



Fifth-grader Kiya Velasquez, 10, center, has an idea to contribute to a class lesson about inference in literature at Lake Ridge Elementary School.

Photo by Katherine Jones, Idaho Statesman

Education for everyone

Choices abound for every kind of student

BY DUSTY PARNELL

There are eight school districts across the Boise Valley with a wide variety of choices for students, including charter and magnet schools. The Idaho State Board of Education has established a goal that 60 percent of Idaho citizens between ages 25 and 34 attain a postsecondary degree or certificate by 2020. To that end, the state is already outpacing the nation in the percentage of students taking the SAT college entrance exam. Also of note, Idaho eighth-graders perform above the international average for mathematics and science.

Boise Independent School District

All four of the district's traditional high schools rank among the top 9 percent of the annual listing of America's Most Challenging High Schools, which measures effectiveness in providing opportunities for rigorous coursework. This is the fifth consecutive year the schools have made

the Top 10 Percent list of the 22,000 total number of public high schools in the study.

These are not the only schools being noticed by the educational system. Alternative Frank Church High School, for example, has increased its graduation rate from 28 to 75 percent over the past decade. In addition, Boise District SAT scores were among the highest of any large school district in Idaho, and college-going rates have increased for six consecutive years. At the other end of the spectrum, some schools now offer all-day kindergarten, and two elementary schools provide an opportunity to become fluent in both English and Spanish.

In addition to the usual public schools, the district also offers several alternative and service school opportunities:

Frank Church High School is an alternative school to assist those students who have dropped out or are at risk of dropping out. The Victory Academy at FCHS also teaches job and life skills to help them

reintegrate into the community and into more traditional education programs.

Marion Pritchett School provides a confidential environment for pregnant and parenting young women who want to earn their high school diploma.

The Dennis Technical Education Center features an industry-aligned, hands-on curriculum with subjects that include automotive technology, business finance, electronics technology, graphic design, precision machining, welding, residential construction, computer technology, and healthcare fields.

The Treasure Valley Math and Science Center is a public magnet school that partners with the Boise and Meridian school districts, as well as creating opportunities for research-based internships with organizations involved with science, technology, engineering, or mathematics.

Boise Evening School is for those over the age of 16 who have not graduated but who want to complete their high school education.

The Madison Early Childhood Center is dedicated to developmentally disabled preschool children between the ages of 3 and 5. The goal is to better prepare students for school and to reduce the need for special education services in elementary school.

Caldwell School District

This school district features six elementary schools, two middle schools, a high school, an alternative high school, and a freshman academy, for those students who need more focused attention to help transition to high school.

The P16 Caldwell Education Project (CAP) is a recent program to help prepare students of all ages prepare for post-secondary opportunities. In its first two years, the go-on rate for high school students climbed from 39 to 50 percent, not counting military or certification programs.

Students at a couple of the elementary after-school programs are labeled not by their first names, but with the year the student would graduate from college — mostly 2027 to 2030.

This nonprofit project has three components, ranging from preschool to high

school. Ninety percent of parents with children in the Out of School Program said their children's grades have improved since entering P16.

"The good thing about the program is that you can learn how to, why to, and what to do on your way up to college," said one elementary-age student.

Emmett School District

This district in Gem County serves 2,700 students in two elementary schools, two rural elementary schools with multiple-grade classrooms, a traditional high school, and an alternative high school, as well as the Payette River Technical Academy, which has a blended curriculum of both high school and technical classes. The Emmett Academy is a tuition-free virtual school that offers a flexible, self-paced program.

Kuna School District

Serving about 5,000 students, this district has one high school, one alternative

high school, a middle school, and seven elementary schools. Kuna Middle School is one of 11 schools in Idaho to participate in the Idaho Technology Pilot Program that uses grant money to provide laptop computers to increase mathematic and writing skills. With the growing demand for technology in schools, the program is a step forward to study and create more educational avenues like this.

Meridian School District

The Fresco Arts Academy joins this school district in 2014 after a seven-year history as a private academy. The school currently serves almost 120 students in grades 6 through 12. The music, art, dance, and theater programs will fill a void the district has been looking to fill for some time.

The Meridian Joint School District serves about 35,000 students in Eagle, Meridian, Star, and parts of Boise and covers nearly 384 square miles. In the past 10 years, the district has opened new schools

at a faster pace than any district in the history of the state of Idaho. Meridian is on a pace to become the second-largest city in the state, and enrollment is expected to continue to rise at an unprecedented rate for several years to come.

The newest elementary addition is the Barbara Morgan STEM Academy with an emphasis on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM). In addition to being a part of NASA's Teacher in Space Program, Barbara Morgan, a Boise Valley resident, has been a leader and innovator in STEM educational programs.

