



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

317 W. Main Street
Boise, ID 83735-0790

TRANSMITTAL #2

MEMORANDUM

December 13, 2005

TO: Workforce Development Council

FROM: Karen A. McGee, Chair

SUBJECT: High School Reform Initiative

ACTION REQUESTED: Endorse the proposals by the Idaho State Board of Education

BACKGROUND:

I have called this special meeting to consider the proposed rules adopted in November by the Idaho State Board of Education to implement the High School Reform Initiative. The meeting is being held by phone in advance of our regularly scheduled meeting because the Idaho Legislature will be considering them prior to our next meeting. The initiative represents a significant effort to improve the skills of students exiting high school to better prepare them for further learning and work.

We have included copies of Dwight Johnson's original transmittal and background materials requesting our support for this initiative.

Contact: Primary Dwight Johnson
Secondary Karen McGee

Attachment

MEMORANDUM

TO: Workforce Development Council

FROM: Dwight A. Johnson, Interim Executive Director
Idaho State Board of Education

DATE: November 22, 2005

RE: ***“The Future is Now” High School Redesign***

The State Board of Education is moving forward on a plan to increase rigor and academic expectations to better prepare Idaho’s high school students.

Consider the following:

- Two-thirds of the nation’s new jobs will require additional education beyond high school. Students need the skills to excel in these job opportunities.
- To be successful in growing and attracting businesses that produce high wage jobs Idaho must have an educated and skilled workforce.
- Of the 77 percent of students who graduate from Idaho’s high schools, only 34 percent will immediately enter post-secondary education.
- 40 percent of students who enter Idaho’s post-secondary institutions must take remedial courses before they are able to begin college level coursework.
- Idaho ranks 46th in the nation in terms of the college graduates per capita – only Mississippi, Arkansas, Nevada and West Virginia have fewer college graduates.

Since the beginning of public education, our schools have emphasized reading, writing and arithmetic to be successful. The only core subject an Idaho student is required to take during all four years is English. Currently, the basic subjects of math and science are only required for two years. Because we only require two years of math, many Idaho students never take a course above a basic algebra class and then enter the workforce and college unprepared. A large number of those who do go on to college are not ready for college-entrance exams and need remediation as soon as they enter college. Last year alone, Idaho college students took 24,000 credit hours of remedial courses at a cost of close to \$2 million to our state. In addition, Idaho’s high school graduation requirements are not aligned with Idaho’s college entrance requirements.

In our changing economy, we can no longer justify the lack of math and science in our schools. Math and science are for every student. Students need math and science whether they are going to work, a university or a technical program.

To address these issues the State Board of Education is proposing the following:

- **Increase math and science high school graduation requirements.** Under the proposed rules, students graduating in 2012 will be required to complete three years of math and three years of science. Students graduating in 2013 will be required to complete four years of math and three years of science. Students must complete a minimum of algebra I and geometry in four years. Students must also take pre-algebra before entering ninth grade. This phased in approach allows school districts additional time to develop the needed resources for the new math requirement and to develop alternative accelerated math courses allowed under the rules.
- **Require students complete a senior project.** Many school districts are already requiring students to complete an oral and written project to graduate from high school. Not only will this help engage students their senior year, but assure that students can effectively communicate. The implementation date for this is 2012.
- **Require 11th grade students take a college entrance exam.** By requiring students to take either the ACT, SAT or Compass exam, one the barriers to post-secondary education is removed. It also gives the state additional academic information. Several states already require this and their experience has lead to increases in post-secondary attendance. The implementation date for this is 2012.
- **Require schools offer at least one advanced opportunities to engage students** in more rigorous coursework including: Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, Tech-Prep, or dual credit. The implementation date for this is 2007.

The State Board of Education understands new graduation requirements will require additional funding. Because of increased costs, the State Board is recommending that graduation requirements be phased in over a period of several years. In an effort to develop some preliminary costs, the State Board formed a committee that consisted of representatives from our office, the State Department of Education, Legislative Services Office, the Division of Financial Management, and several school districts. This committee developed very preliminary figures for the funding of increased graduation requirements. For FY07, the preliminary estimated cost will be \$1.5 million for teacher training and increases in the Idaho Digital Learning Academy's funding. When the

requirements are fully implemented in FY 2013, the preliminary estimated cost is \$17 million or roughly one percent of the public schools budget.

