

Wyoming Department of Education
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Highly Qualified Workforce

EQUITY PLAN

**No Child Left Behind Act of 2001
Title II, Part A**

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Wyoming Superintendent of Public Instruction**

WYOMING DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION HIGHLY QUALIFIED WORKFORCE EQUITY PLAN

Introduction

Ensuring all Wyoming children receive a high-quality education requires an effective teacher in every classroom, effective administrators in every school, and school and district leadership that is focused on raising achievement. Wyoming believes that it is human resources that form the core of Wyoming's educational system.

In keeping with this philosophy, Wyoming is committed to the goal that all teachers and administrators are highly qualified (HQ) and that poor and minority children are not taught at higher rates than other children by inexperienced, unqualified, and/or out-of-field teachers. Wyoming further recognizes that teacher quality has a major impact on student achievement. We remain committed to the goal of ensuring that every child in Wyoming is taught by a teacher who is well prepared and supported in order for each student to experience academic success.

High Quality Teacher (HQT) Statewide Objectives

- 100% highly qualified teachers in every core academic class by the end of the 2006/07 academic year; and
- Poor and minority children are not taught at higher rates than other children by inexperienced, unqualified or out-of-field teachers.

Wyoming's Systemwide Vision

A synchronized, comprehensive human resource system of high quality educators supporting the state's K-12 education structure to ensure all students are taught by a well prepared, effective workforce.

Highly Qualified Workforce Goals:

1. Wyoming will develop a statewide teacher and administrator human resource system to guide and support continuous professional growth for all Wyoming educators.
2. Wyoming will develop and implement a statewide data collection system to monitor and analyze teacher and administrator distribution patterns, to ensure that Wyoming's poor and minority students are not being taught by inexperienced, unqualified or out-of-field teachers at a higher rate than other students.
3. Wyoming will coordinate statewide efforts and strategies that support highly qualified teachers and administrators and provide technical assistance, communication, statewide policy coherence and monitoring to support teacher and administrator quality.

GOAL 1

Wyoming will develop a statewide teacher and administrator human resource system to guide and support continuous professional growth for all Wyoming educators.

WYOMING DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION HIGHLY QUALIFIED WORKFORCE EQUITY PLAN

WDE will work with districts to develop human resource systems that are professional, standards based, include effective recruitment and selection strategies, provide long term induction, engage in effective supervision through mentoring/coaching techniques and effectively plan long-term for manpower needs through district transition planning.

This new comprehensive system brings a variety of components into synchronization to provide the highest quality human resources for the state's system of K-12 education. Plans are currently being developed to design a statewide system, supported by state, federal and foundation resources, to recruit, retain, select, maintain and grow teachers, teacher leaders and administrators.

This system will ensure that a highly qualified teacher is in every classroom and a highly qualified administrator is in every school; that there is a support system in place for early career teachers and early career administrators; that all schools and districts have tools to recruit, monitor and evaluate teachers and administrators; that high quality professional development is tied directly to the needs of students; and that there is a seamless, looped system of educator development from high school through higher education and pre-service and back into the K-12 classroom.

Stakeholders

- Administrators – Superintendents and Principals
- Boards of Trustees
- Legislators
- Paraeducators
- Pre-Service Teachers
- Professional Development Providers
- Professional Organizations
- Professional Teaching Standards Board (PTSB)
- School Districts
- Schools of Higher Education
- Specialists
- State Board of Education
- Students
- Teachers
- Wyoming Education Association

Scope of Work

Prepare: A system that links high school students interested in entering the field of education with work experiences in local schools; provides a seamless higher education experience through the community college and university system; a teacher education program based on approved program standards and high expectations for content knowledge and pedagogy; and ultimately, placement in a Wyoming K-12 classroom.

Recruit: A system that draws on higher education preparation programs, statewide job fairs, out-of-state connections with teacher candidates, community members such as

**WYOMING DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
HIGHLY QUALIFIED WORKFORCE EQUITY PLAN**

paraprofessionals who wish to pursue a teaching credential, and incentives to draw second career professionals into the teaching profession.

Develop: A system that provides tools and resources to assist schools and districts with hiring teachers, administrators, paraeducators and other staff who have the skills and knowledge to meet the academic, emotional and physical needs of their specific student body and community.

License: A system that ensures quality professional standards and accountability for teacher, administrator and specialist certifications; that requires and monitors professional learning; that monitors professional behavior; and provides for high quality staff in every classroom and school in Wyoming.

Induction: A system that supports teachers new to the profession, and retaining existing teachers, through formalized mentoring, coaching, collegial support and professional learning.

Maintain and Enhance: A system that provides high quality, research based, job embedded, life-long professional learning and development planned around individual teacher needs, student learning needs, and school and district goals.

Monitor and Evaluate: A system that ensures teachers, administrators and other staff have high expectations for students; are focused on learning objectives; know and can effectively deliver instructional strategies; work together toward student, school and district goals; and are accountable for high quality work.

Promote: A system that provides development of teacher leaders and administrative leadership through succession planning, research-based leadership training, grow-your-own programs, mentoring, and internships.

