

Wenatchee High School reaches record-breaking grad rate

by Mikaila Wilkerson | Sept. 19, 2018, 1:59 p.m.



WENATCHEE — The class that exited Wenatchee High School in June graduated at a higher rate than any other class before them. The 91.5-percent on-time graduation rate exceeded the previous record of 90.6 percent set in 2011.

The 2018 grad rate exceeded the 2017 rate by 5.8 percentage points.

“I think it’s a testament to the hard work of our staff and students, and also to the partnerships we have made with the community,” said Principal Eric Anderson.

He said the higher graduation rate can be attributed to the high school adding intervention programs in the last couple of years that are designed to help students meet classroom expectations and pass more classes. Programs include after-school homework center, lunchtime assignment completion, student support teams and after-school credit retrieval.

Anderson, who is in his fourth year as principal, said intervention specialists for English and math classes have been implemented, as well as college mentor programs for seniors. The programs have helped students focus on taking the necessary steps to graduate and move forward with their education, he added.

The graduation rate at WestSide High School also increased from 42.5 percent in 2016-17 to 52.7 percent for the 2017-18 school year. WestSide is a coeducational, public alternative high school that opened in 1985. It serves an at-risk student population, offering a smaller learning environment that includes more one-on-one time with teachers.

Programs focused on flexible student schedules and helping students work through stress and trauma have helped WestSide staff members build relationships with students, which aids in keeping them in school longer, Principal Kory Kalahar said.

“We’re really proud of them,” he said of the students. “We are just excited about the results, and we’re even more excited to implement strategies next year to see if we can get (the rate) higher. It’s a celebration, for sure, but it’s definitely a huge community (effort) between staff and students to reach that finish line.”

Kalahar is in his eighth year as principal at WestSide High School.

“I’m super fortunate to be here,” he said. “I love it and it’s my dream job.”

The graduation rate for the Wenatchee School District, combining both local high school rate increases, is the highest it has ever been at 84.3 percent. It represents a 7.6 percentage point increase from a year ago.

The local grad rate surpassed both the state and national averages. The state on-time graduation rate in 2017 was 79.3 percent and the national rate was 84 percent, according to a school district news release.



MORE INFO

Moving on up

The graduation rate at Wenatchee High School has improved by more than 12 percentage points over the past five years, reaching an all-time high this year.

Class	Graduation rate
2014	79.3 percent
2015	81.3 percent
2016	85.5 percent
2017	85.7 percent
2018	91.5 percent

Source: State Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction

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