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**To:** Governor Freudenthal  
Members, Joint Appropriations Interim Committee

**From:** Robert Aylward, UW Vice President for Information  
Technology and Co-Chair, Governor's Task Force on  
Distance Education, Video Conferencing, and IP-Based  
Communications

Maggi Murdock, UW Associate Provost and Outreach  
School Dean and Co-Chair, Governor's Task Force on  
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Communications

**Subject:** Report on progress and expenditure of appropriations for the  
Wyoming Center for Distance Learning and Technology

**Date:** 25 October 2010

This is the report of the Governor's Task Force on Distance Education, Video Conferencing, and IP-Based Communications (Governor's Task Force), pursuant to 2010 Wyoming Session Laws, Chapter 39, Section 327, which mandates "Not later than November 1, 2010, and November 1, 2011, the task force shall report to the governor and the joint appropriations interim committee regarding progress of the center and expenditures of appropriations authorized under this section. The November 1, 2011, report shall include a budget recommendation for the 2013-2014 fiscal biennium."

Included in this report are (1) a report of activities involved in the development and implementation of the Wyoming Center for Distance Learning and Technology (WyoDLC), (2) a report of expenditures supporting the WyoDLC since the close of the 2010 Legislative Session during which the Center was created, and (3) recommendations for on-going implementation and development of the WyoDLC.

## **Section 1: A report of activities involved in the development and implementation of the Wyoming Center for Distance Learning and Technology (WyoDLC).**

### ***Work of the Task Force***<sup>1</sup>

- Following an analysis of the findings reported by the consultants (Wainhouse Research) hired in 2009 to examine and make recommendations concerning distance learning in Wyoming, the Task Force recommended to the Governor that a Wyoming Center for Excellence and Innovation in Distance Learning and Technology (Wyoming Distance Learning Center -- WyoDLC) be established.
- To provide a concrete foundation for the Task Force recommendation to the Governor, in December 2009 forty (40) distance education providers and stakeholders from various constituencies (including the Wyoming Department of Education, Wyoming virtual schools, Wyoming community colleges, University of Wyoming, students, and Wyoming PBS) attended a “visioning session” to define the mission and the activities of the Wyoming Distance Learning Center.<sup>2</sup>
- From April through May 2010, a search committee composed of members of the Governor’s Task Force worked with distance learning constituents statewide to develop a job description for the director of the WyoDLC.
- From June through July 2010 a search committee composed of members of the Governor’s Task Force advertised regionally, nationally, and internationally for applications for the position of director of the WyoDLC; reviewed 29 applications for the position of director received from across the U.S., Canada, and the UK; interviewed the five top candidates by telephone; and held in-person interviews with the top two candidates.
- On 1 August 2010, Dr. Elizabeth Simpson was hired as the first director of the Wyoming Distance Learning Center.

### ***Work of the Director of the Wyoming Distance Learning Center***

The December 2009 distance learning “visioning” group charged the WyoDLC with eight essential priorities related to distance learning in the state. ***The attached table (See Table 1 below) illustrates the work that has done to address those priorities since 1 August 2010 and provides a projection of the work of the Center through 2012.*** Highlights of this work are included below:

- Dr. Simpson has spoken with the majority of distance learning stakeholders identified in the Visioning Committee’s report. Dr. Simpson has met or communicated with these distance learning constituencies:
  - The Wyoming P-16 Council.

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix A, below, for information about the Governor’s Task Force on Distance Education, Video Conferencing, and IT-Based Communications and a list of the members of the Task Force.

<sup>2</sup> See <http://www.uwyo.edu/wdlesupport/docs/PublicDocuments/Distance%20Learning%20Consensus%20Report.pdf> for a copy of the Consensus Report of the Center for Distance Learning Visioning Session, 8-9 December 2009.

