

The Partnership grows

Seven school districts join the Partnership over the summer

Seven new school districts joined the Partnership this summer creating huge excitement around the Partnership office. While we were hoping to get maybe a few new members, we weren't expecting to set a record.

Our new members are Big Horn 2, Carbon 1, Fremont 24, Fremont 38, Sheridan 1, Sublette 9, and Teton 1.

During the 2011-2012 school year, 23 of 48 Wyoming school districts were members of the Partnership. The addition of seven new school districts (with the loss of one - Sublette #1), brings the number of Partnership member Wyoming school

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Pinedale: A first-time 100 Best Places for Youth Winner

Kudos to Pinedale teacher Jasper Warembourg and his class for preparing a winning application in the America's Promise Alliance competition naming 100 of the best places for youth.

Pinedale is the only Wyoming town to ever win the award. Warembourg credits the Partnership's school-community engagement initiative in planting the seed to complete an application.

Go to www.americaspromise.org to learn more about the award and Pinedale's application.

A Look Inside

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Wyoming School-
University Partnership

www.uwyo.edu/wsup

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Edited and Designed
by Beth Wiley



The peer leaders with their respective faculty members, from left to right: Tory Corcoran, Jane Nelson, Audrey Kleinsasser, Kayla Depew, Brianna Wright, and Mary Goetz.

Synergy program features peer leaders

Peer leaders help new students bridge the gap from high school to higher education

The University of Wyoming's Synergy Program is dedicated to helping first-year students be successful.

According to April Heaney, director of the Synergy program, for the past ten years, Synergy has hired experienced students to act as peer leaders for new students in all areas of their transition to college. Peer leaders (both nationally and at UW) have shown to make a significant impact on students' ability to bridge high school and college expectations and relationships; they provide insider tips and serve as role models for engaging with academic work. Heaney says, "In addition, our surveys and interviews with Synergy students reveal that students stay in touch with their peer leader throughout their first couple years in college—and beyond!" Synergy's peer leaders attend class with students in the first semester, sponsor out-of-class activities that help students engage with campus and the Laramie community, and funnel students to resources all around UW.

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Seven new members

districts up to 29, or 60% of the districts in the state.

New members commented they were all encouraged to join by current members. Current members were positive about the Partnership's impact in Wyoming. The Partnership will continue to provide opportunities for communication and collaboration among school districts in Wyoming, the seven community colleges, the University of Wyoming, the Wyoming Education Association, and the Wyoming Department of Education.

Learn a little more about each of our seven new school district members on these two pages. To see the impact map depicting current Partnership members, past meeting sites for Lost in Transition and for the school-community engagement initiative, please turn to page eight.

Baggs, Bairoil, Rawlins, Sinclair Carbon #1 Neil Terhune, Superintendent

Q. What do you enjoy the most about your school district?

A. I appreciate the interest in and support of our schools by parents and the communities. The commitment to creating a professional learning community here is evidenced by the recently passed \$26.5 million bond in support of a new high school and higher education campus.

Q. How would you describe your district to others?

A. We are a school and community that's committed to providing the very best possible education.

Q. Are there any quick facts about your district (student population size, communities served, goals) that you would like to share with other Partnership members?

A. We have a great partnership with our community members - for example, the refinery in Sinclair has donated to help the school there, the chamber of commerce is very supportive, and we have parent advisory committees that are involved in every school building. Enrollment this year is around 1,850 students. We have a brand-new, world class elementary school housing about 300 students in three separate learning communities, K-1, 2-3, and 4-5. We're also currently building a new high school and new higher education campus. And we have been steadily improving our test scores, both comparatively state-wide and internally. I like to think of us as an emerging premier school district within Wyoming.

Alta, Jackson, Kelly, Wilson Teton #1 Pam Shea, Superintendent

Q. What do you enjoy the most about your school district?

A. We have outstanding people who are a tremendous asset to our community and deeply committed to the success of our students.

Q. How would you describe your district to others?

A. Our vision for TCSD #1 is to provide students with a premier educational program that thoroughly prepares graduates to transition effectively into postsecondary education and the 21st century work force. A caring culture that embraces diversity, fosters respect and builds trust is imperative to our vision. This collaborative environment is founded on relationships and communication among students, staff, parents, and the Teton County community.

