professional standards and methods for governmental audits. The research was conducted from June 2005 through November 2005.

In keeping with audit standards issued by the U.S. Government Accountability Office (2003), LSO is compelled to disclose any personal impairments its auditors may have “that could affect their impartiality or the appearance of impartiality.” (Standard 3.07) Prior to employment at LSO, the Program Evaluation Manager was appointed to and served as a member of the State Board of Education from 1979 to 1985. However, in the 20 years since that term was completed, this individual has not participated in education management, decision-making, or policy development and has not been involved in legislative committee work, staffing, or drafting statutory changes that affected Board or Superintendent duties. At the outset of this project, the State Board of Education and Superintendent of Public Instruction were informed of this individual’s prior service; they raised no objections, so the individual continued to serve as manager during the project.

General Methodology

To compile basic information about state-level education governance, we reviewed relevant statutes, session laws, budgets, rules, professional literature, legislative history, legal opinions and memos, previous studies and reports, Board minutes, information from other states, and other relevant information. To gain further understanding, we interviewed a number of current and former superintendents and state board members, officials from other agencies, and other states’ education officials and personnel.

WDE-produced documents

At our request, the Wyoming Department of Education provided documents for our examination including: policy manuals; rules and regulations; Wyoming body of evidence assessment system excerpts; training and orientation materials; State Board meeting agendas and minutes; Board rosters; Board testimony; organizational structure materials; selected correspondence and memos; and other relevant documents.