- Wyoming Distance Education Consortium (WyDEC).<sup>3</sup>
  - The director of the Wyoming Department of Workforce Services.
  - Wyoming Department of Education, including Superintendent McBride and Deputy Superintendent Simpson.
  - Wyoming PBS.
  - Wyoming School superintendents.
  - Wyoming Community college vice presidents for academic and student affairs.
  - University of Wyoming Board of Trustees.
  - University of Wyoming college deans.
  - University of Wyoming Outreach School, including Outreach Credit Programs and UW Television.
  - Wyoming Art Works.
  - Wyoming Distance Learning Guild.
  - Wyoming Law Enforcement Academy.
  - Wyoming Parent Information Center.
  - Wyoming Legislature, Joint Education Interim Committee.
- In addition, the director has:
    - Met with the WyoDLC's Distance Learning Advisory Council to set goals for the coming year and establish quarterly meeting dates, times, and places.
    - Attended the School Improvement Conference to gather data on teachers' understanding of distance learning needs in their schools and environments.
    - Joined into a collaborative agreement with the UW Interactive Media Lab to facilitate research on innovative distance learning techniques and methods.
    - Contacted Tracy Grey of the National Center for Technology Innovation to begin a dialogue regarding how to best utilize the resources of the WyoDLC for the needs of Wyoming citizens.
  - The director has held meetings with each stakeholder group regarding how the Center might best be of service to their educational goals. The following suggestions are what the stakeholders indicated as the highest priorities. This information was gathered as the result of both formal and informal data gathered by the Center and supports the original priorities of the Center, which have been validated by the WyoDLC's Distance Learning Advisory Council.

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<sup>3</sup> A collaborative group of distance education personnel at the Wyoming community colleges and the University of Wyoming, WyDEC is responsible for the listing of all distance education classes available from the community colleges and the University of Wyoming. See <http://wyclass.wy.edu/> for the distance education listings of WyDEC, entitled WyCLASS.

○ ***Professional Development***

The largest need expressed by all stakeholder groups is for professional development on how to use current and emerging distance learning technologies for teaching and learning.

- While there are current incentives for having K-12 instructors create distance learning courses, there does not exist a resource by which K-12 teachers can be trained in the necessary skills of the instructional design, assessment, delivery, and pedagogy needed to create and sustain a distance delivered course or program. This lack of internal capacity has been addressed by some districts by bringing in outside vendors, who provide training on their product and processes. The community colleges and the University of Wyoming each have individual processes for instructing faculty on how to integrate innovative technology and create online classes.
- Wyoming PBS has professional development courses designed for the same purpose, which were developed by the International Society for Technology and Teacher Education.
- The long term goal is to create a three-course distance learning professional development certificate provided by the Center. The Center will pursue approval of the courses and certificate by the Professional Teaching Standards Board. The Center will also collaborate with the community colleges and University of Wyoming to offer professional development academic credit for each course. A large part of the budget has been allocated to the support of individuals who would like to pursue or support professional development efforts *via* Mentorship and Development stipends.

○ ***Information Sharing***

- All constituent groups have indicated a willingness to share their expertise and experience to increase the capacity of institutions and instructors in Wyoming to provide distance courses, but indicate they have not had a collaborative vehicle prior to the creation of the Center.
- Part of the work of the Center over the next few years will be to organize existing data and best practices regarding distance learning and innovative technology to provide support for anyone who would like to provide instruction *via* distance.
- The Center will address the need for information sharing by the creation and facilitation Distance Learning Summits, delivered in the manner of a town hall meeting, to assess the needs of Wyoming communities and share information regarding distance learning opportunities for all stakeholder groups.
- The creation of the Center website will provide a space for sharing of expertise and information readily available to all stakeholders who would like to know more about distance learning.

- **Research**

- Data exist within each stakeholder group to drive decisions regarding best practices for distance learning in Wyoming, though much of the data remains internal to each stakeholder group. Some stakeholder groups have been using their data to inform decisions, others have not.
  - The Center provides a venue for data to be aggregated and utilized to provide a better understanding of the strengths and barriers to implementing distance learning in the State. To date the Center has accessed new data and partnered with stakeholders to mine data to help all stakeholders make better, data-based distance learning decisions.
  - The Center is in the process of accessing, analyzing, and preparing the data for distribution to a larger audience.
- There is also a need for an understanding of how innovative and emerging technologies can be used to further learning. The Center has created partnerships and developed venues for both the study and the dissemination of innovative emerging technology.

