



WYOMING

State Board of Education

Hathaway Building, 2nd Floor
2300 Capitol Avenue
Cheyenne, Wyoming 82002-0050
(307) 777-6213 • (307) 777-6234 FAX

RON MICHELI
Chair, Fort Bridger

SCOTTY RATLIFF
Vice Chair, Riverton

PETE GOSAR
Treasurer, Laramie

SUE BELISH
Ranchester

KATHY COON
Lusk

HUGH HAGEMAN
Fort Laramie

CINDY HILL
State Superintendent

LORI MILLIN
Cheyenne

KEN RATHBUN
Sundance

GERALD REICHARDT
Wheatland

RICHARD CRANDALL
Director

WALT WILCOX
Casper

BELENDA WILLSON
Thermopolis

CHELSIE OAKS
Executive Assistant

For Immediate Release:

April 1, 2014

Contact:

Paige Fenton Hughes

(307) 349-4506

paige.fentonhughes@gmail.com

State Board of Education Sets Meeting To Explore Standards Options

CHEYENNE – Determining the next steps for adopting standards in the content areas of science, physical education, career and vocational education, and social studies will be the focal point of a State Board of Education meeting scheduled for April 11 at the McMurry Training Center in Casper.

“We are trying to navigate the options available so that we can get the very best standards we can for our children while operating within the parameters given us by the Legislature,” said State Board of Education Chair Ron Micheli. “It would be premature to make decisions until we know what the options are.”

The State Board of Education met via teleconference on Monday, March 24 to discuss the ramifications of the 2014 Legislative Session. The Board received a brief legislative update from State Board Coordinator Dr. Paige Fenton Hughes, as well as a legal opinion about a footnote in the budget regarding examination of the Next Generation Science Standards from Assistant Attorney General Mackenzie Williams. The Board then engaged in lengthy discussions regarding options for adoption of science standards, but took no official action.

In the State of Wyoming there are nine content areas, which have their own set of standards. The content areas are math, English language arts, health, fine and performing arts, foreign language, physical education, social studies, career/vocational education, and science. The State Board of Education reviews and approves the standards in each content area every five years. Four standard areas are currently under review: career/vocational education, science, social studies, and physical education.

Committees studying each content area meet to discuss and make a recommendation on standards, which is forwarded to the State Board of Education. Committees are comprised of teachers, professors, administrators, parents, business owners, and community members and generally meet several times over the course of a year. For example, the most recent Science Standards Review Committee was made up of 39

people, which met three times for two days each time from June of 2012 to July 2013.

On Oct. 8, 2013, during its meeting in Cheyenne, the State Board decided not to take action on the standards, wanting sufficient time to review the standards documents. The Board met on Nov. 5, 2013 to discuss these documents, and hear from those in attendance. The Board asked the Wyoming Department of Education's (WDE) Standards and Accountability Division to crosswalk the state's current standards with the proposed standards; to perform analysis on the impact of the new standards on teachers and students; and to provide a communication plan to inform the public of the new standards once the new standards were adopted.

The WDE's Standards and Accountability Division presented the requested information during the State Board meeting on Jan. 24, 2014. The Standards and Accountability Division also collected feedback on all the draft standards through its website from August 2013 to March 2014, receiving 496 responses in total (280 responses relating to the draft science standards, 86 for the draft career/vocational education standards, 71 for the draft social studies standards, and 59 responses relating to the draft physical education standards).

Micheli said it is his hope that the State Board is able to consider next steps and options for the future of standards adoption in all four areas during its April meeting.

"We hope that through this process we can emerge with a set of standards that are Wyoming-based and will help to show the way for a new set of standards for the rest of the nation," he said.