REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

GRADUATE: All Students Successful

Maximum $40,000/year for up to 3 Years

THE JOHN P. ELLBOGEN FOUNDATION
PO Box 1670
Laramie, WY 82070

Foundation Mission
To create or cause change primarily for the benefit of the people of the State of Wyoming through the support of science, education and charity.
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Purpose

The John P. Ellbogen Foundation will provide support and funding to a community-based design team that is comprised of the local school district administration, teachers and support staff, school board representation, PTA representation or the equivalent parent organization, Community College and/or University personnel whenever possible, students, early childhood specialists and community and business members. The coalition must **collaboratively implement and sustain** an initiative as part of a larger systemic design to (1) increase the services and supports necessary for more students, especially at-risk students, to complete high school with a diploma AND (2) increase the capacity of students who do graduate to succeed in their first year of postsecondary education/training or their first year in a job.

August 1, 2014

Introduction

The John P. Ellbogen Foundation is a private, not-for-profit family foundation with headquarters in Casper, Wyoming. The Foundation was funded from the life earnings of John P. "Jack" Ellbogen through his estate in 2001. The mission of the Foundation is to award grants to entities within the state that work diligently to make the quality of life better for Wyoming citizens.

The rationale behind this grant opportunity is that the Foundation Board realizes the tremendous social and economic impacts that dropping out of school has on individual student's lives, the health of our communities and the well being of the State of Wyoming. Further, the Foundation recognizes that there is not just one good idea that will keep students in school until they receive a diploma. It takes several strategies that align well together to provide supports and services specifically designed to meet the needs of students over time and across grade levels. Efforts that begin in high school to "save" students are often too late if a student has been struggling with their education in earlier years. Some students, to be successful in school and life, need additional opportunities to develop their behaviors, skills and knowledge from an early age. The Foundation is seeking community coalitions that will provide a continuum of programs and services to students which will produce the desired outcomes and impacts.

The John P. Ellbogen Foundation has identified two broad outcomes for investment in Wyoming communities and schools. The outcomes of proposals from the GRADUATE: All Students Successful grant must ultimately 1) increase the number of students, especially at-risk students, who complete high school and receive a diploma and 2) increase the capacity of students who do receive a diploma to succeed in their first year in the job market or in postsecondary education and training. This funding is meant to supplement not supplant funds for current systemic efforts to raise graduation rates.

Current Research

In an April, 2013, news item, Bob Beck of Wyoming Public Media interviewed Wyoming's Interim Education Director who expressed concerns about the state's declining graduation rate. Jim Rose noted that Wyoming's high school graduation rate had fallen below 80% for the second straight year. The most recent numbers showed that 78.9% of public high school students graduated in the 2011-2012 school year. Rose says this is an indicator that the state has some work to do to get the graduation numbers higher.

"When one in five high school students is not graduating we look at that as a serious indicator of things that we still need to improve. School improvement and increasing the graduation rate won't occur in just the 3 or 4 grades of high school. This is an issue we have to address across the spectrum," Jim Rose stated.

Throughout their lives too many students consistently experience one or more personal, family, community or academic conditions that put them in danger of low achievement in school or of dropping out. Students who are minority, live in poverty or low income situations, have a primary language other than English, move frequently among schools, are a teen parent, especially a teen mom, are homeless, are absent from school frequently, do not have positive relationships in school, and/or exhibit behavioral problems are less likely to graduate and/or succeed after high school.

Some of the individual consequences of dropping out of school as identified in the McREL publication, *Changing the Odds for Student Success: What Matters Most*, by Bryan Goodwin are as follows:

- Poverty rates of families headed by a high school dropout are two times that of families headed by a high school graduate.
- A dropout is 8 times more likely to be in jail or prison as a high school graduate and nearly 20 times more likely than a college graduate.
- Over a lifetime, dropouts earn $260,000 less than a high school graduate.
- The life expectancy for a high school dropout is 5 years shorter than a college graduate.

These individual consequences when played out have obvious and serious social and economic impacts on families, schools, communities and our society. For more information regarding impacts specific to Wyoming's economy, please see attachment #1 which was developed by the Alliance for Excellent Education.