GOAL 2

Wyoming will develop and implement a statewide data collection system to monitor and analyze teacher and administrator distribution patterns, to ensure that Wyoming's poor and minority students are not being taught at a higher rate than other students by inexperienced, unqualified or out-of-field teachers.

Data Collection History

The Wyoming Integrated Statewide Education Data System (WISE) is a WDE initiative to enable connection of different software systems and data bases within local school districts. As phases of WISE project implementation move forward, schools and districts will progressively move towards realization of a system in which student, staff and other data will need only to be entered once and will then flow to additional applications that require it.

WYOMING DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION HIGHLY QUALIFIED WORKFORCE EQUITY PLAN

WISE is also used to assist districts in meeting requirements for the collection, and reporting of school and district data mandated by state and federal statute. The WDE collects staffing data from districts which is cross referenced with related data collected by Wyoming's Professional Teaching Standards Board (PTSB). PTSB maintains a certification database that includes the subject areas in which every certified teacher in the state meets the definition of HQ. In October of each year, the local districts report each teacher's assignment data through the on-line "School District Staff Member Collection" survey via the WISE system administered by WDE. This staffing information is then cross referenced with certification and other highly qualified teacher records collected by PTSB to determine the highly qualified status of the state's teachers.

On September 1, 2006, Phase-one of the HQT data collection was underway and a preliminary analysis of the 2005-2006 highly qualified teacher data was completed. Based on that data, 92.3% of core academic subjects were deemed to be taught by HQT. During the ensuing three months, WDE and the PTSB worked to ensure quality control mechanisms were in place so that all applicable information, (test data, coursework, and HOUSSE rubrics) was accurately entered into the system. On November 22, 2006, an additional component of this system was completed for special education teachers which indicated that statewide, 93.9% of special education classes were taught by highly qualified teachers in 2005-06. The results of the Phase-one data collection and analysis was an increase to **95.3%** of Wyoming's core academic classes taught by highly qualified teachers for the 2005-06 academic year.

Data Collection Planning

With the first phase of the HQT data collection complete, accurately identifying highly qualified teachers and out-of-field teachers, WDE will now turn its attention to identifying inexperienced teachers in order to assure that poor and minority children are equitably served by highly qualified teachers. Phase-two of the HQT data collection system will bring the data on the experience level of teachers and administrators into the yearly staffing data collection. WDE currently collects teacher experience data only based on criteria developed to meet Wyoming's state school funding model. Not all definitions align with those required under Title II. For example, the teacher experience data collected includes years served in non-teaching positions requiring certification such as "school nurse." WDE will bring the data collection into alignment with Title II by either modifying the existing coding system to fill the needs of both state funding and Title II analysis needs, or developing a corollary coding system tailored to the needs of collecting teacher and administrator experience specifically for use in analysis of experienced teachers per Title II program requirements.

Phase-two of the HQT data collection process will begin in the spring of 2007 with communications to districts regarding the 2007-08 academic year data collections. The WDE will inform districts in April 2007 of the federal requirement to analyze teacher experience data and minority student population data to ensure that they are aware this analysis will first take place using 2007-08 data submitted on WDE's staffing collection. WDE will also solicit feedback designed to ensure our collection and analysis methodology will be both valid and reliable. The data collection will commence in the

**WYOMING DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
HIGHLY QUALIFIED WORKFORCE EQUITY PLAN**

fall of 2007, with district reporting of data to take place in December 2007 and public reporting of data to take place in the Fall of 2008 via the Every Student Counts report. In December 2008 the data will be included in the State Consolidated Report to USDE, meeting federal reporting requirements.

Phase-two streamlines staffing data collection and analysis processes in conjunction with districts and PTSB, so that with the 2007-08 collection of staffing data from districts, the reporting back will occur in December of the same year. This timely turnaround of data will allow for verification of HQT status to occur early within the current academic year and provide for timely technical assistance and monitoring of both HQT status and placement of experienced teachers in high poverty and high minority schools.

WDE Title II program representatives will work in concert with WDE Data and Technical Services staff to develop and automate analytic processes tailored to provide desired data and reporting to teachers, schools, districts, the State, and the United States Department of Education (USDE).

Data Collection, Analysis, and Reporting Timeline

September 2006 – Phase I – Complete analysis of percentage of classes taught by HQ teachers

HQT Data Collection Phase I – 2005-06 collection of teacher qualifications data, at the course level, from every school in Wyoming and reported to statewide stakeholders and USDE. HQT data was reported by high and low poverty status and FTE.

April 2007 – Phase II (2007-08 data) – Communication to districts

WDE will inform districts of the federal requirement to analyze teacher experience data and minority student population to ensure that they are aware this analysis will take place using data submitted on the 2007-08 WDE staffing collection. WDE will also solicit feedback.

October 2007 – Phase II (2007-08 data) – Data collection from districts due

Statewide HQT Data Collection for all schools and districts. The data collection will include all previously collected HQT data and will be the first collection of teacher and administrator experience data. WDE data analysis will include HQT status and novice/experience data by school and school district, by high and low poverty, by high and low minority, and schools not making AYP.

