

NNER SETTING ANNUAL REPORT
2005

SETTING

WYOMING SCHOOL-UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP (THE PARTNERSHIP)

SETTING CONTACT

AUDREY KLEINSASSER

SETTING TRIPARTITE REPRESENTATIVES

JANET CONSTANTINIDES, AUDREY KLEINSASSER, RAY SCHULTE

PLEASE USE THE NNER GOALS LISTED BELOW TO GUIDE THE CONTENT OF THE TWO TO FIVE PAGE REPORT. TRIPARTITE COUNCIL MEMBERS WILL BRING 10 COPIES OF THE REPORT TO THE TRIPARTITE COUNCIL MEETING IN OCTOBER.

1. Include highlights of progress toward and challenges facing your setting related to these areas:

Promoting and conducting comprehensive research related to the Agenda for Education in Democracy

Highlights:

College of Education faculty members (Allen Trent, Kay Persichitte, Rosie Castenada) continue to examine issues of equity and access in the context of the Wyoming Teacher Education Program. Some of this research involves the Wyoming School-University Partnership commitment to the League of Democratic Schools project (Laramie's UW Prep School and Linford Elementary).

As a consequence of our work with the NNER, College of Education faculty adopted the following standard for the Teacher Education Program: *Understand the historical, social and political roles of schooling in the U.S. to support students to become critical participants in a democratic society.* According to survey data measuring the standard, students and mentor teachers alike rated the item lowest (i.e., students felt least prepared in this area).

Challenges:

A multiplicity of possibilities bump up against limited time and human and financial resources. For these reasons, the Partnership's Governing Board did not make conducting AED comprehensive research a priority but acknowledges and encourages faculty projects. Perhaps there's a way for the Partnership to support this work more actively, particularly since a leadership associates program is being revitalized.

For undergraduate teacher candidates, connecting their coursework and experiences in schools to AED remains a challenge. Teacher Education Program staff will continue to monitor and evaluate.

Influencing policy

Highlights:

Standards for candidates in the Teacher Education Program are related to the AED. UW has three years of statistics on their preparations and their mentor teachers. Stakeholders include faculty, candidates, and mentor teachers.

Wyoming's National Board Certification for teaching has its administrative home in the Partnership as of 2005. The project involves a unique combination of private and public funding that seems to be successful. Wyoming has 47 board certified teachers. Currently, another 100 candidates are being mentored. The project's goal is 10% of Wyoming's teachers (n=700) in ten years. The Partnership sees one role of these highly qualified teachers as contributing to policy-level conversations focused on Wyoming education.

Partnership Governing Board members participated in a conference call (9-22-05) with two Wyoming legislators on the topic of increasing student-teacher contact time by increasing the school year by 10 days, perhaps the length of day as well. One result of the conversation was the Governing Board seeking to commission a white paper on the topic that would be distributed to legislators and others. The governing board sees policy as a key concern. The student-teacher contact hours white paper may, in fact, be a pilot project with which we begin focusing more on policy in a focused manner.

The Educational Leadership Department (principal and superintendent preparation) has stated that it is making a concentrated effort to incorporate the agenda into its curriculum.

Challenges:

Since Wyoming does not have a P-16 Education Council, educational policy conversations are generated in a variety of ways, not all of them useful or particularly timely. By statute, a group called the Wyoming Education Planning and Coordination Council (WEPCC) has met sporadically during the past four years. A challenge for the Partnership is to play a role shaping the formation of such P-16 conversations and, in fact, the formation of a Wyoming P-16 Council. A one-page proposal is being developed for UW President Tom Buchanan for a meeting with Governor Dave Freudenthal about the issue. The Partnership director is a co-writer of the proposal.

Wyoming's Mike Enzi chairs the U.S. Senate's Committee on Health, Education, Labor, & Pensions. A challenge and opportunity would be to feature Sen. Enzi and others in a state-wide or regional education policy forum in 2006, the 20th anniversary of the Wyoming School-University Partnership.

Collaboration with other organizations

Highlights:

Collaboration with other organizations seems to be a Partnership strength and can become even stronger. Collaborations are around policy and projects.

