



October 1, 2025 WAPSD Business Meeting

Goshen County School District #1, 626 W. 25th Ave., Torrington, WY 82240

Attendance:

Tanya Barcelona, John Balow, Jennifer Duncan, Tiffany Hunt, Kim Sanford, Katie Schmeltzer, Deana Smith, Drew Aldridge, Hayley Speiser, Jackie Frankson, Jami Clifford, Cindy England, TJ Mecham, Alaria Schnase, Krystyne Ethridge, Ragen Latham

Administrative:

Minutes for the June 19, 2025, meeting were presented for approval. Ragen Latham moved and Hayley Speiser seconded that the minutes be approved as written. Motion carried unanimously.

Welcome/Opening:

Chair Jackie Frankson called the meeting to order at 8:35 AM. There was no public comment.

Secretary Announcements:

Jennifer Duncan asked panel members to review their information on the Panel roster and report any changes. Duncan reviewed the Panel membership and informed the Panel of needed positions to be filled, mainly parents of students with disabilities and students with disabilities. A private school or charter school representative will most likely be added in the future.

Chair Report, Old and New Business:

There was no chair report this meeting.

SPED Director Update, John Balow:

- JEIC Bills
- ESA Update
- Chapter 7 Update: Balow will update the Panel after the Governor has approved them to move forward for public comment. If the Panel wants to meet virtually to discuss, a 30-day public meeting notice will need to be sent out ahead of the meeting. John provided a written report, which is attached to these minutes.

Professional Development Update, Deana Smith:

Deana Smith provided a written report, which is attached to these minutes.

Member Updates:

Deana Smith discussed recruitment of new members for the Panel. A one-page handout to be distributed at events and the Community Receptions could be a great way to get information out to families and parents of students with disabilities. The vetting process within the WDE by the Superintendent has changed a bit and is taking a little longer for new member approval. A little more detail is being asked from applicants such as a brief bio and resume, if available. A spreadsheet to track applications and where they are in the review and approval process has been created by Deana Smith.

Advisory Letter Discussion:

Tiffany Hunt presented a draft of the proposed letter to the Superintendent with regard to legislative decisions surrounding behavior in classrooms. The Panel will review and possibly meet in the future for comment input prior to the upcoming legislative session. Upon completion and obtaining the Chair 's signature, the letter will be sent to the Superintendent and a copy will be sent to the legislative education committee.

DFS Update, Alaria Schnase:

Alaria Schnase attended in Jennifer Neely's absence.

WDH/BHD Update, Ragen Latham:

Ragen Latham provided a written report, which is attached to these minutes.

PIC Update:

Krystyne Ethridge provided a written report, which is attached to these minutes.

DVR Update, TJ Mecham:

Two new employees have been added to the transition team. The Inclusive Post-Secondary Education Program is piloting with their first student. Disability Innovation Fund is now in three locations: Rock Springs, Powell and Laramie.

Corrections Update, Hayley Speiser/Drew Aldridge:

Hayley Speiser provided a written update, which is attached to these minutes.

McKinney Vento Update, Shannon Cranmore:

Shannon Cranmore provided a written update, which is attached to these minutes.

Next Meeting Planning:

- January 21, 2026, Virtual meeting via Zoom
- April 14-17, 2026, Worland, Wyoming
- June 9-12, 2026, Sheridan, Wyoming
- October 14-25, 2026, Jackson, Wyoming

WAPSD Directors Report 10-1-25

Recent news releases from Superintendent Degenfelder:

- The WDE secured a \$24.4 million federal grant to significantly boost literacy instruction statewide.
- Released the 2024-25 statewide WY-TOPP and WY-ALT assessment results and School Performance Ratings, noting a general improvement in student performance and upward trends in schools.
- Reduced administrative requirements for Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs to increase accessibility and sought public input on new CTE standards.
- Sought public comment on proposed rules for Mental Health Service Grants and the Hathaway Scholarship Program.
- The Superintendent hosted U.S. Secretary of Education Linda McMahon as part of her national "Returning Education to the States Tour."