December 2007 – Phase II (2007-08 data) – Preliminary data analysis complete

District reporting of 2007-08 HQT data. HQT data collection for current school year – data and analysis from all schools and districts provided to districts. WDE data analysis will include HQT status and novice/experience data by school and school district, by high and low poverty, by high and low minority, and schools not making AYP.

**WYOMING DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
HIGHLY QUALIFIED WORKFORCE EQUITY PLAN**

October 2008 – Phase II (2007-08 data) - Public reporting

Public reporting of 2007-08 HQT data. HQT data collection for current school year – data and analysis from all schools and districts provided to the public.

December 2008 and following years – Phase II – Data reporting to USDE

Required data from all schools and districts provided to USDE including HQT status and novice/experience data by school and school district, by high and low poverty, by high and low minority, and schools not making AYP. Public reporting will take place via Wyoming’s Every Student Counts report and to USDE via the annual Consolidated Report.

HQT Data Collection, Analysis and Reporting Timeline

Data Year	Phase	Collect Data from Districts	Data Analysis to Districts	Report to state through “Every Student Counts”	Report to USDE through “Consolidated Report”
2005-06	I	Fall 2005	Nov 2006	Fall 2006	Dec 2006
2006-07	I	Oct 2006	March 2007	Fall 2007	Dec 2007
2007-08	II	Oct 2007	Dec 2007	Fall 2008	Dec 2008
2008-09	II	Oct 2008	Dec 2008	Fall 2009	Dec 2009

Phase One Data Analysis

Analysis of HQT data from every school in the state from the 2005-06 academic year indicates that 17,385 core academic classes were taught by 5,396 highly qualified teachers. Eight hundred twenty core academic classes were taught by 233 teachers who were not deemed highly qualified. Thus, in Wyoming for the 2005-06 academic year, 95.3% of core academic classes (CAC) were taught by Highly Qualified Teachers (HQT) and 4.7% were taught by Non Highly Qualified Teachers (NHQT).

The 2005-06 HQT data, for the most part, supports the provision of equitable teacher distribution. As a state there is a 1.2% inequity between low and high poverty schools at the elementary level and a 2.2% inequity between low and high poverty schools at the secondary level. However, when comparing those figures to 2004-2005, mixed results emerge. At the elementary level, 2004-2005 data indicated no inequity, while there was a 6.5% inequity at the secondary level. In 2005-2006, a small inequity at the elementary level has developed, but the inequity at the secondary level has corrected by more than 4 percentage points.

As previously noted, Wyoming’s HQT equity gap is minimal. However, when examining the disaggregated data for districts and schools, it appears that there are some gaps that must be examined and addressed. During the Phase-two data collection planning process, WDE will define the “equity gap” which must be addressed in all districts and schools; that definition will include highly qualified teachers, teacher experience, poverty, minority, ELL, AYP, and proficiency data.

**WYOMING DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
HIGHLY QUALIFIED WORKFORCE EQUITY PLAN**

Following is a table of the 2005-2006 Highly Qualified Teacher composite data for low and high poverty schools in each district:

Distribution of Highly Qualified Teachers Relative to Poverty

District Name	Percent of Classes Taught by HQT in Low Poverty Schools	Percent of Classes Taught by HQT in High Poverty Schools
Albany CSD #1	98.4%	92.5%
Big Horn CSD #1	No low poverty schools	99.3%
Big Horn CSD #2	100%	85.1%
Big Horn CSD #3	100%	96.4%
Big Horn CSD #4	No low poverty schools	98.0%
Campbell CSD #1	94.6%	95.6%
Carbon CSD #1	96.9%	91.4%
Carbon CSD #2	96.4%	99.3%
Converse CSD #1	99.7%	85.0%
Converse CSD #2	92.8%	100%
Crook CSD #1	100%	92.3%
Fremont CSD #1	96.6%	97.6%
Fremont CSD #14	No low poverty schools	90.0%
Fremont CSD #2	No low poverty schools	96.1%
Fremont CSD #21	No low poverty schools	58.5%
Fremont CSD #24	95.6%	98.6%
Fremont CSD #25	98.5%	92.4%
Fremont CSD #38	No low poverty schools	93.3%
Fremont CSD #6	No low poverty schools	90.6%
Goshen CSD #1	No low poverty schools	97.9%
Hot Springs CSD #1	No low poverty schools	99.5%
Johnson CSD #1	92.9%	87.5%
Laramie CSD #1	97.1%	97.2%
Laramie CSD #2	95.0%	100%
Lincoln CSD #1	76.5%	79.3%
Lincoln CSD #2	96.3%	95.1%
Natrona CSD #1	97.2%	96.3%
Niobrara #1	100%	85.4%
Park CSD #1	94.6%	96.3%
Park CSD #16	No low poverty schools	97.4%
Park CSD #6	95.1%	No high poverty schools
Platte CSD #1	80.7%	94.0%
Platte CSD #2	93.7%	96.8%
Sheridan CSD #1	100%	95.4%
Sheridan CSD #2	97.6%	100%
Sheridan CSD #3	No low poverty schools	100%

