



## District graduation achievement gap narrows

### Latino, ELL students see substantial gains

Many thought it implausible. Closing the gap in the graduation rates for subgroups like Latino and English Language Learner (ELL) students has been a top goal for the Davis School District for several years. So when the goal was actually reached with 2017 graduation rates, even district administrators were shocked and excited.

“Our district has traditionally been very strong in graduation rates, in comparison,” said Assistant Superintendent Logan Toone. “One of the things though that we’ve looked at more closely is our subgroups, the resources we’re providing to specific groups of students, and what kind of results we’re getting.”

For 2017 — the most recent statistics available — Davis had the third highest graduation rate in the state with 94 percent and the highest among Wasatch Front districts. That alone is worth celebrating, but when the numbers were separated out, an even greater trend was discovered.

Four years ago, the gap between the graduation rate for all students and



More Latino students and English Language Learner students are graduating from high school.

the rate for Hispanic/Latino students was nearly 10 points. The 2017 rate, however, is identical to the rate for all students — 94 percent.

“This is a remarkable growth in a specific subgroup,” Toone said. “It’s a great, great number, something we’re really proud of and we feel like it warrants a celebration.”

Not only is it worth celebrating the closing of that achievement gap, he said, but the district can also be proud of that rate being the best in the state for that subgroup.

The graduation rate for ELL students also increased. That group is

made up of students who are learning English as a second language. The class of 2017 increased nearly 10 percentage points from 2014 to a total rate of 88 percent, which is also the highest rate in the state for that group.

“That doesn’t happen,” Assistant Superintendent John Zurbuchen said of the large increase for ELL students. “Look at any research, look at any literature out there nationally.

“The culture in our district is ‘we deal with individual kids,’ because we know where they are. That’s what

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## Upcoming dates to remember

**Oct. 18-19:** Fall Break. All schools and district offices are closed.

**Oct. 26:** First term ends for traditional schedule students.

**Oct. 27:** Trunk or Treat. Annual fundraiser for Davis Education Foundation at Young Chevrolet in Layton from 10 a.m.-1 p.m.



**Oct. 29:** Professional Day. No school for traditional schedule students.

**Nov. 19:** Family Literacy Night at Viewmont High with Chad Morris and Shelly Brown, 7 p.m.

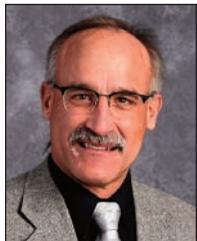
**Nov. 21-23:** Thanksgiving break. All schools and district offices are closed.

# Play a part in creating No Hunger Zone

By Assistant Superintendent John Zurbuchen

*“Those who are happiest are those who do the most for others” — Booker T. Washington*

A significant element of education is the lesson learned through service to others. It is through such service that a connection is established between the giver and the recipient. That connection provides the spark through which the human experience is enriched.



John Zurbuchen

The Davis Education Foundation was established to provide an avenue to assist in kindling that spark. The Foundation, through the leadership of Ms. Jodi Lunt along with her amazing staff, provides the avenue to connect community, businesses, and individuals to the support of our more than 72,000 students. These partnerships provide for an enhanced experience, socially, economically, and educationally for students, teachers, and schools.

This year, the Davis Education Foundation, along with partnerships with the Bountiful Food Pantry and the Davis Hospital and Medical Center, has focused on making Davis County a “No Hunger Zone.” According to federal government data, Davis County has over 16,000 students who are potentially food insecure. Food insecurity adversely impacts our students not only educationally, but also emotionally. It is difficult to be ready to learn and interact if you are thinking about whether or not you will get the next meal.

To assist students and their families, the Foundation has set a goal to raise \$100,000 in October to combat food insecurity. For every dollar raised by the Foundation, Davis Hospital and Medical Center and the Bountiful Food Pantry will match, dollar for dollar, up to \$100,000. Your dollar will create two dollars to fight hunger.

How will these funds be used in this fight? Every school will have access to any of a number of opportunities: food vouchers, Principal Pantry, Pantry Packs, Emergency Food Boxes, and Community Pantry. This is how we create a “No Hunger Zone.”

How can you help? Please visit our website to make your contribution today, <https://dsdgive.net/event/80>. If you would like to be further involved in this worthy endeavor, please contact Ms. Lunt at [jlunt@dsdmail.net](mailto:jlunt@dsdmail.net).

Thank you not only for your continued support of the Davis School District, but also for joining our efforts to make Davis County a “No Hunger Zone.” No child should have to worry about his/her next meal. Together, we can make this a reality.

*“For it is in giving that we receive.” —Francis of Assisi*

## Congratulations to staff and students for great work

The 2018-19 school year is in full swing and it’s time to recognize the efforts of our successful students and employees. Join us in congratulating the following:



Knight

• Central Davis Junior High teacher **Kristy Knight** received the Utah Educator of the Year Award for Dance. Kristy was selected from over 70 other nominations throughout the state of Utah.