Find more information click [here](#).

Stakeholder (very broad summary) feedback from recent Statewide data drill down:

- Training and Collaboration for all educators- PD is needed for gen ed. teachers on SDI and co-teaching, improving transition planning and supporting students with high-needs disabilities.
- Mental health, behavior, attendance, chronic absenteeism are barriers, fueled by rising mental health needs and a lack of resources for behavior support and transportation.
- Refining state systems for clarity and accountability- State needs to be more responsive-simplifying special education forms, providing clearer guidance on SDI and identification criteria, and increasing the monitoring frequency of districts.
- Promote functional, real-world skills for post-school success- need a shift toward vocational programming and earlier connections with outside agencies to ensure a successful post-school path.

*This feedback will help our Division create a focus and support improvement planning

Legislative update: Joint Ed. draft discipline bill(s).

- Attempting to combine bills into one bill.
- [Joint Education site](#)
- Next meeting 11/13-11/14 in Cheyenne.

ESA's and SPED:

- On hold for this year- WEA legal challenge.

Chap. 7:

- Draft is complete and in the Governor's Office waiting to be approved to open for public comment.

CDC's and 6 year olds:

- Once a child turns 6 the FAPE responsibility falls on the district
- Good communication is needed between CDC's and district for transition planning

[ASCEND 307](#)- SPDG grant:

Increase percent of fully certified teachers/ advance employability skills for students with disabilities .

DHH:

Fall WYHI 9/30, Teaching Reading to DHH students in October

Fiscal:

Fiscal IDEA Monitor Training in October, IDEA 2026 grant applications due 9/30

WAPSD Meeting Updates September 2025

- [WDE SPED Webpage](#).
- [Dispute resolution Webpage](#).
- All virtual training recordings and materials can be found on the [Current Trainings](#) page and the [Special Education Professional Development](#) page.

WDE is pleased to announce a virtual 2025 training series for all Special Education Teachers to be held on the second Tuesday of each month from 4:00 - 5:00 p.m. MT. This training series is designed to provide technical assistance, updates, facilitate discussion on important topics, and offer a valuable networking opportunity and shared learning among SPED Teachers across the state. Topics are subject to change. All sessions will be recorded and can be found [here](#).

For more information, contact Deana Smith at 307-777-5326, deana.smith@wyo.gov.

| DATE | TOPIC | ZOOM LINK |
|---|---|----------------------|
| September 9, 2025 | Procedural Safeguards & Confidentiality | Link |
| October 14, 2025 | Communication with Families | Link |
| November 10, 2025* (Monday call due to holiday) | Accommodations | Link |
| January 13, 2026 | Cognitive Deficits & Instructional Strategies Pt. 1 | Link |
| February 10, 2026 | Cognitive Deficits & Instructional Strategies Pt. 2 | Link |
| March 10, 2026 | 10-Day Drop | Link |
| April 14, 2026 | ESY Considerations | Link |

WDE [Self-Paced Modules](#)

Special Education:

- [Individualized Education Program \(IEP\)](#)
- [Special Education Law](#)
- [Planning Transition Services \(secondary\)](#)
- [Specially Designed Instruction \(SDI\) Series](#)
- [Special Education Process](#)

State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG)

- Support for those on an Exception Authorization (EA's) and for their mentor teachers.
- Support for secondary transition
 - Employability skills
 - Family engagement

Wyoming Advisory Panel for Students with Disabilities

Updates

Date: Oct 1, 2025

Panel Member: Ragen Latham, Wyoming Department of Health, Behavioral Health Division (BHD)

Early Intervention and Program Updates:

- The Part C program has continued to collaborate with child development centers on the development and implementation of [Plans of Safe Care](#).
- [Wyoming Early Childhood Behavioral Consultants](#)
 - Provide free mental health and behavioral support to early childhood programs, educators, and families in Wyoming.