A short history of the proposal:

In October 2004, State Board of Education President Rod Lewis announced the formation of an Accelerated Learning Taskforce to analyze the need to strengthen the high school curriculum and to better prepare students to continue their education or enter the workforce. Taskforce members included Board members, curriculum directors, State Department of Education officials, high school administrators, teachers, representatives from higher education, professional-technical educators, and the Governor's office. The taskforce met for seven months evaluating international statistics, national trends, current requirements in other states, and Idaho educational data. Taskforce members presented the rule changes to the Board at the August Board meeting where Board members gave their initial approval.

The Board hosted a statewide summit in September to explain the changes and discuss the need for high school reform. More than 350 people attended the summit including legislators, educators, administrators, school board members, higher education officials and the business community. The Board then held six public hearings throughout the state to gather feedback, as well as receiving written comments on the proposal. Board staff attended every regional superintendent meeting in the state and presented to civic organizations across Idaho. The Board also hosted a stakeholders meeting of interest groups including the Idaho Educational Association, the Idaho School Boards Association, Idaho School Superintendents Association, alternative high school educators and higher education.

The State Board of Education carefully considered the comments and made several significant changes to the pending rules based on the feedback received. A matrix which explains the current requirements, the initial proposed requirements, and the final requirements the Board adopted after reviewing all the comments is attached.

If you have additional questions, concerning this proposal, please contact me, a member of the State Board of Education or the State Board of Education staff. For more information on the proposal including sample transcripts and national news on high school reform go to: www.boardofed.idaho.gov/HiSchIRedesign/index.asp.

Accelerated Learning Proposed Graduation Rules High School – Grades 9 –12

Content Area	Current Requirement	Proposed Requirement	Final Proposed Requirement
Language Arts – includes 1 credit of speech	9	9	9
Mathematics	4	8 (including Algebra I, Geometry and Algebra II) Students may opt out of Algebra II	8 credits including 2 credits of Algebra I; 2 credits of Geometry; 2 credits of Algebra II or advanced math beyond Geometry according to standards and course approved by Idaho Department of Education; and 2 other math credits. Students may opt out of Algebra II or advanced math. Implementation date: 3 years of math in 2012 Implementation date: 4 years of math in 2013
Science	4	6 (All lab)	6 credits – 4 credits which are lab based Refer to definition of “lab” (1) Implementation date: 2012
Social Studies includes 2 credits of government 2 credits of History 1 credit of economics	5	5	5
Humanities	2	2	2
Health	1	1	1
PE	0	0	0
Postsecondary Readiness Plan	Learning Plan at end of 8 th grade – revised yearly	Postsecondary Readiness Plan at end of 6 th grade – revised yearly or more often at student or parent request	Learning Plan at end of 8 th grade – revised yearly Insert sentence (2)

(1) “Lab” Definition –A laboratory science course is defined as one in which at least one (1) class period each week is devoted to providing students with the opportunity to manipulate equipment, materials, specimens or develop skills in observation and analysis and discover, demonstrate, illustrate or test scientific principles or concepts.

(2) Learning Plan –The plan should include a rigorous academic core and a related sequence of electives in academic, professional technical education (PTE), and/or humanities aligned with the students’ post graduation goals.

Content Area	Current Requirement	Proposed Requirement	Recommended
Career Focus Electives – Do not have to be in the same area – students may change interest/focus every semester	0	8 May include courses in any content area including fine arts, professional technical, technology, PE, liberal arts, etc.	0
Senior Project	None	Required including oral presentation, project and written report – Districts will set requirements for project	Required including oral presentation, project and written report – Districts will set requirements for project Implementation date: 2012
College Entrance Exam	None	ACT, SAT or Compass by the end of 11 th grade	ACT, SAT or Compass by the end of 11 th grade – Implementation date: 2012
Advanced Learning Opportunities defined as Advanced Placement®, dual credit, Tech Prep or International Baccalaureate courses/programs	None	Require schools to offer advanced opportunities <i>at the high school campus</i> or provide opportunities for students to take courses at the postsecondary campus	Require schools to provide advanced opportunities or provide opportunities for students to take courses at a postsecondary campus Implementation date: 2007
Total credits required for graduation including electives and core requirements * *More credits may be offered or required by individual school districts	42	46	46