The Meridian Transition Academy is a community-based program for students ages 18 to 21 with disabilities. It offers on-the-job vocational training with a goal of increased responsibility and independence.

The district also offers Professional-Technical (PT) Program classes at three tech centers. Programs include Certified Nursing Assistant, Culinary Arts, Digital Home Technology Integration+, Pharmacy Technician, Fire Services, Law Enforce-

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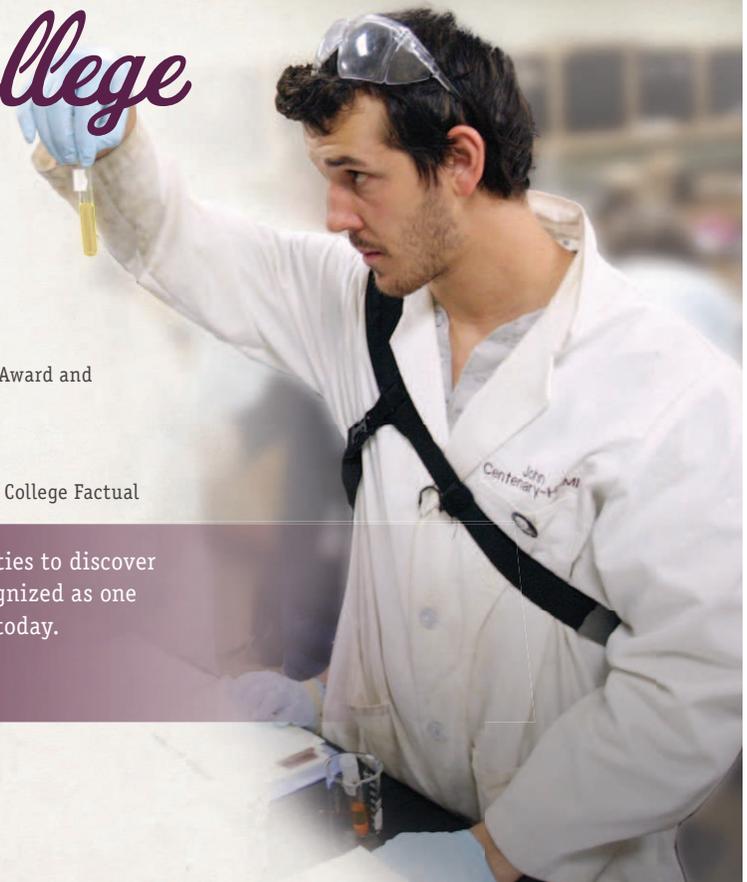
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Middleton School District

This district has about 3,600 students in six schools — three elementary schools, a middle school, a high school and an alternative school. Accelerated Teaching Learning and Academic Success (ATLAS) School features smaller class sizes and an environment where students who have struggled in other settings can succeed.

Nampa School District

This school district is Canyon County's largest employer with 24 schools and more

than 15,200 students.

New Horizons is a dual language magnet school and one of the district's largest elementary schools with a student body of 520 from kindergarten through fifth grade.

The four middle schools in the district offer a pre-engineering program that allows students to explore problem-solving in a fun, hands-on way.

The district also features Professional Technical Education Programs (PTE) that

provide a variety of choices for high school students to explore different career opportunities. Many of the programs offer industry certification and/or college credit. Classes offered include Automotive Technology, Agriculture Science, Graphics Communication-Broadcasting Technology, Graphics Communication-Photography Technology, Drafting Technology, Health Professions, Information Technology, Law Enforcement, Professionals in Education,

TO FIND OUT MORE

Boise Independent School District – boiseschools.org

Caldwell School District – caldwellschools.org

Emmett School District – emmettschools.org

Kuna School District – kunaschools.org

Meridian (Joint School District No. 2) – meridianschools.org

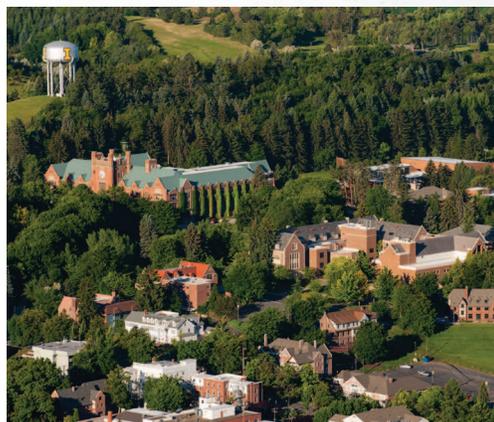
Middleton School District – msd134.org

Nampa School District – nsd131.org

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Vallivue School District

This district began with about a dozen rural schoolhouses scattered throughout the Canyon County countryside and forming a school district in 1961, followed closely by Vallivue High School. Today the district has six elementary schools, two middle schools, one high school, and two alternative schools. Its students come from Caldwell, Nampa, and nearby rural areas.

