Wyoming's RIDE (Reimagining and Innovating the Delivery of Education) Initiative: Evaluation Report

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FullScale

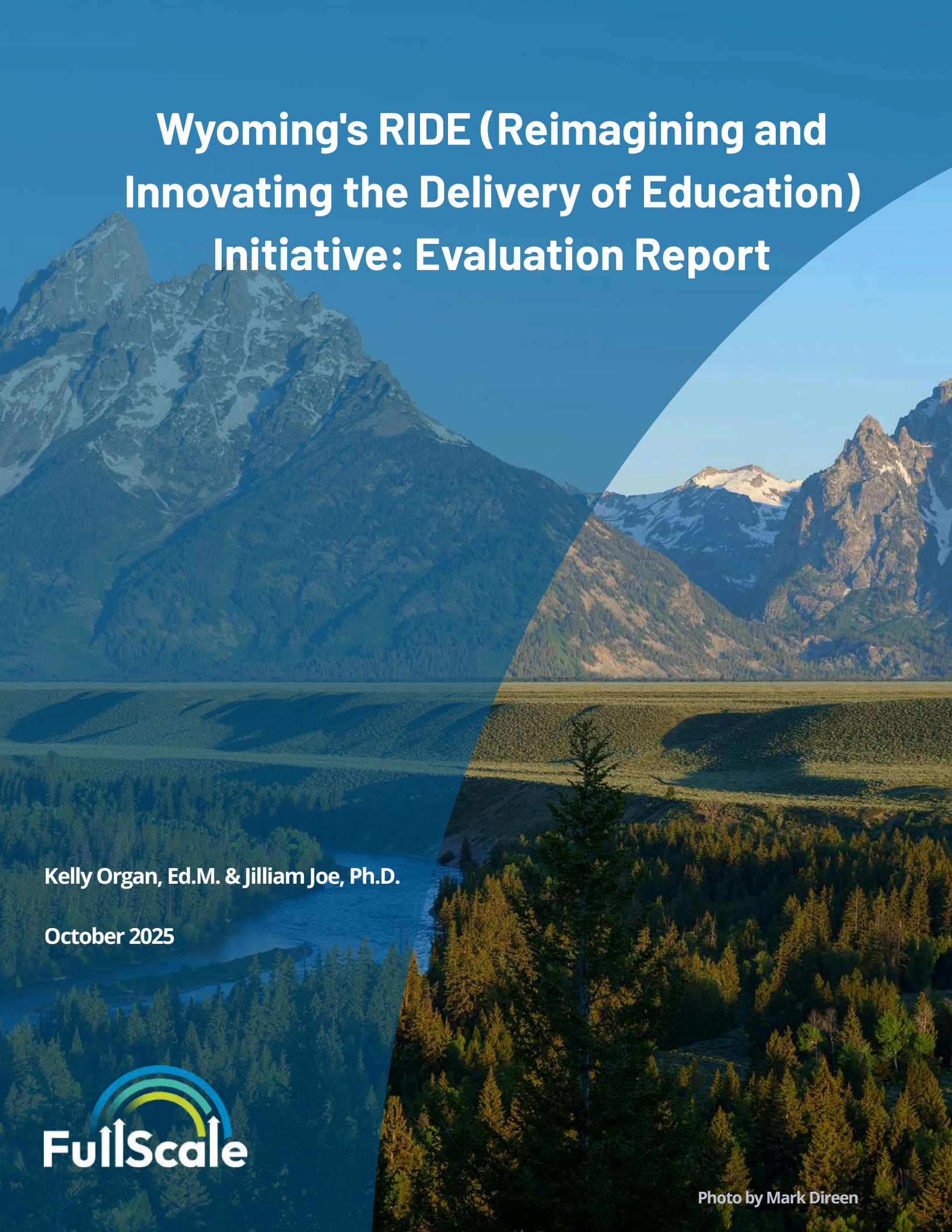

Photo by Mark Direen

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About FullScale

This report was prepared by FullScale under contract with 2Revolutions. FullScale's mission is to unite education leaders and organizations together to drive collective learning, action, and systems transformation. We break silos, bridge divides, lift up new evidence and unseen innovations, and accelerate change for lasting impact for every learner.

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Executive Summary

Introduction

The Wyoming RIDE (Reimagining and Innovating the Delivery of Education) initiative is the inaugural program of Wyoming's Future of Learning Partnership, a state-level consortium working together to support innovative education across the state. The RIDE initiative created an opportunity for districts to update key elements of instruction and assessment to be more student-centered and aligned with the Wyoming Profile of a Graduate (Wyoming Future of Learning Partnership, 2024). The definition of student-centered learning (SCL) included four domains: student choice, competency-based education, flexible pathways, and personalized learning.

Twenty-one districts (almost half of Wyoming's 48 districts) and three community colleges have participated in the RIDE initiative since its inception in the 2023-24 school year. However, the degree of participation has varied; some districts limited participation to just a few departments or schools while others expanded the work district-wide. Regardless of the scope of participation, all pilot districts received two years of support, including personalized coaching, strategic planning, and implementation guidance for leadership teams, professional learning for implementing teachers, participation in statewide learning and celebration events, and a one-time grant of $37,500.

FullScale's evaluation is designed to examine early-stage implementation of the RIDE initiative. Specifically, we explored the following research questions:

1. What support was provided to districts for the implementation of student-centered learning practices, and how did implementation unfold in these districts?
2. What conditions and factors enabled or inhibited the successful implementation of student-centered learning practices?
3. What impact has the implementation of student-centered learning had on leadership practices, educator practices, and student outcomes, particularly across different groups?
4. How do state policies currently support, or have the potential to support, student-centered learning structures and practices?

We selected four deeply-implementing districts to feature in case studies, in consultation with 2Revolutions (the initiative's lead design partner). These districts were all in their second year of RIDE involvement, but varied in geography, demographics, student-centered learning focus, and implementation approach. In exploring these districts' RIDE experiences, we examined how they made sense of and enacted student-centered practices within their local contexts. We were especially interested in how leaders and educators defined what student-centered learning meant in their communities, what supported or hindered their implementation progress, and how early changes showed up in leadership, instruction, and student experiences.

In addition to the four case studies, we also used data from interviews conducted with professional learning providers, state, district, and school leaders, and survey data from 150 teachers and 800 students, to explore broader cross-district themes.

Findings

Findings Related to Implementation

In general, **the resources and support provided to participating districts were deemed helpful and high-quality by those who experienced them. However, there was a gap between the resources teachers said they needed most and the resources they received.** For example, only 14% of teachers who took the survey reported that they had protected time to meet directly with students and discuss what they needed, but 86% of the teachers who had that time said it was "incredibly valuable." Time emerged as the number one barrier to implementation of student-centered learning practices; this was reinforced by many reports of initiative fatigue and being overwhelmed by competing demands and priorities.

Further, **school and district leadership mattered, particularly in creating coherence** between the RIDE work and other initiatives. Many examples were offered of key individuals at the district and building level whose support and prioritization of the work helped lead to positive changes; conversely, a lack of clarity from leaders around the long-term vision, strategy, and priority of the RIDE work often hindered implementation.

A few additional key success factors also distinguished districts and schools that made substantial progress towards embedding SCL deeply in their culture, practice, and systems. These included a **focus on building local capacity for coaching and training**, such as through instructional facilitators or peer leadership models. These **districts also prioritized sustainability and embedded the RIDE work into existing practices and structures**, such as professional learning communities or curriculum committees. Lastly, these **districts took an intentional approach to expansion** beyond the original group of implementing teachers. That scaling process varied dramatically in its pace and scope, but it was intentionally directed. In other words, although word of mouth did help build organic buy-in and interest in the work among teachers, successful expansion relied on more formal structures and planning than word of mouth alone.

At the state level, leadership also mattered. **The presence of an external facilitator (2Revolutions) to convene different stakeholders and facilitate their collaboration was essential**, and helped provide stability, guidance, and sustainability for the initiative. The resulting **unified support for the RIDE initiative from the WY Future of Learning Partnership was vital in creating an atmosphere that instilled confidence among participating districts.** In particular, work undertaken by the WY Future of Learning Partnership to both clarify what was permitted under existing state statute and make changes to further support student-centered learning implementation was incredibly helpful in supporting implementation.

One clear takeaway from this evaluation is that systems change takes time. Progress from initial adoption to sustainability often takes five to ten years (Bryk et al., 2010; Fixsen et al., 2005). Likewise, effective teacher professional development—that which has "a greater chance of transforming teacher practices and student learning"—must be rigorous, cumulative, job-embedded, and sustained over time (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017, p. 15). The RIDE initiative is off to a promising start; however, the work is still far too nascent to draw conclusions about its *overall* impact on leaders, educators, or students.

Findings Related to Impact on Leaders

Increased collaboration across the education ecosystem: RIDE provided an opportunity for state, district, and building leaders to collaborate with people from other institutions and parts of the education sector. This effort built relationships and trust, and led to increased understanding of the ecosystem as a whole and students' journey from K-12 to postsecondary education (whether community college or university system) to workforce.

Leadership development and exposure to new practices: Through the statewide Celebrations of Learning, as well as the external coaching provided by a team with national experience, building and district leaders were exposed to examples of other districts enacting these practices. Exposure to new ideas and processes expanded their vision for what was possible in their learning communities. In addition, the facilitation and strategic planning work led by an external partner was often mentioned as a valuable opportunity for individual leaders to develop their own facilitation, change management, and strategic planning skills.

Findings Related to Impact on Teachers

Increased preparation and buy-in around student-centered learning (SCL) practices: We asked teachers a series of questions about their preparedness and willingness to implement student-centered learning. Across the board, teachers reported increases between Year 1 and Year 2, regardless of whether they participated in RIDE professional learning or not. This suggests that some organic spillover was occurring in implementing schools.

Varying implementation of student-centered learning practices: We organized our analysis around four areas of practice:

1. Flexible pathways: Learning can happen "anytime, anywhere" and proficiency can be gained both in and out of the classroom
2. Student choice: Students have agency in the learning process, and can follow their own path to proficiency based on their interests and strengths
3. Personalized support: Students receive timely differentiated support from educators to help them make progress at a pace that is appropriate for their needs and strengths
4. Meaningful assessment: Students can express what they know in ways that are meaningful to them and transferable across contexts, and receive transparent, actionable feedback from that assessment to deepen their learning

In general, **teachers reported implementing student choice and personalized support practices more often than meaningful assessment or flexible pathways practices.** This is interesting, since most districts selected meaningful assessment practices such as performance assessment as their focus area for the RIDE work. However, these areas of practice are not discrete: personalization and student choice are both strategies used in high-quality performance assessments. Additionally, personalization and student choice are often considered "easier" practices to implement and may have been more commonplace prior to RIDE.

We did not see statistically significant differences in the implementation of student-centered learning practices between teachers who participated in RIDE professional learning and those who did not. Many teachers are new to student-centered learning, and the data in this study was collected at the end of the second year of RIDE pilots, which is too early to expect significant changes in practice. In fact, when we disaggregated the teacher data by district, we found that teachers from the district that had been doing student-centered learning work for many years before the RIDE initiative began showed significantly higher levels of implementation across all four practice areas than teachers from the other districts. This reinforces the importance of giving the initiative sufficient time and long-term support in order to make a deep impact on educators and, in turn, students.

Findings Related to Impact on Students

With the same caution and limitations as stated above, we now turn our attention to the findings about early impacts on students. We examined how often students reported experiencing various student-centered learning practices, using the same four categories as above. Then, we explored six early outcomes we would expect to see resulting from SCL practices:

1. Behavioral engagement: Active participation in class and extra-curricular activities
2. Emotional engagement: Feelings of belonging and support that create ties to the school and influence students' willingness to learn
3. Cognitive engagement: Students' investment in learning, including perseverance, self-regulation, and willingness to work hard
4. Student sense of connectedness: Feelings of acceptance and care from others; the degree to which students relate well to others at school
5. Relevance of school: Students' belief that school is interesting, important, and useful; understanding of the importance of education for success in life
6. Academic self-concept: Self-perceived competence and efficacy students bring to schoolwork

Varied exposure to student-centered learning practices: There was significant variability in how often students reported experiencing student-centered learning practices, with flexible pathways and personalized support being the least commonly reported. Overall, students reported experiencing meaningful assessment practices more often than other types of student-centered learning practices. This presents an interesting tension with the teacher data, as teachers

reported implementing meaningful assessment practices less often than other practices. This difference in perception between what teachers say they are doing and what students experience merits further exploration in future studies.

In addition to the overall variability in exposure, **certain groups of students reported having more student-centered learning experiences than others.** This difference was particularly acute for students of differing social and/or economic status: students who said their families had higher wealth, prestige, or privilege were significantly more likely than less-advantaged students (students who ranked their families lower on that same scale) to report experiencing all four areas of student-centered learning practice. To help minimize opportunity gaps that exacerbate societal inequalities, schools should be attentive to SES as a factor influencing which students access opportunities and extra support, and intentionally work to level the playing field. Similarly, high-performing students (students who reported earning "mostly A's") reported being significantly more likely than low-performing students (students who reported earning "mostly D's or F's") to report experiences of student choice or meaningful assessment. Troublingly, this disparity may indicate that the most struggling students lack access to the methods of learning and assessment that could help increase their engagement and ultimately help close achievement gaps.

Exposure to student-centered learning practices is positively associated with positive student outcomes: This was true across the board, for every SCL practice and almost every outcome of interest. Correlations ranged from small to moderate. The strongest correlations were with meaningful assessment practices and perceived relevance and emotional engagement ($\rho = .48$, $p < .001$); this means that students who reported more frequent experiences of meaningful assessment practices also tended to report higher perceptions of the relevance of their schoolwork and greater emotional engagement with school. Positive correlations (Spearman's rho ranging from .08 to .48) between student-centered learning practices and beneficial student outcomes align with the theory of change on which the RIDE work is based, and are a promising early indicator that implementation of student-centered learning practices may help move the needle on the outcomes of interest.

When we examined the six outcomes of interest disaggregated by student characteristics, we found a number of differences, most notably based on students' previous academic performance, perceived social and economic status, gender, and disability. All of these findings are detailed in the full report; however, we want to give particular mention to the differences based on perceived social and economic status, as they were the most pervasive. Specifically, we found statistically significant mean differences (ranging from 0.37 to 0.71 on a 5-point scale) based on students' perceived social and economic status, with the most advantaged students having higher outcomes in every area than students with less advantages. This may indicate an accumulation of opportunities both inside and outside of school among the most privileged students that schools should be attentive to when working to level the playing field for all students.

Overall, school staff perceive higher levels of student engagement in SCL classrooms: This was a leading theme from interviews with school and district leaders. Increased engagement leads to

many positive long-term outcomes, such as increased academic achievement, attendance, perseverance through school, and more (Fredericks et al., 2011). Engagement is also interconnected with other outcomes like academic self-efficacy and sense of agency (Woreta et al., 2025), which was also a strong theme in the qualitative data. Relatedly, parents and community members are sharing positive responses with school leaders based on the delight they see in their students as they learn. This finding also points to the importance of connecting initiatives like RIDE to the experiences of families and students and involving them in the change management process.

School staff also believe SCL has increased rigor and promoted deeper understanding of concepts: As outlined in Hattie & Donoghue's (2016) model for the phases of learning, effective student-centered learning practices push students to the highest stage of learning, in which students transfer and apply their knowledge in new contexts. School staff reported increased rigor and depth of learning for students, particularly for students at both ends of the achievement continuum. For high-achieving students, SCL practices give them more opportunities to accelerate or deepen their learning, while for struggling students, SCL practices give them additional support, and also alternative methods to show their understanding beyond the traditional pen-and-pencil test. Many students who previously struggled excel when given these more flexible opportunities to demonstrate and apply their knowledge.

Findings Related to State Policy

Overall, the Wyoming policy environment is quite supportive of student-centered learning. Clarifications made by the WY Future of Learning Partnership, as well as recent changes made by the Professional Teaching Standards Board, have clarified new and flexible options for schools.

However, the significant state assessment burden and accountability framework, which is still largely driven by test scores, often flies in the face of the message otherwise being communicated about the value of innovation in education. Until these systems are revised, the WY-TOPP will continue to drive instruction and classroom practices at many schools, and thus reduce the space teachers feel they have for innovation, flexibility, and personalization of learning.

Recommendations

1. **Continue investing in convening state partners for collaboration.** Collaboration across diverse stakeholders is the RIDE initiative's greatest strength. To sustain it, a clear convener must be identified—whether 2Revolutions or a state leader. Without that anchor, the momentum that the WY Future of Learning Partnership has realized risks waning once the RIDE initiative ends. To be effective, that convening entity will also need to be able to work effectively across different altitudes of the ecosystem, from classrooms to state policy structures.

2. **Engage local communities in a reciprocal accountability process to surface additional school quality measures that reflect local priorities.** Consider broadening the state accountability model to include components that better capture these community priorities, bringing coherence between the RIDE initiative, the state's vision captured in the Profile, an ongoing commitment to excellence and rigor, and the accountability structures that so often drive behavior at the local level.

3. **Explore creative professional learning models for capacity-building and sustainability.** The "gradual release" model of the current professional learning providers is reliant on the development of both local expertise and structures that prioritize ongoing coaching, learning, and development. To continue deepening educators' knowledge and practice, and continue identifying and addressing barriers to student-centered learning, the state will need to build a sustainable network of school leaders and trainers to continue this work long-term.

4. **Invest in longitudinal research and evaluation.** Although the RIDE work shows early promise, it is too soon to assess its long-term impact. Wyoming should sustain this work over time, and invest in ongoing research to track progress, highlight successes, and identify areas for improvement.

Conclusion

Overall, the RIDE initiative is off to a promising start. Although this study has some significant limitations, the presence of statistically significant correlations between particular SCL experiences and beneficial student outcomes is promising. These findings do not necessarily mean that the SCL practices are *causing* the hoped-for student outcomes. Similarly, the student practices and outcomes were both measured at a specific point in time, so it is not possible from this data to know whether these outcomes were improving over time as SCL practices increased. However, these results do give us some promising early evidence to test with more rigorous analyses in the future.

The supportive policy environment, united state leadership, and external support provided for collaboration, technical assistance, and coaching have created a strong foundation for implementation of student-centered learning practices among pilot districts. However, the work is still nascent, and will require ongoing support to achieve sustainability and scale.

Introduction

The Origins of RIDE

"Innovation surrounds us – just consider all of the changes in our world over the last few decades. Computers, which filled entire rooms 40 years ago, now fit in the palms of our hands. Whole industries, in fact, have come and gone in very recent history, with change, development, and progress moving at a dizzying rate.

The one industry that hasn't changed radically? Education."

- Governor Mark Gordon

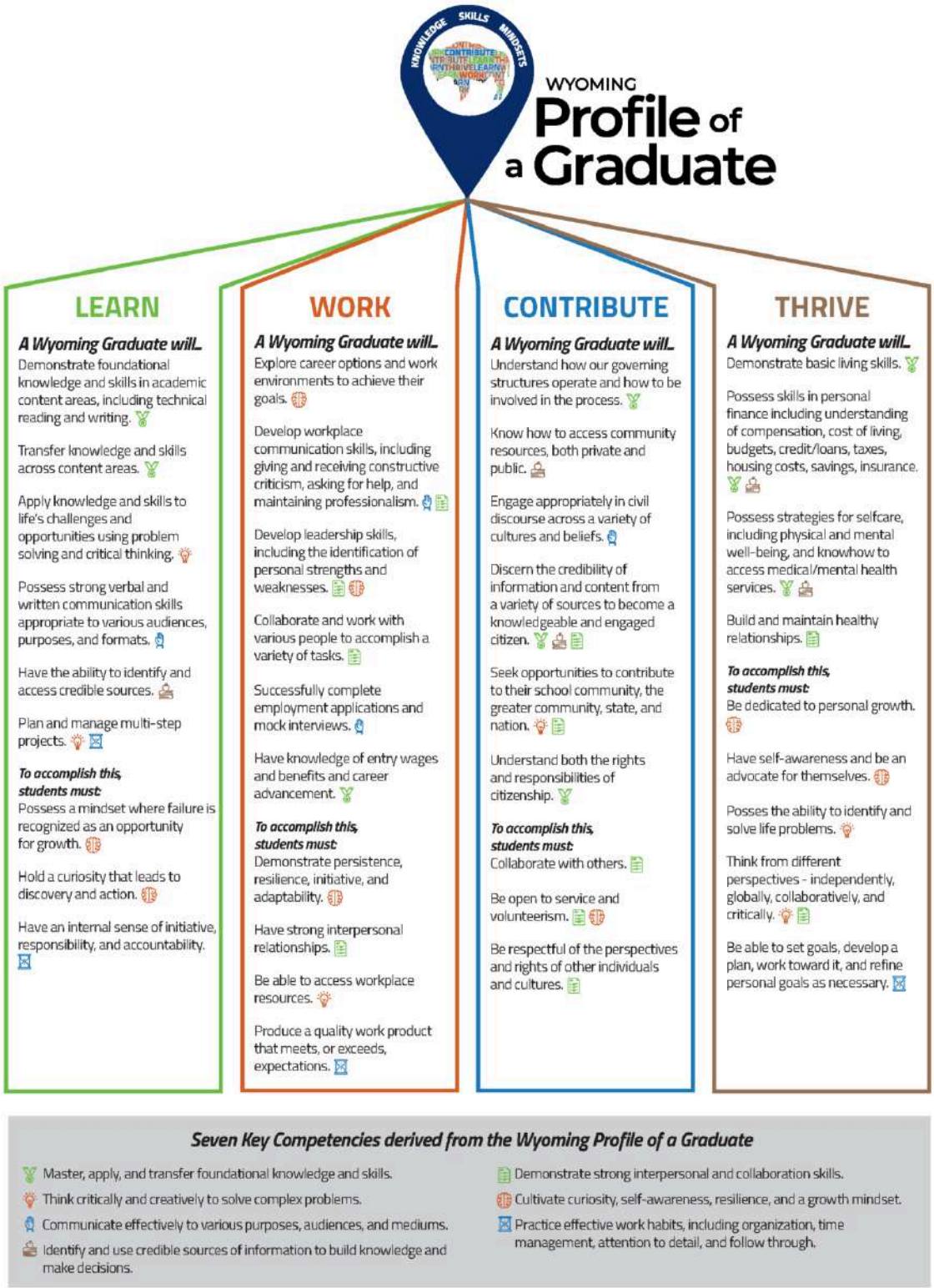
Wyoming's RIDE initiative is the inaugural program of Wyoming's Future of Learning Partnership, a state-level consortium working together to support innovation education across the state. Although the Wyoming Future of Learning Partnership kicked off the RIDE initiative in the spring of 2023, its genesis was much earlier than that, as multiple partners had already been working on separate initiatives related to student-centered learning.

Figure 1: Wyoming Future of Learning Partnership Members

Source: Governor's Office RIDE Website

The State Board of Education had been building the state's Profile of a Graduate since early 2021, which included an extensive process for public input. Based on those listening sessions–which included Wyoming parents, students, teachers, community members, business leaders, higher education, and more–they developed the Wyoming Profile of a Graduate (Figure 2 below). The Profile of a Graduate (POG) is meant to provide a vision for Wyoming's educational outcomes that should guide policy and practice. The POG was launched to the public in Fall 2022.

Figure 2: Wyoming Profile of a Graduate



Source: Wyoming State Board of Education [Profile of a Graduate]

In early 2022, Governor Mark Gordon also established an advisory group to study possibilities for transformation of Wyoming education. His focus was on strengthening education in the state in order to attract and retain families and build a future-ready workforce. The RIDE Advisory Group also adopted a grassroots approach, holding many community listening sessions and conducting a statewide survey to hear from as many Wyomingites as possible. Ultimately, their work led them to propose a series of recommendations in December 2022, two of which became core pieces of the subsequent RIDE program: students progressing based on demonstration of mastery, not seat time; and providing expanded pathways to career and technical education for all students (Ride Advisory Group, 2022).

During the same period, the electoral race for State Superintendent of the Wyoming Department of Education was underway. Megan Degenfelder was elected in November 2022 and took office in January 2023. While on the campaign trail, she spoke to constituents who were telling her they cared about many of these same issues:

> *"There was overlap across all three–the Profile, the RIDE listening sessions, my campaign trail–and we found that people were saying a lot of the same things. We wanted to move away from this one-size-fits-all model; we want education to be more job-focused and hands-on."*
>
> - State Superintendent Megan Degenfelder | Wyoming Department of Education

In early 2023, these streams of work converged when representatives from the State Board of Education, the Governor's Office, and the Department of Education sat down to discuss how they could bring their work together. As one participant in that meeting explained,

> *"We came together and said, we'd really like to form this partnership to try to work on these key areas that communities in the state say are important. That's why we formed Wyoming's Future of Learning Partnership. And then we said, who else needs to be at the table? My recommendation was that if we're going to sustain this, we need those leaders that are closest to the work, so we need the superintendents. And we need higher education if we're going to work on pathways and internships. So that forms the partnership."*
>
> - Deputy Policy Director Lachelle Brant | Governor's Office

As the partnership began to take shape, the Governor's Office, which was funding the work through COVID recovery funds, looked for an external consultant to help provide technical assistance and facilitation for the work. 2Revolutions, a national professional learning organization focused on learner-centered education, had also been working in Wyoming since 2022, supporting the College of Education at the University of Wyoming to develop a state-level Portrait of an Educator. The Portrait of an Educator, like the Profile of a Graduate, served as a vision for effective teachers that would guide UW's teacher preparation and training work. As the University of Wyoming entered the Future of Learning Partnership, this additional stream of work also converged with the work done by other partners:

> *"We knit together some of these components and suggested to the Governor's Office, wouldn't it be great if we had an opportunity to build demonstration sites to realize the*

RIDE [Advisory Group] recommendations? We had done a ton of school design and systems work in our background, so we were well positioned to be a technical assistance provider."

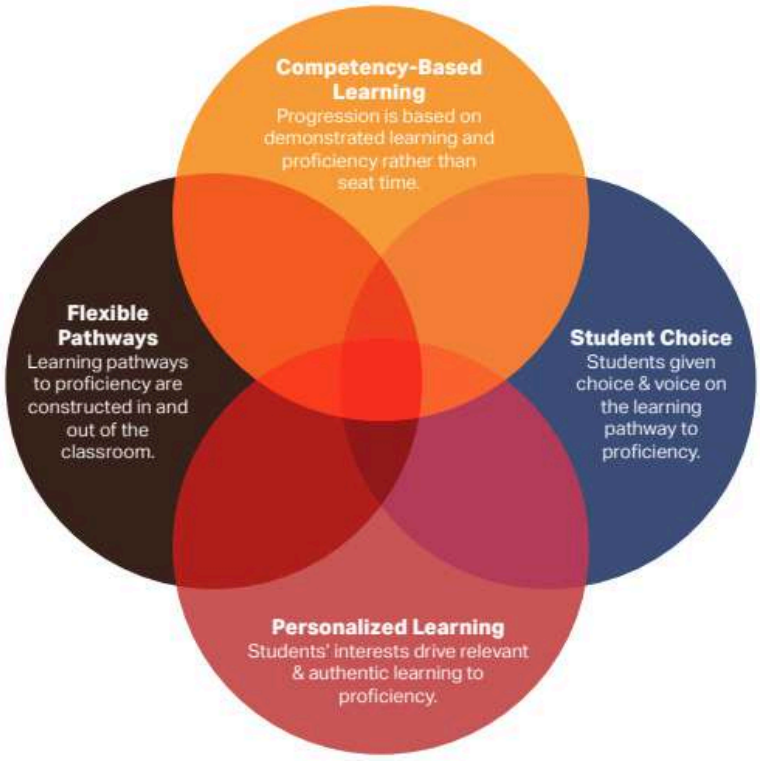
- Founder & CEO Adam Rubin | 2Revolutions

The Wyoming Future of Learning Partnership selected 2Revolutions to help design and facilitate the piloting work in early 2023. Throughout that spring, with guidance from 2Revolutions, members of the Future of Learning Partnership designed the pilot process, and that summer, applications launched for the first cohort of pilot districts. Nine districts were selected in late summer of 2023, and their work began with the 2023-2024 school year.

