

# WYOMING DISTANCE LEARNING CENTER

## Report To Governor Mead and the Joint Appropriations Interim Committee

November 1, 2011

Pursuant to 2010 Wyoming Laws, Chapter 39, Section 327:

*(e) Not later than November 1, 2010, and November 1, 2011, the task force shall report to the governor and the joint appropriations interim committee regarding progress of the center and expenditures of appropriations authorized under this section. The November 1, 2011, report shall include a budget recommendation for the 2013-2014 fiscal biennium.*

### **Section 1: A report of the progress of the Wyoming Distance Learning Center (WyoDLC) from November 2010 through October 2011.**

**Background.** The Wyoming Distance Learning Center (WyoDLC) was created to connect Wyoming citizens to statewide distance learning, training, and education through the use of technology. The mission is to provide access to quality learning resources, technology, communication, and training opportunities across Wyoming.

By finding and sharing new ways to use technology, the WyoDLC has become a strategic state asset that improves the efficiency of communications and learning opportunities, helping provide ways to more effectively use the state's resources. The WyoDLC is enhancing access to educational opportunities for Wyoming citizens of all ages and of all educational levels, assisting state agencies in developing their statewide training efforts, increasing productivity with enhanced training and reduced travel time, and facilitating better services.

*The priorities of the Wyoming Distance Learning Center, identified by the 2009 Distance Learning Visioning Group<sup>1</sup> and validated by the Wyoming Distance Learning Center Advisory Council in Sept 2010,<sup>2</sup> are to*

- Build relationships with constituents and key stakeholders;
- Provide leadership and advocacy for distance learning;
- Assess the current status of distance education in the state, identifying unmet needs, gaps, and overlaps in programs;
- Facilitate collaboration in sharing resources and pursuing activities;
- Be a clearinghouse for training, best practices, and distance learning pedagogy and technology resources;
- Research funding and coordinate grant activities and procurement of resources;
- Act as an incubator to research, evaluate, and disseminate emerging distance learning methods and technologies; and
- Promote technological equity and compatibility statewide

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<sup>1</sup> The Consensus Report of the December 2009 Distance Learning Visioning Group can be found at <http://www.wyodlc.org/about/get-to-know-the-wyodlc/documents-reports/>.

<sup>2</sup> The minutes of the September 2010 WyoDLC Advisory Council meeting can be found at <http://www.wyodlc.org/about/wyodlc-advisory-council/meeting-minutes/>

## ***Report on the Progress of the Center Based on the Priorities Defined in the 2009 Consensus Report***

### **Build relationships with constituents and key stakeholders**

- WyoDLC is consulting and working with Wyoming Law Enforcement Academy instructors to design and build a blended-delivery distance education course to help train officers new to Wyoming law enforcement. The WLEA will have its Advanced Basic courses ready to deploy by the beginning of 2012.
- The WyoDLC is working with Wyoming Workforce Services to design and build its internal trainings for distance delivery, including developing an interactive course for writing case notes. The first Wyoming Workforce Services online course will be ready to deploy by the beginning of 2012.
- The WyoDLC is working with Department of Family Services trainers to put their training modules online. The WyoDLC is providing the online course management structure for the delivery of DFS courses, which should save the state money in travel costs. The first DFS online course will be ready to deploy by the beginning of 2012.
- The WyoDLC consulted with the Human Resources Division of the Department of Administration and Information to design an online distance-training course that could help save the state money in travel costs.
- The WyoDLC offers an e-Teaching Certificate to teachers and trainers who wish to use the latest teaching methodologies and technologies. The Center has been directing teachers to the site and will begin active marketing after the first of the year.

### **Provide leadership and advocacy for distance learning**

- The WyoDLC held its first roundtable policy discussion August 1, 2011 on *State Authorization: The state and federal regulations for serving students from out of state in online/distance programs*. It was well attended.<sup>3</sup> WyoDLC will host several additional roundtables in the coming months focusing on policy issues surrounding distance education in the state.