Middle School – Grades 6 – 8

Content Area	Current Requirement	Proposed Requirement	Recommended
“C” Average	No cumulative grade average required	Cumulative C average in content area courses (Math, Science, Language Arts and Social Studies)	No cumulative grade average required
Pre-Algebra	No requirement	Passing grade (D or higher) before entering 9 th grade	Before entering 9 th grade Implementation date: 2012
Postsecondary Readiness Plan	Learning Plan at end of 8 th grade – revised yearly	Postsecondary Readiness Plan at end of 6 th grade – Can change anytime	Learning Plan at end of 8 th grade – revised yearly Insert sentence (2)

“THE FUTURE
IS NOW!”



REDESIGNING
IDAHO'S HIGH
SCHOOLS TO
REFLECT THE
WORLDWIDE
ECONOMY

EDUCATION is the Key to Economic Independence

- The more education a person receives the more money they will make during their lifetime.

The United States is one of the wealthiest countries on earth. One of the reasons Americans enjoy a higher standard of living is the American educational system has laid the foundation for economic prosperity. In the United States, every child has the opportunity to go to school and to receive an education through 12th grade. Children are educated regardless of race, religion or economic status. Students also have the opportunity to receive more training at a university or college of their choice. This system has catapulted the U.S. to economic dominance, but as other countries do more to educate their students, our economic vitality is at risk.

MORE EDUCATION = HIGHER SALARIES AND LOWER UNEMPLOYMENT

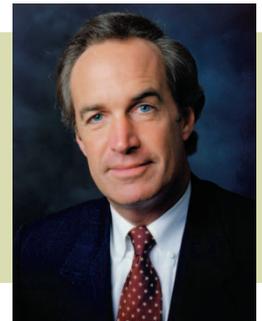
There is a direct correlation between the amount of education a person receives and the money he or she will earn over their lifetime. The U.S. Census Department reports nationwide an individual with a master's degree will earn roughly \$59,508 a year versus \$30,766 for a person with a high school diploma. Statistics also show that not only do college graduates make more money, but are more employable and enjoy better health. A college education yields more financial benefits, and college-educated citizens rely less on public assistance, vote and volunteer more.

Unfortunately, compared to other countries, the U.S. is not graduating enough students from high school or college.

Source: The Investment Payoff: A 50-State Analysis of the Public and Private Benefits of Higher Education can be accessed at <http://www.ihep.org/>.

"Idaho's students are the brightest and the best, but it is up to us to ensure that their educational experience lives up to their potential. Otherwise, we're failing them and our future."

—Idaho Governor Dirk Kempthorne



EDUCATION and TRAINING PAY 2005

EDUCATIONAL LEVEL

IDAHO MEDIAN PAY PER HOUR AND YEAR

\$10.00/hr. \$20.00/hr. \$30.00/hr. \$40.00/hr.
\$20,800 yr. \$41,600 yr. \$62,400 yr. \$83,200 yr.

First Professional Degree or Doctoral Degree

\$35.26

Master's Degree or Work Experience + Bachelor's

\$28.71

Bachelor's Degree

\$24.99

Associate's Degree or Postsecondary Vocational Training

\$16.73

Work Experience in Related Occupation

\$17.90

Long-term and Moderate on-the-job Training

\$13.87

Short-term on-the-job-training

\$9.59

Source: Idaho Department of Commerce and Labor

WORLD vs UNITED STATES

UNITED STATES STUDENTS OUTPERFORM THEIR INTERNATIONAL COUNTERPARTS IN GRADES 4 AND 8 IN MATH AND SCIENCE. BUT, BY GRADE 12, STUDENTS FROM MOST COUNTRIES ARE OUTPERFORMING U.S. STUDENTS.