- **Collaboration**

- Collaboration with key stakeholders is critical to avoid duplication of efforts among distance learning individuals and institutions. Through visits with each of the stakeholders, Dr. Simpson has begun to identify duplicate efforts by stakeholder groups that may be combined or modified to create successful, enhanced distance learning opportunities around the state.
- Dr. Simpson has begun collaborations with government agencies and community members who are interested creating distance learning opportunities.

**Section 2: Budget and Expenditures for the Wyoming Distance Learning Center from March 2010 – June 2012**

<b>Wyoming Distance Learning Center: Budget and Expenditures March 2010 - June 2012</b>				
<b>March 2010-30 June 2011</b>			<b>1 July 2011 - 30 June 2012</b>	
<b>Personnel</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Expenditures to date</b>	<b>Personnel</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b><u>Full Time Benefited Personnel</u></b>			<b><u>Full Time Benefited Personnel</u></b>	
	<i>Note: Figures include EPBs</i>			<i>Note: Figures include EPBs</i>
Director	\$150,012.00	\$21,553.50	Director	\$150,012.00
Staff Assistant	\$57,258.00	\$960.00	Staff Assistant	\$57,258.00
Instructional Education Technology Specialist	\$67,536.00	\$0.00	Instructional Education Technology Specialist	\$67,536.00
Instructional Education Technology Specialist	\$67,536.00	\$0.00	Instructional Education Technology Specialist	\$67,536.00
<b><u>Part Time Non-Benefited/Contract Personnel</u></b>			<b><u>Part Time Non-Benefited/Contract Personnel</u></b>	
Instructional Design Partners	\$75,000.00	\$0.00	Instructional Design Partners	\$75,000.00
Marketing Manager	\$75,000.00	\$0.00	Marketing Manager	\$75,000.00
Research Coordinator (initially a part time person or a graduate student, perhaps moving to FT benefited)	\$65,000.00	\$5,000.00	Research Coordinator (initially a part time person or a graduate student, perhaps moving to FT benefited)	\$65,000.00
<b>Total Personnel</b>	<b>\$557,342.00</b>	<b>\$27,513.50</b>	<b>Total Personnel</b>	<b>\$557,342.00</b>
<b><u>Constituent Support and Professional Development</u></b>			<b><u>Constituent Support and Professional Development</u></b>	

Professional Development	\$75,000.00	\$0.00	Professional Development	\$75,000.00
Constituent/Partner Communications and Collaboration	\$50,000.00	\$0.00	Constituent/Partner Communications and Collaboration	\$75,000.00
Faculty Development Stipends	\$100,000.00	\$0.00	Faculty Development Stipends	\$100,000.00
Faculty Mentorship Stipends	\$75,000.00	\$0.00	Faculty Mentorship Stipends	\$100,000.00
Innovative Grants	\$75,000.00	\$0.00	Innovative Grants	\$100,000.00
Research and Development	\$65,000.00	\$0.00	Research and Development	\$90,000.00
<b>Total Professional Development</b>	<b>\$440,000.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>Total Professional Development</b>	<b>\$540,000.00</b>
<b><i>Operations</i></b>			<b><i>Operations</i></b>	
Marketing (including ePortal)	\$75,000.00	\$0.00	Marketing (including ePortal)	\$50,000.00
Office operations (including communications and supplies)	\$32,500.00	\$1,360.91	Office operations (including communications and supplies)	\$25,000.00
Equipment/Technology (including computers, video conference, emerging technologies)	\$100,000.00	\$66,342.07	Equipment/Technology (including computers, video conference, emerging technologies)	\$50,000.00
Travel / Subscriptions / Memberships	\$25,000.00	\$2,312.90	Travel / Subscriptions / Memberships	\$25,000.00
Contingency	\$11,408.00	\$0.00	Contingency	\$11,408.00
<b>Total Operations</b>	<b>\$243,908.00</b>	<b>\$70,015.88</b>	<b>Total Operations</b>	<b>\$161,408.00</b>
<b>ANNUAL TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,241,250.00</b>	<b>\$97,529.38</b>	<b>ANNUAL TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,258,750.00</b>
<b>BIENNIAL TOTAL</b>	<b>\$2,500,000.00</b>			

