



**WYOMING**  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

*Creating Opportunities  
for Students to Keep  
Wyoming Strong*

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# SUPERINTENDENT BALOW ANNOUNCES ACTION TO ADVANCE CAREER PATHWAYS

CHEYENNE - The Wyoming Department of Education (WDE) has committed to improve career readiness for all Wyoming students, by adding rigor and value to programs that prepare high school students for careers.

A state team will develop a process to use economic development data to strengthen career education, initiate programs spanning secondary and postsecondary levels, and form a steering committee to make ongoing recommendations. Members of the team include Superintendent of Public Instruction Jillian Balow, Security First Bank President Ron Van Voast, University of Wyoming President Dick McGinity, Simon Contractors Business Development Director Mark Madsen, and Carbon County School District #1 Associate Superintendent Debi Gaines.

Superintendent Balow says that the goal is for Wyoming to be the best in the nation at preparing students for life after high school: "This initiative is the anchor that will help us ensure Wyoming students are ready for the next step after high school; whether that is the workplace, higher education, technical training, or the military. We will use labor market data and continuous input from business and industry to set priorities and pathways for career readiness. All students need access to an intentional sequence of courses that span academics, technical skills, and employability skills."

The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) will facilitate the implementation of recommendations made in [Opportunities and Options](#), a report of CCSSO's Career Readiness Task Force. The report encourages states to make high school programs more responsive to the labor market by partnering with the employer community. It also suggests raising the threshold for

quality career pathways in secondary schools, and expanding accountability systems to emphasize the importance of career preparation to schools and students.

Wyoming is among 17 states developing and executing a detailed plan to implement the task force recommendations. The others are California, Colorado, Hawaii, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, New Jersey, New Mexico, Nevada, North Carolina, Ohio, Rhode Island, Tennessee, and Wisconsin.

CCSSO launched its Career Readiness Task Force in the spring of 2014 to address the concern that career education can reflect an outdated model that tolerates low expectations and is often misaligned with the evolving needs of the current labor market.

*The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) is a nonpartisan, nationwide, nonprofit organization of public officials who head departments of elementary and secondary education in the states, the District of Columbia, the Department of Defense Education Activity, and five U.S. extra-state jurisdictions. CCSSO provides leadership, advocacy, and technical assistance on major educational issues. The Council seeks member consensus on major educational issues and expresses their views to civic and professional organizations, federal agencies, Congress, and the public.*

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