The critical question to answer then is, "what can community/school coalitions do to change the odds for all students, especially those who are at-risk of dropping out, and positively impact graduation rates? Bryan Goodwin states the question like this, "In light of the hundreds (if not thousands) of things we might do, are we doing what matters most?"

In *Changing the Odds*, Mr. Goodwin speaks to high-leverage, high-pay-off areas for school systems. To qualify for this level of success, strategies must have an effect size greater than d=.40 to insure that the strategy is more effective than what a teacher themselves might accomplish. Effect size is the <u>measure of strength or overall impact of an initiative or intervention</u>. Bryan Goodwin describes the results of New Zealand researcher, John Hattie, who identified that an effect size of d=.40 is the "hinge point" where the effect size is strong enough for educators to see "real world change" in student achievement. It's the threshold point at which an intervention exceeds the average effect teachers have on student achievement which is d=.20 to d=.40.

The recommendations in the Goodwin book focus on the areas <u>within</u> the school to most likely have a positive effect on student success. They are:

- a guaranteed challenging, engaging curriculum
- curricular pathways to success
- whole-child supports
- high-performance school cultures, and
- data-driven, high-reliability systems.

The most powerful strategy identified by both Goodwin and Hattie in *Changing the Odds* and one which the Foundation has strongly supported through it's work is that <u>"the most important way school systems can change the odds for students is to make sure every child receives the benefit of a great teacher, every year in every classroom."</u> From Hattie's research and a meta-analysis of numerous other research projects, three behaviors that distinguish effective teachers stand out above the rest. Highly effective teachers challenge their students, create positive

classroom environments by developing strong relationships with their students and are intentional about their teaching. They know the how, when and why of what they are teaching.

The National Center for Dropout Prevention has identified fifteen effective strategies that have the most positive impact on the dropout rate and that cover the "spectrum" referred to by Jim Rose. When these strategies work well together or overlap and when improvement plans encompass all or most of the strategies, graduation rates increase.

The following strategies have been implemented successfully at all education levels and environments throughout the nation.

1. Active Learning
2. After-School Opportunities
3. Alternative Schooling
4. Career and Technology Education (CTE)
5. Early Childhood Education
6. Early Literacy Development
7. Educational Technology
8. Family Engagement
9. Individualized Instruction
10. Mentoring/Tutoring
11. Professional Development
12. Safe Learning Environments
13. School-Community Collaboration
14. Service-Learning
15. Systemic Renewal

To learn more about these strategies, go to http://www.dropoutprevention.org/effective-strategies. For each strategy, The National Center provides a definition and an overview as well as identifies resources and models for successful implementation.

The National Center also categorizes the fifteen effective strategies to highlight the fact that they address a spectrum of services and outcomes for individuals across all age levels, across all grade levels in schools and districts and at the community level when meaningful partnerships with the schools exist.

- The **School and Community Perspective** includes Systemic Renewal, School/Community Collaboration and Safe Learning Environment.
- **Early Interventions** includes Family Engagement, Early Childhood Education and Early Literacy Development.
- **Basic Core Strategies** includes Mentoring/Tutoring, Service Learning, Alternative Schooling and After School Opportunities.
- **Making the Most of Instruction** includes Professional Development, Active Learning, Educational Technology, Individualized Instruction and Career and Tech Education.

Actions Overview

The Board of the John P. Ellbogen Foundation supports comprehensive and systemic efforts to improve graduation rates for all students, especially students at risk. It follows then, that the Board will evaluate proposals and give weight to those that provide clear and convincing evidence that:

- schools and communities have come together to form a broad-based community design committee to implement high-leverage, high-pay-off strategies across the spectrum for a "cumulative impact" on students, student success and graduation rates.
- two-way communication is ongoing with the community to inform them of the negative consequences of students dropping out, of support strategies to address the problem, to build support and to actively engage the public in implementation.
- student voices are an integral and consistent component to understand what students want/need for their own success in school.
- meaningful data is collected and used to identify students most in need, to design effective interventions based on their needs, and to measure growth, progress or impact. Data should also be used to justify modifications and changes to the operation of an initiative.
- a warning system is in place to re-engage students early and initiate timely interventions.
- strategies across the spectrum have clear outcomes or impacts which can be documented or measured and have an effect size that meets or exceeds the "hinge point". The intended outcomes or impact should be appropriate for students at the different points along the spectrum.   For example, an outcome for early literacy development could be that all students would be reading on grade level in third grade. An outcome for community-based early childhood systems initiatives could be fewer children entering kindergarten in need of intensive interventions.
- evaluation processes and an annual in-depth review of the strategies and results to recommend modifications to implementation is an integral part of the proposal.

