



# Making the grade

Jeannette Boner Jul 5, 2018  (0)

## School district works to close the gap on state test scores

At the June school board meeting this month, Megan Bybee, the new curriculum director for the Teton School District, presented a variety of reports and statistics to the school board that suggested that student academic performance was maintaining an upward trend in the district.

Bybee prefaced the presentation saying that she has not shared all the data with teachers just yet as the school year had just ended and that she would use this information heading into the 2018/2019 school year to set goals and new benchmarks in classrooms.

The report, based on yearly state tests, showed almost a 60 percent increase in proficient reading skills. While Teton County is performing below average state scores, Bybee noted that the district continues to close that educational gap.

“To close a gap, you have to grow more than average,” Bybee said to the school board at the meeting. “It’s nice to see this growth percentile above average.”

The district closed the gap with the national norm by 55 percent in math, reading, and language Bybee reported. More specifically, 45 percent of grades first through ninth exceeded average growth in math in the 2017-2018 school year. In grades fourth through ninth, 67 percent of students exceeded average growth in reading and 60 percent of grades fourth through eighth exceeded average growth in language skills this year.

According to the Department of Education, Idaho’s overall proficiency was 53.7 percent, up from 52 percent in 2017.

“What you are saying is so important for people to understand,” said school board member Mary Mello at the meeting.

Bybee also reported that the district has increased proficiency by 71 percent in Idaho Standards Achievement Test tests this year. Also known as the ISAT, this is a state test, which is taken in grades three through eight and again in tenth grade. According to Bybee’s numbers, students in grades four, seven and eight have shown improvements on the math ISAT score. English as a second language students have improvement in every grade except for fifth and sixth grade. The most notable improvement was the seventh grade science ISAT score, which saw an improved test score by almost 50 percent.

Finally, Bybee presented an elementary school break down of test scores with the new Istation test. The ISIP provides data with frequent, age-appropriate measurement for students and is a test that is only two years old for Idaho students. The Istation will replace the current Idaho Reading Initiative or IRI that is given to students in Kindergarten through third grade.

From the fall to the spring, each grade saw positive proficiency growth with Istation. Tetonnia Elementary School saw the highest proficiency of growth with 21 percent marked improvement. Driggs Elementary School saw 12 percent grow and Victor Elementary School, 20 percent.