



Wyoming Department of Education

Richard Crandall, Director

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December 2, 2013

Senator Hank Coe
Representative Matt Teeters
Senator Eli Bebout
Representative Seteve Harshman
Legislative Service Office
200 W 24th St. #213
Cheyenne, WY 82001

Gentlemen:

The implementation of 2013 SF104/SEA001 requires a report on the organization of the Wyoming Department of Education. This includes transfers from the 005 State Superintendent's budget to the new agency number 206, Department of Education.

In response to that requirement, I submit the following information:

Over the past few months, we have taken significant steps to increase stability and capacity within the Department. The WDE has had very little turnover since August 1; I also made the conscious choice not to dismiss any employees or even reassign them until I had a better feel for the skills and talents of those individuals working at the WDE. We did, however, fill four key vacancies in September and October including a Chief Administrative Officer and a Chief Strategy Officer. For your review, I have attached our one page bio sheet of the twelve members of the WDE cabinet.

With regards to the transfer of divisions, agencies, programs, positions, personnel, property and appropriated funds: this was accomplished through the 2013 supplemental budget bill which provided positions and funding to the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. Since that bill became law there has been one subsequent transfer of responsibilities and that involved the grants for bullying prevention activities.

In addition to these efforts, the Governor's office, in consultation with WDE leadership, contracted for a comprehensive review of every employee in the Department with an outside firm (MCEC) comprised of former educators and state school chiefs. The purpose of the evaluation was to ascertain current responsibilities, discuss clarity of roles and assignments, and identify strengths and weaknesses of the Department. It is anticipated that this report will be submitted to us for our review the week of December 2.

The agency review will provide additional insight and assist in further recommendations regarding the development of professional expertise within the Department. I look forward to sharing those recommendations with you in the near future.

Thank you for your patience as we work to get you the information you need regarding the transition status of the Wyoming Department of Education.

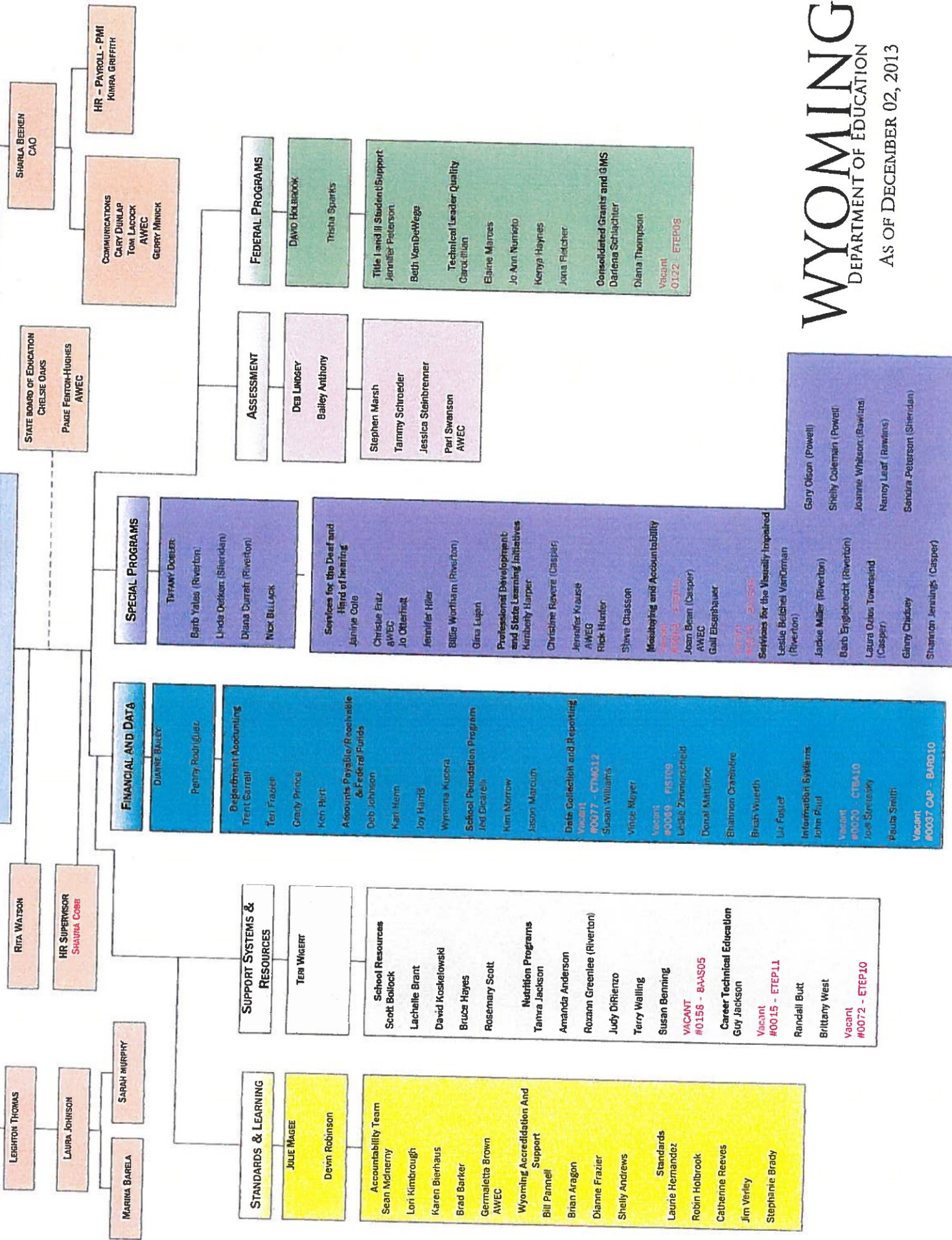
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard Crandall".