**WYOMING DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
HIGHLY QUALIFIED WORKFORCE EQUITY PLAN**

District Name	Percent of Classes Taught by HQT in Low Poverty Schools	Percent of Classes Taught by HQT in High Poverty Schools
Sublette CSD #1	97.4%	No high poverty schools
Sublette CSD #9	96.0%	No high poverty schools
Sweetwater CSD #1	96.9%	98.0%
Sweetwater CSD #2	93.0%	100%
Teton CSD #1	92.9%	No high poverty schools
Uinta CSD #1	No low poverty schools	92.7%
Uinta CSD #4	92.5%	100%
Uinta CSD #6	95.1%	No high poverty schools
Washakie CSD #1	89.2%	95.6%
Washakie CSD #2	95.0%	71.4%
Weston CSD #1	99.6%	100%
Weston CSD #7	90.4%	88.9%

All schools in five districts in Wyoming are low poverty. In those districts, the percentage of highly qualified teachers teaching core academic classes ranges from 95.1% to 97.4%.

All schools in twelve districts in Wyoming are high poverty. In those districts, the percentage of HQT teaching CAC ranges from 58.5% to 100%. Only one district has a percentage of HQT teaching CAC that is below 90%. In this district 58.5% of classes are taught by HQT. Seven districts have a highly qualified percentage above the state average of 95.3%.

In fourteen Wyoming school districts the percentage of highly qualified teachers teaching CAC is higher in low poverty schools. In seventeen, the percentage is higher in high poverty schools.

Phase-Two Data Reporting

As noted above, phase-two of the HQT data collection system will bring the data on the experience level of teachers and administrators into the yearly staffing data collection. In order to compile this data, Wyoming has defined an experienced teacher as “one who has three or more years of teaching experience.” Therefore, the collection will differentiate between teachers who are considered “Novice” with less than three years of teaching experience.

Below is an example of the data reporting which will be included in the Phase-two data collection and reporting. The example portrays the data collection for elementary schools. WDE will report and analyze the data by elementary and secondary schools.

**WYOMING DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
HIGHLY QUALIFIED WORKFORCE EQUITY PLAN**

2007-08 Teacher Experience in High and Low Poverty
and High and Low Minority Schools

	Total Number of Teachers	Number of Novice Teachers	Percent of Novice Teachers	Number of Experienced Teachers	Percent of Experienced Teachers
Elementary					
High Poverty					
Low Poverty					
High Minority	<i>Example</i>				
Low Minority					
All Elementary					

GOAL 3

Wyoming will coordinate statewide efforts and strategies that support highly qualified teachers and administrators and provide technical assistance, communication, statewide policy coherence and monitoring to support teacher and administrator quality.

Strategies for Ensuring Equity

Wyoming Department of Education will engage in the following activities in order to ensure that all children in Wyoming are taught by experienced, highly qualified teachers:

- 1) **Beginning Teacher Support**
Develop programs to enhance the success and retention of early career teachers by aiding the transition into teaching; to improve training for new teachers; to provide intensive, individualized support and assistance to each beginning teacher.
- 2) **Recruitment Programs**
Develop programs to increase the number of teachers in the pipeline and to provide incentives for educators to work in areas of highest need.
- 3) **Teacher Preparation**
Collaborate with the University and community college partners to offer programs that more succinctly address the preparation needs of teachers in Wyoming schools
- 4) **Retention Programs**
Identify and support programs that support teachers who are not new to the profession. These include programs that support collaboration with peers such as peer coaching, leadership opportunities such as shared governance, and targeted professional development, especially content area professional development.
- 5) **Mentoring Programs**

**WYOMING DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
HIGHLY QUALIFIED WORKFORCE EQUITY PLAN**

Nationwide more than half of all new teachers leave the profession within five years of beginning their teaching careers. High-quality, structured mentoring programs have a positive effect both on the retention of qualified teachers and the quality of instruction. For these reasons, as well as requirements under ESEA Section 1116(b)(3), all schools in Wyoming that have not made AYP for two consecutive years must include a teacher mentoring program as part of their required improvement activities.

In this program, new teachers are mentored and coached by instructional facilitators through the \$16 million Instructional Facilitator program that provides instructional facilitators in every district statewide. This program is further described in Section 3a of Wyoming's Highly Qualified Teacher Revised State Plan.

6) National Board Certification

State Support

For the 2007-08 biennium, the Wyoming Department of Education budget includes \$656,000 to support National Board certification of teachers by:

- Recruitment of teacher applicants for national certification
- Strengthening the support system for teachers in the process of obtaining national certification
- Providing awards and public recognition for teachers receiving National Board Certification

For the biennium, 2007-2008, the Legislature appropriated \$600,000 in funding towards a \$4000 salary increase to National Board certified teachers for each year of the biennium.

Foundation Support

The John P. Ellbogen Foundation supports a program that actively recruits Wyoming teachers to seek National Board certification, provides them with a statewide support system and a \$2000 scholarship. In each of the last 3 years, the board has committed over \$260,000. Other financial partners have joined in giving support to the Wyoming Initiative and they include: The Ruth R. Ellbogen Foundation, State Farm Insurance Company, The McMurry Foundation, and The Homer A. and Mildred S. Scott Foundation.