Despite the position of the United States as the world's super power, America is struggling to educate its students to effectively compete on an international level. Statistics clearly show that while American students score near the top on achievement tests in grades 4 and 8, by the 12th grade our students are scoring at the bottom. While America has focused critical efforts on increasing standards and accountability in the last 10 years, those efforts have largely focused on elementary and middle school and have left high schools relatively unchanged. Essentially, the longer students stay in American schools, the less they learn compared to students in other countries. When looking at the system as a whole, American high school students fall far behind. A recent study showed American 15-year-olds ranked 29th compared to students in 34 industrialized countries in math. Only students in Portugal, Italy, Greece, Turkey, and Mexico scored lower. Other key subjects such as science and reading show similar and equally dismaying results. Student achievement plummets in high school not because U.S. students aren't learning, but international students are learning more. While schools are beginning to put in place a more rigorous curriculum, more must be done to ensure students are challenged in high school in order to be college or work ready.

■ Only one country tests better than 4th grade U.S. students in science. By 12th grade, U.S. students outperform only students from Cyprus and South Africa.

(Source: National Governors Association, National Education Summit on High Schools)

AVERAGE MATH SCORES FOR 15 YEAR OLDS BY COUNTRY

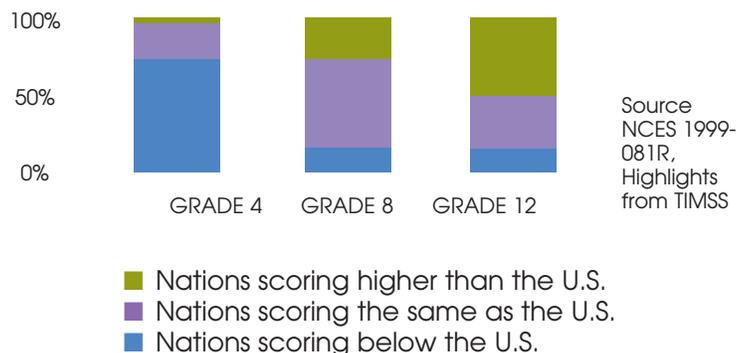


(Source: Program for International Student Assessment 2003)

“When I compare our high schools to what I see when I’m traveling abroad, I am terrified for our workforce of tomorrow.”

—Bill Gates

NATION'S AVERAGE SCIENCE PERFORMANCE COMPARED WITH THE U.S.



■ Student achievement plummets in high school not because U.S. students aren't learning. International students are learning more.