Behavioral Health Redesign:

The Mental Health and Substance Abuse Section is currently in the implementation phase of the Behavioral Health Redesign initiative.

- Priority Populations: The priority populations for this redesign effort include:
 - Justice-involved individuals
 - Children and families at risk

General Updates/ Information:

- [Preschool Development Grant](#)
 - Children's Mental Health through ECBC
 - Wyoming's Early Childhood Integrated Data System (ECIDS) is a framework being developed to collect and connect data from various early childhood programs to improve services, inform policy, and track child outcomes from birth through age five.
- [Wyoming Early Childhood Behavioral Consultants](#)
 - Provide free mental health and behavioral support to early childhood programs, educators, and families in Wyoming.

- [Children's Behavioral Health Alliance](#): We are excited to announce a new resource for providers looking to strengthen their skills in children's behavioral healthcare. The Wyoming Children's Behavioral Health Alliance has launched a new provider resource webpage!

The Wyoming Children's Behavioral Health Alliance is a collaborative group of stakeholders who have come together with a shared commitment of increasing access to behavioral health resources and education for providers across the state. The new webpage features:

- Increased Medicaid reimbursement
- Free Continuing Medical Education Courses
- Quick Links to Behavioral Healthcare Resources
- On-Demand Trainings
- Medicaid Billing Codes
- Provider Directories

The resource webpage can be accessed through the [Wyoming Medical Society's American Academy of Pediatrics website](#). We invite you to explore this resource and share it widely with colleagues. Thank you for your commitment to the health and well-being of children and families across Wyoming.

Upcoming Presentation:

BHD will be providing a presentation to the [Long Term Care Advisory Panel](#) to outline the services offered by the Behavioral Health Division. This presentation is scheduled for 10/9/2025.

PHP - WAPSD Meeting Updates - September 2025

Parents Helping Parents of Wyoming continues to grow and strengthen our reach across the state. We are excited to share several updates:

- **Staffing Updates:** Our Transition Specialist, Ayni, has moved into the Family and Community Trainer position. In this new role, she is beginning to lead trainings across Wyoming, starting in the Uinta County area. To fill her previous role, we have hired another part-time Transition Specialist, whose first day is today (October 1, 2025). In addition, we have expanded our team by adding an Outreach Parent Liaison to better support families across the Western part of the state.
- **Training & Support:** We are seeing a significant increase in the number of families reaching out for both information and training. In response, we are expanding our outreach to schools, with a long-term goal of reaching every school in Wyoming in the coming years. Building stronger bridges between schools and families remains central to our mission.
- **Conference & Events:** Our August 2025 Annual Conference was a great success, bringing families, professionals, and community partners together to learn and connect. We are already preparing for our next statewide conference, scheduled for September 19, 2026, in Cheyenne, Wyoming.
- **Looking Back & Moving Forward:** Over the past year, we have:
 - Expanded services to include more parent training opportunities across multiple regions.
 - Strengthened partnerships with schools, agencies, and community organizations.
 - Increased focus on mental health supports for families, especially those with middle-aged children, where the need is greatest.
 - Continued to build capacity by adding new staff and leadership positions, ensuring that families across Wyoming have access to the resources and advocacy they need.

As we move forward, we remain dedicated to empowering parents, strengthening family-school partnerships, and ensuring every Wyoming family feels supported and connected.



Jennifer Duncan <jennifer.duncan@wyo.gov>

WDOC Updates for WAPSD Mtg.

1 message

Hayley Speiser <hayley.speiser@wyo.gov>
To: Jennifer Duncan <jennifer.duncan@wyo.gov>

Wed, Oct 1, 2025 at 9:18 AM

WDOC IET Plumbing Program-The plumbing IET program is going really well. We started with 12 students and have 9 remaining. Two students were released and a third was experiencing behavioral issues which prohibited him from continued participation in the program. However, the remaining 9 are doing extremely well, and Mr. Rickard anticipates all of them will complete the program. They started the final book of the curriculum and will be graduating within the next month or so. Mr. Rickard has started incorporating some electrical components into the curriculum as well which helps diversify the students' knowledge and skills needed for the trade.

