



# BLAINE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

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*Superintendent GwenCarol Holmes, Ed. D.*

April 2017

Dear Blaine County Neighbors,

Please allow me an opportunity to update you on some of the amazing work the Blaine County School District staff accomplished in the past year. In the spring of 2015, the community helped us create a guide for our work: the BCSD Strategic Plan. In the past year the staff have:

- Greatly improved graduation rates, especially for some of our previously underserved populations.
- Improved attendance.
- Significantly improved the number of students participating in advanced opportunity classes. We have been named to the national AP Honor Roll for our work in this area.
- Expanded the use of a co-teaching model to better support our English Language Learners in rigorous content classes.
- Developed a Secondary Course of Study that expects students to study a World Language, the arts, and technology, in addition to core courses.
- Refined a mastery learning system for students at Silver Creek High School.
- Revised the Gifted and Talented Education program so that students are identified using multiple data points, not just a single score.
- Upgraded our Homework Policy to support balance in student lives.
- Improved our first and second grade reading instruction through more engagement with authentic text and explicit instruction.
- Implemented a program of support for high school students with substance abuse issues so that they can continue to earn high school credit while working to get healthy.
- Approved standards for Social Emotional Learning and set the expectation that these standards are to be a part of what our students learn in school.
- Continued to expand the range of opportunities for our students to be inspired and engaged in learning, such as a growing and competitive robotics program, a Mountain Bike Club, a growing orchestra program, eighth grade outdoor education opportunities, Invent Idaho, guitar classes at Silver Creek High School, outdoor math lessons through snow fort building, and Wood River High School's Senior Community Service Day.
- Developed a General Fund budget that balances revenues and expenditures and have stayed within budget.

As we prepare for the 2017-18 school year, we will be focused on closing the achievement/opportunity gap so that even more of our students meet and/or exceed mastering the Idaho Content Standards. Areas of intense work for the coming year include:

- Increasing student engagement (through clarity, challenge/relevance, and relationships)
- Improving elementary reading outcomes, and
- improving the use of academic language at the secondary level.

We will do all this while continuing to maintain a budget that balances revenues and expenditures, which will mean a need for further reductions as expenses increase.

We greatly appreciate the support shown our students and staff from parents, community partners, and the larger community. We could not have done it without you.

With gratitude,

Dr. GwenCarol Holmes, Ed.,D.  
Superintendent

*Our mission is to inspire, engage, educate and empower every student.*