The focus of this support is as follows:

- Recruit teachers for National Board Certification
- Pay a portion of the assessment (including retake and "Take One" fees) for candidates
- Build a comprehensive support system for candidates
- Provide a full scholarship for Pre-candidate, Candidate, and Leadership workshops
- Plan and sponsor a yearly awards and Recognition Event for National Board Certified Teachers

To date 52 teachers in Wyoming have been certified by NBPTS.

**WYOMING DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
HIGHLY QUALIFIED WORKFORCE EQUITY PLAN**

7) Assignment of Teachers

Work with education associations to develop policies that eliminate obstacles to redistribution of teachers to high poverty and high minority schools and in developing strategies to assure that teachers in core academic classes are assigned to classes for which they are highly qualified.

8) Bonuses and Incentives

WDE will work to build on existing initiatives as well as develop new strategies to support bonuses and incentives to highly qualified, experienced teachers who agree to work in hard-to-staff schools.

The Public School Teacher Incentive Program was introduced in the State Senate this session (SF0100). This legislation will create incentive reimbursement payments to school districts to employ teachers with multiple teaching endorsements and who teach two or more different courses during a school year for which they are properly endorsed. Teachers holding such multiple endorsements qualify for \$2,000 in addition to their regular salary. This incentive will be of particular use by rural and remote schools and districts in Wyoming.

Technical Assistance and Communication

The WDE Title II Office will:

- Work with schools and districts to ensure that HQT plans have adequately addressed the equitable distribution of HQ and experienced teachers;
- Ensure achievement of equity is a viable component of HQT plans;
- Provide all LEAs with data collection tools to report and analyze the equitable distribution of experienced and HQ teachers;
- Review HQT plans and provide feedback;
- Provide technical assistance to districts in the revision and effective implementation of HQT plans;
- Disseminate successful strategies to promote retention of HQ teachers particularly in hard-to-staff schools.
- Administer competitive grants programs that address the HQT needs of high need schools and districts
 - Math and Science Partnership Grants, and
 - Teacher/Leader Quality Partnership Grants;
- Coordinate and provide programs that support the development of highly qualified, experienced teachers
 - Professional Learning Communities at Work Coaching Academies,
 - Reading First/reading initiatives,
 - Statewide writing initiatives,
 - ESL/ELL Endorsement Program, and
 - Focused ESL/ELL statewide professional development;
- Recognize districts and schools that achieve 100% highly qualified teachers and/or make progress on closing the equity gap.

**WYOMING DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
HIGHLY QUALIFIED WORKFORCE EQUITY PLAN**

Promoting Leadership

Wyoming is working to promote and develop effective school leaders statewide. This work is tightly intertwined with the human resource system described in Goal One and will include strategies to recruit, retain, select, maintain and grow teacher-leaders and administrators throughout the state of Wyoming. Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, and Wahlstrom, in their 2004 review of research into effective leadership, concluded that leadership is “second only to classroom instruction among all school related factors that contribute to what students learn at school” accounting for about 25% of total school effects and that this effect was even greater in those schools facing the greatest challenges (p. 5). Richard Elmore (2000) asserts that, in order to successfully perform all of the leadership tasks cited in effective schools research, leadership responsibilities must be widely distributed throughout every school. For these reasons, Wyoming has targeted a variety of initiatives toward the development of teacher leaders and administrators.

1) SAHE Principal Leadership Grants

Under Title II, Part A, Subpart 3, funds are made available to state agencies for higher education (SAHEs) to support partnerships intended to ensure that principals have the instructional leadership skills to help them work most effectively with teachers in order to help students master core academic subjects. Through a partnership between the University of Wyoming- Department of Educational Leadership, Wyoming School-University Partnership, and Laramie County #1, Big Horn #1, Fremont #14, Fremont #21 and Fremont #38 , the *Wyoming Leadership Academy* provides new principals and assistant principals with tools and skills to work with staff, students, parents, community stakeholders, and colleagues in the content areas of reading/language arts and mathematics and the WDE school improvement plan and process. This project has statewide impact as all new principals in the state are invited and encouraged to participate.

2) Professional Learning Communities at Work Coaching Academies

Schools operating as professional learning communities collectively examine the conditions and activities that have a positive impact on student learning, seek out effective practices, and work collaboratively to develop shared leadership, evaluate strategies and techniques. Their work is focused directly on the needs of students and the goal of increasing student achievement within their schools. Teachers and administrators work together toward common objectives within a professional learning community. This program provides educational leaders, including teacher-leaders with the knowledge, tools, and skills to effectively coach schools and staff members throughout the change process.

In 2004-2005, a cohort of approximately 60 educators, mostly administrators, participated in a Professional Learning Communities at Work Coaching Academy, and subsequently moved forward with the planning and implementation in their respective districts. Their successes also included challenges, and they requested additional training. As the plans were being developed to make an Advanced Academy available, it became quite evident that

WYOMING DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION HIGHLY QUALIFIED WORKFORCE EQUITY PLAN

there were many schools and districts who wanted the opportunity to participate in an Introductory Academy.