Richard Crandall, Director

RICHARD CRANDALL

Director





DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

LEADING THE DRIVE TO TOP FIVE



THE MISSION

Wyoming will be a break-out state and nationwide leader in public education, taking its place among the top five states in the country. Through the use of a collective impact model, the Wyoming Department of Education will serve as a strategic partner to districts, schools, families and communities to ensure that every Wyoming student receives an exemplary education.

THE FOCUS

INCREASE SCHOOL READINESS. All families & communities will receive the support they need to prepare their child(ren) to enter and thrive in kindergarten and first grade.

FACILITATE TEACHER & LEADER EFFECTIVENESS. All students will be taught by exceptional teachers in a school guided by an exceptional leadership team.

ENSURE ACADEMIC SUCCESS FOR ALL. All students, regardless of background or circumstance, will receive the support & opportunities they need to be successful.

EXPAND PERSONALIZED INSTRUCTION. All students will have access to an education that can be tailored, through technology and flexible instruction, to meet their needs and aspirations.

PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENGAGEMENT. All students will have access to enriching programs & activities that meet and expand their interests.

GUARANTEE COLLEGE & CAREER READINESS. All students will develop skills and interests that prepare them for success in college and/or a rewarding career.

THE FOUNDATION

- FAMILY & COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS to build upon the strength of Wyoming's values.
- COMMUNICATION & TRANSPARENCY at all levels to facilitate understanding, collaboration, and creativity.
- SAFE & NURTURING SCHOOLS for every child and adult.
- SECURE & STRATEGIC DATA USE to support academic success.



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Rich Crandall **DIRECTOR, WDE**

Rich is the proud father of six girls and a son, which fuels his passion for education. Prior to his appointment as Director of the WDE by Governor Matt Mead, Rich served as the Senate Education Chair in the Arizona Senate, and before that, as the Education Chair in the Arizona House of Representatives. Rich has BS and Master's degrees in Accountancy from BYU, and an MBA from the University of Notre Dame.

Rich founded CN Resource in 2002, a national child nutrition audit firm, which does work for the USDA and State Education Departments. He was CFO of Crandall Corporate Dietitians, the nation's largest dietitian consulting firm and has served as an officer or task force member with several national organizations, including Jeb Bush's Foundation for Excellence in Education, the National Conference of State Legislatures, and the American Legislative Exchange Council.



Leighton Thomas **CHIEF STRATEGY OFFICER**

Prior to joining the WDE, Leighton taught in Washington, D.C. as an elementary and middle school math teacher and served as Principal of a Saturday School program. Before beginning her career in education, Leighton worked as management consultant for Hay Group and then Booz Allen, where she focused on strategic human capital management for both public and private clients.

Leighton is a graduate of Alma College, with a degree in Psychology. After changing careers from business to education, she earned her M.Ed in Curriculum and Instruction from American University. She recently completed a fellowship with Teach Plus—a policy organization aimed at engaging teacher voice in education—and is currently a doctoral candidate in Education Leadership and Policy at Vanderbilt University.



Sharla Beeken **CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER**

Sharla has an AA in Interior Design, a Bachelor's in Marketing, and a Master's in Computer Resources and Information Management. Her experience includes service as Training Coordinator for the Wyoming Department of Health; Executive Director, Dean, and Instructor for College America; Director of Distance Education for Lamar Community College in Colorado; and Financial Controller for Reprographics in Denver.

Sharla has been a teacher at the college level for 16 years (including two years at Warren Air Force Base for LCCC), and she specializes in adult learning, online instruction, and curriculum development. Her passion is leading, building systems through solid strategic planning, and growing healthy, dynamic organizations that respect and value the people within as well as the citizens they serve.



Laura Johnson **LEAD PROJECTS SUPERVISOR**

Laura helps coordinate initiatives that cross divisions and involve many stakeholder groups, including the implementation of new content standards and assessments. Laura comes to the WDE from the National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ), where she served as Director of Communications. In that role she supported research and advocacy work focused on state and district policies that affect teachers.

Laura also helped launch the first edition of the Teacher Prep Review, an evaluation of over 1100 teacher training programs across the country, and she served at the Thomas B. Fordham Institute, supporting education policy work. She began her career teaching math at Dunbar High School in Washington, D.C. Laura holds an M.Ed in Curriculum and Instruction from American University.



