



Wyoming Department of Education

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MEMORANDUM NO. 2007 – 193

TO: School District Superintendents

FROM: Joe Simpson, Deputy Superintendent of Public Instruction

DATE: December 14, 2007

SUBJECT: Body of Evidence



IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Our Body of Evidence consultants have completed the first of several meetings around the state regarding the Body of Evidence system required of each district. On behalf of WDE, we would like to thank the group that met in Cody last Thursday and Friday. This group demonstrated a good deal of commitment and understanding for the need of a comprehensive Body of Evidence system in each district.

Many Wyoming educators will recall the debate that occurred when Body of Evidence was first discussed, and then enacted as Wyoming law. We are discovering, however, that there are many individuals who have moved into our state since that time who are not familiar with Body of Evidence. This is understandable, and WDE takes full responsibility for allowing this issue to remain on the back burner.

Many factors lead to the requirement for Body of Evidence. Wyoming is under strict scrutiny from our court system to assure that our students receive both an adequate and equitable education. The Body of Evidence requirement exists in order to assure that every child has equal access to the common core of knowledge and skills found in state law and that a graduation diploma represents the same high standards from district to district.

Alternatives to Body of Evidence, such as a high stakes graduation examination, have not been popular in Wyoming. The Body of Evidence is a system first developed and then encouraged by Wyoming educators. Some Wyoming school districts have continued to work on high quality systems. The work of these districts may serve as a model for others who have done little work since the law was first enacted.

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Our plan is to use the coming months to both inform and assist districts. In the spring of 2008, we will be able to showcase the work of some districts, and review progress in other districts. By April of 2009, we expect that all districts will have their systems in place, prepared for quality peer reviews.

If you have any questions regarding the Body of Evidence review process, please contact me directly at WDE. Tom Collins, in our Laramie office, is also available. Your curriculum directors are working with Kim Ferguson and Jim Staab, Wyoming educators, who have been hired as contractors to perform assistance in this area. Please feel free to contact them by email at jstaab@tritnet.net or kferguson@focusoneducation.net. Thank you for your cooperation.

JS:tc