



MOUNTAIN HOME SCHOOL DISTRICT 193
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I would like to take a few moments to let our parents, patrons, and community members of Mountain Home hear what has been going on in the Mountain Home School District this year. The first semester of the school year has gone by quickly and there are many exciting things that have occurred.

The Mountain Home School District and the Southern Idaho Conference participated in the Direct Writing Assessment (DWA) pilot that was put together by the school districts from Mountain Home, Kuna, Caldwell, Vallivue, Boise, Meridian, Nampa, and Emmett. This DWA was given to all fifth grade students in those districts, and will provide the districts with some excellent data on improving our students' writing skills. In addition, the district curriculum committee is in the process of reviewing the language arts curriculum and our math sequencing to address gaps in our curriculum as it aligns to state standards.

District wide school enrollment remains stable to slightly growing. This is great news as we had been facing years of declining enrollment in the district. Hopefully, the upward trend in enrollment will continue.

Thanks to the generosity of our community in passing the Plant Facility Levy, the district has been able to complete several much-needed projects. Last year the district replaced the roof at Hacker Middle School. Along with fixing the roof, damaged carpeting was replaced, and water stained walls were painted. Additionally, damaged, unsafe playgrounds were repaved at the three town elementary schools. Stephensen Elementary will have its playground repaved this summer. The roof over the kitchen and gym at East Elementary were also repaired to address some water leakage that was occurring. Security cameras have been installed in the remainder of our schools to address safety and vandalism concerns. The remaining large project for this fiscal year is to begin rewiring the school buildings to meet the energy and technology demands of today's education. This is a massive project and may possibly take part of next year to complete.

The Mountain Home School Board has a new face on the Board. Kristina Knox was appointed to the Mountain Home School Board in October. Kristina is the representative from zone 1. The district and community are fortunate to have such an amazing group of people volunteering their time to serve on the Board. The Board has continued to be very active in school board training. The entire Board attended the 2016 Idaho School Board Association Annual Conference in Boise this past November.

The district has also received a \$1.5 million dollar grant through the Department of Defense Education Act (DoDEA). This five-year grant will help implement Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) throughout the district. PBIS is designed to help address school wide behavioral issues. The grant will also allow us to hire a much-needed elementary counselor and provide additional technology on top of professional development through the Idaho Positive Behavior Network. Over the last two years the district has written and received two grants through DoDEA and been awarded \$3 million dollars through these grants. The grants are a culmination of a partnership with Boise State University.

It is the snowy season so I thought I would give you a quick update on how we determine if school is canceled or if a late start is called. On mornings of weather activity, I drive and evaluate our bus route

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areas. I typically start driving these roads around 3:45 a.m. If it is determined that the buses can safely travel, school starts as normal. If the conditions make it unsafe for the school buses to travel, either school is canceled or a late start day will be announced through our automated e-mail and phone line to parents through the Blackboard Connect. This decision must be made by 5:45 a.m., as buses will be on routes by 6:00 a.m. If the buses can run safely, school will be in session. I know not everyone will agree when a "snow day" is called or not called. Ultimately, it is the parent's responsibility to decide if they feel it is safe for their student to attend on inclement weather days. Should a parent decide that they would prefer to keep their child home the student will be given an excused absence upon notifying the school of the absence. I absolutely support the parents decision on what they determine is best for their child.

Parent teacher conferences will be different this year. The Spring Conferences have been moved up almost a month from previous years. This year's Spring Conference is on February 16th. Our hope is that this will provide more time to help parents with students who may be struggling academically. We are also trying to make the conferences more effective by having staff make parent calls during the afternoon session so that more parents can be contacted. The evening session will provide an open time for those parents who choose to come in for a face-to-face meeting with their student's teacher.

I hope this letter provides you with some additional information regarding the district. If you ever have questions, please feel free to contact me by phone or e-mail. I am always willing to answer parent and patron questions. My phone number is 587-2580, and my e-mail address gilbert_jg@mtnhomesd.org.

Have a great 2017!

Sincerely and respectfully,

James Gilbert
Superintendent
Mountain Home School District #193