Q. Are there any quick facts about your district (student population size, communities served, goals) that you would like to share with other Partnership members?

A. We serve about 2,500 students at nine schools. We have an alternative high school, a high school, a middle school, and six elementary schools. We are very proud of our continuous improvement as we strive to fulfill our vision of excellence.

Arapahoe Fremont #38 Jonathan Braack, Superintendent

Q. What do you enjoy the most about your school district?

A. Our community is wonderful and kind. The students are beautiful. Our students are very smart and highly talented. Our staff is committed and we are seeing district wide improvements every day.

Q. How would you describe your district to others?

A. It is a district in transformation. Since January 2012, we have refocused our vision, goals, and set high expectations for everyone. We are learning through belief, practice, and implementation, that strong school culture and expectations must come first, and that such are the biggest factors in improving student achievement.

Q. Are there any quick facts about your district (student population size, communities served, goals) that you would like to share with other Partnership members?

A. Our goal is to be in the top 10 school districts (the top 20%) in Wyoming, by the end of 2014-2015 school year. We will do this, and our train is heading due north toward this goal. Also, our students experienced substantial growth in their PAWS proficiency from Spring of 2012, which we just celebrated on campus on Tuesday, September 28, with Cindy Hill and many other WDE officials attending.

**Big Piney, LaBarge, Marbleton
Sublette #9
Gerry Chase, Superintendent**

Q. What do you enjoy the most about your school district?

A. We most enjoy the people we work with from our students, parents, community members and staff. They are the best people on earth.

Q. How would you describe your district to others?

A. In describing our district I would say three things - honest, competent, and forward thinking.

Q. Are there any quick facts about your district (student population size, communities served, goals) that you would like to share with other Partnership members?

A. Our District serves the communities of LaBarge, Marbleton, and Big Piney and the surrounding areas. With this service in mind, it is our vision to guarantee an academic foundation in which all our students are equipped to successfully complete post-high school college and/or career readiness programs of their choosing. Our goal is 100% acceptance into post-high school college and/or career readiness programs with 100% completion rates.

**Lovell
Big Horn #2
Dan Coe, Superintendent**

Q. What do you enjoy the most about your school district?

A. The great people who live and work in Lovell and Big Horn #2. Their commitment towards education with a strong sense of purpose focused on student achievement creates a great positive community environment.

Q. How would you describe your district to others?

A. Big Horn #2 has a strong commitment towards students as evidenced by high achieving results.

Q. Are there any quick facts about your district (student population size, communities served, goals) that you would like to share with other Partnership members?

A. Big Horn #2 is a 2A district of 711 students, serving the Lovell community with Lovell Elementary, Lovell Middle and Lovell High School. Our singular focus is providing the best quality education for each student.

**Big Horn, Dayton, Parkman, Ranchester
Sheridan #1
Marty Kobza, Superintendent**

Q. What do you enjoy the most about your school district?

A. I enjoy the fact that there is a tradition of excellence. Parents, staff and students understand that there are high expectations and they do not shy away from them.

Q. How would you describe your district to others?

A. Our district is one of the highest achieving districts in Wyoming. We are also fortunate to be located in one of the most beautiful areas of the state.

Q. Are there any quick facts about your district (student population size, communities served, goals) that you would like to share with other Partnership members?

A. The district serves the communities of Big Horn, Ranchester, Dayton and Parkman. We have a student population of just over 900. Our two systems are located 22 miles apart and operate two separate K-12 systems. We also operate a one room school house on Pass Creek called Slack.

**Shoshoni
Fremont #24
Tammy Cox, Superintendent**

Q. What do you enjoy the most about your school district?

A. We have an educational community that is excited about student learning and achievement.... and our athletic teams! People in the community are very proud of their school system and are actively involved in supporting it. Because of our size, meaningful personal relationships with community members are easier to establish.

Q. How would you describe your district to others?

A. We are a district driven by high moral and ethical standards. We are dedicated to empowering and inspiring our staff and students to become the best they can be, both academically and personally. We embrace data and will do "whatever it takes" to fill the gaps and help our students succeed. To lay the foundation for 21st century teaching and learning, the district has invested significantly in technology and training. We have one to one computing in grades 5-12.