### **Assess the current status of distance education in the state, identify unmet needs, gaps, and overlaps in programs**

- The WyoDLC has contracted with the Wyoming Statistical Analysis Center (WySAC) to conduct research on the distance learning attitudes, needs, and perceptions of Wyoming's K-12 parents and students, higher education learners, lifelong learners, and state agency employees. This research will be added to and compared with existing information to provide an overview of the state's distance learning strengths and needs to help the WyoDLC be more effective in its efforts.

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<sup>3</sup> Notes of the roundtable can be found at <http://www.wyodlc.org/policy/policy-issues/>.

- The WyoDLC joined LinkWyoming<sup>4</sup> in each of their regional planning meetings to ascertain the needs of Wyoming communities with regard to broadband accessibility and usage. The Center’s role was to help communities identify distance learning needs and goals. WyoDLC will be following up with communities to facilitate their goals over the next two years.
- Based on data gathered by the WyoDLC regarding the needs of state agencies moving to online instruction, the Center has contracted with Blackboard to provide a Learning Management System (LMS). The LMS will provide a platform for the facilitation and distribution of online trainings statewide for organizations that would otherwise not have a vehicle for delivery of training at a distance. The WyoDLC consults with its partners to create customizable space for delivering internal trainings and information online.

### **Facilitate collaboration for sharing resources and other efforts**

- The WyoDLC website (see <http://www.wyodlc.org/>) continues to be developed as a repository for sharing information regarding distance education statewide. The distance-learning portal will offer a “one stop shop” for Wyoming citizens regarding distance learning opportunities at all levels and of all types. The WyoDLC continues to join conversations statewide, nationally, and internationally regarding the current and future state of distance education so the Center can bring the latest information and practices to the residents of Wyoming.
- The WyoDLC is developing relationships with distance learning centers from Colorado, Idaho, Utah, and around the country to share information and expertise on best practices in creating and maintaining a collaborative approach to distance learning.
- The WyoDLC has created relationships with instructional designers and innovative teachers and trainers from around Wyoming. It has created <http://wyoelearning.org>, a space for sharing innovative ideas. So far this group has 64 active members.

### **Be a clearinghouse for training, best practices, and resources**

- The WyoDLC sponsored an annual conference, *Opening New Frontiers*, May 23-25<sup>th</sup> 2011 in Riverton, Wyoming. Statewide participation included state agencies and featured a nationally recognized expert in the field of distance education delivery.
- The WyoDLC sponsored the *e-Volution* conference held September 22 and 23, 2011 in Laramie and delivered outside of Laramie through distance technologies. The conference is a hands-on professional development experience that shares innovative technology practices with teachers and trainers. It doubled its statewide and national participation from last year, and WyoDLC was able to increase participation from K-12 schools and state agencies. The WyoDLC also insured that this year’s schedule had an increased focus on the use of distance education delivery for professional development training.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> For the LinkWyoming website go to [www.linkwyomng.org](http://www.linkwyomng.org).

<sup>5</sup> See <http://www.wyoforum.org/2011-session-archive/> for streaming video archives of sessions.

- The WyoDLC created a video to educate physicians around the state regarding how telehealth works and how they can become involved with the Telehealth Consortium. WyoDLC has built a website for this legislatively created Consortium. Its website is a repository for its educational information.<sup>6</sup>

### **Research funding and coordinate grant activities and procurement of resources**

- The WyoDLC Collaborative grants are designed to stimulate innovation in distance learning statewide. The projects created *via* those efforts, and others such as the WDE Distance Education Grants and the UW Technology in Education Grants, will serve to identify efforts and build capacity within the state that can be broadened by seeking funding outside the state.
- The WyoDLC maintains memberships in national organizations such as the United States Distance Learning Association, the International Society for Technology and Education, and the International Association for K-12 Online Learning. The WyoDLC will utilize collaborative relationships to seek funding opportunities in distance education for Wyoming.

### **Act as an incubator to research, evaluate, and disseminate emerging distance learning methods and technologies**

- The WyoDLC and its Advisory Council have developed the Wyoming Distance Learning Center Collaborative Grant Call for Proposals (CFP). The WyoDLC will fund one to ten innovative distance-learning projects around the state. The grant encourages collaboration with existing distance learning providers and enhances the pool of distance learning experts.

