


Wyoming National Board Certified Teacher Initiative

REPORT TO THE JOINT EDUCATION INTERIM COMMITTEE
AND JOINT APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE



WYOMING
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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2018 House Bill 0001 (HEA 0062) section 206, footnote 3 requires the department of education to report to the joint education interim committee and the joint appropriations committee not later than October 1, 2018 regarding the national certification incentive under W.S. 21-7-501(a) through (d), including “compliance with current statute, administrative structure and historic annual costs by budget series and purpose, payments provided for under W.S. 21-7-501(a) through (d), and any expenditures toward the national certification incentive not specifically authorized under W.S. 21-7-501 and recommended changes to statute.”

This report addresses requirements of the budget footnote in the following sections:

1. Background
2. Administrative Structure
3. Historical Appropriations & Expenditures
4. Actual Program Expenditures by Category
5. Compliance with Current Statute

BACKGROUND

The Wyoming National Board Certified Teacher Initiative (Initiative) was established by the Wyoming Legislature in 2006 to encourage more Wyoming teachers to become National Board Certified and support them through the certification process. The Initiative is implemented through a public-private partnership between the Wyoming Department of Education (WDE) and the John P. Ellbogen Foundation (Foundation). Since its inception, the number of National Board Certified teachers (NBCTs) in Wyoming has risen from less than 50 to over 600, and the number of districts with at least one NBCT has increased by 150 percent. The three districts with the greatest number of NBCTs are Natrona County School District #1 at 74; Laramie County School District #1 at 52; and Teton County School District #1 at 46.

The Foundation provides funding in addition to the state appropriation and also fully manages the program, similar to a grant recipient. Funds are used by the Foundation to cover teacher certification and assessment costs, provide teacher training workshops, provide one-on-one coaching from NBCT trained professionals, and promote the NBCT program in collaboration with the University of Wyoming.

ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

The Initiative’s program costs can be broken out into fees, workshops, stipends, and administrative costs.

FEES:

The certification fees for all four components of certification is \$1,900. The initiative splits this cost with

the teacher (\$950/\$950). To ensure buy-in, teachers are required to supply their share first. Approximately 50 percent of teachers achieve certification on the first attempt, and 75 percent by their third attempt. To incentivize teachers to finish after an unsuccessful attempt, the program will pay up to \$1,200 toward subsequent attempts.

WORKSHOPS:

Workshops are available for teachers to attend to assist in the certification process. The cost of workshops is approximately \$650 per teacher for the first year, and \$350 if subsequent years are necessary.

STIPENDS:

Certified teachers receive a one-time \$1,000 stipend upon completion. An additional annual \$4,000 stipend is funded out of a separate budget, WDE unit 205-4503, as per W.S. 21-7-501(i). An annual celebration is also provided for successful teachers.

ADMINISTRATIVE:

The personnel costs and other administration costs for managing the program within the Foundation averages approximately \$50,000 per year, including three percent historically paid to Sweetwater County School District #1 to serve as the program’s fiscal agent. However, in an effort to create efficiencies and reduce program costs, the WDE will take over as the fiscal agent in the 2019 biennium.

HISTORICAL APPROPRIATIONS & EXPENDITURES

From the 2007-2008 biennium to the 2017-2018 biennium, the NBCT standard budget amount was \$656,000. As a result of the 2017 legislative session, the 17/18 appropriation was reduced by \$206,000. Program expenditures have varied each biennium as depicted in the table below. Please note that the State appropriations and expenditures are reported on a biennial basis while the expenditures from the Ellbogen Foundation are reported by calendar year, beginning with 2013.

Biennium	Appropriation	State Expenditures	Foundation’s Expenditures	Total Program Expenditures
BY 13 (2012-2014)	\$656,000	\$653,719.59	\$426,196.86	\$1,079,916.45
BY 15 (2014-2016)	\$656,000	\$233,443.26	\$296,442.23	\$529,885.49
BY17 (2016-2018)	\$656,000/ \$450,000*	\$289,434.64	\$169,917.89	\$459,352.53

*\$206,000 budget reduction - 2017 General Session

ACTUAL PROGRAM EXPENDITURES BY CATEGORY

Biennium	Admin Costs	NBCT Fees	Workshops	Stipends/ Celebrations	Total Program Expenditures
BY 13 (2012-2014)	\$105,072.61	\$505,359.38	\$276,413.87	\$193,069.84	\$1,079,915.70
BY 15 (2014-2016)	\$102,718.47	\$95,169.11	\$118,187.82	\$213,810.09	\$529,885.49
BY 17 (2016-2018)	\$89,107.98	\$159,890.00	\$127,869.10	\$82,485.45	\$459,352.53

Note: Includes combined state and the Foundation shares.

COMPLIANCE WITH CURRENT STATUTE

Statutory amendments would be beneficial to address discrepancies between statute and current administration of the program. The purpose of the original legislation was to build awareness of National Board certification in Wyoming and encourage teachers to apply and complete the process. When teachers submitted proof of National Board certification, they were reimbursed by their school district, and the school district was eligible to apply for reimbursement through a state grant.

The number of "50" teachers and the corresponding appropriation was part of the original legislation as to allow for equity among school districts. By the time the original appropriation was spent down, 47 teachers in the state had achieved national board certification with some support from the Professional Teaching Standards Board. When the Joint Education Interim Committee and the Foundation began to discuss a partnership in 2005 to expand the number of NBCTs to at least 10 percent of the teaching force, it was determined by a stakeholder committee that a more comprehensive marketing and support system was needed and a strategic plan and coordinator position was developed.

Senate File 102 from the 2018 Budget Session largely reflects the current operations of the program and would align state statute to current practice.