



NBPTS[®]

National Board for
Professional Teaching Standards

PROFILES IN EXCELLENCE: Wyoming

How a Foundation Launched a Statewide Collaboration
to Improve Teaching through National Board Certification

Advancing Excellence in a Rural State

As a result of foundation, state, and federal funding—as well as efforts by other stakeholders—Wyoming teachers pursuing National Board Certification now receive a wide range of support before, during, and after the certification process, including:

- **Recruitment.** Informational meetings about the National Board Certification process are held in every district in the state each year.
- **Financial support.** Candidates are allocated \$2,000 of the National Board's \$2,565 assessment fee through a combination of federal, state, and foundation dollars.
- **Running Start workshops.** To introduce new candidates to the portfolio process, Wyoming National Board Certification Initiative (WNBCI) offers an intensive three-day Running Start workshop twice a year, in July and October.
- **Candidate work sessions.** To provide candidates time and support as they work on their portfolios, the John P. Ellbogen Foundation also hosts weekend sessions in a central location three times a year.
- **Assessment center workshops.** Held once a year, this workshop helps familiarize candidates with the assessment portion of the National Board Certification process, giving them the opportunity to write practice prompts and evaluate their responses using NBPTS rubrics.
- **Advanced candidate workshops.** Candidates who do not achieve National Board Certification in their first year are encouraged to attend this workshop. The focus is on the specific needs and process for second- and third-year candidates.
- **Candidate Support Providers (CSPs).** Along with serving as facilitators during workshops and working with candidates during the work sessions, Wyoming CSPs provide one-on-one support to candidates throughout the process.
- **Master's degree collaboration.** The initiative's partnership with the University of Wyoming led its education department to accept a National Board portfolio in lieu of a Plan B paper for a master's degree.
- **Stipends.** National Board Certified Teachers (NBCTs) receive an annual \$4,000 stipend during the life of their certificates (10 years). Newly certified teachers also receive \$1,000 from the foundation during an annual celebration dinner held in Cheyenne.

ON THE COVER: National Board Certified Teacher Maggie Jolly and her students from Park Elementary in Casper, Wyoming, collect samples of life from a Natural Bridge stream, which they later compared to an aquatic index to determine the health of the water. During their trip, they also collected seed samples; explored a crystal cave; looked at the craters of the moon, the moons of Jupiter and the rings of Saturn (with help and telescopes from a nearby planetarium); and created poetry.

A Foundation Initiative Becomes Part of the State Culture

Creating a statewide initiative to increase the number of National Board Certified Teachers (NBCTs) in Wyoming, a vast state with just over a half-million people, required many things—private-public partnerships, the development of an extensive support network for candidates, and a statewide coalition of stakeholders. It also required a reliable car.

“We drive a lot of miles in Wyoming,” says Mary Ellbogen Garland, president of the John P. Ellbogen Foundation, who, in the first year of the initiative, personally drove to every school district in the state to encourage teachers to pursue National Board Certification. She brought with her the promise of financial and professional support—along with a \$4,000 annual stipend for those who become National Board certified, the result of funding provided by the state legislature and the foundation.

The Ellbogen Foundation works to strengthen the quality of classroom teaching in Wyoming’s public schools by increasing the number of NBCTs

in the state. The choice to pursue National Board programs was a natural one based on evidence that effective teachers are the single most important school-level influence on student learning and findings from numerous studies showing National Board Certification’s positive impact on student learning.

“If we continue to build this program and certify a critical mass of teachers, we’re going to be able to show unequivocally that National Board Certification raises the bar for effective teaching across the board.”

***— Mary Ellbogen Garland, President,
John P. Ellbogen Foundation***

“We wanted to find a program that would help us improve student achievement and become part of the state culture,” says Dr. Jim McBride, state superintendent of public instruction. “Mary Garland was the one who got hooked on National Board Certification and visited every single district to recruit. Promptly thereafter, the legislature passed the [stipend] program. It was remarkable.”