Sarah Murphy **PROJECT SPECIALIST**

Sarah works with the strategic team on initiatives that aim to improve education systems. A native of St. Louis, Missouri, Sarah is a graduate of Colorado College. She served St. Louis students as an after-school science enrichment teacher in the Parkway School District and as Program Director at Cultural Leadership, an extracurricular non-profit for high school students focused on social justice advocacy and leadership training.

Sarah taught pre-K-7th grade reading and writing in Singapore, and there she conducted research on post-colonial educational structure and equity. Most recently, she served as Academic Dean of DC Rooted by Literacy, a middle-school summer boarding program aimed at raising reading levels in Washington D.C.



Shauna Cobb **HR SUPERVISOR**

Shauna Cobb earned a Bachelor's degree in Communications from the University of Wyoming and thereafter worked for a global six sigma consulting company for eight years. After a decision to focus on a career in HR, Shauna earned a Master's degree in Organizational Leadership and Human Resource Management. She's also obtained Professional Human Resource (PHR) certification.

Over the past five years Shauna has been committed to providing exemplary service and best practices to the Wyoming Department of Education and its employees. In her free time, she's an amateur wine connoisseur and an outdoor enthusiast. She's been known to haul her husband and three kids outside for activities like mountain



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Deb Lindsey **ASSESSMENT**

Prior to appointment at the WDE, Deb was Director of Research and Assessment in Milwaukee Public Schools for 12 years. There she implemented large scale assessments, including district interim assessments and the annual statewide summative test. She led a redesign of the district's data warehouse and reporting system, and she coordinated research and program evaluation work with local, regional, and national partners.

Prior to her work in Milwaukee, Deb served for two years as assessment coordinator in Kenosha, Wisconsin, and before that as a research analyst and grant program evaluator at the University of North Dakota-Grand Forks. In her early career, she worked with adults and children with significant cognitive disabilities as both a speech therapist and a case manager.



David Holbrook **FEDERAL PROGRAMS**

David has been Federal Programs Division Administrator for the WDE for five years. Previously he served 15 years with SIL International, a United Nations recognized organization that focuses on language development for minority groups. It's the largest non-profit linguistic organization in the world. David has taught at the Graduate Institute of Applied Linguistics in Dallas, as well as the Intensive English Program at Colorado State University.

David earned a Master's degree in linguistics at the University of Texas at Arlington, and a Ph.D. in Linguistics at the University of the West Indies in the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. He's a past president of the National Council of State Title III Directors. He's currently chair of the National Title I Association EL Committee, and chair of the EL Definition Committee for the ASSETS Consortium.



Teri Wigert **SUPPORT SYSTEMS & RESOURCES**

Teri Wigert has statewide oversight of federal secondary and post-secondary CTE initiatives and funds. She's responsible for numerous educational programs and support functions to include online education, career technical education, nutrition programs, school safety and security, and pupil transportation. Teri has a BS in education from the University of Nebraska, endorsed in grades K-12. She is a Certified Public Manager® (CPM).

Teri works collaboratively with internal and external customers at the WDE. These partners include Wyoming's higher education institutions and workforce and economic development associates. Prior to service in state government, Teri was the Regional Administrator at the Wyoming High Plains Chapter of the American Red Cross and a high school teacher.



Julie Magee **STANDARDS & ACCOUNTABILITY**

Julie began at the WDE in 2008 as a Hathaway Scholarship Program consultant and her success there led to her promotion to division administrator for Standards & Accountability programs. In each of her roles, she's had the privilege of working with schools, districts, and higher education institutions to build and implement initiatives designed to serve Wyoming students. She served as an English teacher for ten years.

Julie received her teaching degree from Brigham Young University in 2001, and a Master's degree in Higher Education Administration from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, in 2006. She's currently a doctoral candidate in the Education Leadership program at the University of Wyoming.



Tiffany Dobler **SPECIAL PROGRAMS**

Tiffany earned her undergraduate degree in Elementary Education from the University of Wyoming and began her career as a fifth-grade teacher in Denver. She obtained a Master's degree in special education, and though she intended to work most closely with students with severe cognitive disabilities, she found herself drawn to students with social/emotional needs and sought an endorsement in behavior as well.

Tiffany joined the WDE in 2012 as Special Programs Division Administrator and she feels fortunate to be working with such passionate, knowledgeable individuals, all of whom are vested in positive outcomes for students with disabilities. She believes her current appointment is an incredible opportunity. Tiffany is working toward her doctoral degree in special education with an endorsement in administration.



Dianne Bailey **FINANCE & DATA**

Dianne has worked at the WDE for ten years, with a brief interruption of service of eighteen months, when she served as Chief Financial Officer at the School Facilities Department. She couldn't stay away though, and returned to the WDE in February of 2012. Dianne has additional experience in state finance, having also served at the Wyoming Department of Health.

Dianne is a Nebraska native, but came to Cheyenne with her family after high school and she earned a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration at the University of Wyoming. She has served as a member of the State Treasurer's working group, advising elected officials in areas of investments for the state. She has also chaired a statewide accountability sub-committee within the Governor's ARRA committee.

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