**Meeting Minutes**

**Wyoming School-University Partnership**

**Governing Board Meeting**

**Thursday, November 7, 2013**

**10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.**

UW Outreach Building

951 N. Poplar Avenue, Casper, Wyoming 82601

Those in attendance included the following board members, guests, and staff.

***Governing board members:***

*Dave Barker (Platte 2), Jonathan Braack (Niobrara 1), Boyd Brown (Campbell 1 – by conference call), Gerry Chase (Sublette 9), Jean Chrostoski (Goshen 1), Diana Clapp (Partnership chair, Fremont 6), Bob Gates (Carbon 2), Paige Fenton Hughes (Wyoming Department of Education), Marty Kobza (Sheridan 1), Dee Ludwig (Eastern Wyoming College – by conference call), Mark Mathern (Natrona 1), Mathew Neal (Sweetwater 1), Leslie Rush (UW, College of Education, associate dean), Ray Schulte (Park 6), Audrey Shalinsky (UW, College of Arts & Sciences, associate dean), Kathy Vetter (Wyoming Education Association, president), and John Weigel (Converse 1).*

***Guests:***

*Rich Crandall (Wyoming Department of Education, director), Dennis Fischer (Platte 1), Joe McCann (Wyoming Community College Commission – by conference call), and Byron Stutzman (Crook 1)*

***Staff:***

*Audrey Kleinsasser and Beth Wiley*

Diana Clapp called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. She welcomed those in attendance and asked everyone to introduce themselves by giving their name and explaining a little about what they do. She extended a special welcome to our guests and new members.

After introductions, Diana took a minute to give our guests and new members some background on the Partnership. She and the other executive committee members reminded everyone that the Partnership is grounded in the concept of educational renewal. Ray Schulte also added that Partnership board meetings help members frame the right questions to ask about the big picture in education.

Diana asked Audrey Kleinsasser to present the meeting agenda and supporting materials which included the financial report, the July 10 meeting minutes, and the director’s report. Audrey K. briefly explained each item. Paige Fenton Hughes moved to approve the agenda and related consent agenda items. Kathy Vetter seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion was approved.

Diana introduced the grounding discussion of the reading, *Characteristics of Good Schools*. (Excerpted from John I. Goodlad (1994), *Educational Renewal: Better Teachers*, *Better Schools*, pp. 211-217, Chapter 7, “Tomorrow’s Schools and Communities.” San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.) Audrey Shalinsky opened the grounding discussion by asking everyone if they thought John Goodlad’s seven characteristics of good schools were accurate and still applicable today. In the following discussion, board members generally agreed that schools might be composites of good and bad qualities. Paige pointed out that support is needed not only at the school and district level, but also the state level to create good schools. Marty Kobza suggested that if schools work at being good schools measurable achievements will follow. Several board members suggested that there is a difference right now between the mission and the function of schools. As a mission changes, function changes also. Mark Mathern commented that as we become more intertwined as a state because of the state funding model, we should be connected to a state purpose. Paige added that there appears to be no consensus now of what the mission of education is within the state. Recent discussions focused on whether the goal should be college or career ready, or college and career ready. Dennis Fischer commented that he would like to find a way to help students keep the joy of learning all the way through their school career. He thought we should focus on empowering teachers instead of just holding them accountable. Gerry Chase closed the conversation by suggesting that there are some key questions that could help unify the mission of education in Wyoming – if we all could agree on the answers. What should be the driving force behind education? What purpose is being served? Whose needs are being met?

Audrey S. thanked everyone for their contributions, and introduced our guest, Wyoming Department of Education Director, Rich Crandall.

Rich thanked the Partnership for the invitation to be a guest. In the discussion that followed, Rich asked for specific suggestions for an incentive to encourage high school students to earn at least nine college credits by the time they graduate from high school, whether through AP, IB, or dual or concurrent enrollment classes.

Board members shared their reactions, thoughts, and questions with Rich.

There was short break for lunch. Because of other obligations, Rich had to leave after lunch. Diana reconvened the meeting and discussion continued. Board members present raised several points in response to Rich’s request for information. The governing board agreed to send an email to Rich sharing our discussion with him. Please see the addendum attached to the minutes to read the follow-up email that Diana sent.

In closing the conversation, Leslie Rush wanted board members to know that if anyone was interested in curriculum materials for high school/college transition courses, she is part of a program that provides such curriculum. Interested parties should visit <http://www.sreb.org/page/1508/sreb_readiness_courses.html>

Diana asked Audrey K. to present the Partnership updates and other reports included in the governing board packet. Audrey K. explained documents about current Partnership members, including spreadsheets with current members and dues paid, as well as the 2013-2014 Partnership impact map. October 10-12 was the annual NNER national conference in Albuquerque, New Mexico. October 17-18 was the first Literature Lost in Transition Summit.

Diana requested that everyone complete a meeting evaluation form (transcribed comments appear below) and adjourned the meeting at 2:00 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Beth Wiley, November 8, 2013.