For more information, to ask questions regarding this grant opportunity, or for technical assistance please contact the individual listed below.

Mary Garland
mleg0@yahoo.com
307-761-1898

Grant Proposal Guidance

The John P. Ellbogen Foundation intends to pilot this graduation initiative in three to four Wyoming communities that are different in size, student population composition and geographic locations. Preference will be given to those communities who have 1) demonstrated active involvement in the WY National Board Certification Initiative 2) an existing, operating early childhood coalition that works with the Wyoming Early Childhood Partnership 3) a functioning after school programs that engage with the Wyoming After School Alliance and/or 4) a focus on early literacy development for children ages 0-8 and uses the expertise of the University of Wyoming Literacy Center.

Who Can Apply?

Eligible applicants are Wyoming community coalitions that include multiple partners, as outlined above, each of whom is committed to be a significant and active partner in the development and implementation of the proposal. It is also required that each partner make an investment in the proposal by contributing a cash match and/or in-kind resources.

IRS rules and regulations require the Foundation to grant to non-profit entities with 501c3 status or governmental agencies. Therefore, the coalition must include a non-profit or governmental partner who is designated as the financial sponsor for this grant. The sponsor is legally responsible for ensuring that the proposal falls within its own tax exempt purposes.

Award Amount

The maximum amount awarded to each successful applicant will be $40,000 for each year over a three year period. The Board's intent is to provide funding for the initial year of implementation and for two additional years. This will give adequate time for the Coalition to prove the initiative is successful in meeting its stated outcomes. **The Board requires assurances that the initiative will be sustained after the three-year funding period.**

Funding for each year is contingent upon successful completion of the proposal as outlined for the previous year and receipt of the annual report.

Matching Funds Requirement

A 50% cash match for each year will be required.

Sustainability

The grant funds will support the initial development and operations of a systemic initiative that should continue until the stated outcomes are achieved. It is crucial that the applicant recognizes this expectation and includes in their proposal planning strategies to address sustainability both in terms of leadership and ongoing revenues/resources.

How Can the Funds be Used?

Funds may be used for expected and reasonable start up and operational costs for personnel, including salary and benefits, professional development, materials/supplies, and fees for contracted professional services that directly support the implementation of identified strategies. The grant is to be invested in direct services to students. No more than 3% of the total grant amount may be used for accounting and reporting purposes or other overhead expenses. **Grant funds must supplement, not supplant existing infrastructures and expenditures to meet the outcomes of the proposal.**

Ineligible Activities

- Short term programs that are unlikely to be sustained
- Capital construction
- Duplication of existing programs and/or services
- National conferences
- Travel
- Political activity
- Contributions
- Vehicle purchase

Application Process

The grant proposal and supporting documents are posted on the John P. Ellbogen Foundation website, www.ellbogenfoundation.org.

Completed proposals may be submitted until funds have been fully allocated. We will announce grant recipients as awards are made and update continuing opportunity on our website. Applications must meet a level of excellence on the associated rubric to be funded. Proposals must be submitted via email attachment to: Mary Garland, President, John P. Ellbogen Foundation - mleg0@yahoo.com.

Proposals will be read and evaluated by a team of at least three individuals. The evaluation team may contact potential grantees for more information if necessary. The Foundation will notify applicants within 3 weeks of receipt of their proposal on the status of funding.

Evaluation of Proposals

Scoring of the proposals will utilize a rubric with a point scale of 1-4 and will include:
- The identification of coalition partners and a detailed description of their roles and responsibilities in the proposal's governance, fiscal management and implementation of the project's action plan.
- The documentation of and compelling justification for the new initiative.
- A relevant description of the targeted population which conveys knowledge of their needs and an understanding of how to work collaboratively with the different student at-risk populations.