The RIDE Pilot Program

The RIDE Pilot created an opportunity for districts to innovate key elements of instruction and assessment to be more student-centered and aligned with the Wyoming Profile of a Graduate (Wyoming Future of Learning Partnership, 2024). The definition of student-centered learning was intentionally broad, in order to incorporate each of the partners' priorities. The four interrelated domains–each of which is broad enough to incorporate many distinct strategies to change instruction and assessment–are shown in Figure 3 below.

Figure 3: Wyoming's Student-Centered Learning Domains



Source: Future of Learning Partnership RIDE Application

To participate in the RIDE initiative, districts submitted an application to the Wyoming Future of Learning Partnership, which included a demonstration of local readiness for and commitment to the work. If accepted, each pilot district was assigned a coach from 2Revolutions, who walked with the district through the two-year pilot experience. Participation in the RIDE Pilot involved significant professional development (called "teach-ins") for implementing teachers, personalized coaching, meetings with the local design team, and twice-annual local celebrations of learning. The pilot activities were based on 2Revolutions' design principles for statewide transformation; these principles can be found in Appendix 9. To support this high volume of work, each participating district in the RIDE initiative received a grant of $37,500 from the state[1]. An overview of each year's program activities is shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: RIDE Pilot Program Activities (Based on 2Revolutions Design Methodology)

Activity	Frequency	Participants	Purpose
Site visit* (Varied)	Beginning of pilot	Design team members	Building understanding of local context; identifying priorities
Leadership meetings (30 min.)	Monthly	Superintendent	Monitoring progress of pilot; ensuring alignment with district vision
Cross-functional design team meetings (60 min.)	Monthly	Design team members	Monitoring progress of pilot; planning upcoming learning; coaching & support; ensuring alignment
Teach-ins* (1.5 hours virtual / 3 hours in-person)	Monthly (every other month virtual / in-person)	Implementing teachers	Engaging in new learning; building prototypes; reflecting on successes & challenges
Independent online learning (Varied; self-paced)	Throughout the month	Implementing teachers	Engaging in new learning
Office hours (60 min.)	Weekly	Anyone	Supporting individual or small groups in implementation; answering questions
RIDE district leader community of practice (90 min.)	Quarterly	District leaders	Reflecting on successes & challenges across districts; building statewide network

[1] To receive the grant, sites also had to meet program deadlines. One site did not receive this funding because they entered the pilot after applications had closed.

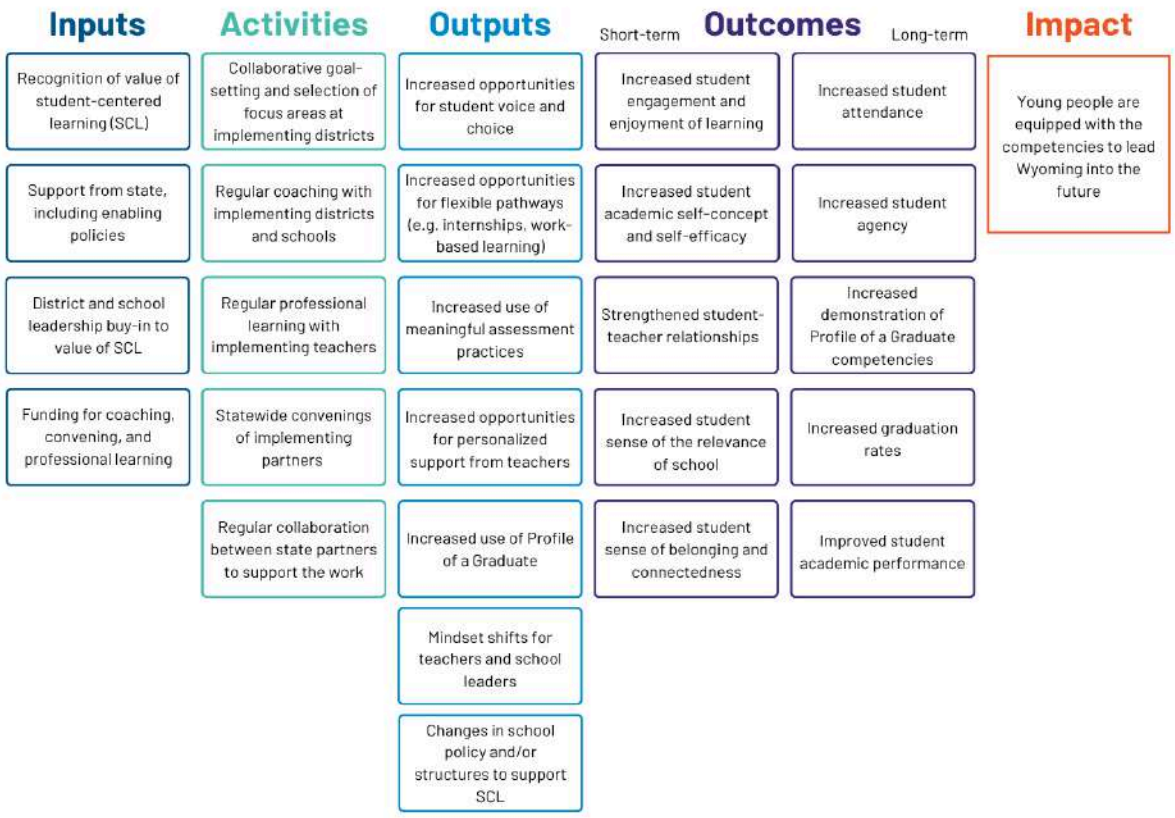
Activity	Frequency	Participants	Purpose
Local Celebrations of Learning* (Half or full day)	Twice annually	Anyone	Sharing and celebrating learning and progress; building excitement among colleagues to scale and expand
State Celebration of Learning* (Full day)	End of each school year	Anyone	Sharing and celebrating learning and progress; building public support and awareness; building interest to scale

Source: 2Revolutions Statewide Learning Design

*Note: * indicates in-person activities; all other activities occurred virtually*

Over the course of the first two years of the RIDE pilots, 2Revolutions adjusted the program activities based on feedback from participating pilot districts and other identified needs. For example, they began hosting a quarterly meeting for RIDE pilot district leaders, as well as a periodic online gathering for RIDE pilot building leaders to enable more cross-district collaboration and learning. The guiding theory of change for these activities is shown in Figure 4 below, and is based on a model of deep capacity-building.

Figure 4: RIDE Theory of Change



In addition to the intensive capacity-building work happening in each pilot district, 2Revolutions also led a statewide community of practice. This statewide work was open to any district, school, or teacher, and included twice-monthly virtual learning sessions focused on both practice and systems change, access to an online library of asynchronous learning materials eligible for graduate credit hosted by the University of Wyoming, and other in-person events, including a kickoff event and annual end-of-year State Celebration of Learning events.

The goal of all these meetings and events was twofold: to build a community of practice among the piloting districts that were engaged in deep local capacity-building work so they could collaborate and learn from each other, and second, to build statewide awareness to help "inspire, catalyze, and imagine what is possible" (2Revolutions, 2023). Ultimately, the goal of this project was **statewide transformation.**

2Revolutions K-12 Senior Director Bethany Bernasconi, Ed.D., explained the strategy:

> *"Our model is a gradual release model at both the local and state level. In our [pilot] districts, we're working to develop lead learners. We want them to not need us for the things we've supported them in. We want to be obsolete. We should be creating the conditions, developing local expertise, and then they pick that up and run with it. That's the same goal with the [Future of Learning] partnership. Our goal is to leave behind a sustainable infrastructure."*

RIDE Pilot Participation

The first cohort of RIDE pilot districts began in the 2023-24 school year with nine districts and one community college. The second cohort of 11 districts began in the 2024-25 school year. As shown in Table 2 below, each cohort received support as part of the pilot program for two years, with participation fluctuating over the years. Some Cohort 1 districts continued to work with 2Revolutions beyond the official two years of the pilot program, and many pilot program alumni are continuing to engage with the work in less-intensive ways, such as through ongoing participation in statewide meetings and celebrations.

Table 2: RIDE Pilot Participation Over Time (Both Cohorts)

	Participating schools		
	2023-24 SY	2024-25 SY	2025-26 SY
Cohort 1	36	41	
Cohort 2		24	22

Source: 2Revolutions internal program documentation

Across both cohorts, the degree of participation varied significantly by district. In some districts, every school was involved in some way; in other districts, just a single school would pilot the work at first. Within involved schools, there was also variability in the scope of participation, with some schools involving the entire staff, and others limiting it to a few departments or grade-level teams. This variability is shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3: RIDE Pilot Schools' Level of Implementation (Both Cohorts)

	Entire school	Grade-level team	Department	Selected teachers	Total
Cohort 1	7 (17%)	9 (22%)	10 (24%)	15 (37%)	41
Cohort 2	1 (4%)	6 (25%)	1 (4%)	16 (67%)	24

Source: 2Revolutions internal program documentation

Note: Pilot participation levels shifted over time. This data represents the level of implementation saturation across all Cohort 1 and Cohort 2 schools near the end of the 2024-25 SY. Percents are calculated by cohort, and may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Student presenter at 2024 State Celebration of Learning
Photo credit: 2Revolutions

Evaluation Overview

Evaluation Design and Methods

This evaluation is designed to examine early-stage implementation of the RIDE student-centered learning initiative. Rather than measuring fidelity to a fixed model, we explored how districts made sense of and enacted student-centered practices within their unique local contexts. We were especially interested in how leaders and educators defined what student-centered learning meant in their communities, what supported or hindered their progress, and how early changes showed up in leadership, instruction, and student experience. Specifically, we explored the following research questions:

1. What support was provided to districts for the implementation of student-centered learning practices, and how did implementation unfold in these districts?
2. What conditions and factors enabled or inhibited the successful implementation of student-centered learning practices?
3. What impact has the implementation of student-centered learning had on leadership practices, educator practices, and student outcomes, particularly across different groups?
4. How do state policies currently support, or have the potential to support, student-centered learning structures and practices?

In RIDE, student-centered learning (SCL) was defined as a comprehensive framework encompassing 1) student choice, 2) competency-based education, 3) personalized learning, and 4) flexible learning pathways. These four dimensions served as a framework for local design, allowing districts to enact student-centered learning in ways responsive to their own communities.

Research Supporting Student-Centered Learning

Each of the four domains of student-centered learning used in the RIDE initiative is supported by a growing body of research.

- **Student choice** is foundational to fostering intrinsic motivation and a sense of control over one's learning (Bandura, 1993; Rotter, 1966). Practices that elevate **student voice**—such as student-led conferences (Hackmann, 1996), co-designed curricula (Bovill, 2014), and learner-developed assessments (Deeley & Bovill, 2017)—have been shown to increase engagement and ownership.
- Similarly, **competency-based learning** promotes mastery by decoupling learning progression from seat time, allowing students to advance at their own pace. This flexibility, coupled with frequent feedback, supports self-efficacy and deeper learning (Haynes et al., 2016).
- **Personalized learning** extends these principles further by connecting content and processes to students' interests and identities, which research suggests enhances both relevance and long-term retention (Pane et al., 2015).
- High-quality **work-based learning** and other flexible learning pathways can provide pathways to economic empowerment and employment opportunities after high school (Ross et al., 2020). In fact, a recent study from North Dakota found that personalized competency-based learning districts closed gaps in workforce readiness for 12th graders compared to non-personalized learning districts (Ahigian, Lacireno-Paquet, & Lolashvili, 2024).

Because of this approach, this evaluation study is also grounded in a broad and pragmatic understanding of student-centered learning as a multidimensional and locally adaptable approach to educational transformation. The evaluation, therefore, employed a qualitative-dominant comparative mixed-methods analysis with case-based storytelling to examine early-stage implementation at the local level, as well as statewide themes. As such, this study aligns with calls for more contextually grounded, equity-attuned inquiry that attends to both systems and stories (Spillane et al., 2022).

Limitations

There are some important limitations to this evaluation. First, the study was not designed to support causal inferences. There is no comparison group of students or schools, and data were collected at a single point in time. Therefore, all analyses are merely descriptive and should be interpreted as correlational, not causal. There may be unmeasured factors that are correlated with both SCL implementation and the student outcomes we explored. In addition, it is not possible from this data to know whether SCL practices or outcomes changed over time. A longer-term study with multiple time points would be required to do this analysis.

Additionally, differences in outcomes across student groups may be due to differential experiences of student-centered learning practices, but may also simply reflect pre-existing differences between subgroups. Without multiple timepoints to compare or the presence of comparison groups, we cannot know if experiencing student-centered learning practices closed previously-existing differences, exacerbated them, or made no change at all.

While our survey measures meet minimum benchmarks for psychometric quality (e.g., factor loading > .30), caution should be taken when generalizing to students beyond the study sample. These results are generalizable only to teachers and students in the schools who completed the survey. This sample represents three districts in the teacher survey and two districts in the student survey. Participation rates varied among educators and students; those who completed the survey may or may not be representative of their school community as a whole.

Also, subgroup comparisons are approached with caution, as the concepts measured may manifest somewhat differently for certain subgroups systematically. Our analytic sample was not large enough to examine measurement invariance across subgroups. Therefore, we assume a similar factor structure for all students. Also, in cases where we are exploring student self-reported perceptions of SCL experiences, without an "anchor" of comparison we cannot know if all respondents interpreted our scales in the same way (King, n.d.). Future research involving student review of items can provide more insight into how students are interpreting the items.

Despite these limitations, the results of this study provide a useful early snapshot of SCL implementation and student outcomes in a few Wyoming districts. The alignment of these results with our hypotheses of how SCL practices might impact student outcomes gives us confidence

that continuation of this work is merited. We recommend continuing to do more rigorous analyses in the future and to consider how to improve data collection processes to support those analyses.

Instruments, Data Collection, and Sample

All data collection occurred during the 2024-25 school year, although data examined spanned both years of cohort 1 participation. Data were not collected from all nine districts in cohort 1, given constraints on the evaluation timeline and budget. Instead, four districts were invited to participate. Selection of these participating districts was purposive, conducted in collaboration with 2Revolutions to ensure variation in geography, demographics, and implementation focus. Not all districts participated in all data collection activities; the level of engagement was left up to district leadership.

Survey Data Collection

In the spring of 2025, we administered two surveys: an educator survey to 14 schools from three districts, as well as a student survey to four schools from two districts. The educator survey captured perceptions of professional learning, shifts in practice, and contextual enablers and barriers. The student survey assessed exposure to student-centered practices and early outcomes aligned with the initiative's theory of change (e.g., relevance, efficacy, connectedness).

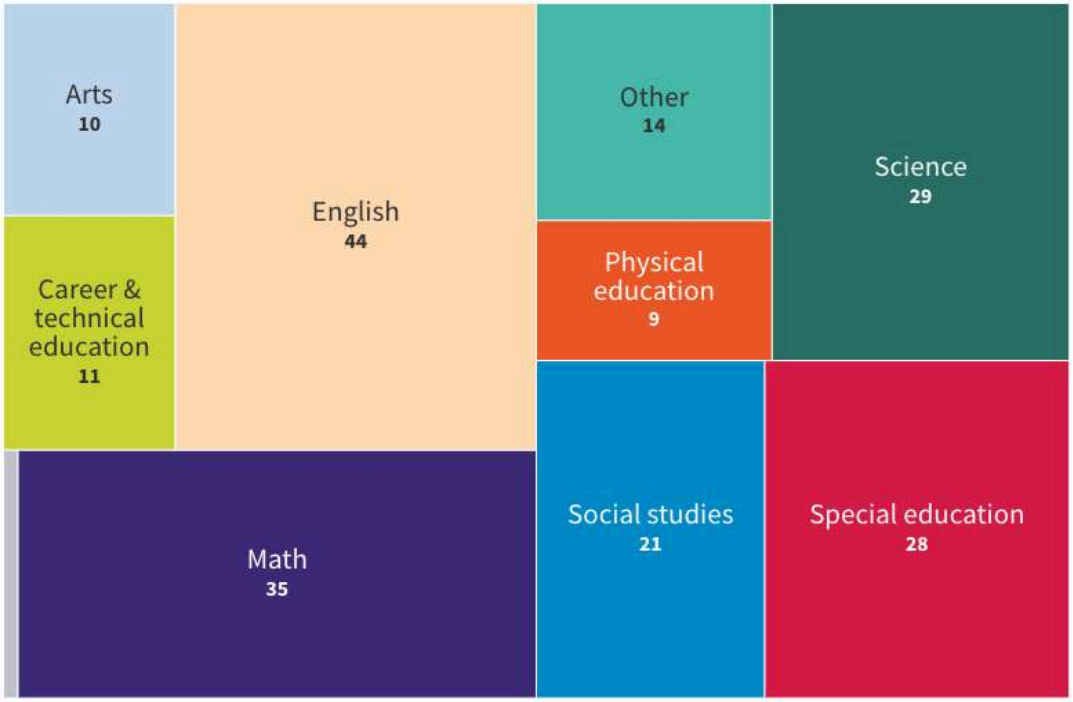
Both survey instruments were developed by FullScale researchers and reviewed by 2Revolutions for relevance and alignment with program activities. Survey instruments included adapted versions of questions from validated measures of student-centered learning, as well as some novel items developed specifically for this study. The full survey instruments can be found in the Appendices to this report.

The educator survey was sent to teachers, paraprofessionals, and any other members of the learning community who directly oversee classroom instruction and assessment. We received a list of recipient names and email addresses from school leaders prior to survey administration, and distributed Qualtrics surveys directly to those recipients via email. This allowed us to track responses and send reminders to any recipients who had not yet completed the survey. The survey was open for the entire month of April 2025. We sent weekly email reminders directly to recipients throughout the month; we also sent overall participation rates to school leaders so they could remind their staff to take the survey. Final participation rates are shown in Appendix 1.

In total, 150 educators from 14 schools and 3 districts participated in the educator survey. Respondents who left greater than 95% of the survey items unanswered were dropped from the dataset (n=13), resulting in a final analytic dataset of 137. Educators who took the survey represented every subject area (as shown in Figure 5) and grade level, with a relatively balanced distribution across elementary, middle, and high schools. Of the total 137 respondents, 77% were teachers, 19% were paraprofessionals, and 4% had other roles (e.g. case manager, speech language pathologist, etc.) Of those who identified as teachers, 21% reported that they had

actively participated in RIDE teach-ins.[2] The majority of educator respondents had over ten years of experience (56%) and were White (72%) and female (57%), which mirrors the general teaching workforce in Wyoming. Additional educator survey respondent characteristics are shown in Appendix 1.

Figure 5: Educator Survey Respondents: Subjects Taught



Source: RIDE Educator Survey, Spring 2025 (n=106)
Note: This item was multi-select so the sum of responses exceeds 100%. The gray area in the bottom left corner represents foreign languages (n=1).

The student survey was also administered online via Qualtrics. It took approximately 15 minutes to complete and was designed to be age-appropriate and accessible for students in grades 6 through 12. The survey was developed in English and translated into Spanish; students could choose their preferred language using a dropdown menu in the corner of the screen. At the beginning of the survey, students were informed about the purpose of the data and given the option to either assent to participation or opt out. Students were also told that they could skip any questions they did not feel comfortable answering; the survey was programmed to allow them to proceed without answering each item. In addition to students assenting to their participation, each school also notified parents/guardians about the upcoming survey and provided an opportunity for them to opt their children out of participating.

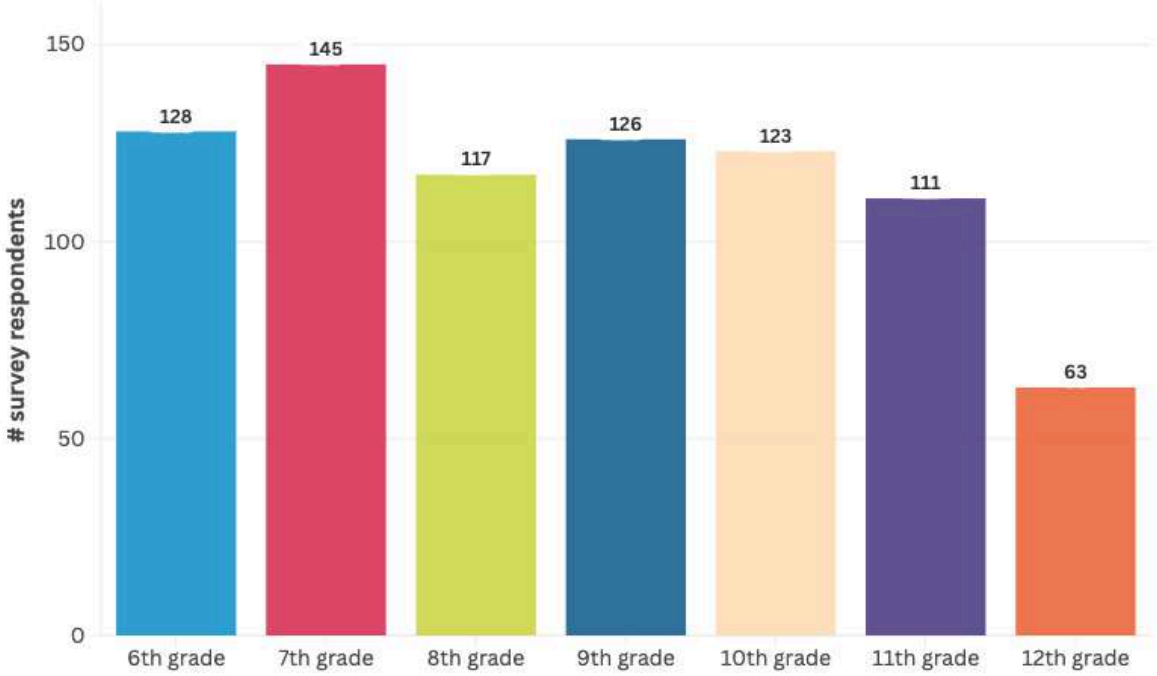
Unlike the educator survey, student surveys were not distributed via email. Instead, each school nominated a staff member to coordinate survey administration during the school day, using a

[2] Non-teacher respondents were not asked whether or not they participated in teach-ins.

district-specific link that students accessed through their learning management system (LMS) or school website. Each school organized a 25- to 30-minute window, typically during an advisory period, for students to sit down and take the survey. Teachers were provided with a facilitation script that explained how to access the link, outlined the purpose of the survey and its intended use, and informed students that participation was optional. At the end of each scheduled participation window, FullScale staff would check participation rates by grade level and send an update to the school coordinator. If participation rates were low, the coordinator would be asked to organize makeups to ensure that all students had the opportunity to participate. Participation rates are shown in Appendix 1.

In total, 846 students from four schools participated in the student survey, representing the middle school and high school of two different districts. Students who did not assent to participation or left greater than 90% of the survey items unanswered were dropped from the dataset (n=33), resulting in a final analytic dataset of 813. The student sample was relatively balanced across grade levels, with the exception of 12th grade, which was slightly underrepresented, as shown in Figure 6.

Figure 6: Student Survey Respondents by Grade

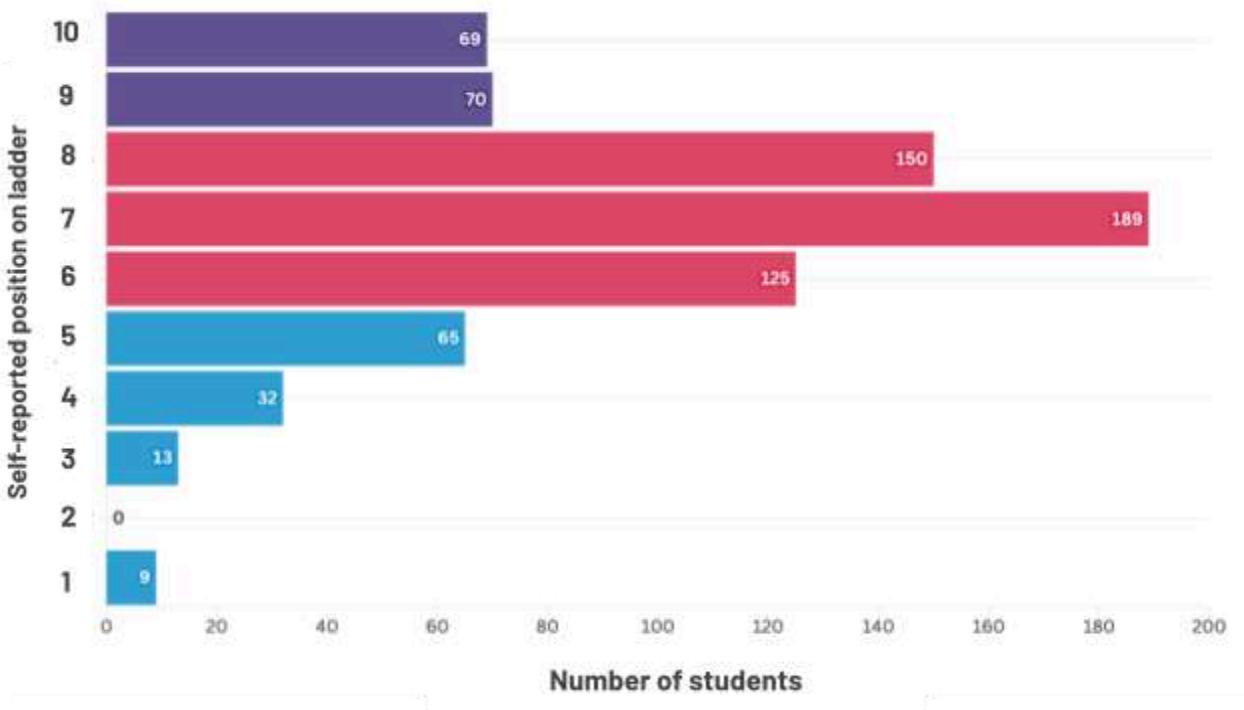


Source: RIDE Student Survey, Spring 2025 (n=813)

The student survey sample also was relatively privileged in terms of perceived social and economic status. In this study, perceived social and economic status was measured through students' self-reported answer to the question "Imagine that this ladder represents our society. Click on the part of the ladder that best represents where your family would be on this ladder." The bottom rung of the ladder (1) was labeled "people with the least privilege, money, education, or prestige" and the top rung of the ladder (10) was labeled "people with the most privilege, money, education or

prestige." Student responses were then re-coded as shown in Figure 7: students who selected 1-5 were categorized as "low" SES (n=119, or 17% of the 722 students who answered this question), students who selected 6-8 were categorized as "medium" SES (n=464, 64%), and students who selected a value higher than 8 were categorized as "high" SES (n=139, 19%).

Figure 7: Student Survey Respondents by Perceived Social and Economic Status



Source: RIDE Student Survey, Spring 2025 (n=722)

In general, the participants in the student survey also tended to be academically high-achieving: 43% of survey respondents said they usually earned "mostly A's" and an additional 21% said they earned "mostly B's." Just 12% of students reported that they speak a language other than English at home, and only 14% of students said they have an IEP or 504 plan. The survey sample was primarily White (64%) and fairly balanced in terms of gender. Additional characteristics of the student survey respondents can be found in Appendix 1.

Interview Data Collection

We also conducted semi-structured interviews (n = 33) with district and school leaders, state partners from the Future of Learning Partnership, and 2Revolutions staff. These interviews explored implementation strategies, support structures, and contextual variation. All four participating districts participated in the interviews, even if they did not participate in survey data collection. Full interview protocols are available in the appendices to this report.

Secondary Data Collection

In addition to primary data collection, we relied on secondary data sources to deepen our understanding of both state and local contexts, including publicly available data retrieved from both the Wyoming Department of Education and the National Center for Education Statistics. 2Revolutions also supplied internal documentation for review and analysis, including implementation logs, participation records, and documentation of coaching and coursework engagement.