### Section 3: Recommendations

Implementation and development of the Wyoming Distance Learning Center is ongoing. The priorities for the Center were established by the Distance Education Visioning Group in December 2009 and validated by the Wyoming Distance Learning Center Advisory Council in September of 2010. Recommendations for the ongoing implementation and development of the Wyoming Distance Learning Center can be found in Table 1 below.

**Table 1**

**Priorities for the Wyoming Distance Learning Center and Activities Undertaken to Realize Those Priorities**

<b>Priorities - Identified by the 2009 Distance Learning Visioning Group and Validated by the Wyoming Distance Learning Center Advisory Council in Sept 2010</b>	<b>Aug 2010 - Nov 2010</b>	<b>Nov 2010 - June 2011</b>	<b>June 2011 - July 2012</b>
<b>Build relationships with constituents and key stakeholders</b>	Dr. Simpson has met with all key stakeholders and is planning collaborative projects with each group.	Plan and design collaborative projects, including regional Distance Learning Summits designed as town hall meetings to share and distribute information on distance learning options for Wyoming communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate four to eight Distance Learning Summits.</li> </ul>
<b>Provide leadership and advocacy for distance learning</b>	Dr. Simpson has met with all of the educational leadership groups and provided counsel to groups outside of public education who are interested in distance learning opportunities.	Continue working with leadership groups to identify strengths and barriers <i>via</i> data analysis that inhibit and/or support distance learning opportunities for the citizens of Wyoming.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attend (and support cost for 4-5 Wyoming distance educators) four national conferences on distance learning and innovative technology</li> </ul> <p>Maintain memberships in</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The United States Distance Learning Association</li> <li>• Society for Technology and Education</li> </ul>



			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WICHE Cooperative for Educational Technologies (WCET)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Assess current status of distance education in the state, identify unmet needs, gaps, and overlaps in programs</b></p>	<p>Dr. Simpson has met with the Wainhouse Consultants and expanded on their research <i>via</i> surveys distributed by the Center to identify gaps and overlaps in programs.</p>	<p>Share information regarding the status of distance learning in the state with key stakeholders.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using the Wainhouse report as a baseline and additional data gathered by the Center, produce a white paper on the current state of distance education efforts in Wyoming, focusing especially on advancements since the 2009 Wainhouse report.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Facilitate collaboration for sharing resources and other efforts</b></p>	<p>Develop relationships and identify venues for sharing information and building collaborative resources. The hiring of the Instructional Design staff is critical to meeting this goal.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design and test a website which will function as the central mechanism for collaboration and sharing of resources regarding distance learning.</li> <li>• Create a mentorship program (Wyoming Accessing Teacher Talent-WYATT) to share expertise and support capacity building for innovative and distance learning throughout the state.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create and maintain a user friendly website which will connect all distance learning resources in one place.</li> <li>• Disseminate the goals, expectations, and benefits of the WyATT program through an educational marketing campaign.</li> <li>• Distribute the application for WyATT mentorship program around the state.</li> <li>• Create the first cohort of WyATT mentors and instructors.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Be a clearinghouse for training, best practices, and resources</b></p>	<p>A virtual space (web site) is being designed to bring together all training, best practices, and resources related to distance learning around the state. The hiring of the Instructional Design staff is critical to meeting this goal.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Operationalize the website and insure connectivity and access to all stakeholders. Disseminate state, national and international reports on best practice in distance and cyber learning. Working with stakeholders (WyDEC, UW, WLLA, WDE) to merge common interests into two</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a dynamic space (online professional development) connected to the website where stakeholders interact with training, best practices and resources available.</li> <li>• Facilitate two statewide conferences on distance learning and innovative uses of technology</li> </ul>