### **Promote technological equity and compatibility statewide**

- The WyoDLC has begun creating the statewide distance learning portal for Wyoming citizens to access information regarding all distance-delivered courses offered by Wyoming institutions from pre-school to graduate school. The portal project was initiated with the transfer of the Wyoming Distance Education Consortium (WyDEC) WyClass site<sup>7</sup> to WyoDLC. WyClass lists all the distance-delivered courses available from the seven community colleges and UW. Prior to the involvement of WyoDLC, WyClass was a tool that was used for internal advising at the postsecondary level. WyoDLC is building upon and modifying WyClass to make it user friendly for the public, so anyone wishing to take a distance delivered course at the postsecondary level will know where to seek information about courses. In the future, the Center will continue to work with its constituents to enhance the portal to meet the needs of all stakeholders wishing to offer and access distance learning.

### **The Wyoming Distance Learning Center Advisory Council<sup>8</sup>**

The Wyoming Distance Learning Center Advisory Council was established by Chapter 39, Section

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<sup>6</sup> See [www.wyomingtelehealth.org](http://www.wyomingtelehealth.org) for the Consortium website.

<sup>7</sup> For the WyClass website and the listing of higher education distance education courses in Wyoming see [www.wyominglearns.org](http://www.wyominglearns.org).

<sup>8</sup> For further information about the programs, activities, collaborations, and accomplishments of the Wyoming Distance Learning Center Advisory Council see <http://www.wyodlc.org/about/wyodlc-advisory-council/>.

327 (b) in the 2010 legislation creating the Wyoming Distance Learning Center.

The Advisory Council does not set policy for the WyoDLC; rather, it advises the director who communicates that advice to the Governor's Task Force on Distance Learning and Video Conferencing for its consideration and direction. The WyoDLC Advisory Council provides a forum for cooperative effort and information exchange among distance educators and learners; promotes the effective and efficient use of state distance learning resources; and promotes professional development and statewide collaboration. WyoDLC Advisory Council responsibilities include proactive participation in the recommendation, support, and implementation of distance learning policy. The council meets quarterly, and every other meeting is conducted through distance technology.

By statute, the council consists of 13 members, to include: *(i) Three (3) members representing K-12 education in Wyoming; (ii) Three (3) members representing Wyoming community colleges; (iii) Three (3) members representing the University of Wyoming; (iv) Three (3) members representing other users of distance education, including but not limited to businesses, professional organizations and telehealth; (v) One (1) member from another state agency.*

Current members of the WyoDLC Advisory Council are

- Chuck Bayne, Deputy Director, Wyoming Law Enforcement Academy
- Sandy Caldwell, Associate Vice President of Student Learning, Western Wyoming College
- Sharon Elwood, Dean of Enrollment Services, Sheridan College
- Dean Fausset; Administrator, State Human Resources Division
- Emily Kramer; UW Student, Distance Programs and Student Provider of Supplemental Instruction for Online Classes
- Greg Lundvall, Owner/Consultant, Wyoming Equality Network (WEN)
- \* Ronda Peer, Dean, Extended Campus, Northwest College
- Pam Shea, Superintendent of Schools, Teton County School District #1
- Sue Steiner, Ph.D. Associate Dean, Fay W. Whitney School of Nursing, University of Wyoming
- \* Ed Weber, Head of School, Wyoming Virtual Academy for Niobrara County School District #1
- David Whitman, Pd.D., P.E., President, Wyoming Board of Registration for Engineers and Surveyors
- \*\* Vacant, Government Services (former representative was from the Professional Teaching Standards Board)
- \*\* Vacant, University of Wyoming (former representative was from the Science Math Teaching Center)

\* Co-Chairs of the WyoDLC Advisory Council

\*\* Nominees to fill vacant positions will be sent to the Governor's Office in November 2011

