

GRADUATION:
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with 75.9 percent. This year's reported graduation rates from Echo are more than 22 percent greater than the state average, which is 72 percent.

While he is happy with the increased numbers this year, Echo Superintendent Raymon Smith said one or two students dropping out of school can have a significant impact on the graduation rates.

"Our goal is 100 percent," he said. "We are excited to see the numbers closer to where they should be. I think that is a huge pat on the back of our teachers ... I credit it back to the individualized attention that our staff pays the kids. I think that is the biggest factor with the percentage as high as it is."

The Stanfield School District had a graduation rate of about 79 percent in 2013-14, up nearly 18 percent from the previous year.

The Umatilla School District reported a graduation rate of 67 percent. Even though the district's rate this year is lower than the state average, it represents a 6 percent growth over the previous year.

Hermiston School District reported a 67.89 percent graduation rate for the 2013-14 class, which is a slight drop from the 2012-13 rate of 69.89 percent. Those figures include the graduation

numbers from both the Innovative Learning Center, the district's alternative high school, and Hermiston High School.

Hermiston High School, alone, actually reported an 88.9 percent four-year graduation rate, which is an increase of about 4.4 percent from 2012-13.

Hermiston also boasts the third-highest four-year graduation and completer rates for Hispanic students in the state.

Many administrators across the districts, however, say that the completion rate among each of their schools is the most important figure. Hermiston High School Principal Jocelyn Jones said Hermiston works hard to get all students to finish school with a diploma or credential so they can be successful after graduation.

"That is the most important," she said. "If it takes five years, who cares? What is most important is that we get them that diploma and that GED. We want every kid to walk out of here with either a diploma or their GED."

Five-year diploma and GED earners are not included in the four-year graduation data, but they are figured into the five-year graduation and completion data, respectively. The state average for five-year completers was 82.15 percent for the 2013-14 class.

Hermiston reported a five-year completer rate of 87.2 percent. Hermiston also had the seventh-highest five-



HERALD FILE PHOTO

The Hermiston School District reported a 67.89 percent graduation rate this year for the 2013-14 class. That is a decrease from its overall district rate of 69.89 percent in 2012-13. Included in those figures, however, are graduation numbers from both the Innovative Learning Center, the district's alternative high school, and Hermiston High School. Hermiston High School, alone, actually reported an 88.9 four-year graduation rate this year, up about 4.4 percent from 2012-13.

year percentage in the state for Hispanic students at 82.9 percent.

Stanfield reported a five-year completer rate of 89.4

percent, and Echo reported a 79.31 percent five-year completer rate.

Umatilla reported a five-year completer rate of 75.3

percent, but because of an input error, Superintendent Heidi Sipe said their percentage actually should have been 77.7 percent.

"The differences between the two rates aren't huge, but they are significant when, in a school district of our size, nearly every student accounts for an entire percentage point," she said.

Sipe said the district has since revised their data validation process to prevent future errors.

Sipe said 14 students dropped out of Umatilla High School in 2013-14. Six of those students, she said, had been enrolled in the district throughout their school careers and had chronic attendance issues. The other eight all moved to UHS while in high school and will continue to receive re-enrollment or GED program support.

"Six kids is still too many, but we're making progress and staff are quick to intervene when kids are moving off track in regards to graduating on time," Sipe said.

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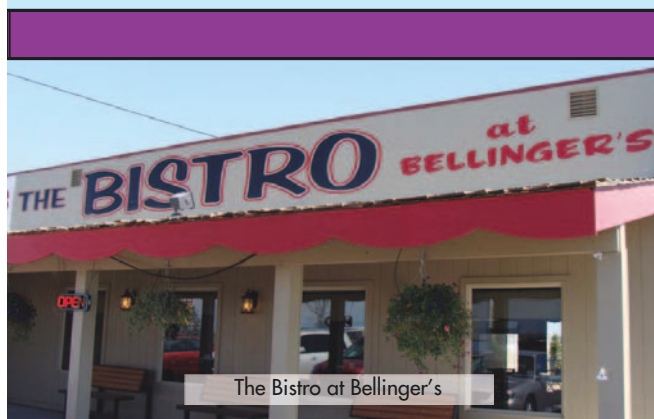
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