



Wyoming Joint Education Committee

October 10, 2022



Reimagining and Innovating the Delivery of Education (RIDE)

Listening to Voices from Across Wyoming



“Wyoming’s future is intertwined with education. If we don’t provide a world-class education system, we will be challenged to stay competitive in a changing world and retain the families that make up both the fabric of our communities and the heart of our workforce.”

Governor Mark Gordon

If we want our young people to be “Life Ready” citizens, legislators, policy makers, and educators must also be “ready” to ensure that the Wyoming educational system is aligned to meet the challenges of the future.

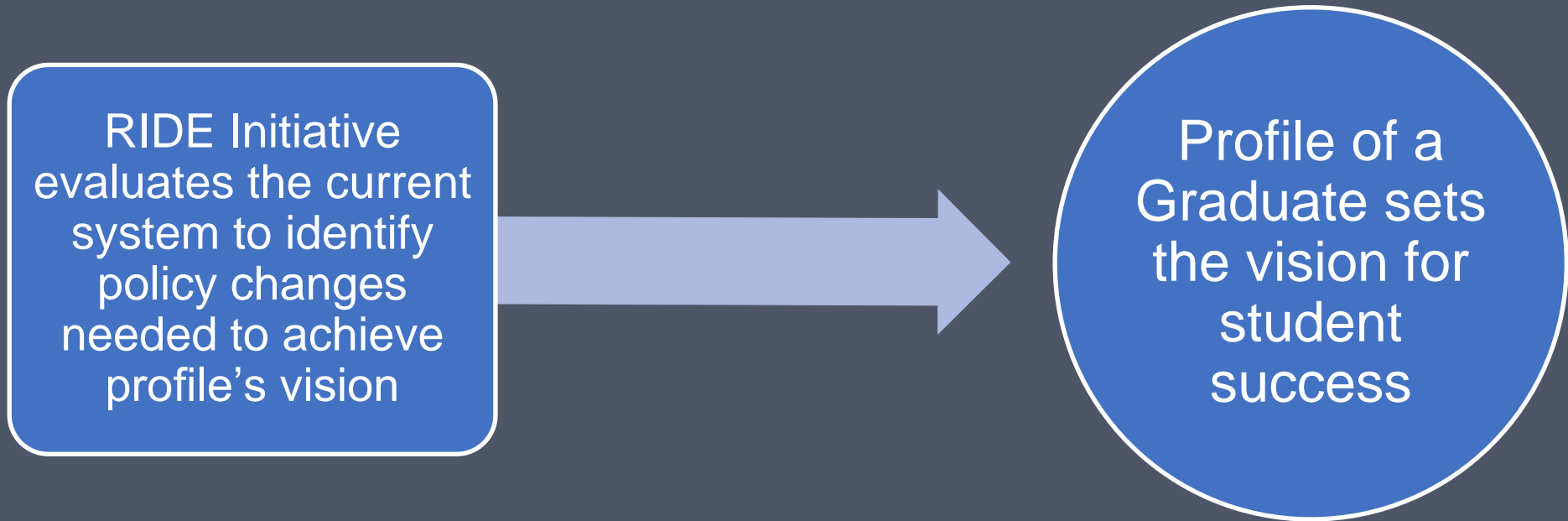
Profile of a Graduate Initiative



RIDE



Vision for RIDE and Profile of a Graduate



RIDE Initiative & Profile of a Graduate

Examine

RIDE - Examine Wyoming's primary and secondary education system

PROFILE – Examine state and district graduation requirements

Gather

Both gathered input from those who are closest to education, including parents, students, educators and employers.