Data Analysis

Open-ended responses from surveys, interviews, and focus group transcripts were analyzed to deepen our understanding of implementation experiences, challenges, and benefits of RIDE.

The qualitative analysis followed an open coding approach, guided by the evaluation's research questions. We first conducted an initial round of inductive coding to identify salient patterns and emergent themes (e.g., benefits, challenges). Data were coded using Dedoose by multiple analysts, with periodic checks occurring to ensure inter-coder reliability. Coding notes were captured throughout the process to document and refine interpretations. Findings from the qualitative analysis were used to ground and contextualize the quantitative results, surface specific insights and examples, and inform recommendations for policy, practice, and systems change.

The quantitative analysis relied on educator and student survey data. These survey data were analyzed first using descriptive statistical methods, consistent with best practices for exploratory data analysis in educational research (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). We analyzed skewness, distribution, and normality, and calculated frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations to summarize educator and student responses and explore patterns in the direction and magnitude of those responses, as well as variability across schools and groups.

Inferential analyses were conducted to examine the statistical significance of differences between groups and to examine the associations between implementation of SCL practices and student outcomes. Given that most of the data did not meet assumptions of normality, we used nonparametric tests for our statistical inferences (Gibbons & Chakraborti, 2011). Specifically, to examine bivariate associations, we used Spearman's rank-order correlation, which is well-suited for non-normally distributed data (Siegel & Castellan, 1988). We then used the Kruskal-Wallis to assess differences between groups, followed by the Dwass-Steel-Critchlow-Fligner (DSCF) test for post-hoc pairwise comparisons[3]. This combination of tests provides a robust approach to group comparison and effect size estimation for non-normally distributed data (Critchlow & Fligner, 1991; Linton & Harder, 2007).

[3] Although the Kruskal-Wallis and DSCF tests compare medians rather than means, we do report mean scores frequently throughout this report for ease of interpretation. When mean scores and median scores differ substantially, we report median scores instead.

Quantitative and qualitative data were triangulated to surface key themes related to enabling and hindering conditions, variation in implementation, and the perceived impact of the initiative. The findings in this report weave together qualitative and quantitative insights, identifying in particular places where they both converge and diverge to tell a complex story of the RIDE work.

Evaluator Positionality

The FullScale evaluation team is not based in Wyoming, and therefore we have certain limitations in our understanding of the nuances of local context. This project was primarily led by Ms. Organ, with oversight and direction from Jilliam Joe, Ph.D. (Managing Director, Evaluation & Measurement, FullScale). Ms. Organ is a White woman with a background in non-formal and civic education, out-of-school-time learning, youth development, and education research and evaluation. She is also a graduate of a small-town public K-12 system in a rural Midwestern state, and therefore has some familiarity with the setting in which most of the case studies in this project were situated.

Both team members contributed to interpreting findings and analyzing their importance for the RIDE work. It is likely that our positionality–our ethnoracial backgrounds, our education and prior experience, and our status as outsiders to the Wyoming context–influenced our interpretations of the data. To minimize bias, notes were taken on our own reactions to and interpretations of certain findings; however, we acknowledge that our own analytical lenses deeply inform this report. To help ensure additional perspectives are also included, the report and case studies have also been reviewed by other members of the FullScale team, staff from 2Revolutions, and all interview subjects.

Findings: Research Question 1

Research Question 1
What support was provided to districts for the implementation of student-centered learning practices, and how did implementation unfold in these districts?

Supports

The supports received by districts in this study were consistent with the supports described in the RIDE Pilot Participation section above: regular meetings with district and school leaders and the RIDE design team; monthly professional learning with implementing teachers, supplemented by asynchronous online learning and classroom piloting; personalized coaching and office hours; and twice-annual celebrations of learning.

However, across the four districts that participated in this study, the volume of professional learning ("teach-ins") varied widely, as shown in Table 4 below. Attendance among implementing teachers[4] also varied, ranging from 61% to 97% in different years.

Table 4: Teach-In Dosage at Study Districts

District	Year 1		Year 2	
	Number of teach-ins	Average attendance	Number of teach-ins	Average attendance
A	7	85%	3	61%
B	10	94%	6	81%
C	5	82%	6	85%
D	7	95%	9	97%
Average	7.25	89%	6	81%

Source: 2Revolutions internal program documentation (n=211 teachers across all 4 districts)

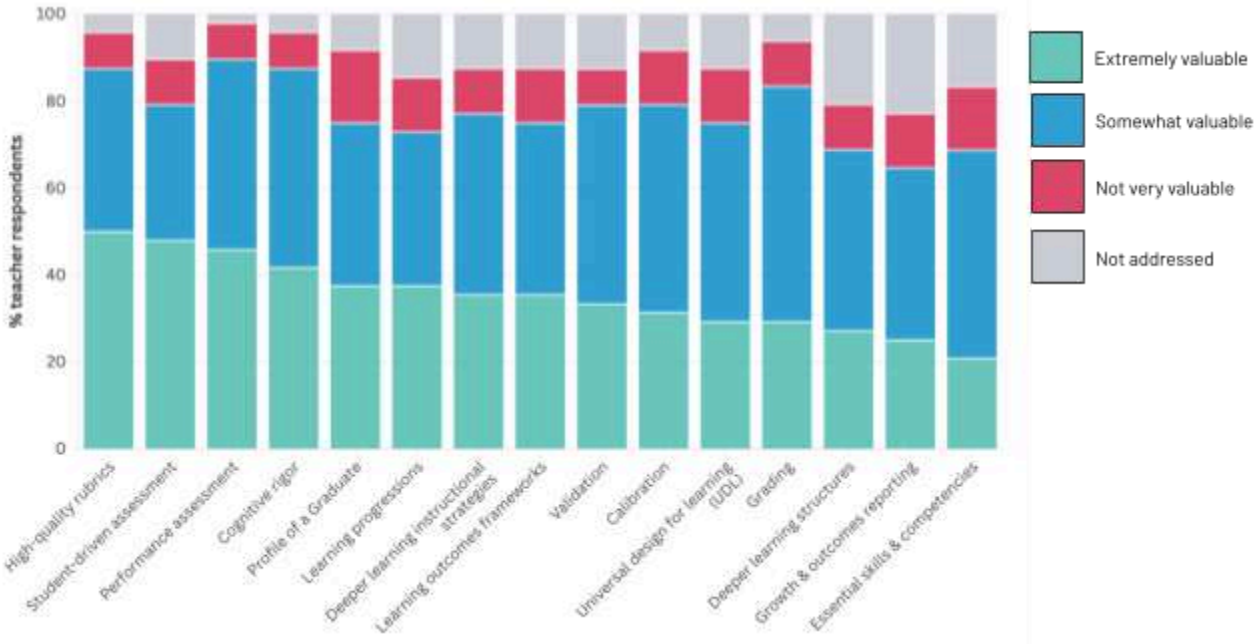
[4] The phrase "implementing teachers" refers to those who were part of the RIDE pilot. At most districts, this was only a subset of the full teaching staff. For the privacy of the four participating districts, we do not describe the percent of the overall teaching staff involved in teach-ins in this table. However, more details can be found in each district's case study.

On average, teachers generally had favorable views of the teach-ins. Of those survey respondents who said they participated in them, 35% said that the topics were "incredibly" valuable and 45% said they were "somewhat" valuable. As one participant described,

> *"The professional development from our coach has been really, really valuable. The topics have been very relevant. The education is supported by data: here's the evidence, here's the model that has worked in other places. You know, just really nicely put together."*

Topics for teach-ins were selected based on each district's RIDE focus area. The most common topics are listed in Figure 7 below. Of all the topics provided, the topics most commonly listed as "extremely valuable" were all related to assessment.

Figure 8: Teachers' Perceived Value of Teach-In Topics

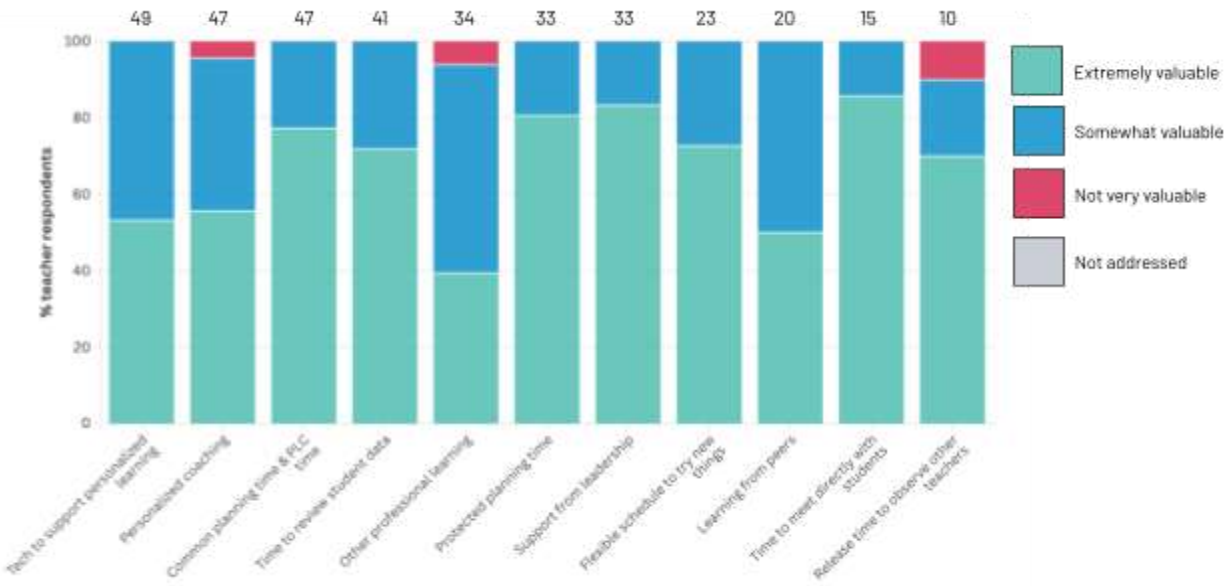


Source: Ride Educator Survey, Spring 2025 (n=51)
Note: Only 51 teacher respondents self-reported that they participated in teach-ins and therefore were shown this question in the survey.

However, teach-ins were not the only form of support that implementing teachers received. Participating districts also offered other support for implementation such as schedule changes, increased collaboration time, edtech tools, and more. On average, 67% of teachers said these additional supports they received were "incredibly valuable." However, access to these supports varied significantly, and **most teachers did not receive the supports that were seen as most valuable.** For example, only 14% of teachers said that they received protected time to meet directly with students and discuss how to support them most effectively. However, of that small group of teachers, 86% of them said that support was "incredibly valuable." Similarly, only 30% of teachers said they received protected time to design lessons, units, or projects across subject

areas using SCL practices, but 81% of those teachers said that support was "incredibly valuable." This mismatch can be seen in further detail in Figure 8 below, where the columns are displayed in decreasing order of the frequency received.

Figure 9: Supports Received by Teachers



Source: RIDE Educator Survey, Spring 2025 (n=106)
Note: The number displayed above each column represents the number of teachers who reported receiving this support.

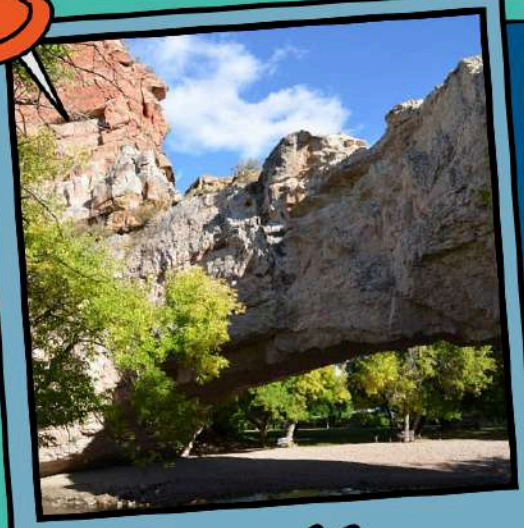
In general, the resources and support provided to participating districts were deemed helpful and high-quality by those who experienced them. However, there were some gaps between the resources deemed most useful and the resources actually received.

Implementation in Practice

We now present four case studies from the first cohort of RIDE pilot districts. These case studies provide an in-depth exploration of each district's implementation journey, including the support they received, challenges faced, and lessons learned.

The four case studies are as follows:

1. Converse County School District #1 31
2. Lincoln County School District #1 45
3. Teton County School District #1 55
4. Weston County School District #7 64



hello

CONVERSE

COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT #1

RIDE focus areas:

- Performance assessment
- Deeper learning

District at a glance

Location:	Douglas, WY
Setting:	Town
# schools in district:	9
# of students K-12:	1,639

Students they serve

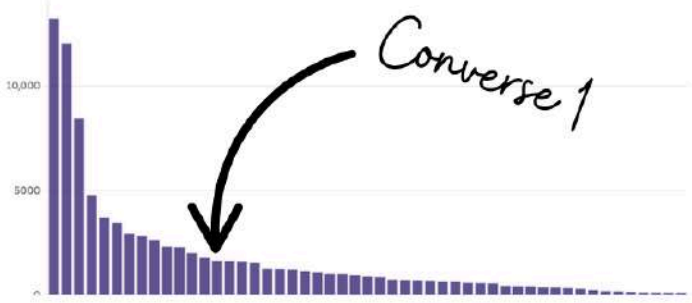
English learners:	3%
Students with disabilities:	18%
Economically disadvantaged:	42%

50% of teachers, from every school, were part of RIDE

Fun fact

Douglas is the home of the legendary "jackalope," an animal with a jackrabbit's body and the antlers of a deer.

Wyoming district size



Jackalope image: Bill Shortridge Art

About Converse 1

Douglas, Wyoming, is a small town in the prairies of east-central Wyoming: "the sort of place people come back to raise their own kids," as Douglas Intermediate School (DIS) Principal[5] Wes Gamble described it. The community is supportive and proud of its local public schools; many staff grew up in the area and have worked at multiple Converse 1 schools throughout their careers. School activities draw people together and provide a strong community identity. As Douglas Primary School (DPS) Principal[6] Tanya Seeds said, "We're so fortunate in Douglas. Our community is very school-centered, so they have put our kids, and our schools, truly at the heart of the community. They're very supportive. Douglas really rallies around our youth, whether it's through school academics or through extracurricular activities like sports or arts."

As the county seat, Douglas is home to a large local hospital and many other services. Converse County is rural, with an economy driven by ranching and energy production. The area is undergoing demographic shifts, with an increasing number of students experiencing poverty. Student enrollment often fluctuates as new students move into and out of the area due to their parents' short-term work contracts in the oil and gas sectors.

Converse 1 is relatively large for Wyoming, enrolling about 1,600 students in grades K-12. The district has five schools in the town of Douglas: Douglas Primary School (kindergarten and grade 1), Douglas Intermediate School (grades 2-3), Douglas Upper Elementary School (grades 4-5), Douglas Middle School (grades 6-8), and Douglas High School (grades 9-12). In addition, the district has four small rural schools that enroll students from grades K-8; each of the rural schools serves about five to ten students in a single multi-age classroom.

The vast majority of Converse 1 graduates enroll in either a two-year technical program or a four-year college. However, a large proportion do not complete a postsecondary degree, a trend that concerns Superintendent[7] Paige Fenton-Hughes. "We don't have a good system to collect this data, but anecdotally, we know they're not graduating," she explains. In fact, Converse County has lower post-secondary attainment rates than most of the state. According to the American Community Survey, only 23% of adults over the age of 25 in the county hold a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 30% of adults statewide (American Community Survey, 2023). To turn the tide on this trend, students at Douglas High School can earn college credits during high school through

[5] Wes Gamble was DIS Principal during the 2024-25 school year; he is now Principal of the K-12 CATS Program. We will use former titles throughout this case study to reflect staff positions during the RIDE initiative.
[6] Tanya Seeds was DPS Principal during the 2024-25 school year; she is now DIS and DUES Principal.
[7] Paige Fenton-Hughes was Superintendent during the 2024-25 school year; she retired at the end of that year. She is now the Interim Director of the Wyoming Community College Commission.

"It takes a lot of time. It takes a lot of work. But the kids are worth it."

- Principal Wes Gamble

dual enrollment. The high school also provides various opportunities for work-based learning and career exploration. However, Superintendent Hughes expressed concern about the economic and career opportunities available to the district's graduates.

Why Converse 1 Joined RIDE

School and district leaders believed in the importance of adapting their work for the future. As DIS Principal Gamble explained, what the education field knows about how children learn and the tools they need to thrive has evolved significantly over his decades-long career:

> *"The world now is different than our world was. We have so much more we can give kids now. It's not a piece of chalk and a board; it's an outside connection to the real world. It's those competencies they need to have to be deep-thinking citizens and able to listen and communicate. So we have to think a little bit differently and bridge the gap between the generations and how they learn best, but also give them the skills that they need to be able to communicate, to think, to problem-solve, and to do it in their world."*

Douglas High School Principal Justin Carr agreed. When the Wyoming Profile of a Graduate was launched statewide, he found it useful as a tool to conceptualize a modern vision for teaching and learning. "We're looking to see how we can assess some of these life skills that we want our kids to have to be successful, regardless of what pathway they take in life," he explained.

As the state began exploring practical ways to bring the Profile of a Graduate to life, Converse 1 leaders wanted to help shape its development. **This desire to be future-focused and involved in the innovative work happening at the state level is ultimately what inspired Superintendent Hughes to apply for the RIDE pilot.** A few years prior to applying for RIDE, when the district received COVID-19 relief funding, she had created a micro-grant program to stimulate innovation throughout the district. "But I had one principal apply to do it," she sighed. This experience left her wondering about how to spark a culture of innovation in the district. When she learned about the RIDE initiative a few years later, she saw it as a perfect opportunity to do just that.

Implementation of Student-Centered Learning at Converse 1

Converse 1 initially selected Douglas Intermediate School (DIS) as its sole RIDE pilot school, as it was the school with the lowest state assessment scores. "That's not the only measure we use, but people care about it," Superintendent Hughes explained. She applied during the summer and told Principal Gamble when he got back from his vacation. She laughed while remembering the conversation: "He was like, 'What are we doing?' and I went, 'Oh, it'll be fun.'" Principal Gamble was on board pretty quickly, as he remembered:

Performance assessment is a multi-step assignment with clear criteria, expectations, and processes which measure how well a student transfers and applies knowledge and complex skills to create or refine an original product and/or solution.

- Center for Collaborative Education

"Our superintendent has always been a true champion of 'if we do things the same way, we're probably going to get the same results.' So I was excited about it, but didn't know what to think... but we began with a couple little groups. And once teachers put their mind to something, they're going to go all-in. It takes a lot of time. It takes a lot of work. But the kids are worth it."

For the first part of the 2023-24 school year, the RIDE work was limited to a small group: four implementing teachers from DIS, as well as a design team composed of building leaders, district leaders, and instructional coaches. Converse 1 chose **performance assessment** as their focus area, seeing it as a concrete step towards more innovation in student learning. They wanted to better meet the needs of individual learners and provide multiple modalities for learning and assessment; performance assessment was a good fit for those priorities. The four implementing teachers attended monthly professional learning sessions led by 2Revolutions, completed online learning modules asynchronously, and also developed performance assessments to use in their classrooms.

A few months into the pilot, district leaders made a strategic pivot to expand. They invited 71 additional teachers, including those in "non-core" subjects such as the arts or career and technical education, believing they would also benefit from the professional learning being provided. 2Revolutions agreed to pivot with them to support a cohort nearly 18 times its original size. The newly expanded cohort commenced in January 2024, following the same learning plan and focus on performance assessments as the first small group.

This sudden, dramatic growth created challenges. The district's design team, which remained the same, now had to support 75 teachers instead of four, with the same high expectations for quality. Moreover, the expectations for participating teachers remained the same: monthly PD attendance, asynchronous learning, and independent development of a performance assessment for their classrooms, including all student-facing materials and rubrics. As Instructional Coach Paige Garcia explained, "That first year was intense. There were some great things that happened, but also a lot of tears and frustration. It was a lot to throw on teachers all at once." Teachers and leaders shared the feedback with 2Revolutions, and it was well-received. As the year progressed, the role of the independent learning modules was clarified, and the workload for teachers lessened somewhat, though the rigor and expectations for high-quality work remain the same, and still required a substantial investment of time and energy. Throughout that year, piloting teachers created and implemented a wide variety of innovative performance assessments. Two examples are shown in Figure C1 below.

Figure C1: Sample Performance Assessments

Third grade teachers co-designed a cross-curricular project focused on math, social studies, and English standards. It required students to build a community and share responsibility for its management. Each student had an assigned job in the community. Students worked individually to create personal budgets based on their salary, and also worked collaboratively to meet shared community needs and goals.

Photo credit: Paige Garcia

A high school math teacher designed a performance assessment for their algebra class which invited students to design a skate park. After the park was designed, the students developed a plan for how they could pitch the idea to the city council to update the existing skate park in Douglas.

Photo credit: Paige Garcia

In the 2024-25 school year, Converse 1 expanded its RIDE work once again to include 20 more teachers. This new cohort followed the same learning journey focused on performance assessment as the first cohort. However, this cohort's learning was facilitated primarily by "lead learners" from the district (instructional coaches and deeply-implementing teachers from the first cohort), who met monthly with 2Revolutions coaches for support and coaching of their own.

Deeper learning means that learners are engaging with content in ways that require complex thinking within the content itself and integrate durable skills (such as critical thinking, collaboration, communication, creativity, and self-direction) to ensure authenticity, relevance and value.

-2Revolutions

In the meantime, the first cohort of teachers continued working with their RIDE coach from 2Revolutions. In their second year, they shifted their focus from performance assessment to **deeper learning.** This allowed the district to continue moving toward its goal of innovation in both learning and assessment, while also connecting to other district priorities. As Douglas Middle School Principal Jessica McGuire explained,

> *"We took the opportunity through the deeper learning work to have conversations about what classrooms could look like outside of traditional instruction... and also to tie to the Wyoming Profile of a Graduate work and our district instructional framework. We were trying to merge those things together. There was a lot of clarity around that."*

As the pool of participating teachers expanded and the benefits of the new approaches began to become apparent, **the organic influence of the work also spread throughout the district.** As DHS Principal Carr described,

> *"The teachers had to showcase their authentic assessments to their colleagues and talk about what lessons were learned through that process and the benefits. When those presentations were made and their colleagues heard about the good things that were going on, it helped it gain traction. It's allowed that to spread into some of the other departments that weren't participating in the PD. They were able to pick up some of the good stuff that their colleagues did and incorporate some of the student-centered, learner-led work themselves."*

Converse 1 is facing significant personnel changes in the year ahead, including a superintendent transition and many principals moving to new buildings. Although the exact future of the RIDE work is uncertain amidst these changes, many staff are confident the work of student-centered learning and innovation will continue. As Instructional Coach Garcia explained, local lead learners will likely take a larger role in leading and training their peers in the years ahead: "That's what we want, right? We want teachers to take it in and continue the work."

Challenges Faced and Overcome

Rapid Expansion without a Roadmap

One of the challenges Converse 1 faced was **ensuring alignment of expectations and vision across many different schools and cohorts of participating teachers.** Because the expansion from a single school to the rest of the district was not planned ahead of time, expectations were not set

up-front, resulting in inconsistent expectations from school to school. At some schools, the principal was highly involved and set a clear expectation that teachers would work on RIDE during their PLC time; at other schools, the principal only heard about RIDE from one or two teachers who were participating and would informally share about their experience. "It seemed disjointed," DMS Principal McGuire explained. "We had a lot of people with different expectations put on them, and then obviously that causes some cultural issues." Douglas Upper Elementary School Principal[8] Brent Notman agreed that the rollout felt a bit disjointed:

> *"I think one of the most important things is to have everyone at the table, because if this is the direction that the district wants to move, everybody has to be part of that training and understanding. We can't rely on one or two from a team to come back and spread it to the team–everyone has to be a part of the work and have some foundational knowledge, because then teams can talk together, develop together, implement together, and reflect together."*

District leaders were aware of this challenge. Superintendent Hughes reflected, "It probably would have gone smoother had we envisioned it the way it happened. When you're going forward without a long-term plan, you always go, 'Wait, maybe we could have done this.' On the other hand, the fact that it's kind of grown itself is much more powerful." Assistant Superintendent[9] Ryan Mackey agreed, acknowledging the pros and cons to the way the initiative rolled out at Converse 1. "If it were going to be wholesale, it would have to be much more strategic and portrayed in a way that was aligned to building initiatives and priorities," he explained. One example of this lack of clarity around alignment with other priorities came from one of the principals, who was concerned about possible contradictions between the more diverse forms of student-centered assessment being developed through RIDE and the district's previous work around a guaranteed and viable curriculum–which includes a commitment to consistent assessments.

As leaders change roles in the upcoming year, it provides an opportunity for Converse 1 to build clarity and alignment about the RIDE work moving forward. As DPS Principal Seeds explained,

> *"Our kids transition a lot right now when they go from one school to the next, so having those aligned opportunities is really important for them. I want to align what we do K-5, look at the learning we've already done and the work that's been put into it, and figure out ways to continue those strategies and continue that learning with our staff to truly align some of those powerful practices."*

Misconceptions about Performance Assessment

Another challenge faced was a set of **misconceptions about what performance assessment is.** These misconceptions took multiple forms. The first misconception was particularly common among CTE teachers, who believed that they were already doing performance assessment because their classes were more applied and hands-on than a core academic subject. This perspective was

[8] Brent Notman was DUES Principal during the 2024-25 school year; he is now the district's Director of Human Resources.
[9] Ryan Mackey was Assistant Superintendent during the 2024-25 school year; he is now Superintendent.

exemplified by this teacher's comment about how their own teaching practices have (not) changed as a result of RIDE: "My subject is already completely based around performance assessments. You cannot assess music/art without performing in some way. The RIDE trainings were a reiteration of things I have always been doing in my classroom."

These teachers did indeed already fulfill *part* of the definition of a performance assessment, as students were applying knowledge and skills to create an authentic end result, like playing in a band concert or making a sculpture. However, performance assessments are not simply equivalent to "performance"—they also require students to be able to assess how their own skills are developing. Therefore, their RIDE coach focused on supporting teachers in building assessment checkpoints throughout the learning process, encouraging students to reflect on how their skills are growing and what they still have to learn. This recognition of a common misconception was also part of the impetus for the focus on deeper learning in year two, as deeper learning is more about the "why."

Another misconception that many Converse 1 teachers had was related to the scope of performance assessments. Because many of the examples used to illustrate the concept included multi-week, multi-disciplinary projects, teachers were daunted. As one teacher described,

> *"I love the idea of performance assessments.I think kids will really like them. But it is daunting to me as a rural teacher to think about how much time I have put into creating mine so far and having to put that much time into each one, for 9 grade levels. That is a lot of work and we don't have the time to do it well."*

Instructional Coach Garcia recognized this was a barrier to implementation, and intentionally worked to help teachers rethink the size question.

> *"The first year, it felt like it had to be these huge things. It would take, like, weeks to get through your performance assessments. It doesn't have to be that! You can do student-centered learning and a formative check that's performance-based. It could be one day. That was a big 'aha' moment for some of our teachers. They were overwhelmed by performance assessment because they felt like it had to be this huge thing, and it doesn't."*

A final misconception teachers had was that to implement authentic performance assessments, students always had to "perform" their learning. This caused struggles in classrooms where teachers were creating creative new ways for kids to show their learning, like one history teacher who had students learn about key figures in the Cold War and then engage in a debate as those figures. One student refused, so the teacher provided alternatives that minimized stage fright, but the student requested a traditional test instead. This situation, and others like it, led to some interesting conversations, as Instructional Coach Garcia recalled:

> *"Do we push kids to be a little uncomfortable because they're going to have great learning? Or do we honor their learning preference by giving them different ways to show what they know in a way that is not performance-based? I think we should push kids a little bit, but also I get that kids have some real anxiety about performing in*

front of others. And at the end of it, what are you assessing? Are you assessing that they are able to stand up and perform, or that they know the content?"

