



Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Newsletter



Sweetwater County School District #1 will create and foster academic success through partnerships with its schools, community and families.

- Increase student and family awareness of educational and career opportunities in Sweetwater County and beyond.
- Instill and reinforce employability skills and a drive for learning.
- Recognize and celebrate student, family, community and employee contributions.



Sweetwater County School District #1 will nurture a positive learning climate and culture.

- Promote positive behaviors and relationships among students, staff, families and the community.
- Ensure schools are safe and secure.
- Proactively support physical, mental and emotional health.

CIA Newsletter

April 2021

Sweetwater County School District #1

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RSJH Students Working with NASA to Land on Mars!!

Students in Sweetwater County School District #1 are playing a role in the U.S. Department of Education's ongoing effort to solve a national problem — the critical shortage of students with mastery of science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) skills.

Through an exciting out-of-school collaboration between the Department and NASA, local students are conducting scientific observations of the natural environment and (are) learning the relevance of STEM skills to daily life.

Rock Springs Junior High is part of the Department's Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) Grant Program, which focuses in part on exposing students in high-need schools to meaningful STEM learning opportunities. One goal of the 21st CCLC program — which serves more than 1.7 million students nationwide — is to demonstrate the value of STEM skills both inside and outside the classroom, thereby raising student interest in STEM and related professions.

Since NASA first became a partner in 2013, available programs have grown from 20 sites in three states to nearly 180 sites across 18 states

SCSD #1 Mission: To provide a quality education for all students.

SCSD #1 Vision: As an innovative district, united with our community, we empower and inspire all students to academic excellence in pursuit of their interests and passions.

in 2020-2021. This year's programming allows NASA to offer unique experiences in the [STEM Challenges](#).

These STEM Challenges introduce students to the engineering design process so they can develop solutions to real NASA challenges, such as how to land a spacecraft on Mars or grow plants in lunar habitats. Students work with NASA engineers and scientists to receive feedback on their work, learn about STEM careers and find out what it is like to work in science and engineering professions.

In 2020-2021, students in Wyoming are participating in the NASA partnership program. This year they are working on the project how to parachute onto Mars.

Rock Springs Junior High students have the opportunity to interact with high-level STEM practitioners; the engaging, hands-on nature of the activities; the ability to understand how STEM skills can benefit daily life and the need to prepare students for an increasingly complex and competitive job market.

To learn more about the Department's Nita M. Lowey 21st CCLC Grant Program, visit: <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/21stcclc/>.

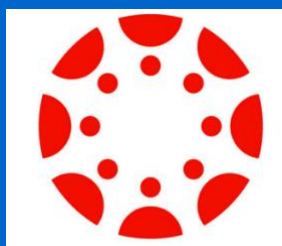
To learn more about other 21st CCLCs in Wyoming, visit: WDE@wyo.gov



WY-TOPP Testing Reminders

- WY-TOPP testing window will be open on Tuesday, April 13. The window will be open until Friday, May 7th. Please make sure your students have engaged in a Modular or a practice to ensure they know how to navigate the testing platform. The Modulares are great formative assessments!
- Administrators will be conducting WY-TOPP testing training. Upon completion of the training, all staff who are testing or involved in testing need to sign the [WY-TOPP Security Agreement](#).
- The Wyoming Department of Education will be randomly dropping into schools to check for test security. The [WDE Checklist](#) is available for review and to ensure testing security.
- Teachers/principals need to review the "[Allowable Classroom Items](#)" prior to testing students. Number lines and alphabet lines are not allowed— click above to see the other prohibited items. Are word walls allowed? Click [here to see](#).
- Please double check your student accommodations and make sure they work. Students should have practiced all year long using their accommodations. Please contact your principal if you have concerns.

- **Do Not Remote Test:** In order to ensure validity and reliability of the state assessment, there will not be any remote testing options. To accommodate parents/guardians who do not want their students to test in person at a school testing site due to COVID-19 pandemic, schools will report these circumstances using the Student Not Tested Form (SNTF). The principals have access to their SNTF spreadsheet and upon completion of testing, the district will aggregate and submit the file to WDE. Keeping safety in mind, please encourage your students to come and test. The results are valuable to drive school improvement and student placement/intervention.
 - **Wyoming Accountability Waiver:** The State Board of Education approved a motion to waive all state accountability requirements. Schools will not get their School Performance Report (blue, green, yellow and orange report) in the fall. Please test as many students as possible keeping safety in the forefront.
 - **Federal Accountability Waiver:** WDE submitted a waiver request to not hold the districts in Wyoming accountable for scores. The plan is currently under review. To view the plan, please [click here](#).
 - **Never share your passwords!** If someone needs access to WY-TOPP to test, we can create an account for them. WDE can track account activity and inappropriate behavior can be traced back to you. If someone else commits an inappropriate act while using your account, you will be held responsible.
 - **Additional Resources:** Test security is important for all assessments. Any violation of test security, whether intended or accidental, can compromise our ability to make inferences about student performance on state assessments. The WDE emphasizes proactive practices — before, during, and after testing — as the primary method of ensuring test security. In preparation for the WY-TOPP Summative window, which opens on April 13, review with staff the [Assessment Security Training slides](#), [WY-TOPP Test Administration Manual](#), and the [Assessment Best Practices](#) guidance. The testing security agreement is available by clicking here. Please make sure you have a signed copy in the office and one in your file.
 - If you have questions or need testing support, please contact the Curriculum Instruction and Assessment office.
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CLEVER PANDA