In a small state, that personal touch has yielded huge dividends. When the Ellbogen Foundation began what would be called the Wyoming National Board Certification Initiative (WNBCI) in 2004, the state had fewer than 50 NBCTs, many of whom were concentrated in one school district. By 2010, that number had grown to 250, and all

but nine of the state's 48 districts had at least one teacher go through the process. While individual urban districts in some states have more than 250 NBCTs, in Wyoming, that cohort represents 3.7 percent of all teachers statewide—significantly higher than the national average and the largest percentage among surrounding states.

“Our idea was to level the playing field so all teachers in Wyoming have equal access to the process,” says Garland. “If we continue to build this program and certify a critical mass of teachers, we’re going to be able to show unequivocally that National Board Certification raises the bar for effective teaching across the board.”

The initiative was inspired by the foundation's namesake, John P. Ellbogen, who, while investigating ways of strengthening the quality of classroom teaching in his native Wyoming, identified the potential of National Board Certification to improve student learning. After his death in 2001, Garland, who is Ellbogen's daughter, continued his vision of expanding a pilot National Board Certification program statewide, working with the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) to develop strategies to improve recruitment, support, and public recognition for candidates.

“The foundation started on the ground floor to pull together all the key stakeholders, from the university to lawmakers to the business coalition, around a common goal—that to raise the achievement level of all students in Wyoming, they needed to increase the skills and knowledge of all

teachers in Wyoming,” recalls Nancy Shakowski, a regional outreach director with NBPTS.

To date, the John P. Ellbogen Foundation, the Ruth R. Ellbogen Foundation, other private funders, and the state have invested \$1.9 million in the initiative. Support also has come from state lawmakers who, after an initial \$182,000 contribution in 2005, have pledged \$656,000 during each biennial budget to support the program and in 2007 voted into law a \$4,000 annual stipend for NBCTs. Federal subsidies, which are allocated to Wyoming through NBPTS, have also increased dramatically since 2004. Equally important, the foundation has provided a personal connection to the National Board Certification

process, which has been a boon to candidates across this rural state.

“Mary has taken away the barriers to completing the process,” says NBCT Barbara Maguire, an instructional facilitator at Park Elementary School in Casper. “People feel like the initiative is behind them, and all the people involved in it are very visible. Even though we’re rural and spread out, there are faces to go with the people who support them.”

“We spent millions on staff development that never made a difference.... Teachers would come back to their classrooms excited and two weeks later would not remember what they learned. But National Board Certification makes a change in the classroom—a long-term change, because the teacher’s thinking changes.”

***— Former State Senator Rae Lynn Job,
Candidate Support and Program
Coordinator, Wyoming National Board
Certification Initiative***

Supporting Teacher Quality in a Rural State

Having formerly served as a director of curriculum and instruction in a K-12 school district, Rae Lynn Job knows the challenges of providing professional development for teachers. “We spent millions on staff development that never made a difference,” says Job, who became WNBCI’s candidate support and program coordinator after a career in education and 12 years in the state senate. “Teachers would come back to their classrooms excited and two weeks later would not remember what they learned. But National Board Certification makes a change in the classroom—a long-term change, because the teacher’s thinking changes.”

In a largely rural state such as Wyoming, geography becomes a key challenge in supporting teachers seeking National Board Certification. “In the majority of districts there might only be two or three teachers working on their certification,” says Garland. “We have to be efficient in the way we provide candidate support.”

As a result of foundation, state, and federal funding—as well as efforts by other stakeholders—Wyoming teachers pursuing National Board Certification now receive a wide range of support before, during, and after the certification process, including:

- **Recruitment.** Informational meetings about the National Board Certification process are held in every district in the state each year. The foundation initially offered pre-candidate

workshops, but growing familiarity with the National Board Certification process across the state have made them unnecessary. Now NBCTs in many districts lead local recruitment meetings.