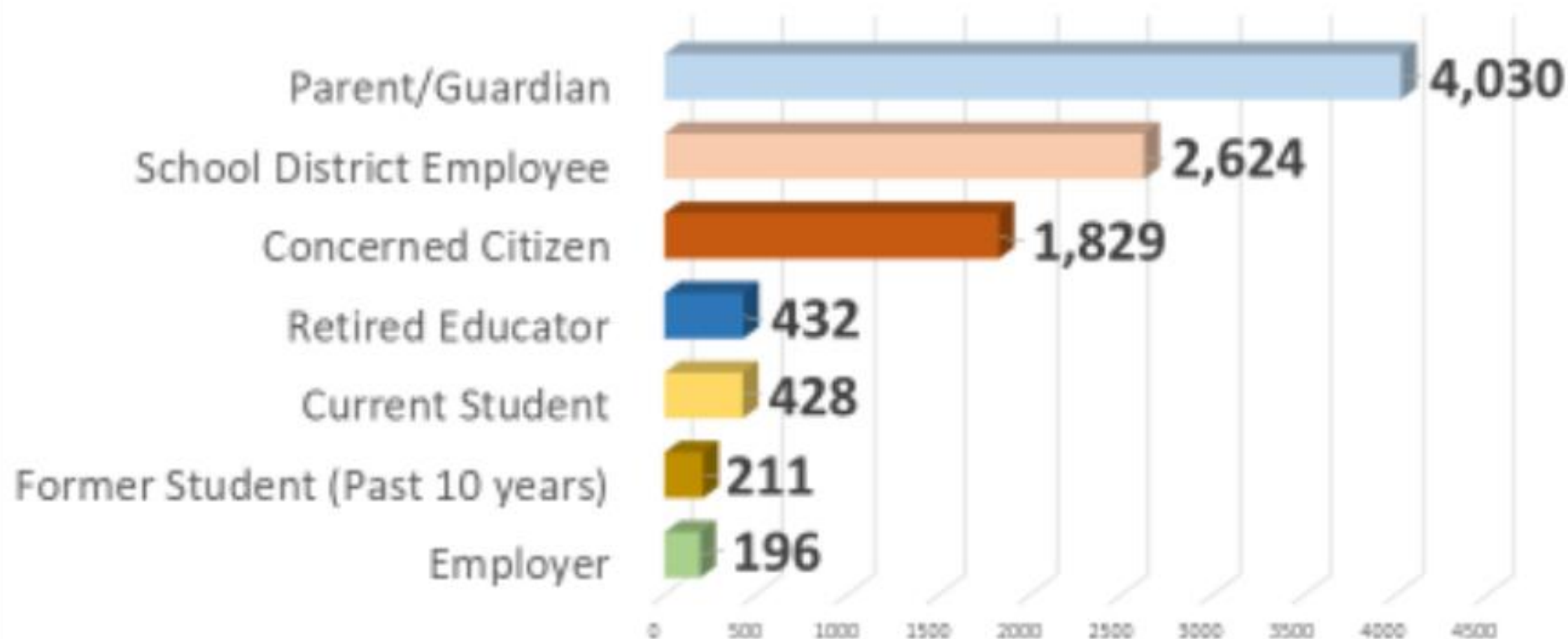
Recommend

RIDE - Make recommendations with the goal of elevating Wyoming's educational system into a position of national leadership.

PROFILE – Use the profile to produce graduation standards and make recommendations on building the capacity within the state to deliver on the vision of the profile.