		<p>statewide distance learning conferences to showcase best practices.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify current professional development offerings to support distance learning and combine those under the auspices of the Center to make the opportunities available to all stakeholders.</li> </ul>	<p>for learning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create a professional development certificate to increase the capacity of Wyoming teachers to utilize distance learning opportunities and innovative technology options.</li> </ul>
<b>Research funding and coordinate grant activities and procurement of resources</b>	<p>The Center continues to identify key people around the state and begin planning for collaborative research on innovation and distance education. The Center is currently partnered with, higher education, PBS, and K12 to seek outside funding for initiatives that support distance learning statewide.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Currently in discussions with Bob Mayes (UW Science Math Teaching Center) and Bryan Shader (UW NCAR project) to develop a proposal for an NSF grant in cyber learning that would serve all stakeholder groups.</li> <li>Preparing a grant for the Arthur Vinings Davis Foundation re: Global Learning Opportunities for Wyoming teachers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Submit, in collaboration with key stakeholders, two national grants to support the work of the Center.</li> </ul>
<b>Act as an incubator to research, evaluate, and disseminate emerging distance learning methods and technologies</b>	<p>The Center has formed a collaborative relationship with the UW English Department and brought the UW Interactive Media Lab under the auspices of the Center to complement and facilitate the research of the Center.</p>	<p>Research projects will be drawn to the Center by creating requests for proposals (RFP) for Innovative Grants. The Innovative Grant opportunity will be shared with all stakeholders who are interested in creative interactive technology options for teaching and learning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support 15-30 Statewide Innovative Grant projects in Wyoming.</li> </ul>
<b>Promote technological equity and compatibility statewide</b>	<p>Inventory current networks, use, and purposes. Create seamless, intuitive collaborative system for access to current distance learning offerings.</p>	<p>Identify, <i>via</i> the Distance Learning Summits, the specific needs of Wyoming's communities regarding distance learning opportunities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with the Governor's Task Force to facilitate equitable networks and systems for reaching all Wyoming citizens.</li> </ul>

## APPENDIX A

### BACKGROUND ON THE GOVERNOR'S TASK FORCE ON DISTANCE EDUCATION, VIDEO CONFERENCING, AND IP-BASED COMMUNICATIONS

**The Governor's Charge to the Task Force.** In order to prepare Wyoming for a technology-based future in which the state is linked and works through technological means as well as small town interactions, in November 2008 Governor Freudenthal appointed a Task Force to examine and make recommendations on distance education, video conferencing, and IP-based communications for the State of Wyoming. Task Force members are Wendy Curran, Governor's Advisor for Health Care; Rob Hurless, Governor's Advisor for Energy and Telecommunications; Dr. Karla Leach, President, Western Wyoming College; Dr. Jim McBride, Superintendent of Public Instruction; Bob von Wolffradt, State CIO; and co-chairs Robert Aylward and Dr. Maggi Murdock of the University of Wyoming. The Governor's charge to the Task Force included, but was not limited to the following core activities:

1. Soliciting input from all affected parties
2. Inventorying current efforts across the various state institutions
3. Examining the historical authorization for these activities
4. Examining the source of funding of these efforts
5. Eliciting the set of issues that have lead us to the current efforts
6. Examining current governance of these activities
7. Analyzing the above information
8. Making specific recommendations regarding various options for improving the provision of these services

**Goals and Work of the Task Force.** To accomplish the goals set forth by the Governor, the Task Force prepared two Requests for Proposal (RFP) to provide a comprehensive review and recommendations for cost-effective statewide solutions for distance learning and video conferencing. In addition to the Governor's charge, the Task Force's goals for the project were to look for ways to effectively develop a support structure for distance education and video conferencing in Wyoming. The goals included:

1. Making state government more efficient and effective through increased access, time savings, cost savings and enhanced communication;
2. Providing a robust technological base for delivery of distance education;
3. Enhancing the business and economic development climate in Wyoming by providing better communications capability between state government and businesses;
4. Easily linking and integrating all state government agencies as well as external users;

5. Increasing citizen access to Wyoming state government by providing additional avenues of communication input; and
6. Enhancing and improving the provision of distance learning services, programs, processes, and practices, including potential structures, course management systems, technologies, and learning assessment.