IDAHO'S LEAKY PIPELINE... Few Students Attend Higher Education

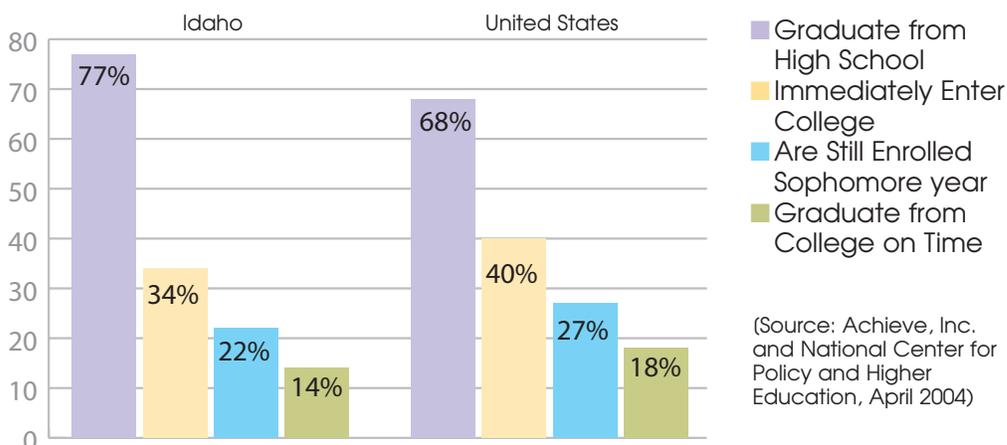
INCREASING IDAHO'S NUMBER OF EDUCATED WORKERS IMPROVES OUR ECONOMY



Idaho has one of the highest high school graduation rates in the country. National statistics rank Idaho's graduation rate at 77 percent or 13th in the country. (State Department of Education statistics shows the high school graduation rate closer to 81 percent). While Idaho enjoys a high graduation rate, the number of those students continuing their education drops dramatically. According to Achieve, Inc., only 34 percent of Idaho high school freshmen go on to enter college and only 14 percent of those students will actually graduate from college. This loss of students who complete higher education is often called the "Leaky Pipeline" where students exit along the way. What happens to our students? Why are they not going on to postsecondary training? The answer isn't simple. While a combination of cultural influences, affordability and accessibility all play a part in students not attending college, it's becoming increasingly clear that preparation in high school plays an even bigger role.

■ Idaho ranks 46th in the nation in terms of college graduates per capita—only Mississippi, Arkansas, Nevada and West Virginia have fewer college graduates.

Of every 100 high school freshmen, the number who...



(Source: Achieve, Inc. and National Center for Policy and Higher Education, April 2004)

“Too few students are ready for either college or work.”

— American College Testing (ACT)

TRANSITIONING FROM HIGH SCHOOL TO COLLEGE, WORK

ONCE AMERICAN STUDENTS ENTER COLLEGE, MANY LACK THE CRITICAL SKILLS NECESSARY TO DO COLLEGE LEVEL WORK. EMPLOYERS REPORT THAT HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES ARE NOT PREPARED FOR THE WORKFORCE.



While many American schools are graduating students that are college or work force ready, many are not. The Manhattan Institute for Policy Research reports that only one-third or 34 percent of high school graduates have the skills and qualifications necessary to attend college.

Once students attend college, many find it necessary to take remedial courses to give them the skills to continue their coursework. For instance 41 percent of Idaho's college freshmen took remedial classes. More than half of those remedial classes were basic math.

This begs the question: what can we do better to prepare our students to enter the work force and higher education? Add more rigor and relevance into our high schools.

Studies show that the greatest hindrance to a college education isn't necessarily cost, but preparation. If students are prepared, they are more likely to attend college, need less or no remediation and graduate from college on time. The data is clear: the more we expect

of our students—the better they perform and the more students will go on to receive postsecondary training, even for the highest need students. Adding rigor to our high schools is at the heart of the State Board's high school redesign efforts. This

means giving students more opportunities to take challenging courses and requiring more core credit requirements. Rigor must also be tied to relevance. What students learn in high school must be relevant to the workforce after high school and what they'll be expected to know before entering college. One of the ways to add relevance is requiring students to have a postsecondary plan. This will help students plan for the future now! It also ties what students are taking in high school to either their college or workforce goals. More importantly, it makes sure every moment in high school counts!

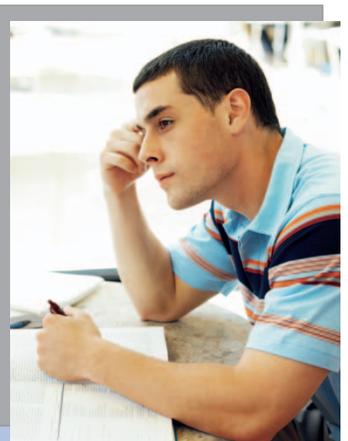
IDAHO'S COLLEGE REMEDICATION REPORT

In 2004:

- 41 percent of Idaho's college freshman took remedial courses totaling 12,118 credit hours
- More than half of the total remedial courses were taken by incoming college freshman
- Idaho students took 23,413 credit hours of remedial classes in 2004
- Students and the State of Idaho spent \$1,873,365 on remediation

(Source: Remediation Activity PSR 6.2, Fall 2004, State Board of Education)

A national poll showed only 24 percent of high school graduates say they faced high expectations and felt they were challenged academically in high school.



—Peter D. Hart,
Research/Public Opinion Strategies February 2005

A strong high school curriculum lowers the hurdles to college graduation for students at every socioeconomic status, especially minorities.