**Wyoming School-University Partnership**

**Governing Board Meeting Evaluation Form**

**November 7, 2013**  
*Session feedback transcribed November 8, 2013 n = 8 responses*

*All responses from evaluation forms were transcribed exactly as written.*

*Not all respondents answered all questions.*

1. **What insights or reactions did you have from the discussion with Rich Crandall?**

* Interesting focus on pushing on AP and changing standard for Hathaway. I continue to wonder if this is reflective of University purpose and legislative mission.
* As a first meeting, it was very fascinating. There were quite a few topics and I enjoyed the discussion. It certainly enhanced my knowledge of the many interfaces of Wyoming politics.
* Lots of good questions, no real answers.
* More questions. Good to see the potential for using access tools to post-secondary. Seems to be in a rush to act!
* Director Crandall’s heading of “policy drives performance” made me think of reflecting on what policies do we have as a district that might be disincentivizing student success.
* I appreciate his enthusiasm. But I question the direction.
* He has a predisposed bias to IB & AP.
* Great opening piece (prior to Rich). With Rich – valuable to know what he is thinking. Not sure he understands purpose of public school, but he might?

1. **What insights or reactions did you have from the discussion about the characteristics of good schools? (*Educational Renewal: Better Teachers, Better Schools*, pp. 211-217, Chapter 7, “Tomorrow’s Schools and Communities”)  Did you find this discussion useful? Why or why not?**

* Helpful insights and discussion because of value of mission and function.
* It was ok. Probably least useful discussion.
* This was a great discussion!! I think this was one of our best discussions we have had. Everyone had such great insightful thoughts.
* Useful – some elements of quality schools are timeless. It was a good article to reflect on past to present and make connections.
* The grounding discussion was very useful. The seven generalizations provide a great platform for moving forward and improving.
* I was struck by the focus on conversation or collaboration, through PLCs or whatever system. To me this is a necessary but not sufficient aspect of ensuring student learning.
* Very good discussion. Well led by Audrey to get input. Good thought starter.
* View schools as an eco-system, rather than viewing schools as a “machine” with inputs & outputs. Important conversation.

1. **Do you have suggestions for future topics and/or readings that you would like to discuss at board meetings during the Partnership/NNER grounding?**

* I would like more reading about Ray’s concept of “public” school vs government school.
* Early Childhood – Pre-K funding. PLC for P-12, Community College, & College. (Not for me to talk about, but for me to gain insight.)
* H.S. to post-H.S. transitioning activities – How to bridge for post-H.S. Success.
* I’ve been impressed with the quality of the readings we’ve used for grounding activities.
* Something @ transition from high school to college/career.
* Use of research that districts are relying on. I.E., we are using John Hattie’s “Visible Learning” that has changed our walk through’s of classrooms.
* Maybe – promoting conversations in our schools, districts, communities around what is the purpose of public school? What should guide our work?

1. **Reactions, suggestions, recommendations, or anything else you’d like meeting planners to know?**

* Advanced notice and packet was great!
* I felt very comfortable. My contributions will be limited until my feet are grounded. I enjoy listening and learning.
* Thanks for the opportunity for & facilitation of great discussion.
* Lunch was yummy.
* Very good discussion. Very glad I came.
* Diana – Audrey – Beth – Great mtng – Great work!

**Addendum**

Friday, November 8, 2013

Greetings Director Crandall,

On behalf of the Wyoming School-University Partnership Governing Board, thank you for joining our meeting in Casper, Thursday, November 7.  We appreciated all of the time you gave us along with the opportunity to share our reactions to your thoughts and questions.  After you left to meet with Bill Schilling, those in attendance continued to discuss the issues you addressed with us, in particular, the challenge of clear and meaningful learning incentives.  Below, you will see a short summary of our collective thoughts.

1. In response to Director Crandall’s request for information:
   1. The group did not have consensus that current Hathaway is a disincentive to take rigorous classes or that it is a false ceiling in that some students have always avoided taking more rigorous classes to preserve GPA.
   2. The group did agree that Hathaway needs to be continually evaluated and tweaked.  One suggestion was allowing students to move to a higher Hathaway scholarship level if they do well in college during the freshman year as an incentive.  The group noted there is no clear mission for Hathaway (i.e., Is it about access or about earning a scholarship for performance?)
   3. Some of the issues discussed with AP/IB is the availability of teachers to teach those courses, professional growth activities for teachers who teach those courses, and opportunities for teachers to get qualified to teach those courses.
   4. A suggestion was made to incentive for teachers to earn master’s degrees in content areas, so they can teach dual and concurrent enrollment.  This incentive could be similar to the annual stipend paid to teachers in Wyoming who get National Board Certification.  Also, fiscal and professional development support for the availability of guidance counselors for students and parents about future educational needs is vital to fostering an aspirational culture in Wyoming.
   5. There was some support within the group for pushing AP and IB courses, but the question remained as to what was the driver for incentivizing AP and IB?  Is it status? Or is it about K-12 learners?
2. Other input:
   1. Continued support for WDE to be a support organization vs. a compliance organization.
   2. It’s important to mesh anything we incentivize with the legislative accountability priorities and the transition to the new content and performance standards in math and English/Language Arts.
   3. Paying attention to the “middle tier” kids is important, hoping to move them to the top tier.   Also focusing on the success of students in their freshman year of college is important.
   4. The members of the governing board who were in attendance hope for continued dialogue among the members of the board and Director Crandall as we forge a common mission for education in WY.  We need to understand a common vision.

We hope this feedback is useful to you as you continue to work on behalf of Wyoming’s K-12 students and teachers. Again, we were so pleased that you joined us in Casper. Thank you! Please know that you have an open invitation to governing board meetings and are always welcome.

All the best,

Diana Clapp, Chair

Wyoming School-University Partnership

Superintendent

Fremont Co. School District #6