Q. Are there any quick facts about your district (student population size, communities served, goals) that you would like to share with other Partnership members?

A. The geographic boundaries of the district consist of 1,260 square miles. We have 350 students and 84 staff members. Our administrative team consists of 2 principals and a special education director. 14% of our students receive special education services. Agriculture and the Energy Industry are primary contributors to the economical basis of the community.

NNER Conference 2012
October 18-20
Denver, Colorado

Register by
September 17
to get the early bird rate!

www.nnerconference.org

**Book your rooms at the Brown Palace
or the Comfort Inn today!**

www.nnerconference.org/lodging.html

**Room blocks with special conference rate
will be held until September 17.**

Thursday night highlight

6:00 - 7:30 p.m. Welcome and Moonlighting Teachers

Friday highlights

8:00 - 10:30 a.m. Morning Presenter Sessions

11:45 - 1:15 p.m. Luncheon, Featuring Scott Marion

1:30 - 4:00 p.m. Afternoon Presenter Sessions

**5:15-6:15 p.m. Panel Discussion – High Stakes
Evaluation**

Saturday highlights

9:00 - 10:15 a.m. Morning Presenter Sessions

1:30 - 4:30 p.m. Professional Development Classes

For the full conference schedule, visit

www.nnerconference.org

Keynote Speaker:
Scott Marion

**“Getting teacher
accountability right
or at least getting it
a lot less wrong!”**



Friday, October 19, 11:45-1:15 p.m.

About Scott Marion

Scott Marion, Ph.D. is the Vice President of the National Center for the Improvement in Educational Assessment, Inc. Current projects include developing approaches for state leaders to use in designing and implementing validity evaluations for state assessment systems. Marion’s organization also explores the instructional usefulness of interim assessments and helps states design valid assessment and accountability systems.

Many have justifiably criticized the U.S. obsession with externally-driven accountability for the ways in which it apparently ignores important research in motivation and cognition. On the other hand, there are more democratic systems where teachers are responsible for monitoring and ensuring the quality of their own teaching and that of their peers.

Marion’s talk will examine why such internal accountable system have not been able to move to scale in the U.S. and will suggest an approach that capitalizes on the positive aspects of external systems to increase the likelihood of fostering more democratic approaches.

**NNER Conference
Statistics
as of September 13**

261 presenters

**Over 160 presenters
from Colorado, Nebraska, and
Wyoming**

**Over 90 presenters from
Wyoming**



NNER Conference

Professional Development Opportunities

Saturday, October 20
1:30 and 3:10 pm

The National Network for Educational Renewal's 2012 Conference, October 18-20 in Denver, Colorado offers a new opportunity for participants to engage in the conference! Professional Development classes will be offered Saturday, October 20 at 1:30 and 3:10 pm.

**Classes cost \$30 per session,
and include all course materials.**

Register by Monday, September 17 to guarantee a seat!

www.nnerconference.org/saturday.html

A. Co-teaching model for teacher education

Presenters: Roger Nyffeler, Director of the University of Nebraska-Kearney Network of Partner Schools
Ann Knipping, Director of Field Experiences at UN - K
Clayton Seeba, 5th grade teacher from Kearney Public Schools
Lori Moore, middle school special education teacher from Kearney Public Schools

Experience actual co-teaching training (you know it as student teaching) as a teacher candidate (you know it as a student teacher) or cooperating teacher (some things haven't changed!). By the end of the session, you will be qualified to take on the role of today's teacher candidate.

B. Teaching and learning environmental sustainability

Presenters: Victor Nolet, Department of Secondary Education, Western Washington University
Sylvia Parker, Science and Mathematics Teaching Center, University of Wyoming
Ana Houseal, Science and Mathematics Teaching Center, University of Wyoming

This hands-on workshop will provide you with strategies to help reorient your teacher education or teacher professional development program to address sustainability. This workshop would be particularly useful for teams interested in creating collaborative and interdisciplinary initiatives.

C. Writing for children and young adults

Presenter: Donna Cooner, Colorado State University's School of Teacher Education and Principal Preparation

This workshop will allow you to explore the markets, learn about acquiring editors and agents, follow a book from conception to publication, and polish your manuscript, using the best revision and editing techniques.