—Anthony Carnevale
Author of "Help Wanted...
College Required"

■ Idaho students took 23,413 credit hours of remedial classes in 2004.

REDESIGNING HIGH SCHOOL IS A NATIONAL, STATE, AND LOCAL PRIORITY

FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES TO THE NATIONAL GOVERNORS ASSOCIATION TO THE IDAHO STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION, HIGH SCHOOL REFORM HAS BECOME A CENTRAL POINT OF DISCUSSION AT EVERY LEVEL OF GOVERNMENT.

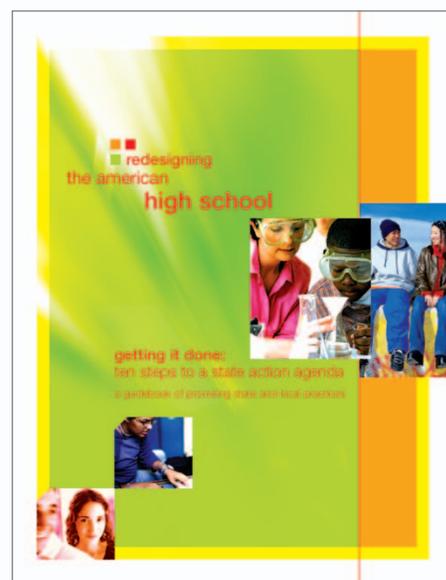


"I view the results in our high schools as a warning, and a call to action. And I believe the federal government has a role to play. As you can tell, I believe the federal government had a role to play in primary education, and I believe the federal government has a role to play in secondary education. Up to now, the reforms, as I've explained to you, focus on the primary schools. Today, I propose a \$1.5 billion initiative to help every high school student graduate with the skills necessary to succeed."
—President George Bush

National Governors Association: Perhaps no other group has been as outspoken on the need for high school reform than the National Governors Association (NGA). The NGA made high school reform a topic for every state to address, including Idaho. Idaho Governor Dirk Kempthorne actively supports NGA efforts to recommend concrete changes. The NGA produced extensive materials on not only the need for high school reform, but also 10 steps to accomplish meaningful reform.

The good news is that Idaho is already addressing many of the recommendations identified by the NGA. For instance, one of the NGA's recommendations is to create a blue ribbon panel or implement a single-board system to oversee all of education in the state, something Idaho is fortunate to have already. The NGA goals include:

- Creating a permanent Education Roundtable or Commission to foster coordination between early childhood, K-12 and higher education;
- Defining a rigorous college and work preparatory curriculum for high school graduation;
- Challenging business, education, parent, community and faith-based organizations to support initiatives that improve college awareness;
- Giving college and work-readiness assessments in high school;
- Creating statewide common course agreements so that college-level work in high school counts towards a postsecondary credential;
- Providing financial incentives for disadvantaged students to take rigorous Advanced Placement exams and college-preparatory and college-level courses;
- Expanding college-level learning opportunities in high school to minorities, English language learners, low-income students and youth with disabilities;
- Helping low-performing students get back on track by designing literacy and math recovery programs;
- Developing and funding support mechanisms to help students pass the high school exit exam; and
- Developing statewide pathways to industry certification.



IDAHO FOCUSES ON HIGH SCHOOL REDESIGN

In October 2004, State Board of Education President Rod Lewis announced the formation of an Accelerated Learning Taskforce to recommend changes to Idaho's middle and high schools.

The taskforce consists of representatives from the State Board of Education, the State Department of Education, Idaho's colleges and universities, teachers, principals, and curriculum directors throughout the state. At the heart of the taskforce's efforts is increasing the rigor and relevance of Idaho's school curriculum. Taskforce members believe the more opportunities for advancement in Idaho's schools, the more students will stay in school and continue on to postsecondary education. To redesign Idaho's high schools, the Taskforce heard numerous presentations from successful states engaged in adding more rigor and relevance, as well as Idaho success stories. To help students receive the maximum benefit of their high school experience, the Taskforce recommended a series of changes to Idaho's high schools.