Over time, Converse 1 educators began to recognize that "performance" does not necessarily require performing in front of other people, but rather refers to the demonstration and application of knowledge in authentic contexts. However, this misconception remains a common one that the district's lead learners are continuing to address.

Concerns about Impact on Traditional State Assessments

Another challenge faced by Converse 1 is a familiar one: **balancing current practices with a vision for the future**, both in terms of classroom practice and accountability. "It's always the elephant in the classroom when you start having these conversations about what school could look like. It's like, 'yeah, that's nice, but we still have to meet the proficiency levels of the WYTOPP,'" DHS Principal Carr explained. Teachers sometimes worry that using performance assessments will harm students' performance on more traditional state assessments, because they will spend less time practicing with similarly formatted tests. Relatedly, it can simply be hard to shift a teacher's vision for learning away from what they grew up with themselves to something new: "We've got to blow up some of those constraints within our teachers' minds. And if your teacher can't visualize bigger, then often your kids can't either," Carr continued.

Limited Support Resources

Converse 1 also faced **familiar constraints on time, especially time to collaborate, learn and plan independently, and give and receive feedback.** This presented a challenge for implementation. Although school leaders set aside time during PLCs, and district leaders held time for RIDE work during district-wide PD days, teachers were still often doing the work outside of their contracted hours. Although teachers who participated both years found that the volume of work was lower in the second year, it was still a challenge to ensure everyone received the feedback and in-depth support they needed, especially with only a couple lead learners supporting implementing teachers across the entire district. As one of those lead learners, Instructional Coach Garcia, described,

"The real credit belongs to the teachers; they were the ones who did the heavy lifting. Myself and the other coaches helped guide and support the process, giving them ideas and coordinating some of the outside authentic applications of learning. I was all over the place, in every building, plus some rural schools, helping them bring their vision to life. But the success of the performance assessments came from the teachers' own dedication and expertise."

Research has consistently shown that professional learning on its own is often ineffective, while professional learning paired with coaching can produce significant changes in teacher practice (Konishi, 2024; Kraft et al., 2018). Without this level of in-depth, on-the-ground coaching and support from the lead learners at the district, it is unlikely that Converse 1 would have seen so much progress in implementation.

Changes and Benefits Resulting from RIDE

Authentic Assessment

One commonly cited benefit of the RIDE work is a shift toward more authentic assessment. As DHS Principal Carr said, "I think it's created an awareness of, how are we going to assess students more authentically than a paper-pencil test?" Similarly, DPS Principal Seeds described the impact at the early elementary level:

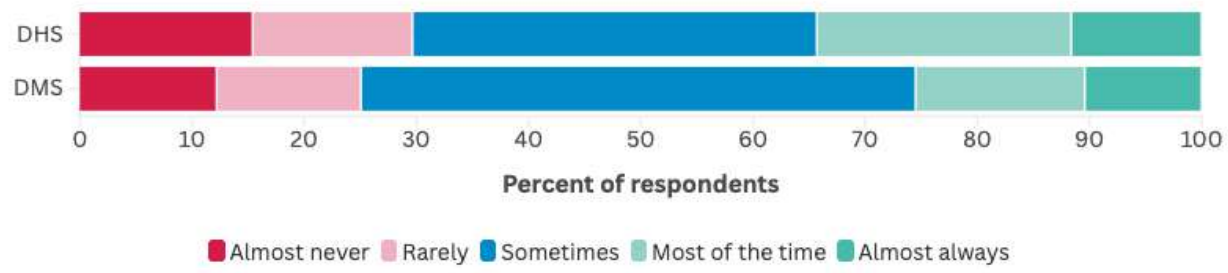
> *"We've seen some positive gains in how teachers look at student performance and growth. They are innovative, out-of-the-box thinkers when it comes to collecting data to analyze a student's performance. They're utilizing highly engaging activities that allow them to assess where a student's at, things like an observation-based checklist approach, allowing students the opportunity to tell us how they want to demonstrate their learning. It's been really fun, especially through the eyes of a five-year-old. I think it's been good for our teachers to realize it's okay to turn loose some of that control and give it to the kid: you really see a whole new world when that happens."*

Teachers' survey responses also echo this theme. As one DUES teacher wrote, "I think more outside the box when creating a lesson or setting expectations of student performance tasks. I am intentional when planning so that I can try to meet the needs of all the different types of learners in my class." Similarly, a DMS math teacher wrote, "I have developed a more open mind to alternative ways of assessing student learning."

This mindset shift is reinforced by a supportive local policy environment: 78% of teacher survey respondents said that the school's policies are usually or always aligned with performance-based assessment practices.

Students also acknowledge the flexibility in assessment. In fact, 71% of Converse 1 student survey respondents said that they either sometimes, most of the time, or almost always get to choose how they'll demonstrate their understanding of a topic at the end of the unit, as shown in Figure C2.

Figure C2: Student Perceptions of Choice in Assessment Modality

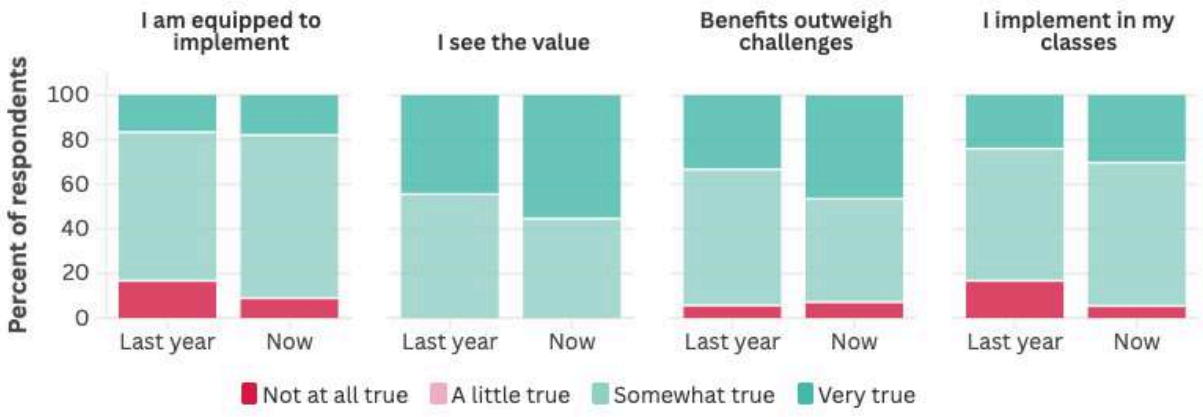


Source: RIDE Student Survey, Spring 2025 (DHS n=344, DMS n=340)

Increased Buy-in around Student-Centered Learning

In addition to the shift in mindset around assessment, Converse 1 teachers have also demonstrated growth in their support for student-centered learning more broadly between the 2023-24 school year and the 2024-25 school year, as shown in the figure below.

Figure C3: Teacher Shifts around Student-Centered Learning



Source: RIDE Teacher Survey, Spring 2025 (n=54 for "last year" items, n=56 for "now" items)

One DHS teacher explained, "Student choice in learning truly does get them engaged to a higher level and prepares them for college or a career." Similarly, one DPS teacher described their belief in the importance of student-centered learning as follows:

> *"I think that student-centered learning gives students the ability to learn at a deeper level, especially in the kindergarten stage, if they are given the ability to be more student-centered rather than get test and assignment anxiety from a very early age. I think students are given the ability to be more creative and express their ideas freely and openly rather than be stuck to one sheet of paper/test/assignment."*

Student Engagement and Enjoyment of Learning

A related benefit of the RIDE work has been increased student engagement and enjoyment of learning, particularly for students who struggle in traditional settings. Instructional Coach Garcia described the "very, very positive" impact this work has had on student attitudes towards learning:

> *"I think they love learning in a different way. Most students really like being able to choose how they're going to show what they know. And a lot of them will do better and go further because you gave them that choice. A little bit of freedom to show what they know in a different way led to better, more creative ways of learning and more engagement."*

Superintendent Hughes echoed this sentiment:

> *"You just see kids excited about learning. You see them telling people about it. Last year, I heard a story about a little student who went into the pharmacy because his mom was getting a prescription, and he was just going on and on to the pharmacist about his school project and how it was the coolest thing ever. So they're articulating their engagement and how they like it."*

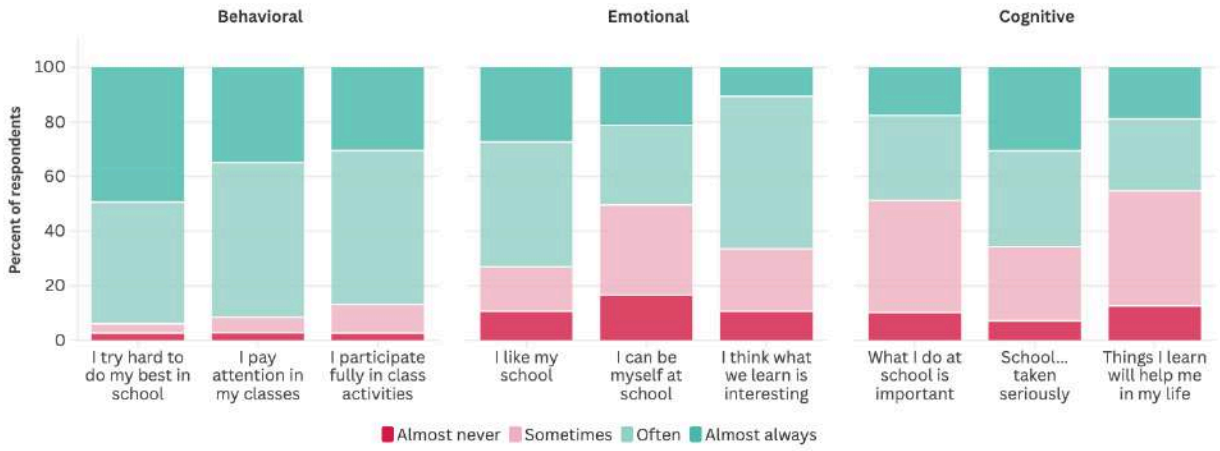
Teacher survey responses mostly reinforce this trend of increased student engagement, as shown in Figure C4 below. The area of student engagement where teachers report the greatest improvement is in students' participation in class activities and discussions: 26% of teacher survey respondents said that this has gotten better in the past two years. Similarly, 22% of teacher survey respondents said that students' likelihood of asking questions or seeking feedback has gotten better in the past two years. This is a promising foundation to build upon, as there is a substantial body of evidence that increased student engagement in school is linked to higher academic achievement, lower risk of dropping out, and other positive long-term outcomes (Renzulli, 2024).

Figure C4: Teacher Perceptions of Student Behavioral Engagement

Source: RIDE Teacher Survey, Spring 2025 (n=70)

This teacher data is reinforced by students' survey responses about their engagement in school. Overall, Douglas Middle and High School students reported relatively high levels of engagement, particularly behavioral engagement, as shown by the selected items in Figure C5 below. This reinforces the teacher survey data above. However, there is still some room for growth in their cognitive engagement–that is, their investment in learning and belief in the relevance of school (Fredricks et al., 2011). This reinforces the importance of continued growth in student-centered learning and assessment, as student choice in learning is foundational to fostering intrinsic motivation and a sense of control over one's learning (Bandura, 1993; Rotter, 1966), and connecting content and processes to students' interests and identities enhances both relevance and long-term retention (Pane et al., 2015).

Figure C5: Selected Student Survey Measures of Engagement



Source: RIDE Student Survey, Spring 2025 (n=791-798, varying by item)

Opportunities to Succeed for All Students

Converse 1 staff reflected that some students who do well in the traditional system have struggled more with the creativity of performance assessment, perhaps because they want to be told exactly how to reach success. But these more flexible assessment methods are beneficial for transient and new students, as well as English Language Learners, because they often are more collaborative and therefore create space for those students to build relationships with other students. As Instructional Coach Garcia explained,

> *"It's important for our high-achieving students to be pushed into situations where they have to be a little creative and show what they know in a different way. They aren't used to that, and it's uncomfortable for them. And on the opposite side are kiddos that hate the traditional assessments, but who really shine in performance assessments. You know, instead of writing an essay, you can show me what you know through a discussion or a role play. They just ate it up! I like that students who are traditionally not the best students were showing that they* could *be the best students."*

Key Lessons Learned

1. **Build a distributed leadership model.** At Converse 1, they have intentionally built a network of leaders at multiple altitudes to help drive and sustain the work. The district even identified a particular role for every leader in the success of the RIDE work: administration "creates conditions for innovation and removes barriers," instructional coaches "provide job-embedded professional development and support," and teacher leaders "model practices and mentor colleagues" (Converse 1, 2025). This is aligned with research on change management, which suggests that reciprocal trust and the sharing of power can help build sustainable change (Harris, 2011; Wan Muda et al., 2024).

2. **Manage the pace of new initiatives to preserve teacher bandwidth and avoid frustration.** The first cohort of teachers at Converse 1 was overwhelmed by the amount of work they were asked to do and the pace at which they were asked to do it, and this built some resentment towards the work at first. Once the district and 2Revolutions clarified what involvement required, and building leaders provided additional clarity for their staff about the expectations and supports available, things settled in, although there is still room for growth in ensuring consistency across schools. DHS Principal Carr described this strategic pacing as cliff-jumping: "I'm good at pushing you off a 15-foot cliff, but I can't push you off a 100-foot cliff. So we cast a vision, then scale it back. What timelines and safety nets do we need to have so it's a 15-foot drop, not a 100-foot drop?"

3. **Leverage existing practices to build buy-in and encourage innovation.** Some piloting teachers initially resisted the RIDE work because they believed they were "already doing it." In this case, effective adult learning requires that their current practices and experiences are honored and built upon, rather than discarded (Anders, 2023). 2Revolutions coaches did this effectively by acknowledging teachers' prior knowledge and using this as a foundation from which to deepen their practice in service of the initiative's goals.

4. **To ensure sustainability and buy-in, clarify the difference between the goal and the initiative itself.** The goal of the RIDE work in Converse 1 was to implement performance assessment as a way to support student-centered innovation in learning and assessment. However, this goal was not always clearly communicated. "It felt like 2Revolutions was coming in and doing this PD and making teachers do performance assessments; I didn't understand the difference between RIDE and 2Revs at first," explained instructional facilitator Paige Garcia. This focus on the "what and who" of the initiative made it easy for teachers to be frustrated at the mode of delivery. However, Assistant Superintendent Mackey laid out a clear vision for how to build sustainability for this work moving forward:

   > *"It has to be a focus on the how, not the who. Because if people believe that performance assessment is RIDE and 2Revs, it won't be sustainable, because they're a contracted service. They're not in the classroom down the hall from me doing it. Long-term, we want this to be embedded. If it's viewed as how we do business, with a focus on the impact it has on children and our lives as professionals, then I believe it will be sustainable."*

5. **Provide incentives for teachers that reward their additional work, especially in the early days of implementation.** Converse 1 built multiple incentive structures that helped maintain commitment. For example, student classroom engagement is one part of teachers' evaluations, and lead learners would remind teachers of this as an additional motivating factor when the performance assessment work felt daunting. Similarly, the district embedded RIDE into its existing Professional Learning Initiative, which allowed staff to get paid for their professional learning. Coupled with the graduate credits offered by the University of Wyoming for completion of the RIDE online learning work, this created a strong incentive structure for teachers to engage deeply in the work.

hello

LINCOLN COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT #1

RIDE focus areas

- Performance assessment

District at a glance

Location:	Kemmerer, WY
Setting:	Rural
# schools in district:	3
# of students K-12:	637

Students they serve

English learners:	<1%
Students with disabilities:	19%
Economically disadvantaged:	27%

100% of teachers, from every school, were part of RIDE

Fun fact

The first J.C. Penney store was founded as the "Golden Rule Store" in Kemmerer in 1902.

Wyoming district size

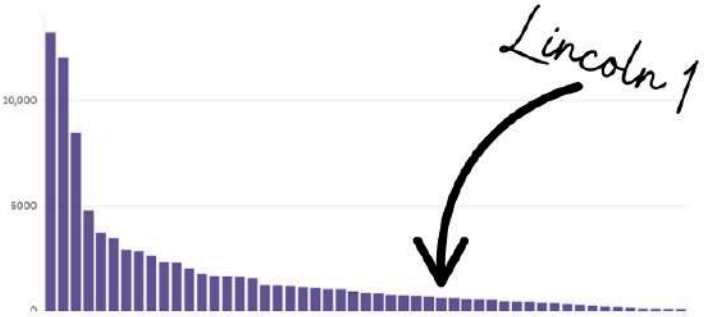


Photo credit: fossilbasin.org

About Lincoln 1

Kemmerer is a small town nestled in the southwest corner of Wyoming. School staff described it as close-knit and supportive. "It's one of those places where you can still let your kids go outside and play," said Brad Meyer, the principal of Canyon Elementary School. Most residents work in the energy industry (coal, oil, natural gas, and nuclear); the area is also known as "Fossil Basin" for its rich paleontological sites.

Lincoln County School District #1 is a relatively small district: there are about 45 students per grade, spread across three school buildings: Canyon Elementary School (kindergarten-grade 6), Kemmerer Junior-Senior High School (grades 7-12), and New Frontier High School (grades 8-12), an alternative school that provides more scheduling flexibility and opportunities for work-based learning, designed to serve students at risk of not graduating. The community is generally supportive of their local public schools; for example, many New Frontier students earn work experience at local businesses.

Why Lincoln 1 Joined RIDE

Superintendent Teresa Chaulk heard about RIDE when the initiative first launched in 2023. The district was struggling with attendance, drop-out rates, and student engagement, and she was looking for ways to motivate students and interest them in learning while maintaining a consistent focus on rigor and high expectations. As she described it,

> *"I thought RIDE sounded innovative and engaging, and I needed to find a way to make learning more engaging and interesting for the students. We have to figure out how to reach our kids, meet them where they're at, and have them learn."*

When she committed the district to joining the initiative, she acknowledged the challenge of trying something new: "It's different. It's work. I don't want to change, but it's our duty to change, to meet the needs of our students, and especially as generations change and norms change, we gotta evolve with it."

The district was interested in exploring more student-centered, competency-based assessment practices, which they hoped would provide multiple ways for students to show mastery of learning outcomes and therefore be more interesting to students than traditional assessments like multiple-choice tests. They wanted to ensure that this new approach to assessment would maintain validity, meaning that it was actually measuring the learning they intended it to measure. By asking students to apply their knowledge in meaningful ways, they also hoped it would increase

Performance assessment is a multi-step assignment with clear criteria, expectations, and processes which measure how well a student transfers and applies knowledge and complex skills to create or refine an original product and/or solution.

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rigor and deepen students' understanding and retention of their learning. As Kemmerer Junior-Senior High School Principal Shawn Rogers described:

"Are we truly measuring what the kid knows, or is it just how the kid is performing at this point in time? We always want to know that you truly understand what we've taught you, not just, 'I can memorize this question for this point in time, but I didn't really learn anything.'"

Implementation of Student-Centered Learning at Lincoln 1

To meet their goals, Lincoln 1 decided to focus on **performance assessment** as their entry point into student-centered learning. The district already had a strong focus on assessment practices, so this inroad built on existing strengths.

In their first year of the RIDE work, Lincoln 1 started with a small group of teachers and instructional coaches. This pilot group was intentionally chosen for multiple reasons: their knowledge, their willingness to try something new, and also their influence and respect from the rest of the staff. Piloting teachers participated in monthly professional learning sessions led by 2Revolutions and applied that learning in their own classrooms.

In the first semester, the piloting teachers designed a performance assessment that they could use in one of their classes. They then worked together to validate their drafted assessments, ensuring alignment with the relevant academic standards, as well as fairness and accessibility to all students. Early in the second semester, they implemented the performance assessment in their classrooms. Upon completion, teachers reflected on the performance assessment process, student feedback about the new assessment approach, and how it impacted learning. They then spent the duration of the semester learning about calibration and rubric development and how performance assessment could be used to measure not just content knowledge, but also essential skills and dispositions. By the end of the second semester, they designed a second performance assessment where they applied their lessons learned from the first one. A few examples of teachers' performance assessments can be found in Figure L1 below.

Figure L1: Sample Performance Assessments

Teacher presenting her performance assessment to colleagues
Photo credit: Kadie Wilson | 2Revolutions

To address a standard about renewable and non-renewable energy, a fourth grade science teacher took her students on field trips to various local energy producers, such as a hydroelectric dam, wind farm, and solar farm. After each field trip, they returned to school to do hands-on learning about the form of energy. For example, after visiting a solar farm, they built solar cars that they raced outside, also testing what happened if the cars went into the shade.

Students describing their projects during Governor Gordon's visit
Photo credit: The Kemmerer Gazette

As part of a unit on the hiring process in their high school business class, students identified an industry they were interested in and researched jobs in that field. Based on that research, they wrote interview questions and prepared for a mock interview. Community members who work in those industries led those mock interviews, using the students' interview questions as well as their own, and provided feedback on their performance.

Piloting teachers were paid a stipend to cover the additional time required to do this work, and each school carved out time in their weekly schedule to dedicate to RIDE. Even with these supports in place, school leaders acknowledged that "it was a heavy lift." Yet despite the work involved, the benefits became clear quickly. As the Lincoln 1 team progressed through the first year, they saw students responding well to this approach–especially students who were usually disengaged, who the district was especially focused on reaching. As Superintendent Chaulk explained, "We know the kids who struggle. Those specific students, and their teachers, gave great feedback about this work."

This positive feedback from the first year of implementation gave her confidence to expand the work district-wide. In their second year in RIDE, Lincoln 1 expanded the same professional learning process to include every teacher and every school, repeating the same arc of learning they had done with the pilot group. This time, however, they added an intentional focus on building the work into existing systems.

Over the past decade, Lincoln 1 has built a consistent system for reviewing curriculum and assessments. The practice of aligning state standards, curriculum content, and assessments–including vertically across grades–is something that Lincoln 1 has built into a well-oiled machine. "Curriculum and assessment never stops; it's always changing and evolving," Superintendent Chaulk explains. The district has a Curriculum Coordinating Council, which oversees and approves proposed changes in both curriculum and assessment from subject area committees to ensure they are aligned with state standards. Two instructional facilitators coordinate and facilitate the committees' work. All teachers take turns serving on the committees; each committee has a certain rotation to ensure that their curriculum is reviewed on a regular basis to keep it up-to-date and aligned to changes in state standards. These committees also review and fine-tune assessments to make sure they are actually measuring what students know and can do.

From the beginning, Lincoln 1 district leaders wanted to ensure that the changes they made through RIDE would be sustainable. Therefore, in the second year of the RIDE work they intentionally enfolded the performance assessment work into the existing structure of the Curriculum Coordinating Council and subject area committees, with the goal that it would become "just something that we do," explained Superintendent Chaulk.

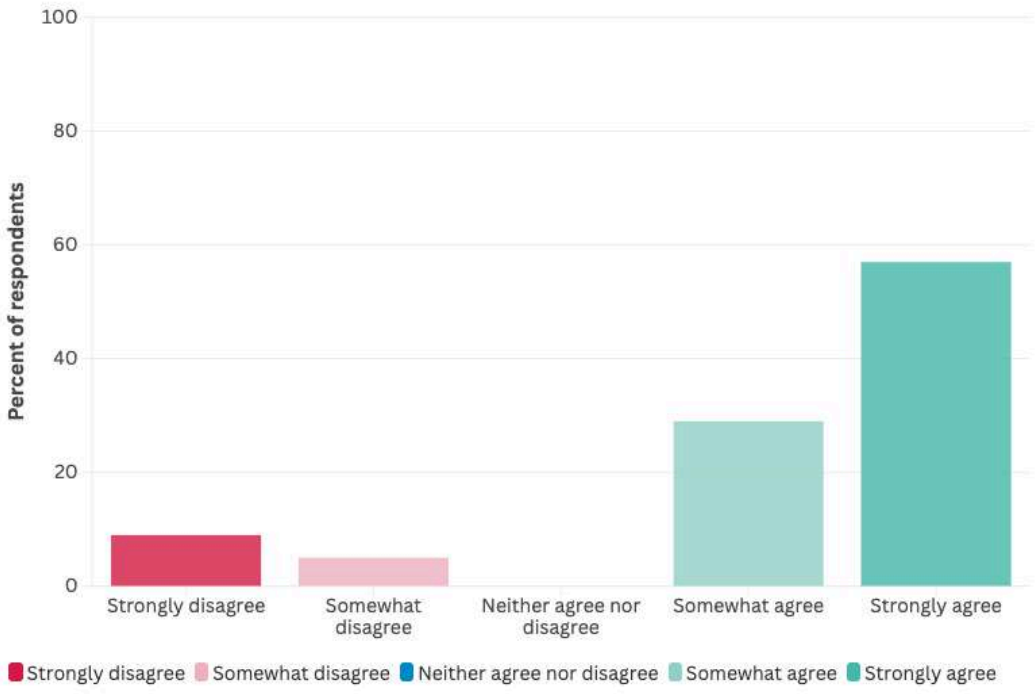
In their second year of RIDE, with the entire district on board, the expectation was set that each teacher would develop at least one performance assessment, which would be reviewed like any other assessment change by the Curriculum Coordinating Committee. With significant support from their instructional facilitators, this goal was met. However, for their first attempt, many teachers played it "safe," building out just one or two performance assessments, usually in units or courses where it felt lower-stakes. In the upcoming year, school leaders are planning to have teachers begin developing performance assessments in subject areas like math and English, which are subject to state standardized testing. 2Revolutions will continue working with the district's

instructional facilitators to build the structures necessary for performance assessment to become an integral part of their local assessment system.

Although the RIDE work has now spread across the entire district, actual implementation of performance assessments in the classroom is still relatively infrequent. In a survey of KJSHS teachers, 50% of respondents said that students can "sometimes" choose how they demonstrate their learning from different options, and the remaining 50% of respondents said students could do so "rarely" or "almost never."

Despite the relatively few opportunities they have had to practice performance assessment so far, teacher survey respondents from Lincoln 1 seemed to find the practice promising. As shown in Figure L2 below, the vast majority of teachers (86%) agreed or strongly agreed that they support their school's intention to deepen implementation of student-centered learning over the next several years. As one special education teacher explained, "The aspect of student-centered learning that I find the most compelling is allowing students to show what they have learned in their own way. Students have the ability to be creative to show in their own unique way." Similarly, a math teacher wrote, "This way all students can show their learning and have different options to fit their learning best."

Figure L2: Teacher Support for Student-Centered Learning



Source: RIDE Teacher Survey, Spring 2025 (n=21)

Leaders at Lincoln 1 are also hoping that a student-centered approach to assessment will begin to influence classroom instruction as well, and there are indicators that this is beginning to happen.

As one high school CTE teacher described, "I've become more aware of my need to incorporate more student-centered learning techniques in my classroom and stray from my traditional presentation style of direct instruction." New Frontiers Principal Cody Hartung echoed that sentiment when he described the district's hopes for how this will expand:

> *"We're at the early stages, developing an understanding of performance assessments from our teachers. And what they've learned is important. But as we move forward, whether the content that they're teaching specifically ends with a performance assessment or not, I think [this experience] has given them the knowledge that they need to look through a different lens at what we're teaching, how we're engaging our students, and how we are assessing that. I think it has opened up that conversation: can we do this differently?"*

Challenges Faced and Overcome

Concerns about Impact on Traditional State Assessments

The largest roadblock that Lincoln 1 faced was a **concern about the potential impact of performance assessment on students' performance on state standardized tests.** As one math teacher explained, "The state requires many skills for each math subject and we barely have time to cover those skills without performance assessments. I can't take a week or more on a performance assessment and have my students ready for state testing."

Although WY-TOPP results are not yet available for the year, school and district leaders are confident that this change will not result in decreased test scores. Additionally, **almost a third of teacher survey respondents reported that the quality of their students' work has improved since they started focusing on student-centered learning,** and no teachers said that it had gotten worse. In fact, Canyon Elementary Principal Meyer remarked that improved student engagement helps contribute to a better learning environment for all students, which helps increase the likelihood that teachers will be able to cover all course content effectively. He described one elementary classroom with a particularly disruptive student whose behavior was causing the whole class to lose instructional time.