**Section 2: Expenditures and Budget for the Wyoming Distance Learning Center from 1 July 2010 through June 2012<sup>9</sup>**

<b>Budget category</b>	<b>Brief description</b>	<b>Expenditures through September, 2011</b>	<b>Budgeted through June 30, 2012</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Constituent Support and Training</b>	Training for distance educators, providers, and learners, including conferences, workshops, and individual training and support; course management system license to host agencies online training courses; research and development in distance learning pedagogies and technologies to enhance distance education for all learners and providers; and collaborative distance education grants to stimulate distance learning innovation statewide.	\$522,737.74	\$494,080.00	\$916,817.74
<b>WyoDLC staff</b>	Salaries and benefits for WyoDLC Director, staff support, media specialist, and instructional designers to provide constituent support and training distance educators, institutions, organizations, and learners statewide	\$359,680.79	\$734,850.00	\$1,094,530.79
<b>WyoDLC Operations</b>	Marketing, office equipment, communications, and supplies.	\$123,651.17	\$265,000.00	\$488,651.17
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,006,069.70</b>	<b>\$1,493,930.00</b>	<b>\$2,499,999.70</b>

**Section 3. Recommendations**

The implementation and development of the Wyoming Distance Learning Center is ongoing. The priorities for the Center were established by the Distance Education Visioning Group in December 2009 and validated by the Wyoming Distance Learning Center Advisory Council in September 2010.

**a. Continuation of the Wyoming Distance Learning Center.** Given the accomplishments of the WyoDLC since its establishment in 2010, it is recommended that the work of the WyoDLC be continued through a Legislative appropriation for the 2013-2014 biennium.

**b. Recommended Budget for 2013-2014.** The recommended budget for the Wyoming Distance Learning Center for the 2013-2014 biennium is for \$2,670,374 in General Funds, as described

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<sup>9</sup> See Appendix A, below, for 2010-2011 WyoDLC activities and activities planned through 30 June 2012 (end of current appropriation).

below. The Center conveyed a detailed budget proposal and explanation for the next biennium to the Governor in late August. Please refer to that document for additional details.<sup>10</sup>

<b>Budget Category</b>	<b>Brief Description</b>	<b>Biennial Request</b>
Constituent Support and Training	Training for distance educators, providers, and learners, including conferences, workshops, and individual training and support; course management system (CMS) license to host state agency online training courses; research and development in distance learning pedagogies and technologies to enhance distance education for all learners and providers; and collaborative distance education grants to stimulate distance learning innovation statewide.	\$1,372,000.00
WyoDLC Staff	Salaries and benefits for WyoDLC director, staff support, media specialist, and instructional designers to provide constituent support and training for distance educators, institutions, organizations, and learners statewide.	\$1,208,374.00
WyoDLC Operations	Marketing, office equipment, communications, and supplies.	\$90,000.00
State Funded Biennial Budget		\$2,670,374.00

**REQUEST BY OBJECT CODE, FUNDING AMOUNT, AND FUND SOURCE**

1. 0626	Grant Pmnt.	\$2,670,374.00	100% General Fund
2.	Total	\$2,670,374.00	100% General Fund

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<sup>10</sup> The WyoDLC budget details can be found in Appendix B, below.

## APPENDIX A

### WYOMING DISTANCE LEARNING CENTER ACTIVITIES

	NOVEMBER 2010 – NOVEMBER 2011	NOVEMBER 2011 – 30 JUNE 2012
<p><b>Provide leadership and advocacy for distance learning</b></p>	<p>Held the first statewide <b>Roundtable Policy Discussion on Distance Education Issues-State Authorization</b> (August 2011).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Video Conference Enterprise Planning session coordination. (Nov. 2011)</li> <li>• Roundtable Policy Discussion (March 2011)</li> <li>• Roundtable Policy discussion (June 2011)</li> <li>• Continue working with leadership groups to identify strengths and barriers <i>via</i> data analysis that inhibit and/or support distance learning opportunities for the citizens of Wyoming (Ongoing)</li> <li>• Maintain memberships in (a) The United States Distance Learning Association; (b) the Society for Technology and Education (SITE); (c) WICHE Cooperative for Educational Technologies (WCET); (d) Statenets; and (e) the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Assess current status of distance education in the state, identify unmet needs, gaps, and overlaps in programs</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WyoDLC surveys (Sept. 2011- Ongoing)</li> <li>• WySAC Research on distance education attitudes statewide (Nov. 2011-March 2012)</li> <li>• LinkWyoming and community collaboration (Jan-April 2011)</li> </ul>	<p>Using the Wainhouse Research 2009 report on Distance Learning in Wyoming as a baseline and additional data gathered by the Center, produce a white paper on the current state of distance education efforts in Wyoming, focusing especially on advancements since the 2009 Wainhouse report (March 2012).</p>