- **Financial support.** Candidates are allocated \$2,000 of the National Board’s \$2,565 assessment fee through a combination of federal, state, and foundation dollars. “The teacher’s financial investment is the \$565 that covers the materials and the processing fee,” says Job.
- **Running Start workshops.** To introduce new candidates to the portfolio process, WNBCI offers an intensive three-day Running Start workshop twice a year, in July and October. During these centrally located sessions, facilitators introduce candidates from across the state to the NBPTS Five Core Propositions and standards and get them started on writing portfolio entries. Except for transportation, the foundation covers all expenses, including lodging.
- **Candidate work sessions.** To provide candidates time and support as they work on their portfolios, the foundation also hosts weekend sessions in a central location three times a year. Candidates from the same school or district often travel together to the sessions and work in small groups aided by facilitators as needed. “It’s a time when they can come and take inventory of what they’ve done and what

Building Wyoming's Candidate Support Provider Network

When Linda Krafft went through the National Board Certification process, she wasn't alone—a cohort of 10 candidates from her district helped each other throughout the process. "We became very close," says Krafft, the library coordinator for Natrona County Schools. "The reflective nature of the process made me think about my practice. I benefited from that and wanted to return it in some way."

Krafft went through Candidate Support Provider (CSP) training immediately after becoming an NBCT in 2006. She was among the first of a growing group of Wyoming educators that built support systems initially provided by facilitators from other states, including North Carolina, Kentucky, and Washington. Together, they helped develop the workshops and other supports now led by a network of more than 50 active CSPs throughout Wyoming.

"I think [WNBCI] is very thoughtful about what people need at different stages of the process," says Krafft, who has facilitated workshops and worked with National Board candidates from her district. "The candidates are almost a step ahead because they are given essential information that contributes to their success."

Key among those supports is WNBCI's Running Start workshops, which help candidates get started with the portfolio process. "Having scored National Board from across the country and living in two different states, I realize how important it is to teach candidates how to explain their teaching situation clearly to assessors," says Teddi Benson, a special education teacher at Laramie High School. Benson, who had become an NBCT and presented workshops on National Board Certification while in North Carolina, assisted in the development of Running Start workshops after moving to Wyoming.

Contact information for all CSPs is listed on the WNBCI Web site (www.wnbc.org). Candidates are encouraged to contact CSPs in their certification area, which is particularly helpful for those in small districts who may not have access to local cohorts or other support close to home. "They feel free to e-mail anybody on that list," says Andrea Carroll, a 7th grade language arts teacher at East Junior High School in Rock Springs. "It's pretty amazing."

After becoming an NBCT in 2006, Carroll attended a candidate support training workshop offered by WNBCI. "I loved the process and got so much out of it. I thought of all the people who could do this, so I jumped right in to help," she says. "The support system the foundation has created has pulled the state together. We are rural but still connected."

they need to do,” says Job. “The interaction in the sessions is incredible.” As with other workshops, the foundation pays all expenses except for transportation.

- **Assessment center workshops.** Held once a year, this workshop helps familiarize candidates with the assessment portion of the National Board Certification process, giving them the opportunity to write practice prompts and evaluate their responses using NBPTS rubrics.
- **Advanced candidate workshops.** Candidates who do not achieve National Board Certification in their first year are encouraged to attend this workshop. The focus is on the specific needs and process for second- and third-year candidates.
- **Candidate Support Providers.** Along with serving as facilitators during workshops and working with candidates during the work sessions, Wyoming CSPs provide one-on-one support to candidates throughout the process. CSPs are trained during an annual workshop and receive a stipend for their work. Since the program’s inception, the network of active CSPs has grown to 53 statewide. The foundation’s support of CSPs has also helped keep NBCTs from “retreating into their classroom after certification and not sharing their knowledge with others,” says NBCT Teddi Benson, a special education teacher at Laramie High School.
- **Master’s degree collaboration.** The initiative’s partnership with the University of Wyoming led its education department to accept a National Board portfolio in lieu of a Plan B paper for a master’s degree. A significant number of National Board Certification candidates now seek a master’s degree while going through the certification process,

The choice to pursue National Board programs was a natural one

based on evidence that effective teachers are the single most important school-level influence on student learning and findings from numerous studies showing National Board Certification’s positive impact on student learning.

according to Kay Persichitte, dean of the university’s college of education. “It only helps us all to be working within these same kinds of frameworks to improve the quality of teaching,” she says.

- **Stipends.** NBCTs receive an annual \$4,000 stipend during the life of their certificates (10 years). Newly certified teachers also receive \$1,000 from the foundation during an annual celebration dinner held in Cheyenne.