> *"What we noticed was how these tougher kids really attached themselves to this approach. Their behaviors went from being an everyday thing to almost nothing. It was quite exciting to see: all of a sudden, this one student, his behaviors just weren't there. I think that if all teachers could see that, they can see the benefit from what we're doing. In the end, you still get the question, 'Well, how do I hit all the standards that the state's wanting us to hit while doing this?' And you know, if you don't have that behavior piece in your classroom, it helps hit all those standards."*

Limited Time

Another familiar challenge was the **volume of work.** In addition to the requirements of the RIDE initiative itself (monthly professional learning sessions, independent learning modules, and district

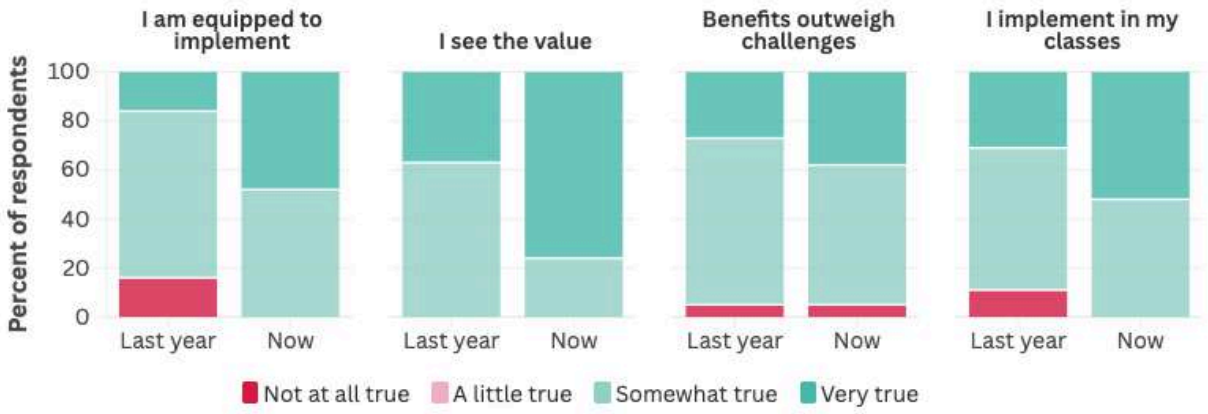
and state celebrations of learning), the actual work of developing thoughtful curriculum- and standards-aligned performance assessments and accompanying rubrics is substantial. Lincoln 1 addressed this very real challenge through the presence of two instructional facilitators, who worked with teachers on the ground to help them figure out how to design and align their projects.

Changes and Benefits Resulting from RIDE

Increased Buy-in around Student-Centered Learning

Lincoln 1 teacher survey respondents have demonstrated noticeable change in their support for student-centered learning from the beginning of their time in RIDE until now. Buy-in around student-centered learning increased in all four areas measured, with the largest change in teachers' perceptions of the value of student-centered learning. About a third of teachers (33%) said it was "very true" that they saw the value of student-centered learning last year; while more than two thirds (76%) say that now. Additional shifts in teacher perception are shown in Figure L3.

Figure L3: Teacher Shifts around Student-Centered Learning



Source: RIDE Teacher Survey, May 2025 (n=19 for "last year" items, n=21 for "now" items)

As one high school math teacher described, "For me, using student-centered learning has helped me to engage with students' needs and interests a little more deeply than I did previously. It has made me think about what the students need a little more than just simply saying 'do this'."

Student Engagement

Student engagement in learning has also improved in Lincoln 1. This has been especially true for students who were previously low-performing or disengaged in learning. However, principals interviewed also mentioned the value for high-performing students: as Canyon Elementary Principal Meyer explained, "This type of learning, if done effectively, can give those [high-achieving] students an opportunity to lead in a lot of ways and take their learning to another level that they can't do on a worksheet or test."

Teachers also commented on this improved engagement. One English teacher explained, ""Giving more agency to students combats the apathy students often have towards learning." A career and technical education teacher echoed that, saying, ""Students are more motivated with this type of learning."

In their survey responses, many teachers cited ways that student engagement had improved since they started focusing on student-centered learning practices. The area with the largest gains was student participation in class activities and discussions, with 38% of teacher survey respondents reporting that they had seen improvement in this area since beginning their work with RIDE. Notably, no teachers reported that student engagement had gotten worse in any way since they began implementing performance assessments. This is a promising foundation to build upon, as there is a substantial body of evidence that increased student engagement in school is linked to higher academic achievement, lower risk of dropping out, and other positive long-term outcomes (Renzulli, 2024).

Figure L4: Teacher Perceptions of Student Behavioral Engagement

Source: RIDE Teacher Survey, May 2025 (n=21)

Changes in Teacher Practice and Collaboration

The final benefit that Lincoln 1 reported from their early work in RIDE relates to teacher practices. Teacher collaboration has increased, especially across subject areas and grade levels, with more interdisciplinary projects and cross-team learning occurring. The work and learning around performance assessment has also had positive spillover effects into other areas of teacher practice, such as their implementation of student choice in their classroom day-to-day.

Key Lessons Learned

1. **Offer strong and consistent leadership with a focus on a clear goal.** Superintendent Chaulk consistently expressed a commitment to meeting students' evolving needs while holding them to high standards. She recognized that it was time for the district to try something new to better support student learning, and has maintained a focus on the end

goal of increasing student engagement. Her personal attendance at RIDE professional learning events, as well as her ability to bring the entire system into the work, has been a key driver of success at Lincoln 1. This is another example of the ways in which effective system leaders drive system-wide change: "System leaders need to be thought leaders as well as practical leaders, with the status, recognition, and skills to positively influence others, at all levels, in the system… They should build the professional capacity, capital, and capability of others in ways that are tangible and have an impact" (Harris & Jones, 2023, p. 452).

2. **Start with a small group of early adopters before scaling across the system.** The first year participants at Lincoln 1 were able to demonstrate early "wins" that helped to positively influence others and create energy and buy-in around the work; this is a key strategy for scaling initiatives (Flam et al., 2023; Applied Research Center, 2024). It also allowed Lincoln 1 to make sure that this was an effective way to meet their goals before they invested the entire district's time and energy in it.

3. **Provide on-the-ground coaching and support to teachers.** At Lincoln 1, they did this through instructional facilitators, who could also notice areas for improvement and growth in the future, and walk with teachers through the ins and outs of the work. This allowed principals to support the work by providing accountability and vision, rather than being focused on the details of implementation. Instructional facilitators and the school and district leadership team received additional coaching and guidance from 2Revolutions while they built up their local expertise. Research has consistently shown that professional learning on its own is often ineffective, while professional learning paired with coaching can produce significant changes in teacher practice (Konishi, 2024; Kraft et al., 2018).

4. **Build the initiative into an existing structure to help ensure sustainability.** From the early days, the work at Lincoln 1 was designed with long-term continuation and local ownership in mind. This helps mitigate the drop-off that many pilot projects experience when initial funding and support dry up (Tan & Samdin, 2023). Lincoln 1 leaders were clear that the state's RIDE funding helped "kick-start" the work by carving out time for the necessary up-front learning and development work, but that the work would be able to continue without ongoing external funding because of this intentionality.

TETON COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT #1

RIDE focus areas:

- Deeper learning
- Student-driven assessment

District at a glance

Location:	Jackson, WY
Setting:	Rural
# schools in district:	10
# of students K-12:	2,844

Students they serve

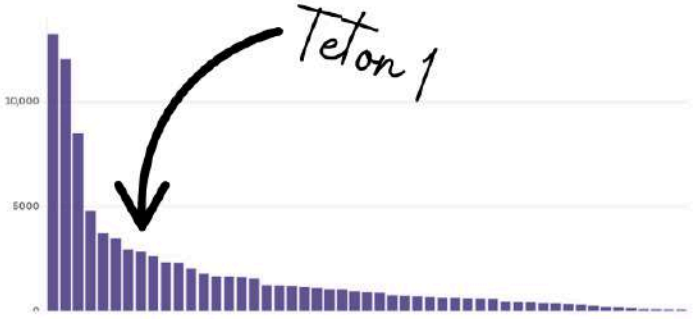
English learners:	16%
Students with disabilities:	10%
Economically disadvantaged:	27%

9% of teachers, primarily from 2 schools, were part of RIDE

Fun fact

Public, federally-owned land such as national parks and national forests makes up 97% of Teton County.*

Wyoming district size



*Source:Jackson Hole Tourism Board

About Teton 1

Jackson, Wyoming, is surrounded by mountains, nestled just south of Grand Teton National Park. The area's economy is centered around tourism, outdoor recreation, and ski resorts. Over the years, the community has grown more diverse both racially and economically, with a noticeable divide between children whose parents vacation at the ski resorts and those whose parents work behind the scenes to keep them running. As Assistant Superintendent[10] Scott Crisp described, "We have affluent kids; we have kids that struggle to eat. We have kids that have no problem purchasing a vehicle, and we have kids who will ride public transportation to school. We have every type of student, both politically and economically, that you can really imagine." In fact, Teton County has the highest cost of living in Wyoming and is the third most expensive county in the entire United States (DePietro, 2024).

Teton County School District #1 is relatively large for Wyoming. The district has seven elementary schools, including one dual-immersion school where students learn in both English and Spanish, as well as one middle school (grades 6-8), one high school (grades 9-12), and an alternative high school (grades 9-12). The alternative high school, Summit Innovations School (SIS), is "a bit of a shift from the traditional alternative school model," explains SIS Principal Pier Trudelle. SIS offers numerous dual enrollment options and is a school of choice that serves approximately 40 full-time students, as well as an additional 50 high school students who attend one or more classes there.

Why Teton 1 Joined RIDE

Overall, the district is quite high-achieving: WYTOPP scores, graduation rates, and state accountability metrics consistently rate its ten schools high on various measures of academic achievement. **Yet the district has recently recognized that these traditional measures of success do not equate to preparation for postsecondary success.** As Assistant Superintendent Crisp described it, "We have many kids who leave our district who are high-achieving, are walking out of here with 30 college credits, have taken 10 AP courses… but when they go to college, they may struggle with being adaptive, with figuring out what to do." For many years, the district has invested in expanding access to advanced and accelerated learning opportunities for students who plan to attend college after graduation. However, as the population of students with other postsecondary plans has increased, the district has recognized the need to better serve those students too. Jackson Hole High School (JHHS) Principal Bennett Lieberman explained, "We have not traditionally focused on those kids. We spent the last 15 years growing communities for acceleration, and that's a great thing. I'm a big fan of that. But, you know, we can chew gum and

[10] Scott Crisp was Assistant Superintendent during the 2024-25 school year; he is now Interim Superintendent. We will use his former title throughout this case study.

> *"When this opportunity was brought forward, I jumped all over it, because we cannot continue to do things the way we've always done them. They aren't going to work with the needs of the kids coming in."*
>
> - Superintendent[11] Gillian Chapman

walk at the same time. So I've been really trying to focus on the 50 kids that walk across the stage at graduation every year who are *not* going to college." This focus on the success of all students–and the need for all students to develop both academic and human skills–has led both high schools to expand work-based learning and other opportunities for deep, personalized learning to more of their student body.

When they joined RIDE, Teton 1 already had multiple initiatives underway: professional learning communities at the elementary level, evidence-based grading work at the secondary level, portfolios of learning in certain departments, as well as sheltered instructional strategies for multilingual learners district-wide. The RIDE work seemed aligned with several of those existing initiatives, especially the evidence-based grading work and learning portfolio work already underway. This synergy, combined with awareness of the potential implications of the RIDE pilots for long-term state policy and a desire to be at the table as those conversations were had, increased district leaders' interest in participating. As Assistant Superintendent Crisp explained, "We jumped in because we knew it really aligned to what they were doing at the alternative high school and in our CTE department at the high school. It matched. It wasn't something else coming in to divert what we had already committed to."

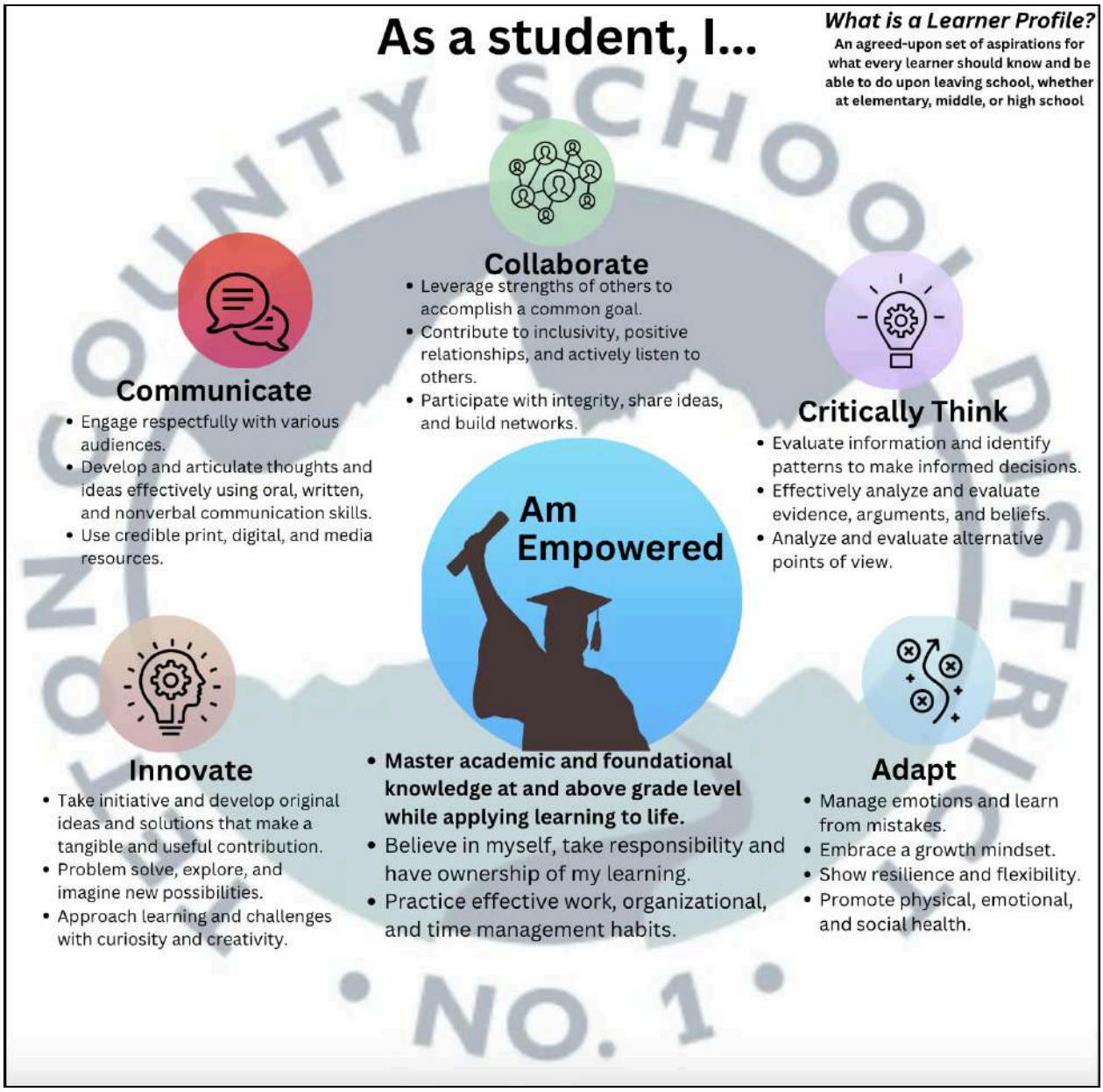
Implementation of Student-Centered Learning at Teton 1

While all of the RIDE implementation work at Teton 1 was generally in service of deeper learning and student-driven assessment, the district approached it through a different lens each year.

In their first year, one objective was the **creation of a district-specific Learner Profile**[12]. This was done by student school board members, who took the Wyoming Profile of a Graduate and "Teton-ized" it, making it more accessible, student-friendly, and locally-focused. With guidance from their district's coach at 2Revolutions, the student school board members collected input from students and community members about what they hoped to gain through their educational experience at Teton 1, and developed that into a profile (pictured in Figure T1 below) that could guide the district's work moving forward.

[11] Gillian Chapman was Superintendent during the 2024-25 school year; she is now serving as Superintendent of a district in Kansas. We will use her former title throughout this case study.
[12] The use of the word "learner" instead of "graduate" was intentional, designed to reflect a comprehensive K-12 focus instead of a focus only on students nearing graduation.

Figure T1: Teton County School District #1 Learner Profile



Source: Teton County School District #1

The second objective in the first year was the **development of e-portfolios in the career and technical education (CTE) departments** at both Jackson Hole High School and Summit Innovations School. The goal of the e-portfolio, as JHHS Principal Lieberman described it, is to be a "a living, breathing, artistic, graphic transcript for students that they walk out of high school and use with a potential employer." Together, the two schools' eight CTE teachers developed e-portfolios on Google Sites where students could upload artifacts demonstrating their mastery of universal CTE skills like communication, leadership, and independence, that are agnostic to

particular courses or content areas. Although the CTE departments' work on the e-portfolios preceded RIDE, working with their RIDE coach prompted this team to strengthen opportunities for student agency in the portfolios. Through RIDE they also began developing rubrics aligned to deeper learning competencies that could be used to assess the portfolios.

As the high school CTE teachers began to pilot their portfolios with students, they realized that many students had a deeply rooted compliance mindset. When given more agency and choice, many students struggled to know what to do. This led to the realization that the work to enable student agency needed to start much earlier and span K-12; it could be limited to a high school initiative. District leaders, therefore, asked the elementary and middle school principals to choose teachers to participate in the second year of RIDE professional learning.

Year 2 professional learning for the newly-expanded group of teachers was primarily focused on **deeper learning**. Throughout the year, participating teachers identified how the essential skills and dispositions articulated in their local Learner Profile can support deeper learning. They also explored structural conditions, mindsets, and instructional strategies that support deeper learning. To put their learning into practice, the group began developing lessons that intentionally supported deeper learning and the development of the essential skills from the Learner Profile, even collaborating to develop cross-disciplinary and cross-grade projects. For example, one high school art teacher developed a project in partnership with a kindergarten teacher: kindergartners read about and drew pictures of monsters, and then the high schoolers turned those drawings into sculptures. Eventually, the high schoolers went to the elementary school and shared their final products with the kindergartners who designed them. The project met multiple grade-specific arts and English standards, and also provided a chance for students to collaborate, communicate, and innovate–essential skills from the Learner Profile.

Superintendent Chapman was pleased with the foundation that this expanded team's learning and piloting created. She saw their work as an essential part of building interest and awareness in the work district-wide: "That K-12 group is really opening some eyes. In our celebration of learning, we got to see the influence that RIDE has had, individual teachers demonstrating what they've learned and how they're trying to develop a more personalized learning approach and engage students in their learning early on." She and Assistant Superintendent Crisp have a vision for the future that includes student work across the district, with portfolios of work starting as early as kindergarten. "But that's going to take some time," she acknowledged.

In the meantime, **Teton 1 has also pursued other objectives during their time in RIDE that also support student-centered learning. At the high school, they revised their schedule dramatically to make it possible for more students to engage in work-based learning**. Previously, a lack of consistency in the daily "drop two" schedule made participating in external activities during the school day incredibly challenging, and these opportunities were only available to the highest-performing students. **At the middle school, they restructured their LMS so that students' proficiency scores on "habits of work" and essential skills would be visualized before scores**

related to course content. The other longer-term initiatives Teton 1 had been working on before RIDE are also continuing, such as the high schools' ongoing work on evidence-based grading.

Challenges Faced and Overcome

Teacher Mindsets

The primary challenges faced in Teton 1 were related to teacher mindsets. These mindset-related challenges generally fell into two categories that have been well-established in previous research: first, mindsets related to classroom management and control (Thigpen & Collier, 2025; Reynolds, 2006); and second, mindsets related to students' abilities and what skills can be taught and assessed (Yeager & Dweck, 2021; Mameli et al., 2025; Unal & Unal, 2019).

Although student agency is consistently associated with student engagement and motivation (e.g. Robertson et al., 2020), **giving students more agency can be challenging for teachers.** Agentic practices can feel chaotic to teachers who are used to a certain style of classroom management; it can also require unlearning old mindsets about what good teaching and learning looks like (Thigpen & Collier, 2025). This familiar challenge appeared at Teton 1, with some teachers expressing an unwillingness to give students more agency in their classrooms. As one culinary teacher explained, "[When I first started this work], the last thing I wanted was kids to be creative and solve problems in my classroom. I don't want them to do that in culinary class! I just wanted them to follow a recipe and clean up on time. Can you imagine if I let 110 kids do whatever they want in my class? Do you know what my grocery bill would be like? That's not practical.... But now, when I think about my initial negativity, I think it really came down to control. It was like, 'How can I maintain control and order? If kids are doing what they want, how can I be an expert?'" (Matthaei, 2025). To address this concern, the district's RIDE coach focused on finding accessible starting points in areas where teachers were already bought in. By beginning with the district's existing e-portfolio work, and gently coaching teachers to identify places where students could be given more choice in that work, the coach was able to slowly address mindsets and misconceptions about student agency. From there, the conversation expanded to other ways students could have more choice in instructional experiences–without teachers "losing control" of their classroom.

A related mindset challenge was **doubt about whether essential skills and dispositions could truly be taught or assessed.** As the implementing CTE team began developing rubrics to assess the essential skills that would be demonstrated through their e-portfolios, some teachers initially expressed skepticism that skills like creativity could be assessed with validity. This is also a common concern; assessing essential skills is often challenging due to lack of clear construct definitions, lack of empirically-based performance targets, and a lack of reliable and valid scoring processes (Brandt, Evans, & Domaleski, 2025); however, it certainly can be done (Holland et al., 2023). This challenge also became a significant focus area for professional learning at Teton 1. As their coach explained, "We started talking about what it meant [to assess creativity]. It's not a value judgment. It's about, like, can you put ideas together? Are you willing to take risks? Are you willing

to take feedback and iterate? Are you willing to deal with ambiguity? That helped teachers start to see it differently and understand how to evaluate it."

Strategic Clarity and Initiative Fatigue

Another challenge faced by the district is the reality of **competing initiatives.** Teton 1 had multiple objectives and pilot groups for their RIDE work, while simultaneously managing other ongoing initiatives across the district and its many schools. Although district leaders believe there is a throughline across all of the initiatives, they have felt disparate to participating teachers and leaders, which Assistant Superintendent Crisp is quick to acknowledge: "Right now we're kind of everywhere. We continue to compartmentalize different initiatives and don't see how they all connect–which they do." He hopes that the Learner Profile will serve as a "North Star" that all initiatives will be tied to in order to build coherence district-wide.

This challenge is exacerbated by the **tension between district leaders casting a long-term vision, which may have some ambiguity in the details, and the practical needs and questions of building-level staff who are trying to implement the first steps in that vision.** As SIS Principal Trudelle explained, "It would be really nice to see a road map. As an example, you think about mapping these skills for the Learner Profile, and people are like, 'Well, who's going to teach these?' And I think you have to hold both of those true at the same time and try to manage the cognitive dissonance of that–that we're not there yet, but that's a real, valid concern." Particularly in a district with numerous interrelated initiatives, staff are eager for clarity that this work has staying power, and that even if their time in RIDE has concluded, their focus on students will not change.

Motivation to Change

The final challenge Teton 1 faced is a counterintuitive one: its own success. **Although the district has clearly recognized the need to better serve struggling students, especially their Latinx students, there is some resistance to change practices that are working for many other students.** As Assistant Superintendent Crisp explains, "Our district is pretty high-achieving. If I was coming into a district that was at the bottom, it'd be easier for me to turn the switch and say, 'We're rolling; we're going to have student-centered assessment.' You could do that and get more buy-in. It's a balancing act here, because we have pockets of extreme performance. So trying to take it one step at a time with this… reframing how you can assess and how you can teach so students are more empowered and more engaged in their learning is difficult, especially when they historically come from systems where it's just like, 'Turn in your paper in the basket, take the test, and move on.'"

As the district adjusts to its growing racial and economic diversity, finding strategies that work for all students will be particularly important to avoid creating or exacerbating opportunity and achievement gaps across diverse populations. A focus on deeper learning and student-centered assessment practices can help mitigate that risk–though only if done with intentionality (Medina et al., 2020).

Changes and Benefits Resulting from RIDE

Reframing Deficit Orientations

As described in the previous section, one significant area of growth in Teton 1 was related to teacher mindsets about student agency. In the early days of their RIDE involvement, some teachers expressed concerns that students were not ready or able to demonstrate agency, even if they were given the opportunity–and this was seen as a student problem. JHHS Principal Lieberman explained, "I think there was a common frustration amongst teachers, like, 'Why won't kids take responsibility for themselves?' We've embraced agency and empowerment as a broad theme throughout the school, and I think putting a name to what we want is really helpful for a team to move forward." Instead of focusing on students' deficits, this reframing focuses on what skills teachers want students to develop, and thus empowers them to teach and coach them in developing that skill.

The CTE e-portfolio has been a helpful tool in this work, as SIS Principal Trudelle explained: "[Through this focus on agency], we've seen students being able to understand and advocate and identify what skills they have and what they need to learn. That's been a nice focus." This aligns with research on the benefits of student-centered assessment, which shows that it creates higher student engagement, motivation, and autonomy than traditional forms of assessment (Burner, 2014; Duncan & King, 2024) and also better measures the development and use of higher-level complex thinking skills than traditional assessments (Darling-Hammond & Adamson, 2010).

Building a Foundation

Teton 1 will be undergoing significant changes in the years ahead, including the hiring of a new superintendent during the upcoming school year. The work to develop a K-12 Learner Profile, in partnership with the community, helps cast a vision and can serve as a foundation throughout upcoming transitions. Additionally, the exposure of more teachers across the district to the principles of deeper learning and student-driven assessment has helped to build familiarity and interest across the district. Although professional learning exposure alone is not enough to change practice (TNTP, 2015), district leaders hope this work will spread organically even as the more formal RIDE professional learning and coaching concludes.

Key Lessons Learned

1. **Tie together initiatives whenever possible.** Using existing language and finding connection points between different areas of work helps reduce the feeling of overwhelm from having many competing initiatives. As SIS Principal Trudelle explained, "One of the things that I really appreciated from our coach was that when we shared our focus area on evidence-based grading (EBG), I asked her to read our EBG consultant's book so that she could make sure we're not speaking two different languages. And she literally took it and

read it, and then was able to create parallel pathways so that when the teachers were sharing out their work, everyone could make connections. Even though it was a little bit of a different focus area, there was still the common language there." This was particularly important for building buy-in and credibility for the RIDE work at the high school, since the EBG work had originally been initiated by teachers, rather than introduced by the district. In addition to building credibility, the integration of the RIDE work into existing initiatives also helped to increase understanding of the points of connection between the initiatives, so that they could be seen as complementary.

2. **Create an overarching vision that helps align everyone to a shared goal.** By developing the Learner Profile collaboratively with many different stakeholders, Teton 1 leadership helped create buy-in around a shared goal and vision for the future. The existence of the Profile, and the familiarity and buy-in around it, is a key step in building out the long-term plans for how exactly the Profile is used, and how Teton 1's many different initiatives align in service of that vision.