Each consultant was asked to (1) determine the needs of constituents, (2) examine the current environment, (3) analyze the difference between constituent needs and what currently exists, and (4) make recommendations for improvements, integration, funding, and governance.

In March 2009 the Task Force awarded PlanNet the contract to conduct the review of and develop recommendations for video conferencing and IP-based communications and in April 2009 Wainhouse Research was awarded the contract to conduct the review of and develop recommendations for distance education. Through the spring and summer of 2009 the consultants held focus groups in locations across the state, interviewed constituents involved in video conferencing and distance education, conducted surveys, and interviewed members of the public. They also undertook an inventory of Wyoming's current video conference systems and distance learning programs. Please see <http://www.uwyo.edu/wdlcsupport/docs/PublicDocuments/090731%20Wyoming%20VTC%20Assessment%20Report.pdf> for the final PlanNet report about video conferencing in Wyoming and <http://www.uwyo.edu/wdlcsupport/docs/PublicDocuments/WR-Distance%20Education-Wyoming%20FINAL-report-RevC.pdf> for the final Wainhouse Research report about distance education in Wyoming.

## APPENDIX B

### TASK FORCE ON DISTANCE EDUCATION, VIDEO CONFERENCING, AND IP-BASED COMMUNICATIONS

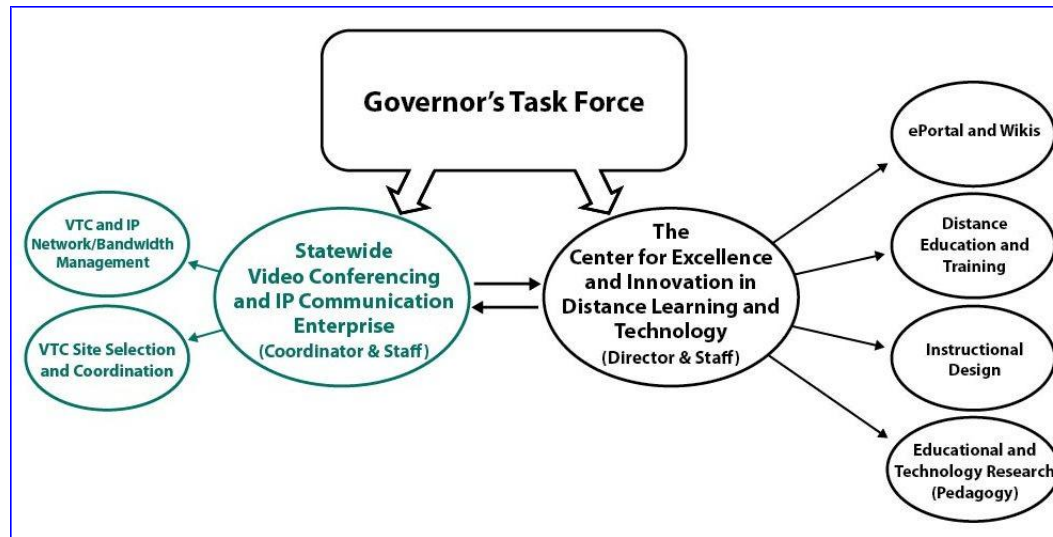
#### SUMMARY RECOMMENDATIONS TO GOVERNOR FREUDENTHAL

9 December 2009

**Background:** In November of 2008, Wyoming's Governor Dave Freudenthal formed a task force to examine distance education, video conferencing, and other IP-based communications across the state. Task Force members are Wendy Curran, Governor's Advisor for Health Care; Rob Hurlless, Governor's Advisor for Energy and Telecommunications; Dr. Karla Leach, President, Western Wyoming College; Dr. Jim McBride, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Bob von Wolffrad, State CIO and co-chairs Robert Aylward and Dr. Maggi Murdock of the University of Wyoming. The primary goal of the Governor's Task Force is to find ways to integrate and enhance distance learning opportunities at all levels (K-12, community college, UW, professional development, and lifelong learning) as well as determine how best to integrate the various video conferencing systems that the state currently supports. The efforts of the Task Force are aimed at focusing these strategic state resources to better serve the residents of Wyoming.

