



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 22, 2026
www.sde.idaho.gov

Media Contact:
Maggie T. Reynolds
Public Information Officer
208-332-6976
mreynolds@sde.idaho.gov

Critchfield: Let's Get to the Heart of What Matters for Student Success

From Superintendent of Public Instruction Debbie Critchfield

(BOISE) – As this school year comes to a close, I find myself thinking less about policies or programs and more about people.

Over the past several months, I've had the privilege of visiting schools across Idaho. I've sat in classrooms and stood in shops in communities big and small, listened to teachers talk about their students, and watched kids light up when something finally clicks.

From Potlatch to Grangeville to Rigby and beyond, I've had the privilege of seeing this work in action.

I saw a first grader sound out a sentence with confidence after months of hard work learning to read. I met middle school students who, not long ago, struggled in math but are now stepping into algebra with a new sense of belief in themselves. I talked with high school seniors who are graduating not just with a diploma, but with college credits, job skills, and a clear plan for what comes next.

Those aren't headlines, but they are at the heart of education in Idaho.

I've also seen the people who make those moments possible.

I've watched teachers give all they had to their students. I've seen principals step in wherever they're needed, no matter what. I've met bus drivers, paraprofessionals, and administrators who greet students by name every single day, making sure they feel seen and valued.

I've seen families showing up – at parent-teacher conferences, school events, and around the kitchen table – doing the important work of supporting their children.

I've seen community and business partners step up with resources, access, and generosity, investing in their local kids and communities.

Because of all of you, we're seeing real progress.

Our youngest learners are becoming stronger readers because we've stayed focused on the fundamentals and supported teachers with what works. More students are building the math skills they need for the future. And across the state, more young people are taking advantage of opportunities like career and technical education and dual credit, opening doors earlier than ever.

Just as importantly, I've seen something that can't be measured on a chart: confidence.

Students who believe they can succeed.

Teachers who know their work is making a difference.

Parents who value their local education. Communities that are proud of their schools.

Of course, we know the work isn't finished. There are still challenges we need to face together, from building on student success to ensuring schools have the support they need. But this year has reminded me that when we stay focused on students and support one another, we can make meaningful progress.

As graduations take place across Idaho, I'll be thinking about each student walking across that stage, and all the people who helped them get there. That moment represents years of effort, encouragement, and belief.

To everyone who plays a role in our schools: thank you. What you do matters.

And to Idaho's students: this is your moment. We are proud of you, we believe in you, and we can't wait to see what you do next.

###

Attached: headshot of Superintendent Critchfield