3. **Be clear about timelines and the long-term commitment to the work.** Acknowledge concerns from teachers and other stakeholders who are concerned about the details and what new initiatives will mean for their day-to-day responsibilities. Be as clear as possible around the practical details of implementation; multi-year plans can help reduce uncertainty. Be clear that this work isn't going anywhere, but also that it isn't going to happen overnight.

hello

WESTON

COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT #7

RIDE focus areas:

- Deeper learning
- Learner-centered approaches to growth & outcomes

District at a glance

Location:	Upton, WY
Setting:	Rural
# schools in district:	3
# of students K-12:	859

Students they serve

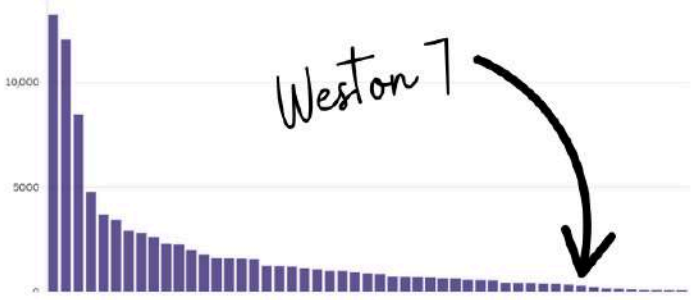
English learners:	0%
Students with disabilities:	18%
Economically disadvantaged:	23%

53% of teachers from 2 schools were part of RIDE

Fun fact

Upton was originally called "Iron Town" because the water of Iron Creek, where it was founded, tasted so metallic. In the 1890s it was renamed Merino in honor of the most popular breed of sheep in the area. Then in 1901, its name was finally changed to Upton*.

Wyoming district size



*Source: Weston County Museum

About Weston 7

Upton, Wyoming, nestled along the edge of the Black Hills in the northeast corner of the state, near the border with South Dakota. "It's a very tight-knit community, and the schools are the center of it. It's a small town atmosphere, and people look out for each other," explained Upton High School Principal Joe Samuelson. Upton Elementary and Middle School Principal Cliff Toole agreed: "It's a great school community, very supportive. Like most small towns, your community events are the high school and middle school athletics and activities." Community pride is strong: the town water tower even proclaims Upton as "The Best Town on Earth!"

Weston County School District #7 is a rural district that serves around 245 K-12 students from Upton and the surrounding area. The district has three schools: Upton Elementary School (kindergarten through grade 5), Upton Middle School (grades 6-8), and Upton High School (grades 9-12). Although they are separate schools, the elementary and middle schools share a building and a principal. The high school is in a separate building a few blocks away.

Weston 7 is not new to student-centered and personalized learning. As a small district, the staff prides themselves on their ability to have personal relationships with each student and to find opportunities that meet their interests. This happens especially at the high school, where most students have work-study opportunities that are tailored to them: for example, one student who loves hunting got the opportunity to intern at an outfitter for a week, while another student who wants to be a dentist got to spend a week helping at a local dental clinic.

The district's work on personalizing classroom learning began almost ten years ago, when the high school began using education technology (edtech) to help students move at different paces through course material. Initially, the edtech program was not well-received by the community: parents were concerned that learning was going to be technology-driven instead of teacher-driven, and not sufficiently tailored to their local context. Superintendent Clark Coberly, who was the Upton Elementary and Middle School Principal at the time of the early rollout, reflected back on those early days of trying to bring edtech to support personalized learning into the younger grades: "Parents were skeptical. There was some latent discontent from what had happened at the high school the year before that started to surface. We started doing some more community learning sessions, and realized that before, when we made the initial leap to personalized learning, we did not build up the skills and competencies of our staff members to build their own classes. We just kind of said, 'Here you go, let it rip!'" To address this, Dr. Coberly brought in an external organization to do some professional development and teacher training, supported by funds from state grants,

> *"Our teachers are very, very flexible and willing to do what's best for kids. A lot of times that means it's gonna be tougher for the individual adult, but we care about kids, and we're willing to do whatever it takes to make sure that kids are successful and have opportunities."*
>
> - UHS Principal Joe Samuelson

and gave teachers time to build their own course content in their LMS. Over time, this led to the transformation from a "canned" program to one he referred to as "totally homegrown in Weston 7."

Today, personalized learning is "the core of what we do," explained UHS Principal Samuelson. "It's become systematic, but also a culture." For example, the high school utilizes a unique schedule that allows students a lot of flexibility in what classes they take, including multi-grade classrooms, self-directed learning periods, and open periods for work-study and other anytime/anywhere learning opportunities. In addition, the school culture is permeated by a belief in student choice: "Our teachers are very, very flexible and willing to do what's best for kids. A lot of times that means it's gonna be tougher for the individual adult, but we care about kids, and we're willing to do whatever it takes to make sure that kids are successful and have opportunities," continued Principal Samuelson.

Why Weston 7 Joined RIDE

Weston 7's primary reason to join RIDE was simple: **they wanted to help shape state education policy.** Superintendent Coberly participated in some of the initial statewide focus groups with the Governor's Office, along with all five members of the local school board–a group he credits as being incredibly supportive and committed to this work. He knew that the district was already doing some great work in the areas of innovation that RIDE was focused on, and he wanted to share that experience. "When the applications came out, it was like, we have to be involved in this," Superintendent Coberly explained. "There have been certain things at the state level that we felt needed to be modified to support what we were doing in personalized learning, as far as definitions of seat time and credit assignment and that type of thing. So we wanted to be involved so that we would have a voice at the table to help shape the structures that exist in the state of Wyoming."

In addition, **the district recognized that they were not implementing personalized learning evenly across all grade levels.** Although the high school was already quite deep into this work, the elementary and middle schools were more traditional. As their 2Revolutions coach described, "You go to the high school and every door is open, teachers are collaborating back and forth, kids are exchanging rooms, it's very open and welcoming. In the high school it feels like kids are part of the learning process, and at the other school it feels like they just receive the process–which is why the district is working to extend learner-centered practices systemwide." UEMS Principal Toole echoed this: "We believe our job is to prepare the kids for a smooth transition to high school. So while we're unique and in our own building, a lot of the RIDE stuff was focused on synergy between the two buildings."

Implementation of Student-Centered Learning at Weston 7

Weston 7 decided to limit the RIDE work to just the middle and high school, as the elementary school had quite a few new teachers on staff and other preexisting initiatives. The district was interested in innovating its grading and reporting practices, with hopes of developing student capstones or portfolio defenses and adopting a new style of grading and a new format for their transcript. However, the 2Revolutions coaches recommended that they not jump directly into the "what," but start by building the foundational "why." The district design team agreed with this approach; they had seen the importance of building alignment and skills among teachers from their early days rolling out personalized learning. "We knew we had to go slow to go fast," explained Superintendent Coberly.

In Year 1, therefore, the district started to explore how they could support **deeper learning** and students' development of essential or transferrable skills, using the seven key competencies from the Wyoming Profile of a Graduate. As Principal Toole explained, "We focused on communication and creativity, two of the attributes of the Profile. How do you infuse those two elements into your curriculum and assignments? So, like, creativity: use math to create a stained glass window in art. Or communication: you need to communicate with your teachers about where you're at in class, start advocating for yourself and ask them questions instead of just waiting for the teacher to come to you. So we've been infusing those things." Over the course of that first year, the implementing teachers worked on developing clear statements to describe the intended learning outcomes for those chosen skills, as well as rubrics to measure and assess them. They then designed a learning experience meant to help students develop that chosen skill, implemented it, and refined and improved their rubrics based on that experience.

Near the end of Year 1, the focus shifted toward **student-driven assessment**. The experience of designing for deeper learning and focusing on essential skills in addition to content solidified the district's commitment to changing the way they assessed students' growth and learning. The recognition of variability across different teachers in rubrics and grading practices had led to a commitment to more standardization and alignment between teachers, so this became the focus for Year 2.

> **Student-driven assessment** refers to a spectrum of intentional assessment designs that progressively shift ownership of purpose, process, and product from educator to learner, allowing students to develop voice, choice, and responsibility in their learning over time.
>
> -2Revolutions

In the second year of the RIDE work, the focus shifted to grading. As Principal Toole described, "We spent the vast majority of our time the second year getting on the same page philosophically and procedurally." Over the course of the year, implementing teachers discussed questions like: What do grades mean? What don't they mean? What goes into a grade? What shouldn't be included in a grade? How can you focus on

providing meaningful feedback in order to improve learning? What does it look like to "delay" a grade while a student is still learning something? These conversations built a foundation from which teachers could articulate their personal philosophies of grading; from there, school teams identified areas of alignment. As Principal Samuelson explained, "At the high school, our core teachers came together and decided that they want all assessments to be worth 70% of their grades, and then teachers have autonomy with the other 30% to adjust for homework or tests or things like that. We wanted the bulk of our grades to be based off of, what do the kids know?" Teachers echoed this in their survey responses, with one physical education teacher writing that this work "allows me to reflect on the lesson I have taught and assess whether or not the students understand the skill and are able to demonstrate it."

As the second year progressed, participants began working on building infrastructure that supports their now-articulated grading philosophies. This included exploring new methods for assessing student learning, as well as new ways to communicate progress to students and families. Specifically, this involved developing new proficiency scales for both content and the essential skills in the Profile of a Graduate. "We built proficiency scales when we first transitioned to personalized learning; however, we built them and then we put them away. I don't think we used them that much. But this year, we realized we wanted to use them, and we want to put them in the hands of kids as well so that kids know the expectations," explained Principal Samuelson. A social studies teacher echoed this focus on transparency in their survey response, writing, "Although I have been practicing many student-learning practices for a few years, I feel that my assessment practices are more transparent for students and better at assessing what students know."

As the two years of state support through RIDE conclude, Weston 7's team feels clear on their next steps. As Principal Samuelson explained, "This year was a tinkering year. I asked teachers to build a proficiency scale, try it out, see what you think. And enough of our teachers said, 'Hey, this is some good stuff. It's more intentional. It provides more rigor for kids.' So this next year, we're going to start building these into our school. We don't expect every teacher to have every proficiency scale done for all their classes in one year. But we're going to start working on it, so that eventually that will become the goal: that kids will have these proficiency scales in their hands so they know the expectations about what they need to learn."

Challenges Faced and Overcome

Over the years of implementing personalized learning, **Weston 7 has learned to balance flexibility and structure.** As Superintendent Coberly succinctly described it, "Flexible pace does not mean no pace." As teachers learned how to support student learning in a more adaptive manner, the district had many hard conversations about how to still ensure that students stayed on track and met all of their standards. Ultimately, this led them to create some structures for tracking students' learning and intervening when a student was falling behind. "We learned that the hard way," Superintendent Coberly admitted.

An additional challenge Weston 7 has faced in this work is logistical, primarily tied to scheduling. Although the high school has built a flexible, personalized schedule that changes annually based on students' interests and allows students to take courses outside of typical grade progressions, extending that to the middle school is difficult because many staff are shared across the two buildings. Scheduling flexibility is thus limited by the hours that those staff are available in each building, which has ripple effects for the rest of the day. In addition, the schedule at the high school is unique every year, based on the courses that students want to take and teachers want to teach. Building it for the year is a "giant puzzle," and once it's built, it's challenging to track the last-minute changes and adjustments that inevitably pop up. "Our counselor is a wizard," Principal Samuelson explained, "but it's a bear to build it." Weston 7 is exploring technology solutions that can aid them in managing this highly personalized schedule.

In the two years of RIDE work, as the district started to address grading philosophies and practices, they encountered another challenge: **grading practices are central to teachers' sense of autonomy.** As Principal Samuelson explained, "If you start talking about grading and how a teacher grades in their room, they have very strong opinions about how it should be done." To address this challenge, the 2Revolutions team started by inviting every teacher to first explore their own beliefs about grading, and then opened up a conversation about what they believed they should do as a team to ensure coherence schoolwide. "I think a lot of what RIDE did is just help us sit down and have conversations about what we foundationally believe together and get on the same page. It helped us nail down our philosophy and beliefs and values tied to grading and assessment. What are the non-negotiables? Having those conversations was beneficial to get everybody on the same page," continued Principal Samuelson. This reflective approach allowed school teams to identify changes in practice they wanted to make on their own, which built much more buy-in and understanding than having those changes mandated by an external actor.

Lastly, **this work takes time.** Building new structures and practices to assess students' development of essential skills requires developing (and refining) learning outcomes, learning experiences, rubrics, proficiency scales, reporting templates, and more. That work simply takes time. This can present particular challenges for a small staff, where everyone wears multiple hats: "We're a bunch of singletons at every grade level and subject area," explained Superintendent Coberly. "And while that helped us be agile, it also slowed down some of the work because, for example, at the middle school, the social studies teacher, the science teacher, and the English teacher all have three grade levels and many different assignments. So that work was a little bit slower, but it was meaningful." Relatedly, carving out the time for participation in the professional learning activities associated with RIDE was challenging in such small schools: "We had so many of our teachers [participating] in it that when we'd have a RIDE meeting during the day, we took approximately half of our teachers out of the building." Although the district was able to cover this time with funding from the state, it took a significant investment.

Changes and Benefits Resulting from RIDE

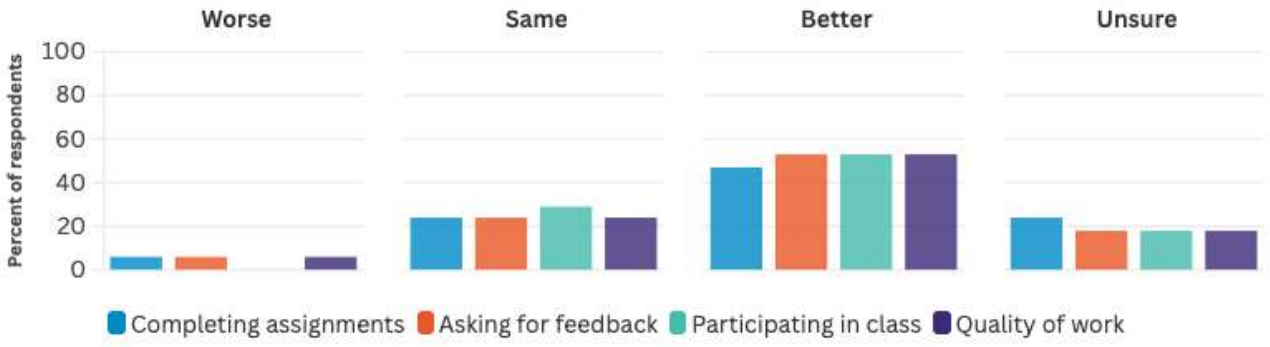
Student Academic Performance

Weston 7 schools have **strong graduation rates and performance on state assessments**. Over the past few years, as the district has deepened its practice of student-centered learning, Weston 7 schools have been receiving increasingly high marks in the state accountability system. In fact, Upton High School has earned the designation of "exceeding expectations" for the past two years (Wyoming Department of Education, n.d.). And as Principal Samuelson notes, "People are seeing the benefits of [student-centered learning] aside from just test scores. You know, your kid comes home enthusiastic about something they got to do in school. That stuff counts! And that happens because our teachers are a lot more engaged with what students like, and are more engaged with students on a personal level."

Student Engagement

Weston 7 teachers and school leaders also report **increased student engagement.** Across four measures of student behavioral engagement (completing assignments on time, participating in class activities, asking for feedback, and doing quality work), 52% of Weston 7 teachers said that they have seen improvement in the past two years; only one teacher said that they have seen things get worse. Details are shown below in Figure W1.

Figure W1: Teacher Perceptions of Student Behavioral Engagement



Source: RIDE Teacher Survey, Spring 2025 (n=17)

For the most part, this observation of high levels of engagement in school is supported by student survey data. As shown in Figure W2 below, the vast majority of survey respondents from Upton Middle School and Upton High School showed high levels of behavioral engagement (active participation in school activities), which is crucial for achieving positive academic outcomes (Fredericks et al., 2011). However, students' self-reported results are more mixed on other facets of student engagement.

Figure W2: Selected Student Survey Measures of Engagement

Source: RIDE Student Survey, Spring 2025 (n=101-104, varying by item)

Table W3: Student Engagement at Weston 7

		Summary statistics		
Subscale	**School**	**n**	**Mean**	**SD**
Behavioral engagement	Overall	104	3.25	0.61
	UHS	59	3.20	0.66
	UMS	45	3.32	0.53
Emotional engagement	Overall	103	2.92	0.68
	UHS	59	2.86	0.72
	UMS	44	3.00	0.61
Cognitive engagement	Overall	102	2.90	0.65
	UHS	59	2.92	0.63
	UMS	43	2.88	0.68

Source: RIDE Student Survey, Spring 2025

As shown in Table W3 above, Weston 7 students scored significantly lower on the composite measures of emotional engagement (M=2.92, SD=0.68) than behavioral engagement (M=3.25, SD=0.61), $t(102) = -4.91$, $p<.001$. Weston 7 students also scored significantly lower on the composite

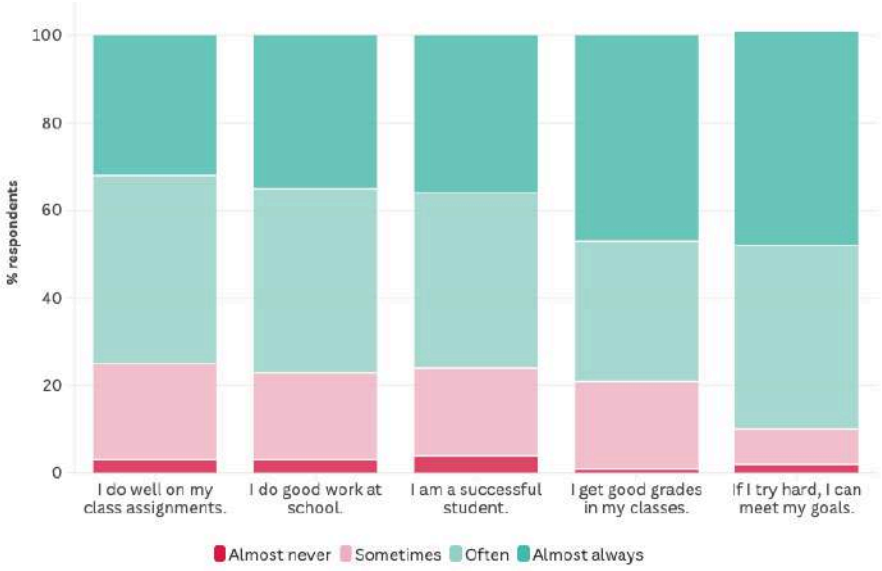
measure of cognitive engagement (M=2.90, SD=0.65), t(101) = -5.45, *p*<.001. Emotional engagement describes students' feelings of belonging and support that create ties to school and influence students' willingness to learn, while cognitive engagement describes students' level of investment in learning and their willingness to exert the effort necessary to master difficult skills (Fredericks et al., 2011).

Overall, these results paint a complex picture of student engagement at Weston 7. The strong behavioral engagement scores indicate a compelling classroom environment that inspires students to participate actively. This provides a strong foundation from which to continue to build students' cognitive and emotional engagement, especially as the district continues their focus on making sure they are teaching and assessing essential skills in a way that is transparent, relatable, and accessible to students.

Student Self-Efficacy and Ownership of Learning

As a result of their work to implement personalized learning, staff at Weston 7 report **increased student self-efficacy.** "We still have some kids that struggle, but students feel more empowered in their learning. I think that's helping their confidence, their courage as learners, and their ability to take risks. They also have greater ownership and better self-accountability," explained Superintendent Coberly. This observation is echoed by student survey data, as shown in Figure W4 below: 80% of students responded "often" or "almost always" across five measures of self-efficacy and academic self-concept, as shown in the figure below. Teachers also echoed this in their survey responses, as illustrated by this special education teacher's response to a question about the benefits of student-centered learning: "Students having a choice helps them to take ownership of their education. By taking ownership of their learning they are more likely to succeed."

Figure W4: Student Survey Measures of Self-Efficacy and Academic Self-Concept



Source: RIDE Student Survey, Spring 2025 (n=102)

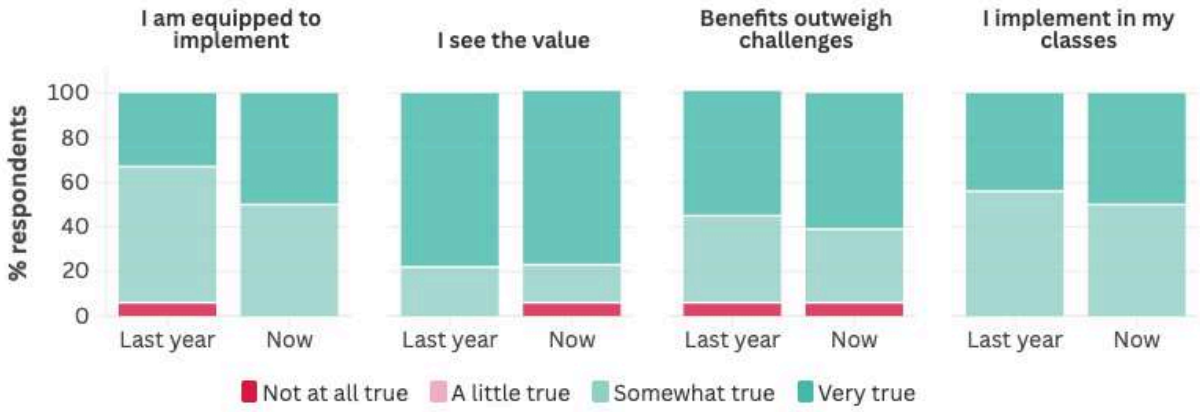
Teacher Satisfaction and Buy-in

Another benefit of the RIDE work has been **strong teacher job satisfaction, as well as strong buy-in to the district's focus on personalized learning.** As Superintendent Coberly described it, "We've got a few teachers that would never go back to a traditional model. They wanted to become the teacher they wish they had, and they are. Also, because they continue to probe and dig and help those kids take it to a deeper level, their rigor is better than a lot of teachers. They go home tired for the right reasons, because they've been helping kids."

Teachers generally agree with this sentiment. Of the 22 teacher survey respondents, 82% agreed or strongly agreed that student-centered learning would improve their school's ability to prepare all students for successful futures, would improve their school's climate and culture, and would improve their school's ability to achieve better outcomes for all students.

As shown in Figure W5 below, teachers also reported increases in their own level of preparation, buy-in, and implementation of student-centered learning practices between the 2023-24 and 2024-25 school year. The most substantial increase was in teachers' self-reported preparation: 100% of survey respondents said that it is somewhat or very true that they are equipped to implement student-centered learning practices in their classes.

Figure W5: Teacher Shifts around Student-Centered Learning



Source: RIDE Teacher Survey, Spring 2025 (n=18)

Key Lessons Learned

1. **Create a culture of flexibility, willingness to try new things, and putting kids first.** Every interviewee at Weston 7 described their team—including teachers, building and district leaders, and even the school board—as a huge part of why their district has been so innovative for so many years. This includes a willingness to do things that might be more difficult for adults because it will be better for students. As Principal Samuelson explained,

"We can talk about systems all we want, but the biggest thing that we can't forget is that it's about people. If you want schools to be great, you gotta have great people. You gotta have a staff, administrators, and teachers that are committed to kids. And we can't have pushback all the time—you have to be willing to be flexible, to adapt. There are so many invisible walls that are built up that we imagine are there, and they're not. You gotta have a mentality of 'why not?' What's best for kids?' You gotta have people who are willing to do that."

2. **Take a long-term view of the work.** Weston 7 has been building their personalized learning approach for a decade, and still is finding areas of growth. As Principal Toole explained, "Our district has been doing personalized learning for a long time. For me, I think grading reform has the largest potential for really transforming what students walk away with in terms of academic skills and abilities." The district's focus on grading reform in their RIDE work built on a strong foundation of previous work to implement personalized learning, but the district was not willing to simply pat themselves on the back for the good work done so far. As Superintendent Coberly described it, "We've been doing really good at student choice and voice, flexible learning opportunities and spaces, flexible scheduling, even some workforce development opportunities... some pretty nice things. But we've got to get better at assessments, grading practices, and communication to parents about student learning. Working with our coach this year he said we're on track. We needed to get the structural pieces in place of what it looked like to have a personalized learning model; now we can drill down. We knew that this was the next step to take our model up to a higher level."

3. **Focus on building understanding and the "why" rather than jumping to the "what."** Although Weston 7 had a strong vision for what they hoped to develop through RIDE–namely, portfolios of learning, capstone projects, and mastery transcripts–they understood that they needed to build a foundation of understanding across the staff first. They learned from their previous experience (rolling out edtech to support personalization without sufficient time for teacher professional development, and the subsequent community pushback), and took a different approach this time. In keeping with the principles of design thinking (Linke, 2017), they resisted the temptation to jump straight to a particular "solution" to their problem. Instead, they spent time understanding it. They recognized a need to find alignment around a philosophy of grading and how it fits with a personalized learning approach; from this foundation, they are now well-positioned to build solutions that will meet the goals they have for student-centered learning.

4. **Give people time to reflect on their personal practices and beliefs before moving to institutional change; this lets the change come from the bottom-up instead of top-down.** The intentionality of "slowing down" in the work at Weston 7 had another benefit in addition to the previous point: it allowed teachers to slowly identify their own strengths and areas they would like to grow in, and then bring those forward to the group themselves, rather than have grading reforms suggested by building leaders or external consultants. This approach is particularly effective in an emergent change process (Edney & Baker, 2019), where adaptation is continuous and ongoing and the change is both cultural and structural.

Findings: Research Question 2

Research Question 2
What conditions and factors enabled or inhibited the successful implementation of student-centered learning practices?

In this section, we will explore the enabling conditions and factors that supported implementation of student-centered learning in RIDE districts. We will rely on common themes that emerged from the case studies above, as well as teacher survey data and interviews with school leaders, district leaders, and state leaders involved in the work. It is worth noting that although state policy emerged frequently in the data as both an enabling and inhibiting factor, it will not be addressed directly in this section; instead, the impact of state policy on this work will be explored in the findings on Research Question 4 later in this report.

Enabling Conditions and Supportive Factors

School-Level Enabling Conditions and Supportive Factors

Actively Supportive School Leaders

At the school level, the most frequently cited enabling factor was aligned and involved building leadership. As one 2Revolutions staff member described it, *"Principals are vital. Absolutely. If principals are not on board, this work is not going to do well."* School leader involvement required not merely endorsing the work, but actively supporting it, including creating a building culture of learning and productive experimentation.

School leaders' support also extended to strategic selection of who would be involved. Most school leaders carefully chose departments or grade level teams that were not already working on other initiatives, to help avoid a sense of initiative fatigue or competing priorities. Many school leaders also mentioned choosing their "early adopter" teachers carefully, based on those teachers' willingness to try new things, as well as their influence on the rest of the school staff.

Expectation and Time Created for Collaboration

Making time for teachers to collaborate, learn together, and try new things was vital. Sometimes this used an existing structure, such as PLCs or assessment review committees; sometimes this required creating something new. As one district leader explained,

> *"In my opinion, if you're going to build a rich performance assessment practice that's collaborative in nature, then you have to, as a leader, establish and create a schedule that allows that collaborative time, right? You can't tell people, 'Well, get out there and collaborate,' but the only time they can do it is at five at night when they're done with the rest of their work. That doesn't work."*

Given the volume of work involved, many schools provided a stipend directly for implementing teachers to help cover the additional time. As one district leader explained, "If we didn't have access to the funding for RIDE, it would not have been as successful. It covered their peace of mind that we were paying for their extra work; it's not just added to their plates. Because it is a lot of work." Other districts did not pay a direct stipend to implementing teachers, but instead included the RIDE work as part of their district's professional learning program, which allows teachers to earn additional benefits if they participate in approved professional development. The possibility of earning graduate credit through the UW-certified "drops" also provided additional motivation for teachers to carve out the significant amount of time required to fully participate in the pilot activities.

On the other hand, some school leaders worked hard to find ways to make the work more accessible and bite-sized, so that it could be integrated into existing collaboration structures like PLCs. As one elementary principal described,

> *"I love quick little resources, like short little snippets that are easy for teachers to see, that allow them to grab that idea, make it their own, and then run with it in their own classroom. It's important to meet [teachers] where they're at, and they're all at different places with it, and to make it easy, because if it's too cumbersome, they're just not going to do it."*

High-Quality Professional Learning and Coaching

Many school leaders emphasized the importance of the teach-ins and personalized coaching in helping to train their staff in the actual "what, why, and how" of student-centered learning. As one instructional facilitator said, *"The materials 2Revolutions has provided are fantastic. They really had some great stuff."* In particular, the iterative and practice-focused nature of the professional learning design allowed teachers to learn something new, go test it out in their classroom, come back to share how it went and what they learned, get feedback, make modifications, and go test it out again. This approach is aligned with existing research, which has shown that the most effective professional development is job-embedded, collaborative, content-specific, paired with coaching, and includes space for feedback and reflection (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017).