One-hundred and fifty educators, 33 teams of teachers and administrators from schools across the state, are participating in the Introductory Academy that is happening at two different sites. The training provides each Introductory Strand participant with a working knowledge of Professional Learning Community implementation and sustainability practices. The 50 additional participants in the Advanced Strand are provided advanced facilitation methods in order to strengthen each participant's leadership skills.

Statewide Policy Coherence

WDE is committed to improving internal processes and revising state policies that may inadvertently contribute to staffing inequities in schools. As an SEA, we will lead the effort in assuring that high-need schools have the opportunity to recruit and retain highly qualified teachers. While local school districts assign teachers to schools, grades, subjects, and classes, WDE monitors teaching assignments through HQT data collections, through evaluative processes such as monitoring and routine oversight of school districts. The WDE plan for a comprehensive teacher and administrator human resource system will bring together what might otherwise be disjointed pieces of Wyoming's statewide education environment and ensure policy coherence.

Monitoring Progress, Corrective Action, and Sanctions

All LEAs will be held accountable by WDE for fulfilling their HQT Plans and meeting the two HQT statewide objectives:

- 100% highly qualified teachers in every core academic class by the end of the 2006/07 academic year; and
- poor and minority children are not taught by inexperienced, unqualified or out-of-field teachers at higher rates than other children

WDE will monitor the equitability of teacher assignment through the collection of HQT data, each annual submission of the LEAs Title II, Part A Consolidated Plan, and the HQT plans of each LEA that has not met the statewide annual measurable objective of 100% highly qualified teachers. The State will use HQT data that identifies classes taught by teachers who are not highly qualified and teaching experience (novice/experienced) to determine high priority schools and districts. Technical assistance will be prioritized for high poverty and high minority districts and schools with the greatest percent of classes taught by teachers who are not highly qualified and have high percentages of novice teachers.

As described above, HQT data is collected each October to identify teachers assigned to classes for which they are not HQ and to identify the experience level of teachers. This information will be utilized in the monitoring process and in providing technical assistance to districts. The State will monitor HQT plans for NHQ teachers to become HQ and the equitable distribution of novice and experienced teachers. WDE will also monitor parental notification requirements as required for Title I schools. When it

**WYOMING DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
HIGHLY QUALIFIED WORKFORCE EQUITY PLAN**

appears that the school or district is unable to meet its highly qualified goals with ongoing implementation of its plan, WDE will enact a series of progressive monitoring and sanctions in accordance with ESEA section 2141.

The following protocols have been developed by WDE to clearly explain the role and responsibilities of the SEA as we work together to ensure the HQT requirements are understood and implemented.

SEA Responsibilities

- Monitor and approve NCLB Consolidated Plan applications. Ensure Title I-A and Title II-A includes evidence of financial support for teachers who have not met the HQT requirements.
- Monitor and approve LEA Highly Qualified Teacher Plans including alignment with NCLB Consolidated Plans and Wyoming School Improvement Plan/Schoolwide Plan.
- Monitor HQT criteria as a component of the rotating cycle of on-site program monitoring as required for each of the following divisions within WDE:
 - Special Education Unit
 - Title I Office
 - Title II Office
- Monitor LEA compliance with all HQT state and federal program regulations and administer sanctions if necessary.

In order to carry out the above responsibilities, the WDE Title II Office will:

- Ensure on-site monitoring occurs for each LEA on the established cycle and/or upon receipt of a substantiated complaint, and when significant concerns arise over the accuracy of HQT data;
- Participate in the WDE Technical Assistance teams, in which concerns regarding schools and districts are addressed and coordinated technical assistance and/or sanctions are planned and delivered;
- Collect, review, and authorize each LEA HQT Plan;
- Provide technical assistance to LEAs in accessing high quality professional development for their non-HQ teachers;
- Provide on-going support to LEAs to ensure that all teachers are highly qualified by the end of the 2006-07 academic year and that poor and minority children are not taught at higher rates than other children by inexperienced, unqualified, and/or out-of-field teachers; and
- Annually report publicly and to USDE updated HQT data, assess progress relative to the 100% HQT goal, percentage of teachers participating in high quality professional development and equitable distribution of experienced teachers.

**WYOMING DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
HIGHLY QUALIFIED WORKFORCE EQUITY PLAN**

Evidence of Probable Success – Research Base

As part of the development of this plan the WDE has created an evaluation system to monitor the degree to which the LEAs implement their agreed upon HQT plans and how successful the activities were in addressing the targeted issues. The WDE Title II staff uses the following criteria to review and evaluate HQT plans:

- 1) Is the district committed to ensuring that all core academic classes are taught by highly qualified teachers?
- 2) Do the district and schools assist with and support individual professional development plans for teachers who need to become highly qualified?
- 3) Is the LEA analyzing and addressing equitable distribution of highly qualified, experienced teachers among low poverty and high poverty schools?

These plans will be required to include on-going evaluation, monitoring, and accountability. WDE is confident that this process, along with intensive technical assistance and the evidence of success collected for HQT compliance so far, will result in effective administration of the HQT program.