<p><b>Facilitate collaboration for sharing resources and other efforts</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WyoDLC website (Nov. 2010-Ongoing)</li> <li>• WyoDLC “Portal” (April 2011-Ongoing)</li> <li>• Wyoming e-Learning Guild- (Feb. 2011)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First meeting and visioning of the Collaborative Grant Cohort (Feb. 2012)</li> <li>• Create the WyATT (Wyoming Accessing Teacher Talent) program (Feb. 2012).</li> <li>• Disseminate the goals, expectations, and benefits of the WyATT program through an educational marketing campaign (March 2012).</li> <li>• Distribute the application for WyATT mentorship program around the state (March 2012).</li> <li>• Create the first cohort of WyATT mentors and instructors. (May 2012).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Be a clearinghouse for training, best practices, and resources</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our current efforts revolve around building capacity and awareness for distance education in Wyoming. To this end, WyoDLC sponsored the following conferences during the past year: <b>The Wyoming Distance Education (WyDEC) Conference and the eVolution Conference.</b></li> <li>• We created and built a structure for disseminating the <b>Wyoming Telehealth Consortium’s Telehealth Educational video</b></li> <li>• We identified current professional development offerings to support distance learning and combined those under the auspices of the Center to make the opportunities available to all stakeholders.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a dynamic space in the portal (online professional development) to access training and best practices consisting of 15 Professional Development Courses (Feb. 2012).</li> <li>• Market WyoDLC online professional development opportunities statewide (Jan-June 2012).</li> <li>• Market the professional development certificate to increase the capacity of Wyoming teachers to utilize distance learning (Jan. 2012-June 2012).</li> <li>• Link to other professional development opportunities around the state PBS, Conference proceedings (Spring 2012).</li> <li>• Offer first WyATT summer workshop (June 2012)</li> <li>• WyDEC Conference (May 2012)</li> <li>• Market and hold a regional roundtable to connect and share information with Idaho,</li> </ul>

		Utah, Montana, and Colorado regarding State Distance Learning Center best practices (April 2012).
<b>Research funding and coordinate grant activities and procurement of resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Created the <b>WyoDLC Collaborative Grant</b> to stimulate distance education and to add to preliminary data on state distance learning needs (Oct. 2011).</li> <li>• Joined membership in several national and international distance education organizations to insure access to funding opportunities (Sept. 2010-Ongoing).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilize WySAC research to determine distance education needs statewide to support seeking outside funding (Spring 2012).</li> <li>• Market and distribute the WyoDLC Collaborative Grant call for proposals (Nov. 2011)</li> <li>• Create a cohort of WyoDLC grant recipients to utilize their preliminary data to support seeking outside funding. First cohort meeting (Feb. 2012)</li> </ul>
<b>Act as an incubator to research, evaluate, and disseminate emerging distance learning methods and technologies</b>	Created the <b>WyoDLC Collaborative Grant Call for Proposals</b> (Oct. 2011).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fund 1-10 Collaborative Distance Education grants (Jan. 2012).</li> <li>• Submit, in collaboration with key stakeholders, 1-2 national grants to support the work of the WyoDLC and distance education in Wyoming (June 2011).</li> <li>• Prepare a grant for the Arthur Vinings Davis Foundation re: Global Learning Opportunities for Wyoming teachers (May 2011).</li> </ul>
<b>Promote technological equity and compatibility statewide</b>	Licensed LMS to facilitate distribution of state agency trainings statewide (Oct 2011).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with the Governor’s Task Force to facilitate equitable networks and systems for reaching all Wyoming citizens. (Ongoing).</li> <li>• Continued collaboration with and support of state agencies and entities that need technological support for distance education (Ongoing).</li> </ul>

