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Idaho’s “Go-on” Numbers Showing Progress

By Dr. Linda Clark, President, Idaho State Board of Education

Three years ago, the Idaho State Board of Education launched its Direct Admissions program for high school seniors. By automatically admitting all of our high school seniors to at least six of Idaho’s colleges and universities, the goal of Direct Admissions is to provide students options from a certificate from a technical college up through a bachelor’s degree.

Last fall, 45 percent of Idaho’s graduates enrolled in a post-secondary school and while that percentage rate has been relatively flat for the last three years, a deeper look at the numbers shows more Idaho graduates are indeed going on.

First, Idaho high schools are producing more graduates – more than 7 percent over the last three years.

Second, more of those graduates are going to college in Idaho and fewer are leaving the state to go to college elsewhere. Since 2015, the in-state go-on enrollment rate increased nearly 11 percent and the out-of-state enrollment rate decreased nearly 16 percent.

Here are the numbers:

	2015	2017	Percentage Difference
Idaho High School Graduates:	17,389	18,667	7.3%
Post-Secondary Enrollment (in-state)	5,869	6,499	10.7%
Post-Secondary Enrollment (out-of-state)	2,170	1,829	-15.7%

Given Idaho's rapid population growth, it may take more time to see our overall go-on rate increase. Even though more high school graduates are going on to college, the increase in the overall population of high school age students masks the go-on increase because there are more high school students than there were three years ago.

As President of the Idaho State Board of Education, I look at these numbers and see that we have more work to do. At the same time, I think it is important to acknowledge progress and I think the Direct Admissions program is having a positive effect.

We are also seeing improvement in other programs intended to help students go on. For instance, last fall we saw a 20.5 percent increase in the number of high school seniors who participated in College Application Week.

We are moving in the right direction and we need to continue to find ways to make it easier for our young people to continue their education and to build on the momentum we've started.

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