Additionally, WDE will continue to monitor and evaluate the success of the programs and initiatives described above through collection of HQT data and evidence of program implementation. WDE staff has utilized a variety of research and the resources from higher education, school districts, the USDE, Comprehensive Centers, professional organizations and others in identifying strategies that will result in meeting the HQT goals. A sampling of the research that informed this plan appears below:

Stanford University: Linda Darling Hammond, “Teacher Quality and Student Achievement: A Review of State Policy Evidence.” (2000)

Studies of the effects of teacher experience on student learning have found a relationship between teachers' effectiveness and their years of experience (Murnane & Phillips, 1981; Klitgaard & Hall, 1974), but not always a significant one or an entirely linear one. While many studies have established that inexperienced teachers (those with less than three years of experience) are typically less effective than more senior teachers, the benefits of experience appear to level off after about five years, especially in non-collegial work settings (Rosenholtz, 1986). A possible cause of this trend in experience effects is that older teachers do not always continue to grow and learn and may grow tired in their jobs. Furthermore, the benefits of experience may interact with educational opportunities. Veteran teachers in settings that emphasize continual learning and collaboration continue to improve their performance (Rosenholtz, 1984). It is also possible that uneven effects of experience can be the result of cohort effects (for example, cohorts of teachers hired in times of shortage may be less well-qualified than those hired when schools can be more selective) or of attrition effects (for example, disproportionate early attrition of more able teachers may leave a less capable senior force on average) (Murnane & Phillips, 1981; Vance & Schlechty, 1982). Presumably, the direction of this effect would change if retention policies kept the most able beginning teachers in the profession. Since experience is also correlated with teacher education and certification status, these variables may be confounded in some analyses.”

**WYOMING DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
HIGHLY QUALIFIED WORKFORCE EQUITY PLAN**

University of Kansas, Andy Tompkins and Anne S. Beauchamp, How Are States Responding to the Issue of Teacher Recruitment and Retention, and What More Needs to Be Done?, (2006)

In a review of issues related to recruiting and retaining teachers in hard-to staff schools, Berry (2004) notes that “salary increases alone are insufficient to attract teachers to hard-to-staff schools” (13). He summarizes the following as other important initiatives to address this problem:

- Recruit from a larger pool of traditional and nontraditional candidates
- Provide strong induction and mentoring programs
- Provide a supportive principal
- Provide opportunities for leadership
- Provide opportunities to influence decision making
- Provide more time to learn from colleagues
- Provide the chance to work closely with fewer numbers of students and their families
- Improve research by the federal government

The National Education Association in Tompkins and Beauchamp, (2006) recommends several strategies for addressing teacher recruitment and retention. Specific recruitment strategies include the following:

- Develop a comprehensive recruitment plan
- Develop a strong marketing and outreach campaign
- Improve the hiring process
- Provide nontraditional routes into the profession
- Provide financial incentives

Specific retention strategies include the following:

- Prepare teachers adequately
- Nurture new teachers
- Improve the working environment
- Provide financial incentives

NGA Center for Best Practice, Richard Ingersoll and Bridget Curran, Out-of-Field Teaching: The Great Obstacle to Meeting the “Highly Qualified” Teacher Challenge, (2004)

States should address the gaps between the HQ teacher requirements and the qualifications of their teachers by considering the following initiatives:

- Creating and streamlining state data systems to include relevant data on teacher qualifications and assignments and requiring schools and districts to report critical data, including data on out-of-field teaching;
- Developing strategies for recruiting and retaining effective teachers in areas where they are needed most;
- Prohibiting out-of-field teaching for new teachers;
- Offering incentives for schools and districts to eliminate out-of-field teaching and imposing consequences for those that do not;

**WYOMING DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
HIGHLY QUALIFIED WORKFORCE EQUITY PLAN**

- Helping hard to staff schools improve retention rates;
- Encouraging districts and schools to rethink how staffing decisions are made and use creative solutions;
- Offering scholarships or loan forgiveness;
- Establishing or expanding mentoring and induction programs to help out-of-field teachers work toward competency in additional fields by using expert veteran teachers in those fields;
- Fostering partnerships among institutions of higher education, school districts, and state leaders for developing new strategies and solutions; and
- Tapping federal resources, such as those offered in NCLB to fund these initiatives.

University of Melbourne, Suzanne Rice, Staying or going? Factors that Influence Effective Teachers' Decisions on Where to Teach, (2006)

Schools that have been traditionally hard to staff are facing increasing issues in attracting and retaining teachers, and the pattern of new graduates accepting positions in such schools, only to leave for more desirable locations once they have gained experience, is likely to be exacerbated by teacher shortages. Such staffing patterns only compound the educational difficulties already faced by many students in rural, remote and urban disadvantaged schools, and are likely to further increase inequalities in educational outcomes. If schools in disadvantaged settings are to improve student outcomes, they need to be aware of how best to attract and retain the teachers likely to have a strong positive impact on students. The strong commitment of these teachers to their own learning also suggests that another means education systems might consider to attract these teachers to hard-to staff schools could be to offer payment or subsidy of course fees for postgraduate educational qualifications to teachers willing to accept a position in such a school. Subsidized courses would be linked to school need, thus helping the school to increase its own effectiveness through staff knowledge, while allowing the teacher the personal benefit of building their skills and qualifications...The desire of these teachers for opportunities to shape and influence their schools, particularly through attaining leadership positions in schools, suggests that one means of improving the ability of less-favoured school locations to attract and retain better teachers may be to increase the proportion of leadership positions they offer, relative to more advantaged schools. For this to work, funding would need to be tied specifically to positions, rather than provided as general finances that could, for example, be spent on facilities rather than staffing. In contrast to calls to increase *salary in general* for teachers working in disadvantaged settings, the findings of the study indicate that using funds to increase *positions of responsibility* may have a much greater educational impact.