D. A model for engaging school-community conversations

Presenters: John Anderson, community engagement project facilitator for the Wyoming School-University Partnership
James Reed, Social Studies teacher at Southern Valley High School, Nebraska
Satoshi Machida, Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of Nebraska - Kearney

In this workshop, you will learn about what has been done, what to avoid, and successful strategies for doing community engagement. Tools for engagement reach beyond the traditional high school social studies class and can be applied in any setting from the elementary level to the middle or high school.

E. Open your eyes to exercise your mind: art as the means for exploring identity, culture, and viewpoint

Presenters: Wendy E. Bredehoft, Education Curator, University of Wyoming art Museum
Heather Bender, Master Teacher, University of Wyoming Art Museum
Tessa Dallarosa, Ann Simpson Artmobile Curator, University of Wyoming Art Museum

In this workshop we will explore how original art stimulates thinking about individuality, cultural narrative, multiple perspectives and more. Using the model we have been piloting at the University of Wyoming Art Museum, we will observe, explore, and question original art, create our own artistic response, and, finally, reflect on the process and what we have learned.

www.nnerconference.org



NNER annual summer symposium features large numbers and diverse participation

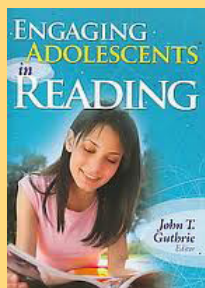
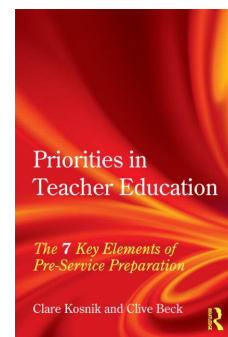
by Mauro Diaz

Editor's Note: Mauro Diaz, Natrona County School District #1 science teacher at Dean Morgan Junior High, was one of 36 K-12, teacher education, and arts and sciences faculty members who participated in the mid-July meetings in Seattle from 21 National Network for Educational Renewal settings across the country. Each year, the Partnership encourages Wyoming participants by supporting the \$750 symposium registration fee. This was the seventh summer symposium and featured the largest number of participants.

I enjoyed meeting people from around the country and hearing their perspectives. Bringing together people from all different aspects of the education system was valuable because it gave me an appreciation of the work that goes into preparing students to become teachers. The readings helped me reflect on my role as a teacher and the importance of teachers in developing a civil society. I also liked hearing participants speak about the Agenda for Education in a Democracy (AED) and how they can weave these ideas with their current work. Participants also understood that working to make the agenda possible takes collaboration among all involved in the education system. Having these discussions brought to light the importance of teachers who have daily interactions with students and know students well. What occurs in the classroom not only reflects on the teacher, but on the whole system of education.

I thought the book *Priorities in Teacher Education: The 7 Key Elements of Pre-Service Preparation* by Clare Kosnik and Clive Beck (2009) provided valuable information. The book details the findings of a three-year study that followed 22 graduates through their first years of teaching. It highlights the importance of pre-service preparation. At the symposium we participated in a Socratic style conversation, led by Francisco Rios (current Dean of Education at Western Washington University and former University of Wyoming faculty member), to respond to the author's perspective and interact with other participants who gave their unique points of view.

The overall lesson I took away from the symposium was that even though I sometimes feel that I am working alone to improve student learning, there are actually many people who are systematically working to improve the system of education. They value my work and are working hard to elevate our profession.



4th Annual UW College of Education Literacy Education Conference

September 21-22, 2012

University of Wyoming, Laramie

FREE REGISTRATION - registration closes September 15

Find the full schedule, workshop descriptions, and register at

http://www.uwyo.edu/wsup/events/uw_literacy_conference_2012.html

Keynote Speaker: Professor John Guthrie, University of Maryland
Building Students' Motivation and Engagement for Reading Multigenre Texts

New research reveals powerful practices to boost engagement. We will discuss teachers' pathways to inspiring literacy that lasts.

Professor Guthrie speaks Friday, September 21 from 7-9 p.m. Saturday, September 22, the following workshops will be offered once in the morning and once in the afternoon.