State Board of Education Members

Back row: Blake Hall, Milford Terrell, Roderic Lewis

Front row: Dr. Marilyn Howard, Laird Stone, Karen McGee, Sue Thilo, Paul Agidius



"It is education that picks us up out of our current surroundings and takes us to a new and higher level. It is education that enables us to achieve our personal goals. It is education that allows us to provide for the needs of our children and our society. It is education that inevitably drives our economic engine. We must increase our statewide commitment to education. Idaho's future depends on it."

—Rod Lewis, President of the Idaho State Board of Education

THE TASKFORCE'S GOALS ARE:

- Goal One:** To increase the number of students prepared for and attending postsecondary institutions
- Goal Two:** To increase opportunities for and involvement in accelerated learning programs (including Advanced Placement, dual credit, concurrent enrollment and International Baccalaureate programs, as appropriate).
- Goal Three:** To increase academic engagement by senior level students through a relevant and rigorous curriculum
- Goal Four:** To carefully examine the benefits and issues associated with increasing high school core-credit and middle school curriculum requirements

TASKFORCE RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Add more rigor and relevance to the high school curriculum by increasing graduation requirements and overall core credits for math, science by 2012.
- Enhance the 4-year learning plan by requiring a Postsecondary Readiness Plan at the end of 6th grade.
- Increase rigor at the middle school level to prepare students for a more challenging high school curriculum.
- Increase access to advanced learning opportunities and dual credit classes to earn college credit at the high school campus or to take courses at a postsecondary institution prior to graduation.
- Require students to take the ACT, SAT, or COMPASS test by the end of the 11th grade.

REDESIGNING IDAHO'S HIGH SCHOOLS IS A PRIORITY FOR EVERYONE

By: Sue Thilo, Member of the State Board of Education and Chair of the Accelerated Learning Taskforce



Thank you for taking time to learn why redesigning Idaho's high schools is crucial. The time to better prepare our students is now! Currently, we simply do not expect enough of our middle and high school students. The typical American high school sets minimum expectations in basic subjects like math and science and allows students to choose electives to fill their schedule. While we recognize the need for choices and the importance of elective classes, Idaho students are allowed to take nearly as many electives as core requirements. The state of Idaho requires 42 credits to graduate, and only 25 of those credits are in math, science, English, humanities, social studies, and physical education. For the remaining 17 credits, students can choose to take other elective classes.

"If your children have graduated from high school or college and are gainfully employed you might wonder, 'Why should I care?' Redesigning Idaho's high schools affects all of us."

Because we don't set high enough expectations for our high school students, they aren't getting all they need to succeed. Today, other than English and a handful of humanities courses, students can complete most of their required classes by the end of the sophomore year. This enables students to coast to graduation, taking mainly electives their junior and senior years. Because we only require two years of math, many Idaho students never take a math course beyond basic algebra and then enter college expected to have completed two years of algebra. Consequently,

students are unprepared for college entrance exams and need remediation as soon as they enter college.

"The bottom line is every student needs more rigor and challenge in high school, not just those who plan to go on to college."

The bottom line is every student needs more rigor and challenge in high school, not just those who plan to go on to college. Raising the bar is good for all students! Research shows that the more we require of our all our students, the better they do in school. The drop out rate actually decreases and

students have the skills they need to tackle life after high school. The fact is, a more rigorous curriculum prepares all students for every postsecondary option—including college, professional technical schools or employment.

If your children have graduated from high school or college and are gainfully employed you might wonder, "Why should I care?" Redesigning Idaho's high schools affects all of us—whether we have children in school or are enjoying an empty nest. The students we graduate today will be the doctors, electricians, teachers and inventors of tomorrow. Without competent and prepared workers, businesses cannot expand. New companies and new jobs will find homes in other states and other countries.

The notion of reinventing high schools should not be interpreted that schools have been standing still. As a state, we've implemented a host of reforms in the last 10 years. However, our ultimate goal is to strengthen the economy of the state and the well-being of our citizens. If we want more students to continue their education beyond high school, students need better preparation. If we, as a state and as a country, do not invigorate our high schools then we stand to lose the economic opportunity Idahoans and all Americans cherish. There is no time to lose.

For more information contact the:

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