- A clear and direct connection between the stated problem, the interventions and the intended impact(s).
- The capability of the coalition partners to develop and implement the grant proposal and achieve the identified outcomes within the given grant period.
- A project plan which includes: clear, concise outcomes; specific and sequenced tasks to achieve outcomes with responsibilities assigned to coalition partners; sound methodologies for data collection and evaluation, a draft plan for sustainability.
- The cost-effectiveness of the budget over the three years, the amount of matching funds and in-kind resources, a budget narrative on how costs and expenditures were calculated, and the draft plan for financial sustainability following the grant period.
- The evaluation plan to document changes that occur as a result of implementing the proposal. Evaluation should provide both qualitative and quantitative evidence to validate the proposal's success.
- The capacity of the proposal to advance the mission and intent of the John P. Ellbogen Foundation.

Reporting Requirements

The Foundation requires an annual report of activities, outcomes and expenditures. More frequent reporting or communication may be negotiated at the time of the grant award. If a significant modification needs to be made to the project plan, the Foundation requires notification and a discussion about the proposed amendments prior to the implementation of the modifications.

Evaluation

An evaluation component is required. Both qualitative and quantitative data should <u>prove impact</u> in terms of both progress and sustained change for the targeted population(s).

<u>**Proposals are limited to 10 pages.**</u>

Disclaimer

In the event that proposals do not meet the criteria as outlined, the Foundation is under no obligation to make a grant award.

Grant Proposal Form

Cover Page

Grant Seeker:_____

Project Title:_____

Primary Contact Person: _____
Phone: _____
Email: _____

Signature(s) of Partners and Date(s)

_____

Abstract

Project Title: _____

Project Location: _____

Coalition Partners: Please list and give a brief description of roles and responsibilities of each partner. Identify the lead individual/organization.

Project Summary: (Use as much space as necessary to provide an adequate description of the project.)

Project Duration:

Total Amount Requested: _____

Justification of Need: Please provide data and other information which establishes a compelling statement of need in an identified service area and for the targeted population. Be concise and clear and provide only data that you have the capacity to impact in a significant manner. Also, describe what is currently being done to address the identified needs and how partners will effectively collaborate with these efforts to enhance outcomes.

Partners: Please list the individuals/organizations who will be involved in this project and explain what they will do and why they are important to the project. See the section above for required members of the coalition. Cite previous or current experience of partners to establish their credentials/capacity to insure the success of the proposal. Identify the lead organization(s) for governance and fiscal management.

Target Population: Identify who will benefit from this project both directly and indirectly. How will they benefit in both the short term and long term. What change do you expect to see in three years? In six years? Describe the partners' experiences in working with the target population.

Project Design: The Foundation requires a cohesive, systemic and comprehensive plan that gives the Board confidence that significant outcomes have been identified and a quality, aligned plan of action will deliver the intended results. Therefore, the proposal needs to have

- clear and significant outcomes,
- an explanation of specific, sequential actions which will achieve the identified outcomes,
- names of individuals or entities who will be accountable for specific actions and results,
- essential resources to achieve outcomes,
- identification of the data needed, how it will be collected and most importantly, how it will be used to impact the quality of the project, and

- estimated timelines.

Please also include in the project design explanation

- the problem-solving process that will be used by the partners to address unanticipated events or results and
- the communication strategies that will be used to keep partners connected and engaged throughout the project timeframe.

A template for the project plan is available as a separate document on the Foundation's website.

Project Evaluation: Design a project evaluation component that will provide evidence of growth towards and achievement of the intended outcomes. Explain how partners will determine when outcomes have been met based on collected data and information. Also, identify the data that will be collected, from whom, how frequently, the methods of collection to be used, how it will be compiled and analyzed, who will do the evaluation work, and how the information will be reported and used.

Budget and Budget Narrative: Develop a budget to explain what the project will cost in total over the three years and for each one of the three years. Provide details by including all expenditure categories appropriate to the project proposal. Describe how the amounts in each category were calculated.

Identify the required cash and in-kind contributions and the source for each.

Identify who will be accountable for the fiscal management over the three years of grant funding and provide their credentials to do so.

What will the project cost in year four and how will the project transition to self-sufficiency by the beginning of year four? Who will be responsible for the administrative and financial functions when the grant period ends?

A template for the budget is available as a separate document on the Foundation's website.

Final Note to Applicants: The evaluation rubric is available on the Foundation's website. Please read the directions for scoring in addition to the rubric.