

**Wyoming School-University Partnership
Governing Board Meeting Minutes
Thursday, October 18, 2007
9:00 – 10:45 a.m.
12 noon – 2:30 p.m.**

**Senate Chambers, Wyoming Student Union
University of Wyoming, Laramie**

Present

Board members in attendance: Trish Cook, Jean Hayek, Mike Hejtmanek, Jim Lowham, Pat McClurg, Audrey Shalinsky, B. Oliver Walter, Dennis Wilson. Also attending: Audrey Kleinsasser and Kelli Pribanic, Partnership staff; and guests, Rollin Abernethy and Francisco Rios.

Introduction

Lowham called the meeting to order at 9:14 a.m. Lowham invited those present to check in by responding to the question: *My deepest fears and highest hopes for the children I love and how I work to avoid the fears and achieve hopes.*

Review and Approve

Today's meeting agenda and the July 16, 2007 Governing Board minutes were approved with no discussion. Motion by Wilson, seconded by Hejtmanek.

February Governing Board meeting in Cheyenne

The February board meeting will occur Thursday, February 28, 2008 at the Wyoming Education Association Office, 115 E. 22nd St. in Cheyenne, 10 am – 2pm. Board members suggested inviting members of the Wyoming Legislature's Joint Education Committee for lunch.

AED Scholar program; NNER equity self study

John Goodlad, through the Institute for Educational Inquiry, selected Audrey Kleinsasser and Francisco Rios to be Agenda for Education in a Democracy scholars. The group of 30 representing the NNER settings will meet and study together, January 26-28, 2008, in Seattle.

Rios also explained a current initiative. He is the director of a newly instituted Social Justice Research Center at UW. Rios explained that the center was established to encourage and nurture scholarly research in topics related to social justice. The idea for the center stemmed from a directive of the President's Advisory Council for Minorities and Women's Affairs (PACMWA), of which Rios was chairman. The center's long-range goals include developing meaningful solutions to identified problems; serving as a catalyst for grant funding; developing an outreach program to create and present research; and strengthening existing UW academic programs that have a social justice focus, such as Women's Studies, African American Studies, American Indian Studies, Chicano Studies and other programs.

Rios also addressed the NNER equity self study, a component of each setting's annual report to the NNER. The study asks, *How do we look at our own work and to what degree are any of us*

promoting the AED agenda in what we actually do? and How is the NNER vision statement coming to life? The report recommends that to answer these questions, each site engage in a self study specifically addressing equity issues, that the NNER Annual Review detail partnerships and results, and that the NNER conference be used to discuss challenges and successes. Francisco distributed guiding questions for an equity self study and asked if the Partnership would be interested in engaging in a study with Partnership school districts. Reactions varied. Concerns were expressed about the challenges in coordinating and carrying out the study across a state-wide partnership. Discussion shifted to proposals for funding professional development for English Language Learner teacher programs in Wyoming.

Lowham proposed a \$500,000 5-year initiative for ELL program development in Wyoming, catered to individual learning and affirmed a funding stream for such an initiative. Francisco spoke earlier about a College of Education grant proposal to the State Department of Education for ESL teacher training. The grant proposal can be used as an example for modeling the current initiative proposal. Rios volunteered to send the grant proposal to Kleinsasser who will distribute to the executive committee. No further action was taken.

The board recessed to attend the Cathy Small plenary, “What I Had Wrong, or What a Professor Learned by Becoming a Student.” Small, a Northern Arizona University anthropology professor, based the talk on her book, *My Freshman Year: What a Professor Learned by Becoming a Student*. Later that evening, Small talked with guests and answered questions at a dinner. Her appearance in Wyoming was in conjunction with UW’s Pathways for Learning forum, October 15-19 and the Partnership’s October 18-19 fall conference.

Following lunch and a conversation with UW Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs Rollin Abernethy about meanings and opportunities for partnerships, the board reconvened at 1:43.

Draft - 2006-2007 NNER annual report

The board examined and discussed a draft of the NNER 2006-2007 annual report. The only suggestions related to the equity self study item and ways to represent current work around diversity, equity, and justice in the Wyoming setting. The report is due to Ann Foster, Executive Director of the NNER, November 10.

Report – 2007 membership update and recruiting efforts

Membership remains steady, with all 2006-2007 members renewing and one new member, Sweetwater School District #2 (Green River), joining. Board members explained various recruiting efforts, including telephone calls, email, and one-on-one contacts. For the coming year, Cook, Hejtmanek, and Lowham volunteered to identify specific superintendents and districts for membership. The board also discussed the importance of retaining current members, meeting attendance, and convening meetings at central locations such as Casper or Cheyenne, when the Wyoming Legislature is session.

Report from the executive committee

An executive committee work session was held at Kleinsasser’s home Wednesday evening. Lowham reported that the committee discussed membership and recruiting, as well as the three upcoming regional science summits. Registrants bringing student work was identified as a possible barrier for the life science summits.

Hejtmanek recommended asking K-12 teachers what they'd like from university educators. Cook volunteered to contact Mark Lyford (UW Director of Life Sciences) about the January 2008 Wyoming Teachers of Science meeting as well as the statewide meetings of curriculum coordinators organization.

McClurg announced that she plans to retire at the end of the academic year. All thanked her for her great work and commitment to Wyoming education as well as to the Partnership. Board members agreed that the Partnership should be represented on the search committee and nominated Cook to serve on the committee. Lowham will contact Myron Allen, UW Vice President for Academic Affairs, with the Partnership's nomination.

Updates: Partnership Initiatives

The board reviewed the summaries of initiative updates included in the Governing Board packets. Several questions focused on the Wyoming Leadership Academy's SUCCEED training and Wyoming's Big Read of Willa Cather's *My Antonia*.

Review and approve bill payment

There were no questions or comments. Kleinsasser explained that fall conference expenses would be coming from the UW President's gift to the Partnership designated for high school to higher education transition work. Wilson moved to pay the bills. McClurg seconded.

Evaluation of today's meeting and check out

During check out, board members reacted to Cathy Small's plenary talk and discussed themes of student isolation, student work schedules and consumer culture, and student cell phone use. Board members also expressed surprise at Cathy Small's finding that a majority of students she surveyed stated that they would prefer to stay in college even if given the opportunity to pay for the credits and receive their degrees. Response to the plenary was overwhelmingly positive. Board members completed written evaluations of the day's meeting.

Lowham adjourned the meeting at 2:22 p.m.