



Wyoming Department of Education

PRESS RELEASE

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State Board to engage search firm for Director search

CHEYENNE - The Wyoming State Board of Education (SBOE) awarded a contract to Ray and Associates to aid in the search for the permanent director of the Wyoming Department of Education (WDE).

Ray and Associates of Cedar Rapids, Iowa was selected during the State Board of Education's meeting in Rock Springs on Tuesday. The fee for Ray and Associates' services includes a base fee of \$30,000, not including associated costs and travel.

Gary Ray is the President of Ray and Associates. He said his firm has been engaged in the hiring of State School Chiefs in Florida, Rhode Island and Ohio. They have also recently been involved in the search for directors of the Arizona and Oregon State School Board Associations.

"We've been doing this for going on 38 years," Ray said. "We specialize in helping educational institutions find top-rate leaders. We believe this will be a challenging position and one that people should show a lot of interest in."

The State Board of Education approved a request for proposals for executive search firm services during its Feb. 11 meeting and received six proposals by its Feb. 28 deadline. A subcommittee of the State Board whittled that list down to three and the finalists were allowed to present during the Board's work session Monday. The finalists for the contract included HYA of Rosemont, Ill., Dakota Educational Consulting of Volga, South Dakota, and Ray and Associates. Each firm was allotted two hours with the Board to include a presentation on how the firm intended to meet the requirements as specified in the RFP and answer questions from the Board. On Tuesday, the State Board made its decision during its regular meeting.

"There were three excellent applicants, we wouldn't have gone wrong with any of them," said State Board of Education President Ron Micheli. "The thing that set Ray apart is the fact they have been doing national searches, over 1,000 of them, for over 30 years. They just have a lot of expertise and know what they are doing."

Enrolled Act 1, which was signed by the Governor on Jan. 29, transfers the supervision of the Department of Education from the State Superintendent of Public Instruction to the newly formed position of Director of the WDE. According to the legislation, the Governor was required to name an interim director of the WDE upon signing of the bill and did so by appointing Dr. Jim Rose.

The State Superintendent will retain her role on several state boards, such as the State Loan and Investment Board and the State Board of Land Commissioners. The Superintendent's office remains responsible for the general oversight of Wyoming education and other specified policy areas.

The SBOE is statutorily charged with finding three qualified candidates to fill the position of Director. Those names must be submitted to Governor Matt Mead prior to Dec. 1, 2013. Micheli said it is the goal of the board to place three qualified names in the hands of the Governor by July 1.

“Our goal would be by July 1 and that is aggressive,” Micheli said. “I know we are setting ourselves up for disappointment with that date, but given the fact contracts with school superintendents and personnel tend to expire on July 1, it would be ideal to have it done by the first of July. Ray presented the same timeline (during their presentation with the board) without any consultation with our board.”

“At the first meeting that is something we will establish--when we will start, when we will end and who will be involved,” Ray said. “I think we will propose a fairly aggressive timeline. We certainly look at it as an opportunity to work with the Board, the Department and eventually find some top-quality candidates that the Governor can look at.”