Workshops and other support are optional—but strongly encouraged. Between 84 and 90 percent of all Wyoming candidates participate in at least one foundation-sponsored workshop, and there is a clear correlation between participation and certification. In 2008, for example, 44 percent of all Wyoming candidates became NBCTs—but only 27 percent of non-participants achieved certification.

Candidates surveyed by WNBCI have consistently rated the foundation’s support programs at an average of nine points on a 10-point scale, according to WNBCI data. “We often hear from candidates that they feel we honor them as teachers and treat them as professionals,” says Job.

Profile: Barbara Maguire

When Barbara Maguire became a National Board Certified Teacher in 2000, it was “really a pretty unknown thing in Wyoming,” she says. So unknown, in fact, that she later found out that another colleague at Park Elementary in Casper was going through the process at the same time—but they never realized it.

“You were very much a lone island when you went through the process,” she says.

To spare other candidates from the same isolation, Maguire was one of the first NBCTs in the state to go through candidate support provider training in 2005, as WNBCI was preparing to launch its workshops. Learning from and working with facilitators from Washington, North Carolina, and Kentucky, Maguire helped shape the initiative’s support offerings and became the lead facilitator. “We made it a Wyoming program,” says Maguire who now serves on WNBCI’s advisory board.

As an NBCT, Maguire has become a leader in her school where she serves as an instructional facilitator. “It’s very similar to the National Board Certification process—coaching people and helping them be reflective,” she says. “There’s a culture here that’s growing.” She also holds a weekly support meeting for NBCT candidates in her district, which she says is supportive of teachers who go through the process, granting candidates professional development time as deadlines approach. Maguire has also become a public face of the program on a policy level. In 2007, she testified before the U.S. Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee in Washington, D.C., at the request of U.S. Sen. Mike Enzi (R-Wyo.), calling the National Board Certification process “the most powerful professional development I’ve experienced in my 26 years as an educator.”

As a Candidate Support Provider, Maguire helps facilitate workshops and provides support to candidates statewide. “We’re spread out everywhere in Wyoming, so we do a lot of mentoring via e-mail and phone calls,” she says. “It doesn’t feel institutional at all. I can go anywhere in the state, and there are familiar faces in any city, and that’s so exciting.”

Statewide Impact, Statewide Results

With NBCTs now in place statewide, the impact of their work is beginning to be felt, according to state education leaders. “My sense is we’ve reached a point where the numbers of NBCTs are now raising eyebrows in every district across the state,” Persichitte says. “The energy and attention at the superintendent level is definitely promoting interest in more teachers participating in the process.”

While Wyoming does not currently have longitudinal data systems capable of tracking NBCTs’ impact on student achievement results, the state superintendent points to multiple examples of specific teachers whose students are scoring significantly above state averages. “We can find significant case studies when we compare specific teachers’ classes to the state average,” Dr. Jim McBride, state superintendent of public instruction, says.

Dr. Mark A. Higdon, executive director of the Wyoming School Boards Association, agrees. “It has improved teacher performance, which has improved student achievement,” says Higdon, who became a member of WNBCI’s advisory board

after his local district was among the first in the state to strongly support National Board Certification.

According to McBride, the program’s strength is that it is an individual effort that has a broader impact. “We see these programs changing the

culture of schools, especially when more than one or two teachers become certified,” he says. “It changes the way instruction is delivered and how teacher quality is perceived.”

“Teacher quality is critical to student learning, and I’m convinced that participation in the National Board Certification process supports

professional improvement and leads to increased student learning,” says Margaret Hudson, principal of the University of Wyoming Lab School in Laramie. Hudson was one of three researchers who studied the impact of certification and education on teacher quality. That research found that Wyoming NBCTs engaged more frequently in indicators of quality teaching, according to Hudson.

In a survey of Wyoming NBCTs in 2009, the foundation reported significant increases in self-ratings of their ability to reflect on their own practice—from an average 2.3 rating on a four-

“[National Board Certification] has improved teacher performance, which has improved student achievement....It changes the way instruction is delivered and how teacher quality is perceived.”