## APPENDIX B

### WYOMING DISTANCE LEARNING CENTER BUDGET DETAIL FY 2011 – FY 2014

(For an extended explanation of activities, please see Appendix A)

Category	(A) Expended  FY 7/1/2010- 6/30/2011	(B) Budgeted  FY 2012	(C) Proposed  2013-2014 Biennium	Comments  <i>Note: Please see additional explanation of activities in Appendix A</i>
<i>WyoDLC Staff Salaries includes ERB's</i>	\$359,680.79	\$734,850.00	\$1,208,374.00	Salaries and benefits for WyoDLC Director, staff support, media specialist, and instructional designers to provide constituent support and training distance educators, institutions, organizations, and learners statewide. <i>The increase in column represents projected increase in UW benefits, i.e., insurance costs.</i>
Director	\$114,964.00	\$132,010.00	\$279,158.00	Hired August 2010
Staff Assistant	\$35,448.00	\$56,570.00	\$107,843.00	Started as part time in August 2010. Full time in November 1, 2010. Two months' salary from the first part of FY 2010 reflected in the part-time row below.
Instructional Designer	\$41,784.00	\$83,318.00	\$176,635.00	Hired in January 2011. FY 2010-2011= 6 months. FY 2011-2012 = 1 year salary and benefits (12 months)
Media Coordinator	Filled by part time and contract	\$50,569.00	\$115,499.00	Hired September 2011
Instructional Designer	Filled by part time and contract	\$40,016.00 (7 months of salary)	\$124,968.00	Job posted October 2011

Instructional Designer	---	\$40,016.00 (7 months of salary)	\$124,968.00	Proposed
*Part time/Non Benefitted/Contract personnel	\$138,228.79	\$267,422.00	\$226,335.00	PT staff were originally utilized (2010-2011) to fill work obligations in the areas of staff assistant, instructional design and media coordinator. Part time expenditures as well as workload warranted full time positions. Thus the anticipated decrease in this category for the 2013-2014 biennium.
<i>Constituent Support and Training</i>	\$522,737.74	\$494,080.00	\$1,372,000.00	Training for distance educators, providers, and learners, including conferences, workshops, and individual training and support; course management system license to host agencies online training courses; research and development in distance learning pedagogies and technologies to enhance distance education for all learners and providers; and collaborative distance education grants to stimulate distance learning innovation statewide
Learning Management System	---	\$143,305.00	\$242,000.00	Licensed LMS to distribute state agency trainings online statewide (Oct 2011)
Research and Development	\$200,000.00	\$15,000.00	\$400,000.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WyoDLC surveys (Sept. 2011- Ongoing)</li> <li>• WySAC Research on distance education attitudes statewide (Nov. 2011-March 2012)</li> </ul>
Grants	----	\$100,000.00	\$200,000.00	Created the <b>WyoDLC Collaborative Grant</b> to stimulate distance education and to add to preliminary data on state distance learning needs
Travel	\$27,541.98	\$50,000.00	\$130,000.00	Travel to work with constituents in state and connect with other distance learning centers regionally and nationally.
Equipment	\$53,200.85	\$50,000.00	\$100,000.00	Operating equipment. This figure will remain the same over time.
Professional Development	\$241,994.91	\$135,775.00	\$300,000.00	Constituent support via trainings, conferences, courses, portal, professional memberships.
<i>WyoDLC Operations</i>	\$123,651.17	\$265,000.00	\$90,000.00	Marketing, office equipment, communications, and supplies Office equipment for staff to include computers, learning technologies, and software. Marketing includes TV, radio, newspaper, and community roundtables, but the Center also uses social media extensively to reach the Wyoming citizens.