Teacher Mindsets

Teachers' willingness to try new things to better serve their students was also a frequently-mentioned theme. Ultimately, many leaders said, the ability and desire of teachers to build relationships with their students is the key factor in making student-centered learning happen. As one high school principal explained,

> *"This is where having great people is really, really important. You know, you can have all the great policies and systems in place, but if you don't have good people to implement stuff and give kids opportunities, it doesn't do anything."*

However, the willingness of teachers to try new things was not merely contingent on teachers' own personalities and risk tolerance. As mentioned in the first point about building leadership, teachers' willingness to try new things could be reinforced or hindered by the culture of the school, and their

sense of safety to try and learn new things. As one member of the WY Future of Learning Partnership pointed out,

> *"It's a credit to the districts that have participated in this for sending the message to their teachers that we're okay with you experimenting, and maybe failing now and then, and there won't be the sort of professional consequences as we usually think of them. And that's, you know, that's a credit to those district leaders and building leaders who feel the same way."*

District-Level Enabling Conditions and Supportive Factors

Clear vision and support from district leaders

The schools and districts that made the most progress in deepening and expanding their student-centered learning practices were led by a consistent team with a clear shared goal and vision for the work. As one 2Revolutions staff member described it,

> *"There's 100% a correlation to strong leadership at the district level. Where this is not happening, we don't have that leadership–we don't have their buy-in or their ability to lead this effectively. So when we're looking for future districts in Wyoming and elsewhere, I think the biggest correlate to success is a leader that sees this as their work, and a leader that can move this kind of agenda."*

District leaders also mentioned that support and alignment from the school board also served as an enabling condition, as it helped provide additional evidence of the district's commitment.

Alignment with existing initiatives and strategy

In addition to the strong commitment from individual leaders, districts and schools that could clearly align the RIDE work to other initiatives or their district's strategic plan were able to make more progress than districts where it felt like "one more thing." As one 2Revolutions coach described, *"Places that are successful, this work is seen as building on work that's already underway, taking what they are doing to the next step. Places that are 'othering' the work are not gaining traction."* This was particularly true in districts with many competing initiatives: the more coherence created across those disparate streams of work, the higher the likelihood of adoption and sustainability. This was particularly important when those other initiatives were teacher- or student-initiated, as this state-led initiative was often opted into by district leadership, and therefore needed to gain buy-in among building staff.

Many districts used the Wyoming Profile of a Graduate, or a localized version thereof, as a foundation for their district's vision for the future. This allowed them to create buy-in with their community about the goals they had for their students, and then to align the RIDE work to those shared goals.

Distributed leadership and capacity-building

Districts and schools that made substantial progress towards embedding SCL deeply in their culture, practice, and systems focused on involving as many people as possible in the work. This

included building local capacity for leadership, coaching, and training, such as through instructional facilitators or peer leadership models. This approach reduced their reliance on the external professional learning provider or individual "champions" of the work, allowed them to scale to new teachers without diminishing exposure to coaching and feedback, and increased the likelihood of sustainability after the state support concluded. This distributed leadership approach was part of 2Revolutions' intentional "gradual release" approach, which emphasized local capacity-building. As one 2Revolutions staff member described,

> *"We have had a constant focus on scale and on growing the number of educators participating. And we've had a focus on a multi-stakeholder design team meeting. Every month for two school years, we've had a constant engagement with leadership. And that is a huge part of our change strategy. Number one, 'infect' as many teachers as possible over time. Number two, build a multi-stakeholder structure to look at conditions, systems, and barriers on a regular basis."*

Clear plan for expansion

Districts benefited from having a clear long-term plan for sustainability and scaling. That scaling process varied dramatically in its pace and scope, but it was intentionally directed. In other words, although word of mouth did help build organic buy-in and interest in the work among teachers, successful expansion relied on more formal structures and planning than word of mouth alone. This included attention to building increased capacity for teacher training and coaching as mentioned above, but also intentional structures for making space for the work, monitoring its progress, and assessing outcomes.

Relatedly, districts that built on existing infrastructure for collaboration, such as PLCs or curriculum committees, were able to build towards sustainability faster by embedding the work in existing structures.

State-Level Enabling Conditions and Supportive Factors

Unity across various state actors

The involvement and support of the various actors in the Wyoming Future of Learning Partnership was incredibly important for building confidence among participating districts that this work would be supported at all levels of the system. As one high school principal explained, *"I think RIDE speaks volumes to the ability of the different partners that came together to work and support this. It doesn't happen very often. It's a really nice opportunity for everyone to focus on the same thing from different angles."*

This is consistent with other literature about the importance of not just permissive policies, but also clear support from leadership, in supporting innovation (e.g. Soleas, 2021; Sȧnchez & Gutiérrez-Esteban, 2023). This dynamic was something the WY Future of Learning Partnership was acutely aware of, and therefore intentional in their messaging around, as one state partner explained:

"When politics gets involved, it just makes it a little bit challenging. But I think [the other FoL partners] are bought in, and I think that was important to the districts as well. I think some of them were hesitant in the beginning, because if you have barriers to the work, if everybody's not bought in and on the same page, then they're like, it's not worth doing."

Alignment with other state initiatives

Related to the previous point about state actors working together to support student-centered learning, another factor that aided implementation was the alignment of the RIDE work with other state initiatives. For example, as the State Board of Education began working to operationalize the Profile of a Graduate, many participating districts pointed out ways in which their work in RIDE was helping them to "get ahead" of those changes. As one high school principal described,

"We kind of merged our RIDE work with the Profile of a Wyoming Graduate. That way when the state said, 'Hey, do this,' it allowed us to bridge that gap, so it wasn't another new thing. This way we can seamlessly transition with this initiative the state says we have to do."

The policy work that the WY Future of Learning Partnership has been doing in the background (which will be discussed in more detail later in this report) also has helped to build alignment and coherence across various aspects of state policy and political priority.

Public awareness and buy-in

There has been significant investment in communicating about the RIDE work to the public. This has included in-person events such as the statewide celebrations of learning, but also online communications, including professionally produced videos, a thoughtfully designed public website, and various other public collateral and press engagement. A subcommittee of the WY Future of Learning Partnership has been dedicated to communication, acknowledging the importance of making the case for successful innovation in Wyoming public education. As one member of that subcommittee explained:

"Everything boils down to communication, right? Communication needs to come from the schools to the parents. That's an incredible task. So I think continuing to highlight publicly what are the wins from this, getting students talking to school board members, you know, talk about what they're learning... that's a lot of important work. I definitely think if the public knew more about the details of how invested their educators are in their students' learning, and their willingness to just step out there and be innovative and creative, and then see the benefit from the student learning perspective, I think they would be behind it completely."

Funding

The costs of an initiative like this are substantial. Gathering stakeholders together for this sort of collaborative systems-change work takes time, planning, and facilitation; doing so in-person is even more costly. Although some of the RIDE costs are up-front (e.g. developing the professional learning materials), many of the costs are ongoing–though some may diminish as local capacity to

lead training and provide ongoing coaching increases over time. The presence of significant funding from the Governor's office enabled the creation of the infrastructure that supported the RIDE work, and stipends provided to participating districts helped incentivize teacher participation in the substantial work required.

Inhibiting Conditions and Challenges

In this section we outline some of the most commonly-cited challenges and barriers to implementation of student-centered learning work. For brevity, we will not list barriers that are the inverse of an aforementioned enabling condition (e.g. strategic alignment supports implementation; a lack of strategic alignment hinders it), although these "mirror image" findings did emerge frequently in the qualitative data.

School- and District-Level Inhibiting Conditions and Challenges

Initiative fatigue

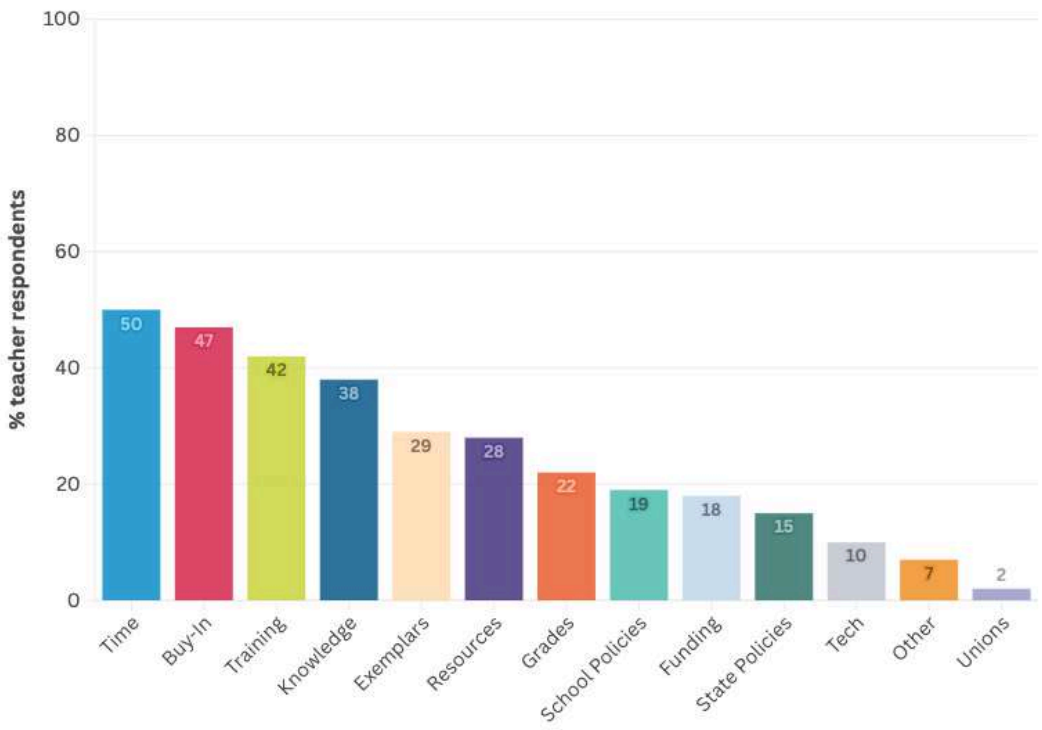
The most common barrier to successful implementation was initiative fatigue and incoherence. Many participating school leaders mentioned balancing multiple disparate initiatives and struggling to find a throughline across multiple, often "competing" priorities. As one 2Revolutions coach explained,

> *"If building leadership isn't saying this is a priority and doing the work to make it happen, it will die as soon as we walk out the door. And that's hard, because that's not a traditional model of professional learning. We guide. We support. But at the end of the day, if it's going to stick, it has to be you. And there are so many competing priorities. When districts came into this work, a lot of them had lots of other things going on, and [part of the work] is figuring out how this isn't something extra, but how it's a tool to support the goals that you already have established."*

This theme of initiative fatigue showed up from a teacher perspective as well. Teachers often expressed a sense of overwhelm at having too many things on their plate, especially given the volume of work that this level of transformative change requires. As shown in Figure 9 below, time was the most frequently selected barrier to SCL implementation among teacher survey respondents. As one middle school principal explained,

> *"A lot of teachers felt that it was a heavy lift on top of other heavy lifts. What that says to me is that we probably didn't protect their time very well. I also think that feedback says to us as a district that we need to think about how many initiatives we have going. In our district we almost always have several initiatives going. And we do have people that will engage in good, hard work when they understand the purpose and the 'why.' But I know in our district, sometimes, we just wear them out."*

Figure 10: Teacher-Reported Barriers to Implementation of Student-Centered Learning



Source: RIDE Educator Survey, Spring 2025 (n=137)
Note: This item allowed teachers to select all that applied; therefore, the percentages do not sum to 100.

Insufficient time and resources

As described in the previous section, the professional learning, coaching, and feedback provided as part of RIDE was deep, personalized, and carefully designed. This meant that the level of work required presented a substantial time commitment for participating districts and schools. One instructional facilitator described teachers in tears because they were overwhelmed by the volume of work they were trying to take on. Some of the districts did not have enough PD days in the year to accommodate all of the meeting and work time required and had to carve out additional time for RIDE participants to meet. In districts where a large percentage of the staff was involved in the pilot, finding substitutes to cover staff roles created a significant logistical challenge. Similarly, some districts did not have sufficient instructional coaches or other support staff to help provide individualized feedback and support to implementing teachers, so the 2Revolutions coach was the only source of this support.

Relatedly, sometimes schools faced particular resource constraints and challenges based on their size, geography, or student population. For example, multiple schools shared staff members across multiple buildings, which presented logistical challenges when trying to schedule collaborative time for teachers to plan or teach cross-curricular courses. Some rural schools reported having fewer options for diverse hands-on experiential learning opportunities. Some schools faced severe

staffing shortages in particular departments that hindered implementation; others had acute student needs that diverted attention from the RIDE work.

Misconceptions about student-centered learning

Teachers and school leaders who experienced school in a more traditional system may not have a clear vision for what SCL practices look like, and there are often misconceptions about student-centered learning and concerns about its implications for classroom management, the role of the teacher, and the ability to cover academic content with rigor. As one high school principal described, *"We started having these conversations as a staff, and just the fear of the unknown, the fear of turning that much freedom to kids… it's scary for teachers."* Another middle school principal described it as follows:

> *"It was kind of like asking them [the teachers] to suspend belief, which is really hard, right? Or maybe impossible? Because they were thinking, I don't know, I've never taught that way before. So there was a lot of hesitancy. But I think they did find in the end, that they're facilitating the kids' learning more, not just dispensing information. But there was some fear around that, like, there might be several different choices happening in my room, right? So how do I grade that? How do I manage that? They had all those questions that we had to work through."*

In addition, SCL can also sometimes feel philosophically contradictory to other initiatives that districts have undertaken in the past. For example, one school leader pointed to a perceived tension between the personalization of performance assessments and the standardization of assessments that their school had established while working on a guaranteed viable curriculum initiative. If leaders do not create coherence across initiatives, or clearly change course from previous directions, this can remain a point of confusion that influences educators' willingness and ability to implement with fidelity.

Fear of implications for state testing

Despite the collaboration at the state level to build a supportive policy environment, state accountability and assessment structures still seem to disincentivize student-centered learning and assessment approaches. As one high school principal described it, *"Sometimes the state assessments fly in the face of authentic, relational assessment."*

Many of the districts in this study chose to pilot the SCL work in subject areas that are not included in the state assessments, explaining that they felt more comfortable "experimenting" in some subjects than others. This risk aversion may reduce innovation and adoption of SCL practices in precisely the subjects where innovation is most needed (Carrillo, 2025), as illustrated by this secondary school principal's comment:

> *"I think RIDE has allowed them to kind of open up and interact with their kids in a different light. But there's still the worry for some of them, if I'm honest, in the content areas where we get tested. They're still worried about their scores and how kids are going to perform on those standardized tests, and whether or not their performance assessments are allowing their students to be successful there."*

State-Level Inhibiting Conditions and Challenges

Collaboration challenges

The most commonly-cited theme related to barriers to SCL growth and implementation at the state level had to do with the challenges of collaboration among state actors. Some of this was simply logistical: the state actors involved in the WY Future of Learning Partnership have full plates, and carving out time to prioritize collaborative work is always challenging, particularly in the absence of funding or official responsibility (state partners do not receive a stipend like participating districts do, and participation in the WY Future of Learning Partnership is not mandated). Additionally, some partners were represented by a single "champion" who originally joined the group on behalf of their organization without involving other staff or stakeholders. In cases where turnover happened, the WY Future of Learning Partnership lost momentum because of the lack of continuity and internal buy-in at that partner.

Some of the challenges also relate to ownership. Although the WY Future of Learning Partnership came into existence with a broader goal than merely supporting the RIDE work, in practice, it has remained focused almost exclusively on RIDE. The group has yet to take on its own identity and ownership of its own mission and vision, nor to organize itself without the facilitation support of 2Revolutions, as this member explained: *"2Revolutions largely facilitates our monthly meetings. If they didn't, it wouldn't be happening at all. So I think that's good to have a facilitator there; that keeps the conversation going."* Staff from 2Revolutions echoed this concern, explaining, *"We've been much more active in the facilitation than should be the case typically. We'd love to kind of lead in year one, co-lead in year two, and then step back in year three."*

Despite the lack of in-state ownership of leading and facilitating the collaborative work, the political incentives and benefits of the collaboration seem strong. As one member described:

> *"There was a press release about the Partnership. You've got the State Board, you've got the State Superintendent, you've got the Governor's Office, you've got the Superintendent's Association, the community colleges and university... So when these folks all come to the table, if they can't all get on the same page and collaborate, what message does that send? So there is that political incentive of, if this falls apart, none of those state partners look very good, right? But I could not gauge for you the various levels of intentionality and commitment to it. I don't think any of the partners want to be the first ones to say, 'Hey, I'm out. I'm not for collaboration'... but also there are some voices that are more focused on efficiency. And although collaboration is more effective and more powerful, maybe it's not viewed as the most efficient."*

Although these political incentives are in place to support collaboration, many of the state partners do not collaborate regularly outside of the RIDE work. Therefore, they have not established the habit of developing projects together or sharing ideas with the rest of the coalition. However, the fruit of these political incentives is slowly emerging; for example, the University of Wyoming

College of Education and the Wyoming Department of Education worked together in 2025 to create a summer conference called TeacherCon. In the future, including other members of the WY Future of Learning Partnership in similar initiatives will help continue to strengthen collaboration and increase the impact of the group.

Overall, the Wyoming Future of Learning Partnership has not yet achieved the depth of collaboration nor breadth of mission that was intended in its creation. Its presence sends a vital message to participating schools about the statewide support for their work in student-centered learning; however, its fragility and the lack of a clear leader going forward could undermine the long-term impact of the RIDE work.

Lack of clarity around state policy and priorities

This theme will be explored in more detail in the Policy section of the report, but merits introduction now: many schools and districts reported a lack of clarity around what was actually permitted in state statute. Although Wyoming's policy environment is actually quite permissive and enabling, confusion about those permissions, as well as mixed messages communicated through current assessment and accountability priorities, made schools hesitant to try new things. One member of the WY Future of Learning Partnership described this dynamic through the analogy of a teacher being afraid to try new things–even if they are supposedly encouraged to–because of the potential consequences built into the system:

> *"If teachers don't feel like they're in a position where they can take chances and take risks, they're not going to. Because at the end, if their students don't perform well enough [on state assessments], their building principal is going to come down and visit their classroom. Some districts take this to crazy extremes where it's like, every single day of the year is already planned for teachers, so they lose a lot of their agency."*

Similarly, despite the prioritization of student-centered learning from the entities in the WY Future of Learning Partnership, participating districts were acutely aware of the other educational priorities coming out of the Wyoming Legislature. Other legislated mandates, such as a K-3 literacy law, can dilute focus from the RIDE work and stifle creativity, as one superintendent explained:

> *"I'm not opposed to K-3 literacy, but when you're mandated to do certain things in certain ways… I believe that there's space for performance assessments and the RIDE initiative to fit into that. It's just a matter of whether or not leaders are creative enough to ensure that happens, or whether they're so worried about the law that they're just going to get something in place that meets the letter of the law."*

Findings: Research Question 3

Research Question 3
What impact has the implementation of student-centered learning had on leadership practices, educator practices, and student outcomes, particularly across different student groups?

Impact on School Leaders

In this section we explore what impact the implementation of student-centered learning has had on state, district, and building leaders, using themes that emerged from the qualitative data collected from interviews with those stakeholder groups.

Increased collaboration across the education ecosystem

The RIDE work pushed state, district, and building leaders to collaborate with people from other institutions and parts of the education sector. This collaboration was valuable for building relationships and trust, and led to increased leaders' understanding of the ecosystem as a whole and students' journey from K-12 to postsecondary education (whether community college or university system) to workforce. This deeper understanding of the realities of other parts of the sector is incredibly valuable, as this state higher education leader from the WY Future of Learning Partnership described:

> *"The collaboration piece has been very beneficial. We always say that Wyoming is just one really big town with really long streets, and it doesn't take very long for you to get to know the main players. But in the past we haven't really worked that collaboratively. So we're connecting together, talking to elected officials, talking to members of the State Board of Education, working with the Department of Education, the Governor's liaison for education. Without projects like this, those relationships would be very superficial–we see each other at state meetings, but that isn't the same as being engaged in a project. So I think this has been very useful. We certainly understand K-12 better. I know for sure they understand the community colleges better, and that really is beneficial for supporting students as they transition from high school."*

Exposure to new ideas

Through the statewide Celebrations of Learning, as well as the external coaching provided by a team with national experience, building and district leaders were exposed to examples of other districts enacting these practices. This exposure expanded their vision for what was possible, as these two superintendents described:

> *"I think my staff really did enjoy the RIDE celebrations. They learned a lot. They see how other districts do it. And we're very honored to present what we've done, you know. So I think that collaboration piece statewide, helping districts collaborate*

statewide and continue some of those cross-district learnings, even more regionally, could be valuable."

"Sometimes people need to know what possibilities are out there and be given the support and permission to go forth. I think that's something that we wouldn't have been able to do absent RIDE, because it also connected us with people all across the country. And that's been really important because we tend to be a little behind the times. And also having that connection within Wyoming has been really impactful for us, to connect with other districts that are also taking the lead and seeing what they're doing."

Leadership development

The RIDE initiative included not just professional learning for teachers, but also regular facilitated meetings and strategy planning work for design teams. This experience was often mentioned as a valuable opportunity for individual leaders to develop their own facilitation, change management, and strategic planning skills. As one superintendent described:

"Seeing excellent high-quality facilitation is important. And having in-house support is important so we're not having to send people far away, because we are so isolated. I think it's been a leadership development opportunity for those involved as well."

Source: Wyoming Future of Learning Partnership website

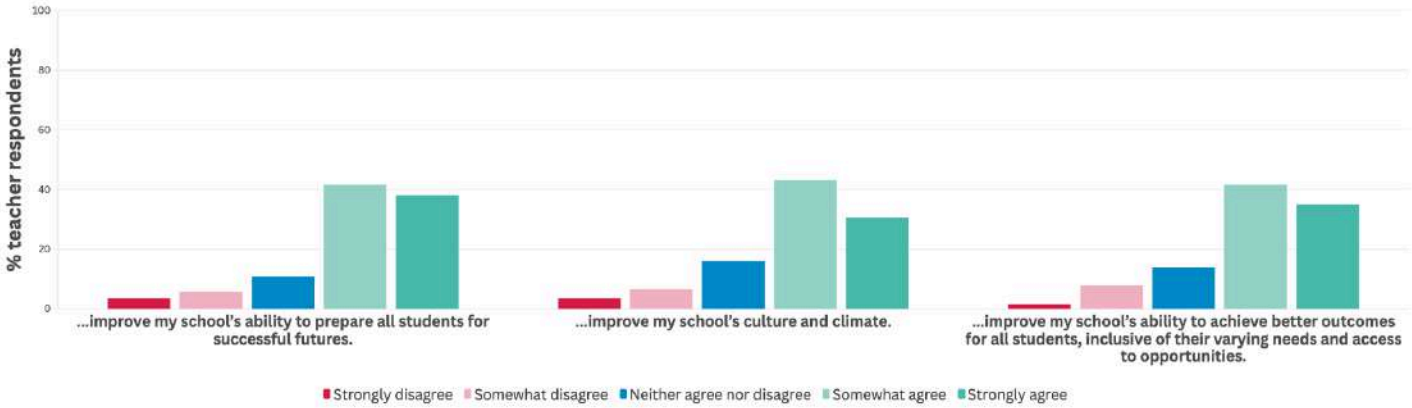
Impact on Educators

In this section we explore what impact the implementation of student-centered learning has had on educator practices, using data collected from educator surveys and interviews with school and district leaders.

Commitment to Student-Centered Learning

Belief in the importance of student-centered learning was quite high among educator survey respondents. Overall, 77% of educators who took the survey said that they either "somewhat agreed" or "strongly agreed" that they support their school's intention to implement student-centered learning at progressively deeper levels over the next several years. As shown in Figure 10 below, teachers generally believed that deeply implementing student-centered learning practices would positively impact their school in multiple ways.

Figure 11: Educator Beliefs about Impact of Implementing SCL



Source: RIDE Educator Survey, Spring 2025 (n=137)

One middle school paraprofessional described the benefits of student-centered learning as giving students *"choice in how they learn. It will provide more buy-in. Things are changing and the way a student learns is changing."* An elementary and middle school educator echoed that theme, writing simply: *"We know that not all students learn the same, so they can't be taught the same."*

We also asked teachers how their views around student-centered learning had changed since the previous school year. As shown in Table 5 below, participants generally reported that their overall buy-in increased between the 2023-24 school year and the 2024-25 school year, with the largest changes reported in their actual readiness to implement SCL practices (mean score increase from last year to this year from 2.94 to 3.21 on a 4-point scale) and actual implementation of SCL practices (mean score increase from 3.06 to 3.33 on the same scale).

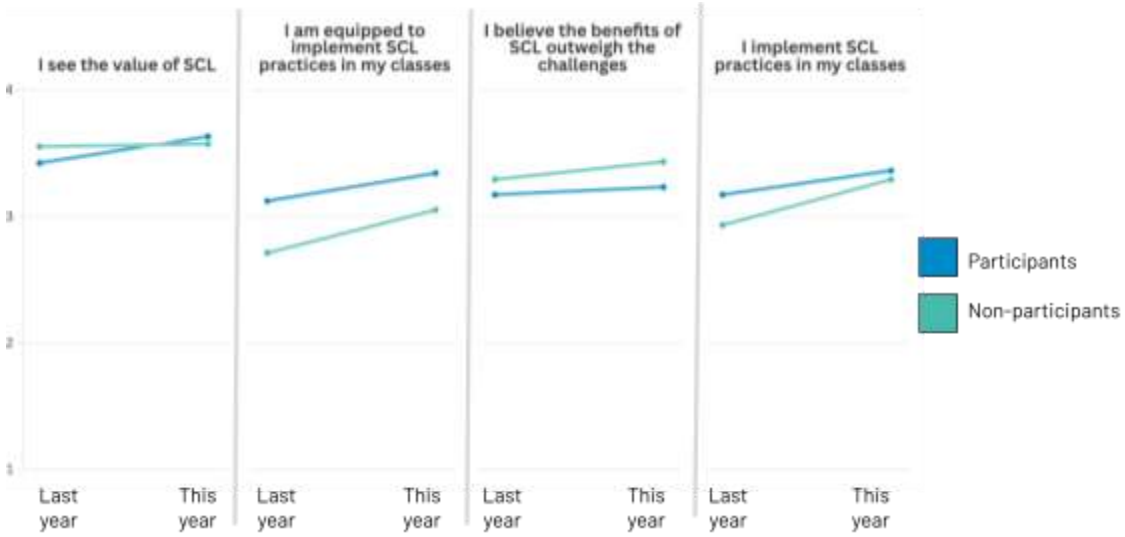
Table 5: Changes in Educator Beliefs and Practices around SCL

	Last year		This year		Change between years
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
I see the value of implementing SCL practices	3.48	0.50	3.60	0.55	+.12
I am equipped to implement SCL practices in my classes	2.94	0.88	3.21	0.69	+.27
I believe the benefits of SCL outweigh the challenges of implementing it well	3.22	0.75	3.32	0.81	+.10
I implement SCL practices in my classes	3.06	0.88	3.33	0.64	+.27

Source: RIDE Educator Survey, Spring 2025 (n=98 for "This year" items, n=94 for "Last year" items)

We then disaggregated these results between teachers who participated in RIDE teach-ins[13] and teachers who did not. We expected that teachers who participated in teach-ins would report higher levels of buy-in and implementation than teachers who did not. However, we found mixed results. Teachers who participated in 2Revolutions' teach-ins did report being significantly more equipped to implement student-centered learning practices in their classrooms (M=3.34, SD=0.67) than teachers who did not (M=3.05, SD=0.70), $t(96) = -2.10$, $p<.05$. However, we found no significant differences between the two groups in the other items. Response patterns are visible in Figure 11.