***— Dr. Mark A. Higdon, Executive Director,
Wyoming School Boards Association***

**In a survey of Wyoming NBCTs
in 2009... [Candidates] reported
significant improvements in a variety of
more specific teacher quality indicators, ranging
from assuming leadership roles to researching
best practices and current literature
on education reform.**

point scale prior to going through the National Board Certification process, to a 4.0 afterwards. Candidates also reported significant improvements in a variety of more specific teacher quality indicators, ranging from assuming leadership roles to researching best practices and current literature on education reform. “By successfully generating a high level of the frequency and quality of teacher reflection, the initiative’s capacity to support long-term and sustainable individual teacher growth is exponential,” a foundation report states. “Planting the seeds of reflective practice today carries support for improved instruction into tomorrow.”

Preliminary results from a current WNBCI survey of Wyoming principals suggests that the majority—70 percent—believe that NBCTs demonstrate “more strongly an intentional and consistent provision of engaging, complex, challenging, and rich work for students and the demonstration of appropriate and adequate differentiated instruction.” Eighty percent of principals surveyed believed that NBCTs were also “more intentional and consistent” with in-depth reflection of their own teaching practice.

“The greatest impact I see is that they hold themselves to a higher standard,” wrote Park Elementary Principal Doris Waddell. “All of them say that the process was the best professional development they had ever done. It made them become more reflective practitioners.”

For that reason, support for the program has trickled down to the school level in many places. “Principals with at least three NBCTs in their building valued them and their expertise and leadership,” says Benson. “These principals tended to encourage other teachers to attempt the process, because they recognize the impact it had on their students.”

At the UW Lab School, Hudson encourages her staff to consider National Board Certification or the *Take One!* process. She supports candidates by providing professional leave and travel expenses—and, at times, personally helps by videotaping lessons and covering classes. “I become a cheerleader and provide constant encouragement,” Hudson says.

The benefits of the process are also trickling down to education classes at the University of Wyoming, according to Persichitte, who says that virtually all of the students in the education school’s master’s program are current teachers. “The repeated expectation is that teachers improve their practice through reflection. That focus on their own practice and how they are developing in their own classroom setting is huge,” she says. “It’s something very difficult to teach as a stand-alone curriculum, because you don’t have the direct access to the setting.” As a result, faculty members are creating assignments that tie into and mirror the National Board Certification process. “When these projects and activities directly map onto what the classroom teacher is working on in their school setting, everybody wins,” she says.

The university is also beginning to explore how it could use NBCTs in its pre-service preparation programs, including student teaching, according to Persichitte.

As in other states, Wyoming educators speak of the “multiplier effect” that NBCTs have in their classrooms and districts. WNBCI’s primary goal is to have 10 percent of all Wyoming teachers achieve National Board Certification, which is approximately 700 teachers, according to Job. “It’s about the collective impact of what they’ll do in the classroom and the differences they’ll make in their buildings and beyond. “

As evidence, educators point to the growing numbers of NBCTs who have become instructional facilitators, a school-based position the state began funding in 2006. Facilitators are required to have five years of teaching experience and a master’s degree—or National Board Certification. Facilitators who are NBCTs, such as Maguire, point to the similarities between the reflective practice encouraged by the National Board Certification process and the coaching and professional development they deliver to all teachers. “It’s very similar,” Maguire says.

WNBCI encourages NBCTs to become teacher leaders in roles that extend far beyond their classroom walls. “Expanding the role of the teacher through leadership will keep good teachers from leaving classrooms and schools,” says Hudson who also serves on the WNBCI board. As part of her research, Hudson studied different elements of teacher leadership, concluding that

National Board Certification is a critical “avenue” for increasing the role of Wyoming teachers in leadership and advocacy activities. “I see National Board Certification as setting the stage for teachers making a difference in the building, then making a difference in the district, and then the state,” adds Job.

To that end, the Ellbogen Foundation also offers a Leadership and Advocacy Institute, a yearlong series of workshops that provide opportunities for teacher leaders to become involved in broader conversations about education and “effect policy change,” says Job. “We need more people on the

ground who can articulate the complexities of education in the policy arena.”