After more than 50 years, the district's population has grown to the point where a brand new high school is now on the drawing board. Ridgevue High School is expected to open its doors by fall 2016 near the corner of Linden and Madison roads in North Nampa.

The new school will feature an indoor track, a fine arts auditorium with a full stage, science labs, computer labs, and a media center. The sports complex will feature tennis courts, baseball, football, soccer, and track facilities.

Based on current enrollment projections for the 2016-17 school year, each high school will have about 1,100 students.

The school district's overall goal is to put at least 80 percent of its students on a college/career path by 2016, and moving that goal to 100 percent by 2020.

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Higher education offers larger choices

Curriculums and opportunities increase across the Valley

BY DUSTY PARNELL

Higher education opportunities continue to grow and expand in the Boise Valley, and there are a variety of educational choices and institutions to find the program you need, whether you're looking for professional certification or a doctoral degree.

Boise State University

Founded in 1932 as Boise Junior College, Boise State University has grown into a metropolitan research university with an enrollment of 22,000 students. It offers 200 degrees and certificates in seven academic colleges: Arts & Sciences, Business & Economics, Education, Engineering, Graduate, Health Sciences, and Social Sciences & Public Affairs. BSU has the largest undergraduate nursing program in Idaho, as well as an internationally accredited business school. It is the only university in the country to offer a Master of Science degree in Raptor Biology.

In 2013, BSU launched its ninth doctoral degree — an online doctor of nursing practice.

U.S. News & World Report has twice listed Boise State as one of the top up-and-coming schools in the nation for regional universities. The College of Engineering is consistently ranked among the best undergraduate engineering programs.

This urban university, located a short distance from downtown Boise, has seen tremendous growth and upgrades throughout the campus in the past decade. The new Micron Business and Economics Building, for example, is one of 17 major building projects in recent years that have resulted in a 25 percent increase in classroom, laboratory, office, event, and common area space.

More than 1.5 million people visit the campus annually for cultural, athletic,



Boise State University graduate Kayla Hubbard (B.S. in Math) cheers as she poses in front of a large "B" in front of the administration building after commencement.

photo credit: Syle Green, Idaho Statesman

and entertainment events, including Bronco sports, the Gene Harris Jazz Festival, the Distinguished Lecture Series, and the Martin Luther King Jr. Human Rights Celebration.

College of Idaho

Located in Caldwell, the College of Idaho is the state's oldest private college, founded in 1884 by the Presbytery of Wood River. (From 1991 until 2007, it was known as Albertson College of Idaho.) This liberal arts college has an enrollment of 1,100 students from all over the world. International students comprise 10 percent of the student body and, overall, 22 states and 55 countries are represented at the college, which boasts a student to faculty ration of 12 to 1.

C of I offers 26 majors, 57 minors, and 13 collaborative programs in 16

departments. Top majors are Biology, Health Sciences, History, Psychology, and Business.

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The College has a strong sports background in the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA), including national championships. Meanwhile, the school will field a football team in 2014 after a 37-year absence. They play in the Frontier League, which covers schools in Idaho, Montana, North Dakota, Oregon, and Utah. The team will



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play its games at Simplot Field in Caldwell, which will have artificial turf installed by the time the season starts.

C of I alumni include a former Oregon governor and two Idaho governors, including the current Governor, C.L. “Butch” Otter.

College of Western Idaho (CWI)

CWI in Nampa began regular classes in January 2009, with an enrollment of more than 1,100 students. Enrollment expanded to 3,600 students by the fall semester. The campus is the former West Campus of Boise State University.

Today, the College has grown to support nearly 20,000 degree and short-term training students each year. The rapidly expanding student population is served by more than 800 faculty and support staff across the Boise Valley in eight campus locations and more than a dozen community classrooms.

During the 2012-13 term, almost 800 degrees and certificates were awarded, including associate degrees in Arts, Science, Applied Science, and technical certifications. In addition, 1,800 students received their GED diplomas.

High school students can obtain college credit through dual credit programs and receive college credit for tech prep courses such as automotive, information technology, welding, diesel technology, and dental assisting. Numerous programs prepare students to transfer to a four-year university or to improve skills for the workforce. Associate degrees are offered in diverse areas from Baking and Pastry Arts to

Wildland Fire Management.