• **Davis School District Purchasing Department** has been awarded the Annual Achievement of Excellence in Procurement® (AEP) for 2018 from the National Procurement Institute, Inc. The AEP is awarded annually to recognize innovation, professionalism, e-procurement, productivity, and leadership in the procurement function. This is the third year in a row for the department.

• Salt Lake City and the Department of Sustainability named Davis School District as the winner of the **2018 Elevate Buildings Energy Management Program Award**. Davis School District was chosen because it has demonstrated a concerted and comprehensive commitment to energy management.

Early Childhood Education Director **Terry Rawley** from Layton High was selected as one of three national 2018 Early Educators Leadership Conference Scholarships for High School & CTE Teachers. She will be honored



Rawley

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for her dedication to training future childhood educators.

- Davis High School senior **Cole Ponich** played a major role in helping the U.S. team to a victory in the 11th Junior Ryder Cup at Disneyland Paris. Ponich, who is committed to BYU, and his partners won two matches providing two key points in the 12½ -11½ win.



Wolf

- Farmington Junior High band director, **Heath Wolf** has been named as a semifinalist for the 2019 Music Educator Award by the Recording Academy and Grammy Museum. He was selected as one of 25 semifinalists from over 2,800 nominations throughout the country.

- **Wasatch Elementary** was named as a National Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Distinguished School to represent Utah. Representing Utah, the Title I school was recognized in the category of “Closing the Achievement Gap Between Student Groups.” To be named a National ESEA Distinguished School shows that Wasatch has “demonstrated a wide array of strengths, including team approaches to teaching and learning, focused professional development opportunities for staff, individualized programs for student success and strong partnerships between the school, parents, and the community.”

- Microsoft named several district employees as Microsoft Innovative Educators. They are: **Courtney Geisler, Rachele Herbst, Mario Harraez-Velazquez, Lori Oliver, Jenelle O’Meara, and Bayna Delia.** Additionally, **Alberto Herraes-Velazquez** has been named a Skype Master Teacher and **Joanna Monson** and **Cathy Larsen** have become Microsoft Master Trainers. Each year, Microsoft selects innovative educators who are dedicated to improving student outcomes through technology.

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made the difference in those two groups.”

Zurbuchen said several key elements led to the better graduation rates. Those elements include:

- The district’s focus on graduation rates, which includes conversations about individual students who are in jeopardy of not graduating. Counselors and administrators at secondary schools work diligently to help get students to graduation.

- The implementation of the Latinos in Action (LIA) program. The program gives Latino and ELL students

leadership experience. It also provides a mentoring program. The secondary LIA students tutor the elementary students in language arts and math.

- Counselors focus on ELL students to ensure they do not fall off the radar. Counselors meet with ELL students several times a year to track how they are doing academically and help them access programs if they are struggling in certain areas.

- A database was established that allows administrators and counselors at a glance to see how all ELL students in their schools are performing and whether they are on track to graduate.

And although the numbers are

worth celebrating, Toone said the hard work will continue as the district strives to maintain that growth and looks at other subgroups. For instance, the gap for students with disabilities has stayed consistent. Students in poverty has also remained flat.

“We need to find ways, creative ways, to find the resources to be able to carry those kinds of things out for other subgroups of students who have significant gaps,” Toone said.

Additionally, he said the district hopes to close other gaps, such as standardized test scores and ACT scores.

## Foundation corner

# Help us support students, classrooms

October is a big month for Davis Education Foundation! Help us to make a difference for students, classrooms, and teachers by joining us for the following campaigns and events:



**No Hunger Zone:** We are so excited to launch our annual campaign to Give Where You Live and fight against childhood hunger in Davis School District. One in five children in Davis County do not have enough to eat at home. Help us raise \$100,000 to support food assistance programs, including the creation of Pantry Packs and emergency food boxes for students across the district. All donations up to our goal amount will be matched by Davis Hospital and Medical Center and the Bountiful Food Pantry. Donate today at [www.dsdgive.net/event/80](http://www.dsdgive.net/event/80).

**Trunk-Or-Treat:** Join us on Oct. 27 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Young Chevrolet (645 N. Main Street, Layton) for a Trunk-Or-Treat that’s so fun, it’s frightening! There will be a costume contest, coloring contest, giant slide, and of course, lots of candy.

**Fuel Your School:** Did you know you can raise money for classrooms in our district just by filling up your fuel tank? For the month of October, every time you buy at least eight gallons of fuel from participating Chevron and Texaco stations, Chevron will donate \$1 to fund [donorschoose.org](http://donorschoose.org) projects in Davis School District. We are grateful for their support!



Face painting was a popular activity.

# CELEBRATING EQUITY

## STUDENTS, PARENTS GATHER FOR NIGHT OF MULTICULTURAL ACTIVITIES



Canyon Creek third-grade Spanish immersion students entertain the audience with a few songs. French, Chinese and Spanish immersion groups, as well as Native American dancers, performed. North Davis Junior High band also played a few songs.



Universities and Davis Technical College were on hand to give information about their programs.



Immersion instructors share food from their country.