

# COMMUNITY SUPPORT KEY TO SCHOOL SUCCESS

We need your help. We need communities across Wyoming to step-up and send the message that we value a rigorous education for our young people. In September, I sent out 200 letters to various organizations, community representatives, civic and business leaders in Wyoming. The letters detailed the Wyoming Department of Education's new strategic plan that focuses on improving school attendance, improving graduation rates and reducing drop-outs, and reducing bullying.

The reason for the letters is simple. While we know that these areas of focus can and will affect students' quality of education and learning environment, we also know that schools can't do it all by themselves.

Students have to be in school for schools to make a difference and people in local communities can make sure that happens. Research has revealed that being involved in your schools affects student achievement, safety and school success.

I am asking for you to take advantage of every opportunity to talk about these issues within your community and organization, and to determine specific steps that you and your organization can take to help us improve daily school attendance, keep students in school, and reduce bullying.

Currently, the average attendance rate for Wyoming is 94.1%, and we want to improve the statewide attendance rate to 96%. The Wyoming graduation rate is currently 79.3% and we want to increase it to 85%. Bullying is reported in the Youth Risk Behavior Survey by asking students if they have been bullied in schools. Middle grade students have reported that 50% have been bullied and we want to reduce this to 45%. High school students have reported that 29.1% have been bullied and we want to reduce this to 24.1%. Data varies widely across Wyoming, but there is room for improvement in every region of the state.

I know that you have heard the adage, "it takes a community to raise our children." I sincerely believe this statement. We really need your help! If we work together we can help our children achieve at high levels, graduate, be good citizens and lead productive lives. Please join me in these efforts to help Wyoming students.

For more information on how you can help or become involved, contact your local school district or the Wyoming Department of Education at 307-777-7675.



Dr. Jim McBride, Superintendent of Public Instruction


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