

Johnson County School District 1's  
**New West High School**



Empowering **ALL** students to thrive

March, 2019



*Each and every one of our students needs to know that we understand them, we value them, and we want them here. They don't need a watered-down high school program--they need a program built from the ground up, just for them.*



**From day 1, we have had two goals:**

1. Our students will achieve graduation through a **meaningful and relevant** curriculum.
2. Our students will express **increased satisfaction** with their high school experience.

Why DO students  
**choose**  
New West  
High School?



# Graduating Student Exit Interviews (Anonymous)

	2022	2023	2024
<b>Were you more satisfied with your experience at New West than at your previous school?</b>	100	100	100
<b>Was your academic experience at New West meaningful and relevant?</b>	100	100	100
<b>Did you like the climate of New West better than your previous school?</b>	100	100	100
<b>Would you recommend New West to other students?</b>	100	100	100

“I love the people and the atmosphere.”

“The school is very flexible and pays attention to the physical and mental health of their students.”



“Love the school, love what you all do for each and every one of us as students and individual people. I feel like I am treated with respect and that I am cared for in this building.”

“I love attending New West. The staff helped me get my grades back on track and helped me love school again. It’s an amazing place to be.”

Through its published Vision, Mission, and Beliefs, **JCSD1 acknowledges the individuality of the learning process and student well-being** (JCSD1). In accordance with our Vision, Mission, and Beliefs, it is recommended that New West High School require 20 credits for graduation that, in addition to the 13 credits required by the state of Wyoming, include:

- 1 credit physical education

- .5 credit personal finance

- .5 credit social-emotional learning

- .5 credit senior project (including work experience and/or employability skills)

- 4.5 additional credits

These requirements constitute a reconsideration of the requirements for high school graduation that **acknowledges the increased challenges many of our students face**; the requirements set forth by the state of Wyoming, the Hathaway Scholarship program, and the University of Wyoming; as well as our District's vision of our hopes for all of our students.

(Adopted 6/8/2020)

# How Would This Initiative Impact New West High School?

1. The way this and other information directly affecting NWHHS has been poorly communicated is avoidable, disrespectful, and sows mistrust, **undermining staff morale.**



## 2. Decreased Core Instruction Time

8 x 4 years = 32 credits (- 4) = 28

7 x 4 years = 28 credits (- 4) = 24

6 x 4 years = 24 credits (-4) = 20





A 7-period schedule would **decrease instructional time** across core courses **by 24 hours** per year at New West High School.

Even with a 4-day week (144 school days), the 6-period schedule provides about **13 more instructional hours per core course** (i.e., math, English, social studies, science) across the school year than an 8-period schedule.

	Core Course Days	Core Class Length (min.)	Total Class Time (hrs.)
<b>Buffalo High School</b>	175	45	131.25
<b>New West High School</b>	144	60-80	144
<b>Powell High School</b>	175	50	145.83
Shoshone Learning Center	175	NA	NA
<b>Hot Springs High School</b>	176	57-60	167.2
No Alternative School	–	–	–
<b>Pinedale High School</b>	169	54	152.1
Skyline Academy	34	240	136
<b>Sheridan High School</b>	175	52	151.67
<b>John C Schiffer High School</b>	175	55	160.41

### 3. Decreased Schedule Flexibility



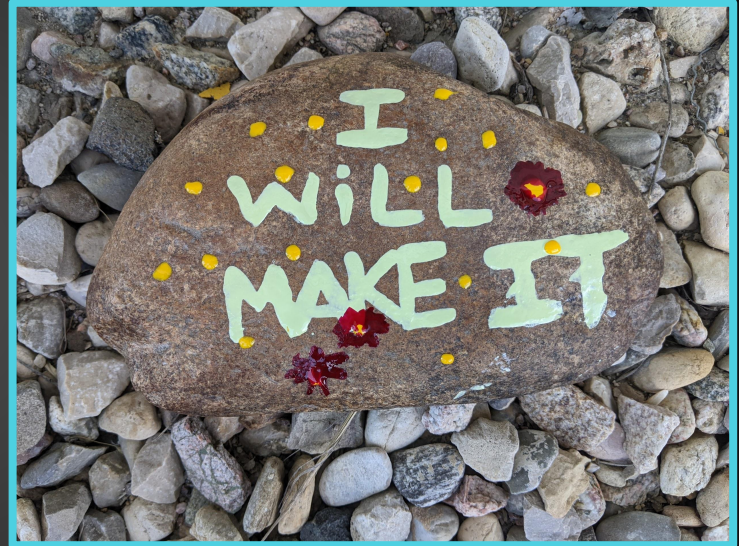
Requiring 4 more (elective) credits for graduation would decrease student options for internships, job-shadowing, and on-the-job training.

It would also decrease our ability to offer remediation. For example, we sometimes re-enroll students in math courses (e.g., Algebra 1) though they have a “D” (passing) grade on their transcript, when it’s in their best interest...

...It would also impact our ability to respond to students' individual risk factors.

Every aspect of students' lives affects their ability to learn and succeed in school. These aspects are categorized as **student-related**, **family-related**, **school-related**, and **community-related factors**. While any one factor—or even several factors—does not necessarily prevent a student from being successful in a district's traditional high school program, these factors do identify the potential that a student may drop out (Frymier & Gansneder, 1989).

**This table** presents an extensive list of risk factors and New West High School's response to them.



## To Summarize our Position...

- Families choose New West High School, not because of our credit requirements, but because we have designed an excellent alternative school designed specifically for JCSD1 students at risk of dropping out.
- The way this and other information directly affecting NWHS has been poorly communicated is avoidable, disrespectful, and sows mistrust, **undermining staff morale**.
- Increasing the number of credits required for graduation from NWHS isn't necessary; **let's not decrease instructional time nor schedule flexibility**.

## On Other Topics:

**Early Graduation:** The language is too narrow—there are other unknowable reasons students might need to graduate early.

**Early Release:** We make decisions based on students' best interest.

**PE Requirements:** Since 2020, NWHS has required 1 credit of PE (which can include .5 credit of health). Our students travel to BHS for PE (Our thanks to Mr. Camino and Mr. Mader for taking care of our kids!).

Dear DR. Hanson,

I wanted to say thank you. Thank you for everything this past year. Thank you for encouraging me, helping me, laughing with me, and teaching me. Being accepted to NW has been the greatest thing that has happened to me. Last year when things were rough I wanted to give up. But then I came here and everything changed. I love it so much that I am having the hardest time leaving. I want to truly thank you for giving me this opportunity. Because of you, I am starting the next chapter in my life. I am going to miss waving at you when you come into a class, trying to prove being right on silly debates, and just saying I go to New West. I will miss this school and these people so much, you have no idea how much of an impact this made on me. I cannot thank you enough. Keep being amazing and please help more students get a great experience like me.

—New West High School Graduate, 2024