POLICY AND PROJECT: The Wyoming School-University Partnership will play some kind of role in the \$400 million dollar, state-funded Hathaway Scholarship Endowment which opens the door for Wyoming students to receive funding for postsecondary education. Collaborators include UW, the State Department of Education, and the Community College Commission. Up to \$20 million will be available per year, with scholarships likely to be awarded beginning Fall 2006. Key issues include a high school success curriculum and a seventh grade course.

POLICY AND PROJECT: The Partnership has partnered with the Ellbogen Foundation to further the NBC initiative in Wyoming. This private-public model has great potential for other projects. Wyoming was recognized at the July NBC annual conference for its private-public model.

\$427,560 FY 2005-2006 Budget

\$182,000 are state funds (we are negotiating an MOU with the Wyoming Department of Education)

POLICY AND PROJECT: P-16 instruction and curriculum articulation meetings. (through Hathaway Scholarship, the Wyoming *Gear up! Grant*, and other efforts)

POLICY AND PROJECT: The Partnership and the Wyoming Department of Education entered into a MOU to further the Teacher Policy Institute. The Partnership's role is to assist with evaluation and help the project director.

\$180,000 state funds

PROJECT: Sublette County #1, one of the state's wealthiest school districts and member of the Governing Board, made a gift to the Wyoming School-University Partnership to sponsor another iteration of the Wyoming Leadership Associates Program for 2005-2006. \$25,000 gift

PROJECT: The Partnership accepted an invitation to support the formation of a New Principals Mentoring Program.

\$500.00

PROJECT: The Partnership will co-host a dinner honoring former North Carolina Governor James Hunt and keynote speaker at the November 17-18 Wyoming Business Alliance/Wyoming Heritage Foundation meetings. Hunt was instrumental in institutionalizing North Carolina's NBCT initiative.

\$500.00

***** The amount of private and public money dedicated to projects outlined above exceeds the Partnership personnel and operating expenses budget by nearly 75%.**

The NNER statement on equity

The governing board addressed this issue last year.

Leadership in the College of Education will be bringing equity statements forward and working on the issue over a period of time. The equity statement was presented to College of Education faculty. Also, an equity consultant will be working with the college's leadership council in the coming year.

2. Reflections on progress toward and/or challenges related to initiatives in your setting that advance aspects of the Agenda for Education in a Democracy.

Highlights

Partnership Governing Board meetings (July, September, November, February, April) include a regular round table of reports about partnership activities (e.g., National Board Certification, Teacher Policy Institute, mentor teacher agreements; P-16 articulation meetings, new principal mentoring program, League of Democratic Schools)

According to meeting evaluation data, a highlight of the governing board meetings is the regular NNER grounding activity. The group reads and discusses a short article to stimulate discussion. During the July meeting, for example, we discussed a *NY Times* op-ed piece entitled, “Reading, Writing, and Retailing.”

At the September 26-27, 2005 Wyoming School Improvement Council, three superintendents on the governing board and the director presented a session that described the Partnership’s commitment to community conversations around AED and other topics by sharing examples from three districts. The president of the Wyoming School-University Partnership board and the director also had a session at the conference about the Partnership and its activities.

The Partnership had a strong presence at the June 2005 Oregon conference and will have 10-12 attendees at the annual meeting in Myrtle Beach, including four program presentations.

The Partnership hired a new full-time director beginning July 2005, after a year of interim leadership.

The Wyoming School-University Partnership continues to be connected to the NNER and IEI through funded projects such as the NNER’s “Leaders for Teacher Preparing Schools” initiative. We anticipate submitting a proposal for the “Journalism, Education, and the Public Good” call.

3. Changes and updates within the setting, names and contact information for those working on initiatives.

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** Preparation of this report began with a Partnership Governing Board meeting and the opportunity for all governing board members to contribute. Audrey Kleinsasser took the information from the meeting and created the next draft. Then, all members of the executive committee of the Governing Board had an opportunity to react to the draft, suggesting clarifications, additions, and corrections.