

Sweetwater County School District Number One is very encouraged by the improvement we are seeing in our graduation rates.

The graduation rate increased approximately 3% from last year, up to 79.3% across our school system, according to the latest report from the Wyoming Department of Education.

This is particularly noteworthy – and speaks to the dedication of our students and their families - given that our Individualized Education Program (IEP) students increased roughly 13% and our free and reduced lunch eligible students increased about 7.5% from last year. This underscores how our teachers, support staff, administrators, students, and parents are working together to overcome challenges.

One highlight is the 93.5% graduation rate for students in our Career and Technical Education (CTE) Concentrators. The creation of our Career and Technical Education Academy at Rock Springs High School is showing immediate dividends. This emphasis we've placed on student-centered pathways and career readiness is paying off with more students graduating on time - and with good local jobs waiting.

How did this happen? In working with our community, parents, students, and staff, we have put in place systems that meet the needs of our students, including:

- Adjusting school start and end times so that they work for students.
- Using federal grant funds to designate an intervention team of classroom teachers, grant-funded graduation coaches, grant-funded interventionists, special education staff and effective leaders. This team is ready to support credit recovery and jump in early with students who may need help. It's working.
- Second-chance breakfast in all schools in the same year with the 4-day week.
- Putting and keeping quality teachers in front of our students, along with support staff. Together they build relationships with students, all driven by the desire to succeed.

We salute the growth of our students and will continue to build upon this positive trend. But the upward trajectory we all want is not guaranteed. We must continue to find ways to invest in what works, as we have done with the federal grant-funded intervention team. A high graduation rate does not begin in high school, but starts at a young age with preschool and continues K - 12. We must continue to take an in-depth look at the classes we offer students, so they are relevant to future careers and engage student interest. We must continue to be flexible and adapt to meet the needs of our students.

Today, as a community, we can all pause and celebrate the improved graduation rates. And then get right back to work.

Thank you,

Kelly
Superintendent of Schools