One of the exciting new developments at CWI is the addition of a new 176,000-square-foot Professional Technical Education Program Center.

Idaho State University - Meridian Health Science Center

This school in Pocatello opened its doors in 1902 as the Academy of Idaho. Four name changes later, the school finally settled on Idaho State University in 1963.

ISU's presence in the Boise Valley began in the early 1970s with clinical pharmacy rotations at the Veteran Affairs Medical Center in Boise and the Nampa State School. Since then, it has added more than 25 graduate and undergraduate degrees. Most fields of study are in the health professions and sciences.

In 2014, Idaho State University-Meridian Health Science Center graduated its largest class in history, conferring 235 degrees.

As programs have grown, so too has its campus — moving from leased facilities to the Idaho State University-Meridian Health Science Center in 2009, which spans four acres and houses nine distance-learning classrooms, the L.S. Skaggs Pharmacy Complex, Counseling and Speech and Language clinics, and human patient simulation and clinical/medical science laboratories. The Delta Dental of Idaho Dental Residency Clinic opened in 2011 and provides advanced training for dentists and treatment for underserved patients.

In the spring of 2014, it was announced the school would soon be breaking ground on new anatomy and physiology laboratories at the Meridian campus, to be opened in 2015. These new facilities will advance the learning opportunities for both students and current health practitioners.

Unique to ISU-Meridian is its partnership with Joint School District No. 2, whose administrative offices and Renaissance Magnet High School are adjacent to the University. Renaissance students interested in careers in



Photo: Idaho Press Tribune
Pharmacy Technicians Program at Idaho State University Meridian Campus

medical sciences and research have the opportunity to use ISU laboratories and resources.

ISU-Meridian also serves as the higher education anchor of the CORE (Council on Rehabilitation Education), an 1,800-acre business enterprise corridor with public and private partners committed to building the economy through innovations in health, research, and technology.

University of Idaho Boise

The University of Idaho was founded in 1889 and is consistently recognized as one of the best public colleges in America.

From its main campus in Moscow, to 70 research and academic locations statewide, U-Idaho combines the strength of a large university with the intimacy of small learning communities.

As a land-grant institution, part of the university's mission is to serve all of Idaho, including campuses in Coeur d'Alene, Boise, Twin Falls, and Idaho Falls.

The Boise location began in 1910 with an agricultural extension program in Ada County. Today, there are more than 120 faculty and staff members, and

the enrollment of 322 students in 2014 was up 3.5 percent from the previous year.

Master's, doctorate, and specialist degrees are offered, as well as certificates and professional development in a number of disciplines. Some programs are offered in a traditional classroom and others are online or in a hybrid setting and include Agriculture and Life Sciences, Architecture, Education, Engineering, Environmental Science, Water Resources, Science masters, third-year Law, and Natural Resources.

Located in downtown Boise, the Urban Design Center offers Master of Architecture and Landscape Architecture students the opportunity to engage in sustainable urban design in a metropolitan setting while contributing to the future urban landscape of the rapidly evolving Boise Valley.

Research projects in Southern Idaho cover a wide variety of subjects, including biomedical and molecular biology, agricultural and natural resources, animals and fisheries, environmental and ecological, energy and water, bioremediation and subsurface science, nanotechnology and material sciences, and education program design.

EDUCATION

PRIMARY EDUCATION

Idaho State Department of Education
650 W. State St.,
P.O. Box 83720
Boise, ID 83720-0027
(208) 332-6800
www.sde.idaho.gov

Idaho State Board of Education
650 W. State St., Room 307
Boise, ID 83702
(208) 334-2270
www.boardofed.idaho.gov

Boise Independent School District
8169 W. Victory Rd.
Boise, ID 83709
(208) 854-4000
www.boiseschools.org

Caldwell School District
1101 E. Cleveland Blvd.
Caldwell, ID 83605
(208) 455-3300
www.caldwellschool.org

Emmett School District
201 E. Third St.
Emmett, ID 83617
(208) 365-6301
www.emmettschools.org

Joint School District #2 (Boise, Meridian, Star, Eagle)
911 Meridian Rd.
Meridian, ID 83642
(208) 855-4500
www.meridianschools.org

Kuna School District
1450 Boise St., Kuna, ID 83634
(208) 922-1000
www.kunaschools.org

Nampa School District
619 S. Canyon
Nampa, ID 83686
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Vallivue School District
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www.puentes.biz

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The College of Idaho
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(208) 467-8113
www.nnu.edu/academics/boise-center

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<http://boise.paulmitchell.edu/boise-id>

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www.stevenshenager.edu

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