Teaching the New Literacies of Online Reading Comprehension in Grades 5-12

Digging Deeper: Analyzing Running Records to Inform Instruction

Literacy in the Secondary Math and Science Classroom: Reading, Writing, and Beyond

Bridging the Gap: What is Required for Success with College-Level Literacy Demands

Working With Struggling Readers and Writers in the Regular Elementary School Classroom

Earn PTSB 0.5 credit (Wyoming certified teachers ONLY)

Earn UW graduate enrichment credit (\$50 per credit)

Peer leaders

This fall, Synergy is piloting three sections of a course called *Critical Reflection and Transition*, a course that features peer leaders. The courses are taught by Audrey Kleinsasser, Jane Nelson, and Brianna Wright; all three have been active in aspects of the Partnership's Lost in Transition initiative. The three instructors will be examining student writing as part of a semester long research project.

Read more about each of the peer leaders and their insights on first-year college learning below.

Kayla Depew, a junior business major from Cheyenne, is a peer leader for Kleinsasser's section of *Critical Reflection and Transition*. A member of Delta-Delta-Delta Sorority and Iron Skull, Kayla applied for a peer leader role so she could not only help the students academically, but also with everyday college problems and situations. To accomplish that and support course activities, she is hosting an outside-of-class, Tuesday evening study hour for class members from 6:30-7:30 in the lower level of the Washakie Dining Center.

Kayla observes, "As a recent freshman, I know that college can be an overwhelming new experience. I wish I could have taken a course that would have given me the skills and tools to be successful in college. These first-year students are eager and ready for college life. They have a lot of potential and with the right audience, I believe they can all be successful college students."



Kayla Depew



Tory Corcoran

Tory Corcoran, a senior elementary education major from Rozet, Wyoming, is working with Jane Nelson's section, called *Groups and the Power of Language*. Nelson is impressed. "Tory has made an immediate and significant impact for student learning in this course. Because of his honest and open contributions to class, students report that they feel quite free to engage in discussion about the class readings and to tackle the complex time management issues they face." Tory himself observes that, "The students in the class seem to be motivated to learn and the majority are participating in the class activities."

Tory hopes to help students avoid some of the mistakes he made as a college freshman. He related this story as an example. "As a first year student at UW I did not advocate for myself on the first day of school. I ended up missing my first class because I could not find the right building on campus. If I would have just gone to a desk somewhere on campus, they would have been able to help me, and I would have made class. However, I continued to wander around and finally gave up and went home, and the professor emailed me after the class wondering where I was at. I think advocating for yourself is the most important thing you can do because it is how you learn."

Tory applied to be a peer leader because it was closely related to his resident assistant and assistant hall director jobs. Tory says, "I enjoy working with freshmen and wanted to continue this with my last semester on campus."

Mary Elizabeth Goetz is a sophomore from Laramie, double-majoring in elementary education and Spanish. Mary reports, "The students in our course are very driven. All of the students would like to be successful at the university and are willing to put in the hard work to be successful. I was also impressed by their enthusiasm and by the ideas that they have generated for their service learning project."

Brianna Wright asked Mary to be the peer leader for the course. "I took Wright's course, *Life Science 1020*, last fall semester and enjoyed it, while also getting to know her. She has been a wonderful person to stay in contact with and has helped me immensely."

Goetz articulates some strong feelings about first-year success, "As a freshman I did not realize the importance of studying and note taking for my first semester courses. I would like to pass the knowledge that I gained as a freshman on to these students so that they can avoid some of the obstacles that I had to overcome."