The Southeast Center for Teaching Quality, Best Practices and Policies, NCLB Teaching Quality Mandates Findings and Themes from the Field, Second of Four Part Series: Recruitment and Retention, (March 2004)

WYOMING DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION HIGHLY QUALIFIED WORKFORCE EQUITY PLAN

Use the right combination of incentives to proactively recruit and retain teachers — including a focus on building a critical mass of accomplished teachers in these schools and dramatically improving working conditions for them. Many of the schools we visited are not attractive because teacher candidates would not want to teach there without sound principal leadership and like-minded colleagues who can help them teach in effective ways. Just sending a promising recruit to teach in a school where many teachers believe children’s minds are like “brick walls” will not suffice. We imagine incentives to include a package of principal development strategies along with a combination of recruiting a critical mass of well-prepared teachers, who receive reduced teaching loads and unique opportunities (through technology and university programs’ continued investment in induction) to continue to learn to teach. Furthermore, recent research shows that teachers in high-poverty schools are far more dissatisfied than their peers in low-poverty schools with their working conditions. These under-performing schools are more likely to have poor teacher working conditions— with inadequate time to work with and learn from expert colleagues.

National Staff Development Council, Dennis Sparks, High Performing Cultures Increase Teacher Retention, (December 2002)

“Teachers--even those in the most demanding settings--are far more likely to remain in their positions when they feel supported by administrators, have strong bonds of connection to colleagues, and are aggressively pursuing a collective vision for student learning about which they feel passion and commitment. Teachers' connections to the profession and to their schools are also strengthened when they feel they possess the content knowledge, instructional skills, and technological tools to meet the challenges of standards-based education in increasingly diverse classrooms. Strong professional learning communities do not occur by accident. It is critical that union contracts, district calendars, and teachers' schedules be designed to support results-driven, team-focused professional learning and collaboration that are part of teachers' work days. It's also critical that principals and teacher leaders be equipped with knowledge and skills that enable them to build and sustain performance-oriented cultures that have at their heart high-quality interpersonal relationships founded on trust and respect.

Next Steps

Ultimately, it is WDE’s mission to ensure that all students achieve Wyoming academic standards. That goal can only be achieved when every child is taught by a highly qualified teacher and a competent administrator leads every school. We believe that given the opportunity to learn, all students can achieve to high levels. In order to support this mission our next steps are:

Step 1—Dissemination of Information

Information will be disseminated to teachers and administrators at the School Improvement Conference in March reinforcing the importance of having highly qualified and experienced teachers in schools with higher numbers of poor and minority students. Districts will be encouraged to consider this issue as they make teaching assignments. They will also receive information reinforcing NCLB Title II HQT requirements and

**WYOMING DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
HIGHLY QUALIFIED WORKFORCE EQUITY PLAN**

Wyoming's certification rules. In addition, technical assistance tools will be made available.

Step 2—Data Collection and Analysis

WDE will begin Phase-two of the annual web-based HQT data collection from all SEAs in October 2007 for the 2007-08 academic year. The data will be analyzed to determine HQT status and teacher experience levels. In addition, the data will be analyzed according to poverty and minority levels to determine if higher poverty schools or higher minority schools have greater numbers of teachers who are unqualified, inexperienced or out-of-field. Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) data will also be reviewed to determine which groups of students experience an achievement gap.

Step 3—Communicate with Identified Districts

Once districts are identified as having higher numbers of inexperienced, unqualified or out-of-field teachers in higher poverty and/or minority schools, WDE will review the district's *Highly Qualified Teacher* plans to determine what strategies are being implemented to address this issue. The WDE will communicate with the districts to determine what the contributing factors are that cause this situation to exist and provide technical assistance to help ameliorate any inequities.

Step 4—Modifying LEA Plans

Districts may need to modify their *Highly Qualified Teacher* plans if there are insufficient strategies or plans for addressing equity issues. WDE will provide on-going support to LEAs to ensure that all teachers are highly qualified and that poor and minority children are not taught at higher rates than other children by inexperienced, unqualified, and/or out-of-field teachers.

Step 5—Monitoring Equitable Distribution of Teachers

WDE will monitor the issue of equitable teacher assignments in three ways. The first is to annually review the data on teaching assignments through the HQT data collection. The second is through the Local Consolidated Plan monitoring process. The third is through monitoring the LEA *Highly Qualified Teacher* plans. In monitoring Title II Part A, the WDE staff will account for, evaluate, report to the public and address the distribution of highly qualified teachers and inexperienced teachers.