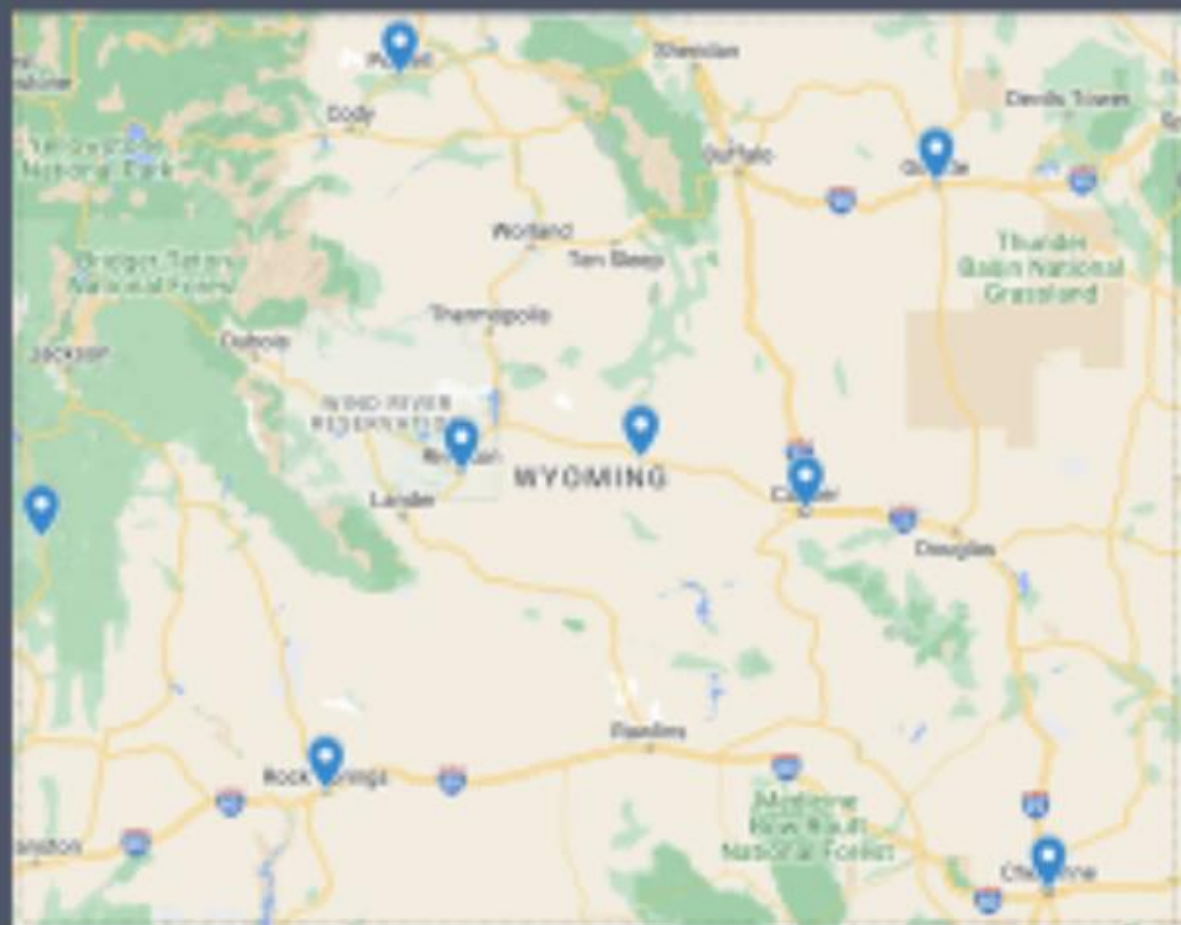
RIDE Stakeholder Engagement: Survey Respondents

Who Responded?



RIDE Stakeholder Engagement: Listening Sessions

- ~200 participants
- Members visited:
 - Afton
 - Rock Springs
 - Powell
 - Riverton
 - Gillette
 - Casper
 - Cheyenne
- 1 student-specific session hosted with Laramie #1 Summer school students



Stakeholder Engagement: Profile of a Graduate

Phase I

Survey

- Count of Participants: 496

Listening Sessions

- Count of Sessions: 46
- Count of Participants: ~475

Total Engagement Points Phase I: Approximately 973

Phase II

Survey

- Count of Participants: 100

Vetting Sessions

- Count of Sessions: 9
- Count of Participants: ~76

Community Sessions

- Count of Sessions: 6
- Count of Participants: ~116

Total Engagement Points Phase II: Approximately 292

The state board also received input during 14 presentations at state board meetings from students, educators, and business representatives regarding efforts across the state to provide innovative learning experiences for students.

RIDE Innovative Idea	Brief Description	Corroborating Feedback from the Profile Work
Competency-based Learning	Allow students to progress based on mastery rather than seat time; reimagines assessment	There is too much testing of students and focus on seat time. Giving students multiple opportunities to retake tests and assignments negatively impacts work habits.
Pathways	Expand options that prepare students for careers and life in addition to college; more arts, career technical education, and work-based learning	Barriers between career and college preparation need to be brought down. There are silos between 'academics' and 'career' preparation when it is actually all career and life preparation. There are too many standards. We value learning experiences for students like project-based, work-based, or service-based learning.
Teacher Preparation, Retention, Recruitment	Prepare and support teachers to encourage higher teacher retention and elevate the profession to aid in recruitment	Allow more opportunities for innovation in the classroom. Relieve the pressure of too many standards and standardized testing.
Focus on Early Years	Increase the focus on the years before third grade, including pre-kindergarten to close gaps between students.	Reading at early grades is good but there is too much pressure and focus on this. Primary grades should be more well rounded and be a time for developing social skills and learning about school and life.
Mental Health Supports	Increase supports for student and educator mental health, including access to supports and training to develop common language.	Mental health issues are a concern, particularly among students. Counselors are often being used for student testing rather than serving students. Staff are being used in areas other than the services they are trained to provide (i.e. counselors, social workers, psychologists).
Strengthen Parent Engagement	Build capacity for parent engagement and strengthen the relationship between schools and communities.	There is recognition that the skills and experiences Wyoming wants for its high school graduates cannot be the sole responsibility of the school. Parents and communities are school partners in providing life and learning experiences for students.