An example of those complexities will play out as the state begins developing a uniform teacher evaluation system. Kathryn Valido, president of the Wyoming Education Association and a representative of the WNBCI advisory board,

is involved in those discussions, and McBride, the outgoing state superintendent, hopes that the NBPTS Core Propositions become embedded in the evaluation process, as has been the case in other localities such as Maryland’s Montgomery County. “That’s definitely preferable to ‘easy options’ like test scores,” agrees Valido.

The role WNBCI plays in such discussions typifies how the program has advanced the National Board in state policy circles, according to Valido. “It’s really been institutionalized as part of the discussion of public education,” she says.

“Teacher quality is critical to student learning, and I’m convinced that participation in the National Board Certification process supports professional improvement and leads to increased student learning.”

***— Margaret Hudson, Principal,
University of Wyoming Lab School***

Keys to Success

Stakeholders identify Garland's personal commitment to WNBCI as the most significant key to the program's success. "She talks to teachers as partners," Maguire says. "She has an honor and respect for teachers in a way few people outside the field do, and she goes and shares that with legislators. Even in tough budget times, we still have support, and I think it's because [she] and [Job] are so visible."

For their part, Garland and Job credit the National Board's reputation as a key selling point. "Being able to articulate our position gave us a lot of credibility," Garland says. The Board's "national recognition and a reputation for integrity and a rigorous nature didn't hurt," adds Job.

Among key components to the initiative's success:

Building support from both the bottom up and top down.

Much of the foundation's initial work involved promoting interest in National Board Certification in districts statewide and winning the support of key stakeholders. In the program's first year, Garland met with all but two of Wyoming's legislators in small-group or one-on-one settings. The creation of the advisory board, with its broad cross-section

of stakeholders, also helped ensure support and visibility for the program. "We knew we had to bring everyone involved in education in Wyoming to the table," she says.

As lawmakers began considering supporting the initiative, Garland also invited former North Carolina Gov. James B. Hunt, Jr., founding chairman, NBPTS, to Wyoming, where he spoke

to lawmakers and members of a business coalition about the benefits his state saw from National Board Certification. "The National Board process in some states is looked at askance by some legislators," says Valido. "With the relationship she's maintained with legislators, they are well informed and remain fully supportive of the initiative."

At the same time, Garland and Job also criss-crossed the state to discuss the benefits of National

Board Certification with superintendents, principals, and teachers—which was critical, as nearly half of the state's 47 NBCTs taught in one district, while the program was virtually unknown in other parts of the state. The foundation's role in outreach and recruitment was critical in building grassroots interest in National Board Certification, according

"The greatest impact I see is that [National Board Certified Teachers] hold themselves to a higher standard. All of them say that the process was the best professional development they had ever done. It made them become more reflective practitioners."

***— Doris Waddell, Principal,
Park Elementary School***

to McBride. “That’s remarkably difficult for a state education agency to do,” he says.

Multiple sources of funding. The Ellbogen Foundation’s willingness to invest its own time and dollars in the program was a key to obtaining state funds. Because of the financial support, lawmakers describe WNBCI as a private-public partnership in which the state and the foundation contribute equally to the program’s operation budget. “Matching dollars have been a driving force,” says McBride. Likewise, the \$1,000 in federal support for the certification fee provided through NBPTS was critical. “The federal subsidy was a great talking point for legislators because they knew it wouldn’t come to Wyoming any other way,” Garland says.

Garland adds that her message to lawmakers has been consistent: “We’re not going to use your money if we’re not willing to use ours,” she says. “That’s been huge in building trust.” In fact, WNBCI returns a portion of its \$656,000 state allocation at the end of each biennium, according to Garland.

Financial incentives and recognition for teachers.

The \$4,000 stipend for NBCTs played a key role in attracting teachers, but it hasn’t changed the tenor of the process in Wyoming. The first year after lawmakers approved the stipend in 2007, a record 174 candidates went through the process; the following year, the number fell to 124. “It only took one cohort for teachers to understand the rigor of the process and that certification is not a given,”

Preliminary results from a current WNBCI survey of Wyoming principals suggests that the majority—70 percent—believe that NBCTs demonstrate “more strongly an intentional and consistent provision of engaging, complex, challenging, and rich work for students and the demonstration of appropriate and adequate differentiated instruction.

Garland says. “The financial incentive is available, but teachers participate to improve their practice.”

