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## **Statehouse event showcases mastery-based education in Idaho schools**

(BOISE) – Teachers, students and administrators from across Idaho will gather in the Capitol Rotunda Friday, Feb. 23, to demonstrate a new approach to education that measures student learning by mastery of content.

“This is an opportunity for us to personalize learning for each student so they’re successful in their own way, at a flexible pace,” Superintendent of Public Instruction Sherri Ybarra said.

“Mastery-based education is the wave of the future, and this network puts Idaho at the forefront.”

The Idaho Mastery Education Network is a cohort of 18 school districts and charter schools that are pioneering mastery-based education at a total of 32 school sites. The Idaho Mastery Education Legislative Showcase, scheduled from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Friday on the first floor Rotunda, will include these mastery sites:

- American Heritage Charter School, Idaho Falls
- Blaine County School District: Silver Creek High School
- Bonneville School District: Rocky Mountain Middle School
- Coeur d’Alene School District: Venture High School
- Lake Pend Oreille School District: Clark Fork Junior Senior High School
- Kuna School District: Initial Point High School, Kuna Middle, Ross and Teed Elementary schools
- Meadows Valley School District: Meadows Valley School, K-12
- Meridian Technical Charter High School
- Middleton School District: Middleton Academy
- Moscow School District: all schools
- Nampa School District: Columbia High School, Union High School, Greenhurst Elementary
- North Valley Academy Charter School, Gooding
- Notus School District: all schools

- Salmon School District: Salmon Junior Senior High School
- Three Creek School District
- Vallivue School District: Rivervue Academy
- West Ada School District: Central Academy, Eagle Academy and Meridian Academy
- Wilder School District: all schools

Moving Idaho to a mastery-based K-12 education system was the No. 1 recommendation of the Task Force for Improving Education. Idaho lawmakers approved the model in 2015, and the initial cohort of participants was selected, forming the Idaho Mastery Education Network as a mastery incubator. Network participants completed a year of planning and design for their mastery models in 2016-17 and are implementing those models this year.

Participants include rural and urban schools, alternative schools and specialized schools from varied parts of the state. Response from educators, students and parents has been very positive, said Kelly Brady, mastery education coordinator for the State Department of Education.

“They love it,” Brady said, noting reports of increased student engagement and fewer behavioral issues. “We now have 40 to 45 districts that want to move in this direction.”

The mastery-based system is tailored by each participating district and school to meet local needs, she said, and network members work collaboratively, sharing ideas and experiences. Last year, she said, members of the cohort met together once a month; this year they gather for two days during every quarter.

“It’s a reboot to our system,” Brady said. “It puts students in the center and pays attention to the student as an individual.”

Although serving students’ individual needs is the goal of all Idaho educators, mastery-based education makes it easier to match educational goals with individual students and encourages students to communicate their needs and help determine how they learn, Brady said.

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**Attached:** Infographic on mastery-based education. Credit: State Department of Education