Early in 2009 the Task Force issued RFPs to hire consultants to help examine and make recommendations concerning distance learning and video conferencing in Wyoming. The consultants were charged with examining the needs of the state's residents and practitioners with regard to distance education and video conferencing, making an inventory of existing distance education programs and video conference systems, analyzing the information gathered, and making recommendations to the Task Force. The consultants finished their work and provided their recommendations to the Task Force in late summer 2009.

**Recommendations:** Utilizing the work of the consultants and focusing its recommendations to accomplish the objectives outlined for the Task Force by the Governor, the Task Force has integrated its recommendations to the Governor under the concepts of (1) a *Video Conferencing Enterprise* (VCE) and (2) a *Center for Excellence and Innovation in Distance Learning and Technology* (Center).



### VIDEO CONFERENCING ENTERPRISE (VCE)

- The purpose of the Video Conferencing Enterprise is, through the Task Force, to integrate state video networks and systems in order to establish an effective state video conference capability that is technologically robust, expands video conferencing service capabilities, and minimizes duplication among state agencies and government entities.
- The Video Conferencing Enterprise will be responsible for integrating the existing independent video conferencing systems through:
  - setting standards and protocols for current and future technologies;
  - integrating scheduling;
  - identifying, developing and integrating appropriate end sites;
  - planning for and implementing future IP-based technologies; and
  - allocated VCE funding for statewide video conferencing and emerging technologies – all being based on the needs of constituents/stakeholders.
- The Video Conferencing Enterprise will report to the Task Force.
- The Task Force that will provide appropriate representation of video stakeholders and will provide oversight of the Video Conferencing Enterprise.

- The Video Conferencing Enterprise will require a Director/Coordinator with supporting staff. Initial funding for the Video Conferencing Enterprise will be through a legislative appropriation recommended by the Governor.
- In accordance with the purpose of these recommendations, stakeholders in the state's video conferencing networks and potential users of video conferencing will be informed about the Video Conference Enterprise and have a voice in suggesting standards and protocols, integrating scheduling, identifying appropriate end sites, and planning for future IP-based technologies based on their expertise, experience, and needs.
- The VCE will work closely with the Distance Learning Center in establishing the state's video conferencing infrastructure.
- The integration of the WDE and State video conferencing systems can begin immediately, with the understanding that the Video Task Force will approve final protocols and standards to guide the integration.

#### **THE CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE AND INNOVATION IN DISTANCE LEARNING AND TECHNOLOGY**

- The purpose of the Center is to focus, integrate, and enhance distance learning opportunities.
- The Center will be responsible for providing leadership and support for distance learning opportunities of all kinds and at all levels: K-12, higher education, professional development, training, and lifelong learning.
- The Center must be independent, centrally funded, and legislatively mandated to provide the authority, responsibility, and accountability necessary to make the Center efficient and effective.
- A Distance Learning Council will provide oversight of the Center.
- The Center will require a Director with support staff.
- An integral part of the Center will be functional groups, composed of existing and future personnel with expertise in various aspects of distance learning (e.g., pedagogy, instructional design, learning technologies), with assignments in their existing institutions and part of their time assigned to the Center as needed.
- In accordance with the purpose of these recommendations, the Center will be initially defined through a charrette-style visioning meeting, to include stakeholders from all learning sectors, in order to provide more details about the Center for legislative consideration.
- The Center will work closely with VCE in establishing the state's video conferencing infrastructure.

The Task Force will continue to prioritize and develop other consultant recommendations and incorporate other appropriate stakeholder inputs to integrate, enhance, and support distance education, video conferencing and IP-based communication in Wyoming.