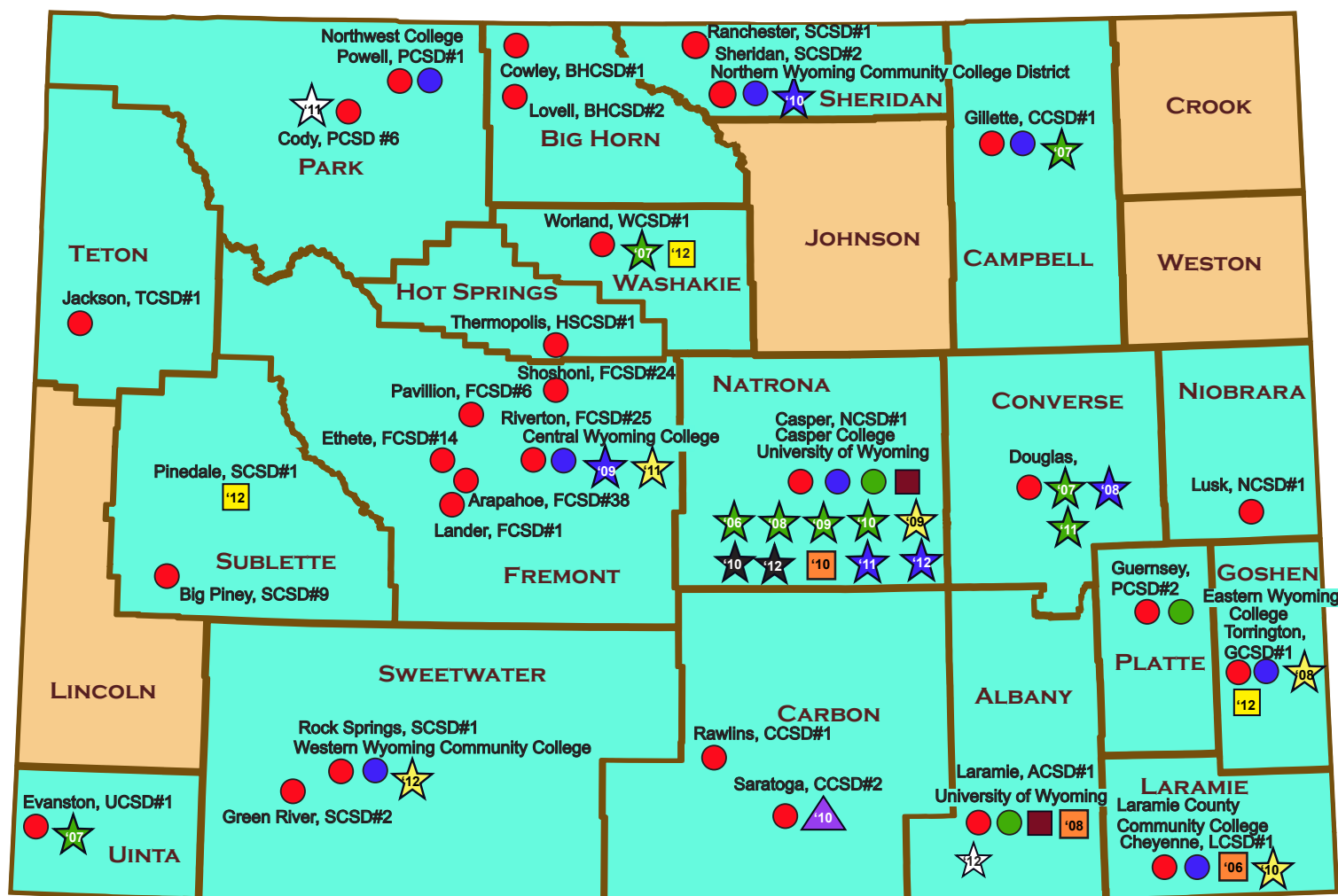
Mary Elizabeth Goetz

THE WYOMING SCHOOL - UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP

Advancing the Agenda for Education in a Democracy

Impact Map representing the 2012-2013 School Year

Total PK-12 2011-2012 Student Population: 89,476 Total PK-12 Student Population Served by Partnership = 85% (75,798)
29 of 48 (60%) Wyoming School Districts Belong to the Partnership and Pay Annual Dues



Map Legend

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| ● School District Member | School-Community Engagement Initiative Setting | ★ Mathematics Transitions Meeting Site |
| ● Community College Member | ★ Life Sciences Summit Site | ★ World Languages Institute Site |
| ● League of Democratic Schools Member | ★ Life Sciences Site Swap Site | ★ Social Studies Institute Site |
| University of Wyoming | ★ Teaching Writing in Wyoming Colloquium Site | Partnership Statewide Conference Site |

Partnership members include all seven community colleges, the University of Wyoming College of Arts and Sciences and College of Education, the Wyoming Education Association, and the Wyoming Department of Education.

UW Partnership School Districts working with concentrated placements of student teachers include: Albany #1, Campbell #1, Fremont #14 & #25, Laramie #1, Natrona #1, Sheridan #2, and Sweetwater #1 & #2.

More information is available at www.uwyo.edu/wsups. If you have questions, call 307.766.3274.



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