This is a new professional development opportunity through the Wyoming Department of Education. The course deals with advanced Canvas topics. The class is self-paced and can be taken for one full PTSB credit (14 total hours of anticipated time to complete the course). The Clever Pandas In-Training Course is now live and available for [registration](#). Registration will remain open throughout the spring, but the course will be ending on May 31, 2021. Get your seat in the first ever cohort so you too can be called a Clever Panda.

CELEBRATION: SWEETWATER #1 ELEMENTARY SCIENCE TEACHERS PUBLISHED IN NATIONAL SCIENCE JOURNAL

Congratulations Jennifer Applequist and Lorna Bath!! Elementary teachers, Lorna Bath from Northpark Elementary and Jennifer Applequist from Farson-Eden Elementary, are published authors for a national science teaching magazine, *Science Scope*. *Science Scope* is an award-winning NSTA journal for middle school and junior high level schools. Read the article by [clicking here](#). The key learning in the article is " *By asking students to embody various perspectives in a familiar place, local spaces transform into novel grounds for rich learning.*" Lorna and Jennifer are working hard to improve science instruction beyond their classrooms by sharing ideas with other science teachers around the country. Thank you ladies for transforming science education.

SWEETWATER #1 ACCREDITATION VISIT

The Sweetwater#1 accreditation visit took place on Monday, March 29 and Tuesday, March 30. The WDE accreditation team consisted of WDE staff, superintendents, curriculum directors, principals and teachers from across the state. In Sweetwater #1, teachers, principals, board members and directors were involved in the two day process. This year, the visitation was virtual, which is new. Sweetwater#1 had over 50 teachers involved in interviews with the accreditation team as well 7 teachers who taught virtual classroom observations (with CBV students) using technology. All of the Sweetwater#1 Board of Trustees were involved in the process, as well as all building principals and directors. Superintendent McGovern will receive a formal written report with our final scores in the next two weeks. Celebrations will be announced and areas of growth will be recommended. Thank you to everyone for your hard work in making this visit a success.

AND THE SURVEY SAYS . . .

Needs Assessment Survey: Results from the staff needs assessment are available by [clicking here](#). Teachers revealed that they are concerned about the CBV students, special education students and students who are struggling socially and emotionally. Teachers also shared that these struggling students could benefit from teacher professional development on high-impact instructional strategies as well as PBIS training, social emotional learning, mental health and trauma, differentiated teaching strategies, using technology, and how to accommodate all learners. Educators also noted that they value PLC time with and would like additional time to work with their colleagues. Other district resources teachers would like to utilize include administrators to enhance teaching, to have additional instructional planning time and time to use and learn about technology.

PLC Survey: PLC teams have been self-assessing on how they are doing as a team for the past 3 years. The [first indicator](#) assesses the structures and commitment teams have to working together to achieve learning for all students. The overall results indicate there was an overall increase in movement from the Pre-Initiating category to the Developing and Sustaining rubric categories. The sustaining rubric highlights that the PLC process is deeply engrained in the school culture. Teachers know that PLCs drive school improvement and the teams are self-directed and skillful in advocacy and inquiry. This category emphasizes that team processes directly impact teacher practice in the classroom. For more detailed results, [click here](#). The [second indicator](#) assesses the ability to identify and honor the commitments we make to members of the PLC team. The teams are respectful and come prepared and ready to work. These commitments allow members to become more effective and the collaborative experience more rewarding. Survey results show that there is movement from Initiating to Developing and Sustaining. For more detailed results, [click here](#).

Professional Development Survey: Teacher survey results indicate that they are interested in the following summer academies:

- Prioritizing Instruction: Teaching in a 4-Day week
- Trauma Based Education
- Self Care Camp
- Differentiated Instruction
- Online-Teaching Strategies (SWIVL and Wacom)

Look for more information about Summer Academies coming out soon!