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1. Competency-based Learning	Allow students to progress based on mastery rather than seat time; reimagines assessment	There is too much testing of students and focus on seat time. Giving students multiple opportunities to retake tests and assignments negatively impacts work habits.
2. Pathways	Expand options that prepare students for careers and life in addition to college; more arts, career technical education, and work-based learning	Barriers between career and college preparation need to be brought down. There are silos between 'academics' and 'career' preparation when it is actually all career and life preparation. There are too many standards. Wy values learning experiences for students like project-based, work-based, or service-based learning.
3. Teacher Preparation, Retention, Recruitment	Prepare and support teachers to encourage higher teacher retention and elevate the profession to aid in recruitment	Allow more opportunities for innovation in the classroom. Relieve the pressure of too many standards and standardized testing.
4. Mental Health Supports	Increase supports for student and educator mental health, including access to supports and training to develop common language.	Mental health issues are a concern, particularly among students. Counselors are often being used for student testing rather than serving students. Staff are being used in areas other than the services they are trained to provide (i.e. counselors, social workers, psychologists).
5. Focus on Early Years	Increase the focus on the years before third grade, including pre-kindergarten to close gaps between students.	Reading at early grades is good but there is too much pressure and focus on this. Primary grades should be more well rounded and be a time for developing social skills and learning about school and life.
6. Strengthen Parent Engagement	Build capacity for parent engagement and strengthen the relationship between schools and communities.	There is recognition that the skills and experiences Wyoming wants for its high school graduates cannot be the sole responsibility of the school. Parents and communities are school partners in providing life and learning experiences for students.

Mental Health Supports

Types of mental health issues:

- Growing student behavior issues
- Suicide and suicide ideology, increasingly younger ages
- Social interactions and social media influences
- Bereavement issues

Issues with mental health supports:

- Counselors assigned with school-wide testing responsibilities
- Career counseling needed as well as social/emotional counseling
- Social workers, school counselors, and school or clinical psychologists trained for different types of support and interventions; however, they used interchangeably due to lack of personnel.
- Lack of community mental health services that leads to an over reliance on schools to provide services beyond a school counselors' or social workers' training.
- Lack of community mental health services also leads to students referred to doctors who can provide pharmaceuticals but lack options for critical therapy support to accompany the use of medications.
- Students returning to their school/community following placement in institutional settings to schools without the level of trained mental health professionals to continue with needed therapies.
- Students entering school not physically and/or emotionally prepared to learn.

Brittney Montgomery - 2022 Wyoming Teacher of the Year

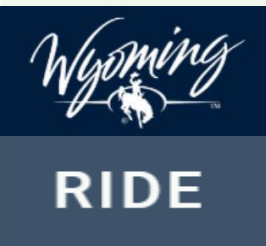
Alexis Barney – 2021 Wyoming Teacher of the Year

“It is time to re-evaluate. It’s time to look at how we are looking at education and at our educators and the system as a whole. And it’s time to make changes.”

“This year alone, I have more students receiving outside emotional support than I’ve ever seen. Specifically, one-third of my fifth grade class has been referred to or asked for counseling support this year.”

“During the pandemic some students have lost a parent, grandparents, or some a sibling. They don’t know how to navigate that . . . and they are anxious.”

“The spirit of thanks is real but the season of exhaustion is also very real for our teachers, and students, and their families.”





JOIN US FOR THE
**2022 Governor's
Mental Health
Summit!**

OCTOBER 11

7:00 am to 5:00 pm • Summit

Nicolaysen Art Museum • 400 E Collins Dr • Casper, WY

Please join Governor Gordon, alongside members of the Legislative and Judicial branches, to discuss the state of mental health in Wyoming. Discussions will focus on current efforts related to mental health and substance abuse, the continuum of care, expectations of the system from various perspectives, and the development of a common agenda for Wyoming. In addition, Dr. Rob Anda, developer of the Adverse Childhood Experiences research and founder of ACE Interface, will connect leadership conversations related to mental health and substance abuse support with the importance of establishing trauma-responsive communities using panel discussions of current efforts. The event will also include opportunities for networking with state leaders and community partners across Wyoming.