Teachers also point to the Ellbogen Foundation’s sponsorship of an annual celebration for teachers who become National Board certified. Attendance at the event includes state and federal lawmakers, NBPTS leadership, educators from across the state, and teachers’ family members.

Drawing from outside resources to develop homegrown support programs.

Working with NBPTS, WNBCI brought in facilitators and candidate support providers from other states, including North Carolina, Kentucky, and Washington, to develop and offer the first workshops for candidates. “The

National Board network has been a tremendous support for our emerging program. Whenever we call, they share with us their expertise and experiences,” Job says.

“In recent years, a core group of in-state NBCTs has taken a significant leadership role in the initiative. They began developing agendas and content

“We have to grow National Board to that critical mass to see the true impact of this work,”
Garland says. “We believe that this is the right thing for Wyoming teachers and, more importantly, students.”

**— Mary Ellbogen Garland, President,
John P. Ellbogen Foundation**

The Ellbogen Foundation's willingness

to invest its own time and dollars in the program was a key to obtaining state funds. Because of the financial support, lawmakers describe WNBCI as a private-public partnership in which the state and the foundation contribute equally to the program's operation budget.

for the initiative workshops to meet Wyoming's unique needs," Garland says. "They have also played an increasing role in recruitment statewide."

Due to the state's rural nature, the need for excellent communication between CSPs, program personnel, and candidates is critical. Tiffany White, the foundation's executive assistant, is instrumental as the main point of contact. Along with the CSP network, White, Job, and Garland are available to answer questions. "Teachers know they can call us at any time—and they do," Garland says.

Accountability. The foundation tracks a wide range of statistics about the National Board Certi-

fication process and has been responsive to recent requests by lawmakers to provide metrics about the effectiveness of the program. WNBCI is also transparent about the need to bring up the percentage of candidates who have become National Board certified, which has improved from 17 percent of candidates who certified in 2006 to the 40 percent range in more recent years.

Sustainability. With McBride leaving his elected office as state education superintendent at the end of 2010, the foundation's consistent support will play a key role in ensuring that the program remains sustainable, he says.

"It's almost becoming self-perpetuating," McBride adds, pointing to the role NBCTs now play in recruiting sessions. "Most who attend now have actually seen the culture change and the attitude, behavior, and process that [NBCTs] bring to the table. It's remarkable and, we hope, sustainable."

Having grown the percentage of Wyoming's NBCTs from 0.5 to 3.7 percent with growth expected to continue at about 1 percent each year, foundation officials are confident they will reach their 10 percent goal. "We have to grow National Board Certification to that critical mass to see the true impact of this work," Garland says. "We believe that this is the right thing for Wyoming teachers and, more importantly, students."

Stakeholders on the WNBCI Advisory Board

- John P. Ellbogen Foundation
- Wyoming School Boards Association
- Wyoming Qwest Communications
- University of Wyoming College of Education
- Wyoming Department of Education
- Wyoming Professional Teaching Standards Board
- Wyoming School-University Partnership
- Wyoming Education Association
- National Board for Professional Teaching Standards
- Principals
- District superintendents
- Active and retired National Board Certified Teachers

To learn more about the Wyoming National Board Certification Initiative, visit www.wnbc.org.



About NBPTS

National Board Certification is administered by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, an independent, nonprofit, nonpartisan and nongovernmental organization.

NBPTS advances the quality of teaching and learning by developing professional standards for accomplished teaching, creating a voluntary system to certify teachers who meet those standards and integrating certified teachers into educational reform efforts.

© 2010 National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. All rights reserved. NBPTS, NBCT, National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, National Board Certified Teacher, National Board Certification, Take One!, Accomplished Teacher and 1-800-22TEACH are registered trademarks or service marks of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. Other marks are trademarks or registered trademarks of their respective organizations.

The contents of this publication were developed in whole or in part under a grant from the U.S. Department of Education. However, those contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the federal government.

NBPTS[®]

National Board for
Professional Teaching Standards

1525 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 500
Arlington, VA 22209
www.nbpts.org | 1-800-22TEACH

October 2010

ISBN-13: 978-1-878520-16-6
ISBN-10: 1-878520-16-4