Next Gen Sector Partnership Group-Recently, I had the opportunity to attend the Next Gen Sector Partnership meeting which focuses on industry employers in the Construction trades in Laramie County. Larry Fodor spearheads this group, and I was grateful for the opportunity to attend and learn about the needs of our local employers. I learned there are significant workforce needs in the trades, specifically in Laramie County, due to larger companies coming from out of state to build the data centers in Cheyenne. Local employers are struggling to compete with these larger companies, and this could be an opportunity for the agency to help create a pipeline of employees from our welding and plumbing programs for local employers. I hope to continue to be involved in the Next Gen group to learn more about how the agency can best equip our students with the skills and knowledge the local employers need, and how we can help employers feel comfortable hiring our students.

Digital Literacy Program-We're in the final stages of developing the digital literacy program (see attached flyer). Due to the magnitude of this program, we've added additional instructors (we will have a total of 5) to facilitate across all five WDOC facilities through our tablet system. We plan to launch the program mid-October. For the first cohort, serving as the pilot group for the program, six students will be selected from WHCC and WMCI, and then expand enrollment with each new cohort until they reach the number of students the instructors feel is manageable. The development team is working to identify case management representatives from each facility to assist in identifying students most in need of the program. The attached flyer will also be distributed throughout the facilities to recruit potential students and begin building a waitlist.

Prison Art Symposium-The WDOC worked with Dr. Trisha Martinez at the University of Wyoming to coordinate artwork submissions for the Prison Art Symposium (see attached flyer) which is a traveling art exhibit facilitated by Paño Connections. Inmates from all five facilities had the opportunity to submit artwork to be included in this exhibit, and each facility had artists submit pieces. The artwork includes all types of mediums; woodwork, leatherwork, drawing, painting, poetry, etc. The exhibit also includes artwork by formerly incarcerated artists throughout the state. If you have an opportunity to visit one of the exhibits, I would encourage you to do so. It is going to be a very neat experience. Dates and locations of the exhibits are outlined on the attached flyer.

University of Wyoming Pell Program-We have the two cohorts of UW students pursuing their Bachelor's degree in General Studies. Our female cohort has begun their senior year and will be graduating next summer. The men's cohort has begun their junior year.

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Sincerely,



E-Mail to and from me, in connection with the transaction of public business, is subject to the Wyoming Public Records Act and may be disclosed to third parties.

2 attachments



Prison-Art-Symposium-Pano-Connections-Flyer (1).jpg
1244K



Digital Literacy Flyer-2025.pdf
3518K

McKinney-Vento Updates:

Start of the school year is identification and re-identification time for McKinney-Vento district liaisons. They also are busy working on trying to meet transportation needs for those that need transportation. This has also brought on a lot of questions this year as we have many unique situations this year.

A couple things I am noticing there year.

1. Parents are more familiar with what McKinney-Vento is and what rights and protections McKinney-Vento kiddos have. This is good, however, we have identified a couple cases of fraud this year, one was by a school district employee. So, district liaisons are going have to be more diligent in the identification process to ensure fraud is not taking place.
2. Parents are also “expecting” all the things their student needs for free. This can get tricky, because it must be something they need to be able to fully participate in school or extracurricular activities, it must be reasonable and something the district can provide through community support or their limited McKinney-Vento funding. There are some things the districts just aren’t able to provide as requested, so parents are getting upset and I am getting calls from them. There are some things districts must do, such as free lunch and transportation, and many things are “may do” if reasonable and necessary.

Coming up I will be doing 3 virtual training for our new district liaisons, and will also be working on changes for both our ESEA Consolidated grant application and the McKinney-Vento subgrant application for the 2026-27 school year.