



## Office of the Wyoming State Archaeologist

The Office of the Wyoming State Archaeologist is beginning development of a comprehensive education plan for the State of Wyoming focusing on archaeological and anthropological concepts and topics. This plan will seek to educate students on Wyoming's historic and prehistoric past and introduce them to the State's rich cultural resources. Materials will discuss our history, introduce students to archaeology, explain how archaeology is done, highlight how this work and the material we collect help us to understand the past, and provide an understanding of the various threats to these valuable resources. Educational materials will also use archaeological and anthropological concepts to teach other topics such as math, reading, and art. As part of the development of this education plan we would like to work in direct collaboration with educators across Wyoming.

The benefits of incorporating archaeology into classroom education are multifaceted. There are benefits to the school district, teachers, and most importantly, the students. The analysis of multiple cultures allows students to see that cultural variation and change is normal and prevalent throughout our history. Fostering this understanding and appreciation for other cultures helps to grow students into responsible global citizens. Archaeology, and the past in general, is an area of interest for many students and provides a unique opportunity to capture and hold students' attention while approaching a range of educational topics and concerns. Aside from the social sciences, archaeology can be used as a platform to teach topics such as language arts, math, the physical sciences, and art. Archaeology is also an integrative, interdisciplinary field; providing a synthesis of the social and physical sciences. Archaeology, as the nexus between numerous social and physical science disciplines, allows not only for the application and instruction of the scientific method but proves an excellent means of teaching students to think holistically, to integrate information from multiple sources and topics, and to effectively assess and weigh the value of different types of data. Finally, archaeological concepts can provide the foundation for numerous skillsets valuable to students in their educational and professional careers such as developing a more complete understanding of methods of scientific inquiry, problem solving, cooperative learning, and citizenship skills.

We currently plan on developing educational materials for classroom use which include lesson plans, activities, and modules covering a range of archaeological topics. Additionally, we are considering including classroom visits by professional archaeologists, facilities tours for students, opportunities for students and teachers to participate in archaeological field and lab investigations, archaeological site tours, digital (remote) tours or instruction, and teacher support or training for these materials. However, before we begin work on these items, we would like the opportunity to meet with as many educators as possible so we can begin to work together to create an education plan which meets the needs of Wyoming's educators. We are happy to travel to your district to meet with you. To arrange a visit or submit comments, please contact [greg.pierce@wyo.gov](mailto:greg.pierce@wyo.gov). We've also attached a link to a brief survey to begin this process. If you have the time, please take a few minutes to provide us feedback.

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