Figure 12: Teacher Buy-in and Preparedness to Implement SCL, By Teach-In Participation



Source: RIDE Educator Survey, Spring 2025 (n=137)

[13] This included both teachers who self-reported in the survey that they participated in teach-ins (n=29) and survey respondents who appeared on the attendance lists maintained by 2Revolutions at least once, even if they did not self-report that attendance on the survey (n=36).

These findings show that personally participating in the RIDE teach-ins was not meaningfully associated with shifts in teacher buy-in or preparedness. However, overall, *all* teachers experienced growth in their self-reported buy-in and preparedness over the two years, indicating the likely presence of spillover effects (when benefits spread beyond professional learning participants to influence non-participating educators). This is common in educational interventions, and is reinforced by the case studies, as many schools described having some teachers participate in the teach-ins and then share their learning with colleagues through PLCs and other collaborative structures.

Shifts in Practice

We then shifted our attention to examining changes in teachers' actual implementation of student-centered learning practices. We grouped these practices into four themes:

1. Flexible pathways: Learning can happen "anytime, anywhere" and proficiency can be gained both in and out of the classroom
2. Student choice: Students have agency in the learning process, and can follow their own path to proficiency based on their interests and strengths
3. Personalized support: Students receive timely differentiated support from educators to help them make progress at a pace that is appropriate for their needs and strengths
4. Meaningful assessment: Students can express what they know in ways that are meaningful to them and transferable across contexts, and receive transparent, actionable feedback from that assessment to deepen their learning

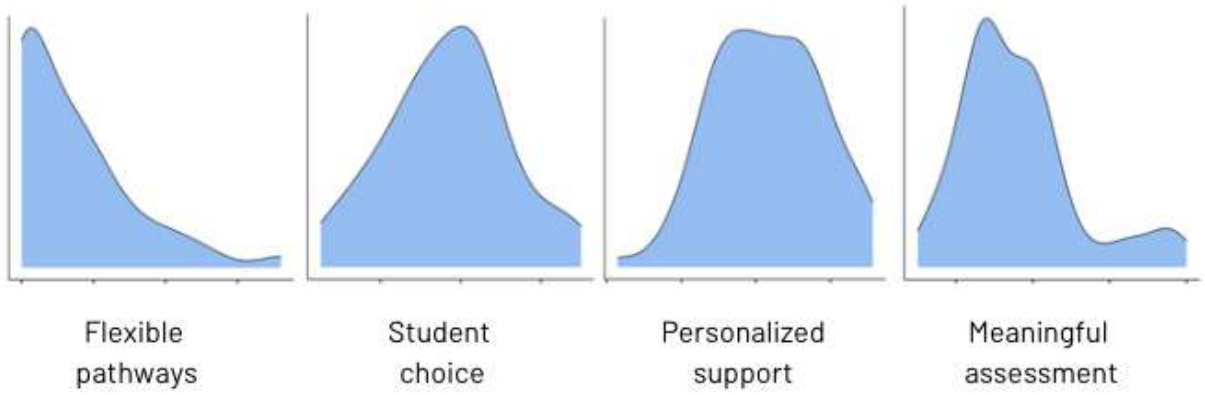
There was quite a bit of variation in the teacher-reported experiences of student-centered learning. Each composite measure had a different scale (as shown in Table 6 below), making it difficult to compare the frequency of each set of practices at face value. However, from the density plots shown in Figure 12 below, we can see the variation in teachers' responses to each of the four areas. In general, teachers consistently expressed higher levels of implementation in the area of personalized support, followed by student choice. The area of practice with the lowest levels of teacher-reported implementation was flexible pathways.

Table 6: Teacher-Reported Implementation of SCL Practices

	n	Mean	Scale	Median	SD
Flexible pathways	92	1.35	1-3	1.20	0.41
Student choice	94	2.84	1-5	2.88	0.77
Personalized support	92	3.16	1-5	3.14	0.73
Meaningful assessment	91	2.79	1-5	2.67	0.77

Source: RIDE Teacher Survey, Spring 2025

Figure 13: Teacher-Reported Implementation of SCL Practices



Source: RIDE Teacher Survey, Spring 2025 (n=91-94)
Note: The four areas of practices have different subscales, as shown in Table 6 above. Therefore, these density plots have their scales removed. The horizontal axis on each plot should be read from left to right, with left indicating "minimal exposure" (e.g. "rarely" or "never") and right indicating "maximum exposure" (e.g. "always" or "frequently"). The total area under each curve is always 1, with the proportion of data falling within a specific interval represented by the area under the curve within that interval.

The relatively low levels of meaningful assessment practices is an interesting finding, since most districts in this study selected meaningful assessment practices as their "onramp" to SCL. However, these areas of practice are not discrete: personalization and student choice are both strategies used in high-quality performance assessments, and were included in the professional learning offered about UDL. Additionally, personalization and student choice are often considered easier practices to implement (Sutherland et al., 2023) and may have been more commonplace prior to RIDE.

Among the meaningful assessment practices described in the survey (a full list of items can be found in Appendix 3), the most common practice teachers self-reported was "I give students feedback on what they're doing well and what they can still improve." In fact, 90% of teachers said this was "usually" or "almost always" true (M=4.38 on a scale from 1-5, SD=0.66, n=91). On the other end of the spectrum, the least-commonly reported meaningful assessment practice was about assessing learning that has happened in non-classroom environments: only 10% of teachers said that it is "usually" or "almost always" true that "students can show me what they've learned in an internship, apprenticeship, or other out-of-school opportunity, and I will assess and give them credit for that learning" (M=41.60 on a scale from 1-5, SD=1.17, n=90).

Teachers' qualitative responses described other ways in which their practices had shifted as well. Teachers described myriad changes in their own instructional and assessment design, as well as honest reflection on their own practice. Below are a few examples:

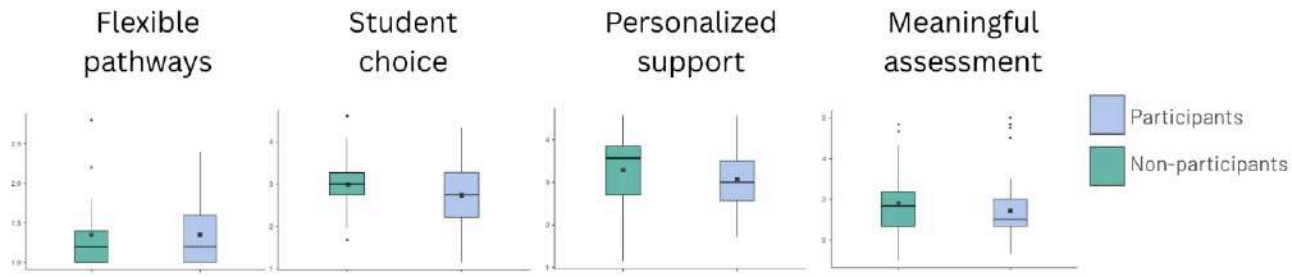
- *"For me, using student-centered learning has helped me to engage with students' needs and interests a little more deeply than I did previously. It has made me think about what the*

students need a little more than just simply saying 'do this.'" -Middle & high school math teacher

- *"I think more outside the box when creating a lesson or setting expectations of student performance tasks. I am intentional when planning so that I can try to meet the needs of all the different types of learners in my class."* -Elementary teacher
- *"I've become more aware of my need to incorporate more student-centered learning techniques in my classroom and stray from my traditional presentation style of direct instruction."* -High school career & technical education teacher
- *"I better understand where I need to evolve as a teacher. I feel that my assessment practices are more transparent for students and better at assessing what students know."* -High school social studies teacher
- *"I have increased the number of options that the students have to choose from when they are ready to show that they understand the content."* -Middle school special education teacher

Once again, we disaggregated our analyses to examine potential differences in implementation between teachers who participated in RIDE teach-ins and teachers who did not. We expected that teachers who had participated in teach-ins would report higher levels of actual implementation than teachers who had not received this professional learning; however, we did not find any statistically significant differences between the two groups. The self-reported scores between the two groups on each of the four items can be found in Figure 13 below.

Figure 14: Teacher-Reported Implementation of SCL Practices, by Teach-In Participation



Source: RIDE Teacher Survey, Spring 2025 (n=91-94)
Note: The four areas of practices have different subscales, ranging from a 3-point to a 5-point scale, with lower numbers indicating lower mean scores on the relevant scales. Boxplots should not be compared to each other.

The lack of a statistically significant difference between teachers who participated in the RIDE teach-ins and those who did not does not necessarily mean that the professional learning was ineffective. In fact, earlier findings (see section on Research Question 1) found that overall, teachers who participated in the teach-ins found them valuable. Rather, this lack of discernible difference is likely due to either methodological limitations or the nascency of the intervention.

Methodologically speaking, our "participants" group included both teachers who had participated in every single teach-in for two full years, and teachers who had participated in a single session. The fact that only half of the participants in this group self-reported that they had participated in

teach-ins indicates that many of them perhaps had not remembered or realized that they were doing so. This variability in dosage within the participants group likely dilutes the impact of the professional learning on practice. Given the relatively small size of our participant (n=62) and non-participant (n=75) groups, we already lacked the statistical power to detect significant differences unless the effect size was quite large.

In terms of timeline, we collected data at the end of Year 2 of the RIDE initiative, which is far too early to expect to see significant and sustained changes in teacher behavior according to most research (e.g. Ehlert et al., 2025). For example, one review of the literature found that effective PD models averaged 49 hours of development per year (Yoon et al., 2007), which is substantially more than the 12-15 hours per year offered through RIDE. Most participating teachers were relatively new to this work, and therefore it is not surprising that we see minimal effects on their practice.

To address this question of timeline, we examined differences between Weston 7 teacher responses and teacher responses from the other participating districts. As shown in the case studies, Weston 7 has been on this student-centered learning journey for much longer than the other districts in this study. And indeed, in all four areas of practice, Weston 7 teachers demonstrated significantly higher levels of implementation than teachers from the other districts, as shown in Table 7 below.

Table 7: Differences in SCL Implementation Between Teachers, by District

	Weston 7 teachers		**Other district teachers**		***t*(15)**	***p***	**Cohen's *d***
	M	SD	M	SD			
Flexible pathways	1.75	0.52	1.26	0.33	3.74	.002	0.94
Student choice	3.64	0.61	2.68	0.69	6.35	<.001	1.59
Personalized support	3.78	0.55	3.03	0.69	5.43	<.001	1.36
Meaningful assessment	3.89	0.85	2.56	0.50	6.24	<.001	1.56

Source: RIDE Teacher Survey, Spring 2025 (n=91-94)

Impact on Students

In this section, we will address the impact of student-centered learning on student outcomes, particularly across different student groups. Although this study is not designed for causal inference because of the lack of comparison group and the nascency of the work itself, we do explore early indicators that support the theory of change and provide promising preliminary evidence that the RIDE initiative may lead to positive impacts for students in the long run.

Methodological Approach to Measuring Student Impact

To do this analysis, we will rely primarily on student self-reported survey data from four schools (two middle schools and two high schools) from two RIDE districts. Due to small sample sizes and inconsistencies in the data collected, we were not able to successfully match individual teachers' survey data to student survey data as originally intended to assess the impact of teacher-reported practices on student experiences and outcomes. Instead, we will rely only on student-reported data to explore their experiences of student-centered learning practices and the early outcomes that we hypothesized would result from those practices. As in the teacher analysis above, we organized student-centered learning practices into four areas: flexible pathways, student choice, personalized support, and meaningful assessment. To measure early student outcomes, we created composite measures of students' responses to multiple questions about a given outcome of interest. There were six outcomes of interest that we examined in this study: behavioral engagement, emotional engagement, cognitive engagement, students' sense of connectedness to school, perceptions of the relevance of school, and student academic self-concept. These outcomes are described in more detail in the box below.

Early Student Outcomes

Student engagement: Previous research on student engagement has shown it is key to supporting student academic achievement and persistence, and reducing dropout rates and boredom (Fredericks, Blumenfeld, & Paris, 2004). Measuring student engagement is challenging and multi-faceted, but previous research on the topic typically organizes it into three categories:

- **Behavioral engagement**: participation in class and extra-curricular activities
- **Emotional engagement**: feelings of support that create ties to the school and influence students' willingness to learn, and
- **Cognitive engagement**: students' investment in learning, including perseverance, self-regulation, and willingness to work hard (Fredericks et al., 2011; Appleton et al., 2006).

We will use these three categories in this study. In addition to these measures of student engagement, we also measured three sub-concepts that are component parts of engagement, but are called out specifically in the theory of change:

- **Increased student sense of connectedness:** Like student engagement, school connectedness is a multi-faceted concept (McCabe et al., 2024; Balfanz et al., 2024; Hurem et al., 2021) and is also a subcomponent of emotional engagement. For the purpose of this study, we will use a definition of school connectedness as "the feelings of acceptance and care from others and the degree to which one relates well to others at school" (Renshaw et al., 2015). We hypothesized that students would feel an increased sense of acceptance and closeness with teachers and peers as their schools implement personalized, student-centered learning.

- **Increased relevance of school:** We define this as how much students feel that school is interesting, important, and useful. Belief in the relevance of school indicates that students understand the importance of education for success in life (Stafford-Brizard, 2016). It is one component of student cognitive engagement. We hypothesize that as school activities become more personalized through RIDE, students will find school increasingly relevant and interesting to their lives.

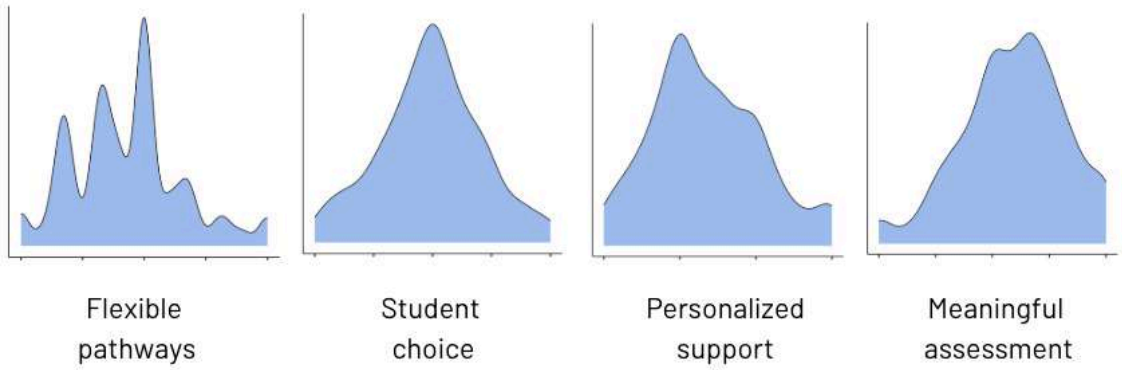
- **Academic self-concept:** When students perceive that they have voice and choice in their learning, their academic self-concept—the self-perceived competence and efficacy they bring to schoolwork—should strengthen (Marsh & Martin, 2011; Bandura, 1993).The most robust antecedents of academic self-concept are mastery experiences and credible signals of competence (Bandura, 1993). Success on meaningful tasks, opportunities to revise and improve, and feedback that locates progress in strategy and effort rather than fixed ability, provide evidence that one "can do this." Agency and academic self-concept are mutually reinforcing. Students' sense of agency—the perceived capacity to initiate, direct, and regulate learning—creates conditions for mastery (e.g., strategic choice, persistence, self-monitoring) that build academic self-concept; in turn, stronger academic self-concept sustains the willingness to choose challenging tasks and persist, amplifying agency and engagement (Marsh & Martin, 2011; Bandura, 1993).

To ensure our student survey accurately captured the distinct domains it was designed to measure, we conducted a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) on our composite measures of both practices and outcomes. This statistical method allowed us to test whether student responses aligned with the theoretical structure of the survey, providing evidence that the subscales represent valid and reliable constructs. Establishing this structural validity was essential for our intended use of the composite measures to examine how students' experiences of various student-centered learning practices were associated with student-reported outcomes. Reliability estimates were examined alongside model fit and factor loadings to inform potential item revision or construct refinement. The CFA confirmed that the survey results could be trusted to reflect how students experience key aspects of student-centered learning and its intended outcomes.

Student Experiences of SCL Practices

Students expressed substantial variation in their experiences of SCL practices. Each composite measure had a different scale (as shown in Table 8 below), making it difficult to compare the frequency of each set of practices at face value. However, from the Figure 14 and Table 8 below, we can see the variation in students' responses to each of the four areas of implementation measured. **In general, students were most likely to experience meaningful assessment practices**, followed by student choice practices, than the other two areas we examined.

Figure 15: Student-Reported Experiences of Student-Centered Learning



Source: RIDE Student Survey, Spring 2025 (n=791-795, varied by item)
Note: These density plots are on different scales because the four SCL experience subscales have different ranges. For the sake of comparison, therefore, the axis labels are removed. The x-axis on each plot should be read from left to right, with left indicating minimal exposure (e.g. "rarely" or "never" across most subscale items) and right indicating high levels of exposure (e.g. "always" or "frequently" across most subscale items).

Table 8: Student-Reported Experiences of Student-Centered Learning

	n	Mean	Scale	Median	SD
Flexible pathways	794	1.86	1-3	1.80	0.446
Student choice	795	2.97	1-5	3.00	0.864
Personalized support	791	2.35	1-5	2.25	0.722
Meaningful assessment	794	3.37	1-5	3.33	0.902

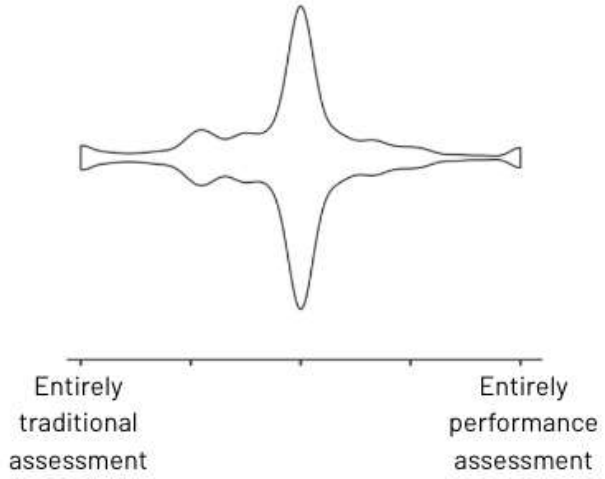
Source: RIDE Student Survey, Spring 2025

Even though students experienced meaningful assessment practices more often than other student-centered learning practices, there was still substantial variation in what that meaningful assessment looked like. For example, only 45% of student survey respondents said that they "usually" or "always" get helpful feedback from their teachers on their submitted work, and 53% of respondents said that the work they do for school "usually" or "always" helps them identify what they

already know and what they still need to learn. This focus on providing actionable, growth-oriented feedback is a foundational piece of meaningful assessment.

However, other elements of meaningful assessment, such as application of learning in real-world contexts and use of performance assessments, are less common. For example, only 31% of student survey respondents said that they "usually" or "always" can complete projects in the community to show what they've learned. Similarly, when asked to rank what types of assessments their classes most typically use on a scale from 0 to 100 (with 0 indicating entirely traditional, multiple-choice assessments and 100 indicating entirely performance-based assessments), the mean score across all student survey respondents was 47.71 (SD=18.28). The distribution of responses to that question can be seen in Figure 15 below, and indicates that overall, student experiences of performance assessments are still relatively uncommon.

Figure 16: Assessment Practices Most Frequently Experienced by Students



Source: RIDE Student Survey, Spring 2025 (n=724)

Connections Between SCL Practices and Student Outcomes

After examining what student-centered practices were occurring in RIDE schools, we tested the correlation between those self-reported experiences of student-centered learning practices and our outcomes of interest using Spearman's rank-order correlation, which is well-suited for non-normally distributed data (Siegel & Castellan, 1988). Before we describe our findings, a note of caution: The presence of a statistically significant correlation between particular experiences and particular student outcomes cannot be used to attribute causality, as it is possible that there are other reasons that students who experience more of certain SCL practices also experience higher levels of certain positive outcomes. In addition, the student practices and outcomes were both measured at a specific point in time, so this is simply a snapshot; it is not possible from this data to know whether these outcomes were improving over time as SCL practices increased. However, positive correlations between student-centered learning practices and beneficial student

outcomes do align with the theory of change on which the RIDE work is based, and thus these results provide useful information to generate hypotheses for more rigorous analyses in the future.

Across the board, we found statistically significant relationships between all four areas of student-centered learning experiences and beneficial student outcomes. The details of this analysis are found in Table 9 below. Positive correlations between student-centered learning practices and beneficial student outcomes align with the theory of change on which the RIDE work is based. These results are a promising early indicator that implementation of student-centered learning practices may help move the needle on the outcomes of interest.

Table 9: Correlations Between Student-Centered Learning Practices and Student Outcomes

		Student-centered learning practices			
		Flexible pathways	Student choice	Personalized support	Meaningful assessment
Behavioral engagement	Spearman's rho	0.119***	0.302***	0.274***	0.401***
	n	788	791	787	789
Academic self-concept	Spearman's rho	0.077*	0.245***	0.235***	0.334***
	n	788	790	788	785
Cognitive engagement	Spearman's rho	0.192***	0.441***	0.461***	0.419***
	n	785	784	780	780
Perceived relevance of school	Spearman's rho	0.167***	0.423***	0.403***	0.479***
	n	789	790	786	787
Emotional engagement	Spearman's rho	0.238***	0.452***	0.436***	0.479***
	n	786	790	785	784
Connectedness at school	Spearman's rho	0.198***	0.401***	0.403***	0.425***
	n	787	790	785	783

Source: RIDE Student Survey, Spring 2025

*Notes: * indicates a p-value of <.05, ** indicates a p-value of <.01, and *** indicates a p-value of <.001. Yellow highlight indicates a small correlation (rho >.10), and green highlight indicates a moderate correlation (rho > .39) (Schober, Boer, & Schwarte, 2018)*

Of the four areas of practice examined, **experiences of meaningful assessment were most strongly linked to beneficial student outcomes.** In particular, there was a moderate, positive, statistically significant correlation between students' experiences of meaningful assessment practices and their perceived relevance of their schoolwork (ρ=.48, n=787, p<.001), their emotional engagement with school (ρ=.48, n=784, p<.001), their sense of connectedness at school (ρ=.43, n=783, p<.001), their cognitive engagement (ρ=.42, n=780, p<.001), and their behavioral engagement (ρ=.40, n=789, p<.001). There also was a small, positive, significant correlation between students'

experiences of meaningful assessment and their academic self-concept (ρ=.33, n=785, p<.001). These findings are aligned with research from cognitive neuroscience and the science of learning, both of which emphasize the value of regular low-stakes assessments that provide specific feedback and encourage active retrieval of information, strengthening neural connections and enhancing long-term retention (Truong, 2019). As assessment becomes more individualized, actionable, and growth-oriented, it follows that students not only learn more effectively, but also feel a stronger sense of connection to what they are learning and why.

In addition to the quantitative data collected to answer this question, we also collected qualitative data from teachers, school leaders, and district leaders regarding their observations of student outcomes based on their RIDE experiences. A few key themes from this analysis are described below.

Overall, staff perceive that students are more engaged in learning in SCL classrooms. Increased engagement leads to many positive long-term outcomes, such as increased academic achievement, attendance, perseverance through school, and more (Fredericks et al., 2011). Engagement is also interconnected with other outcomes like academic self-efficacy and sense of agency (Woreta et al., 2025), which was also a strong theme in the qualitative data. Relatedly, parents and community members are sharing positive responses with school leaders based on the delight they see in their students as they learn. This finding also points to the importance of connecting initiatives like RIDE to the lived experiences of families and students, deeply involving them in the change management process. As one high school principal described,

> *"There are so many examples of specific situations where kids benefited from [SCL]. Whether that be a project they just did in class, or work-study, or when parents see that their kids are taking a lot of college courses and saving money down the road… that all helps them feel good about what we're doing. There are too many examples of positive things that happen on a daily basis, people seeing the benefits of it aside from just data and test scores and things like that. That's the stuff where, you know, a kid comes home enthusiastic about something they got to do in school because our teachers are a lot more engaged with students on a personal level… you know, that stuff counts."*

Increased student engagement is producing concrete changes in classroom environments, including reduced disciplinary issues. Although many participating districts focused on assessment practices as their RIDE focus area, they quickly found that implementing changes in assessment necessitated shifts in classroom experiences as well. As teachers adjusted to making their classrooms more active and collaborative, students' behavior in class also adjusted. One frequently-mentioned byproduct of this shift was a reduction in behavioral challenges in the classroom. This is aligned with previous research, which affirms bidirectional relationships between student engagement and "problem behaviors" (Wang & Fredricks, 2013). As one state leader described:

> *"It sounds like student engagement is much greater. As they've started to make these changes, I've heard teachers talk about how, like, 'I didn't have any discipline issues*

today. I didn't have to deal with all the normal things that I have to deal with. Kids were working, and they were excited about working, and they were focused on what I wanted them focused on.'"

School leaders see increases in students' academic self-efficacy. When students perceive that they have voice and choice in their learning, their academic self-concept— the self-perceived competence and efficacy they bring to schoolwork—should strengthen (Marsh & Martin, 2011; Bandura, 1993). As one high school principal described, ensuring clarity around learning expectations and building personalization into the assessment of those expectations, was part of building students' sense of self-efficacy:

"We set up our proficiency scales so kids could understand them. It shows them, here's the things you need to be doing. So a teacher might sit down and go through a kid's project with them and say, 'You're proficient here, but you're still basic here, why don't you go redo this part,' or some teachers are now challenging their kids, saying, 'You're proficient, but I want you to go hit the advanced tier.' Teachers encourage kids, saying, 'Give me an idea of what you want to do,' and kids hopefully feel the freedom, the autonomy, to express some ideas. We really want to empower them to start thinking about their lives and what they want to learn."

SCL has increased rigor and deeper understanding of concepts. A related frequently-mentioned way that the SCL work has impacted students is in increasing the rigor and depth of their learning. As outlined in Hattie & Donoghue's (2016) model for the phases of learning, effective student-centered learning practices push students to the highest stage of learning, in which students transfer and apply their knowledge in new contexts. As one district leader described it,

"This cross-curricular piece is so powerful. Kids get involved on a topic across the curriculum, and that reinforces so many standards. One of the things we used to do is teach standards in isolation. Now they're intertwining different standards and different content areas, and it's much more sophisticated and challenging for kids–and they enjoy it a lot more."

Meaningful assessment practices have helped reduce student assessment anxiety. By emphasizing student reflection on their own learning, ensuring that assessments are relevant to the learner and require application of knowledge in novel contexts, providing multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate their understanding, and disentangling academic skills and knowledge from other behaviors (Gagnon, 2022), schools focused on meaningful assessment have been reframing what "assessment" means for their students. Multiple school staff mentioned ways in which this new approach has helped reduce students' anxiety and dread about "testing," while allowing them to still push students to learn deeply. As one high school principal explained,

"Kids can screw up at our school, and it doesn't destroy them. Some kids might screw up, they might have a bad semester. And our philosophy is that you're going to learn, so if you skip out on learning, we're going to make sure you still learn. I can't just not do something and take a zero. We won't let that happen. It might be late, but that's allowed, to make sure kids can still have success."

Disaggregated Analysis by Student Characteristics

In addition to the overall analysis described above, we also conducted a series of disaggregated mean difference analyses based on student characteristics. First, we examined students' experiences of student-centered learning to see if students with different characteristics experienced their school's implementation differently. We then examined student outcomes across different characteristics to see if anticipated outcomes differed by group.

We examined mean differences in student outcomes across six student characteristics that have consistently been shown to impact students' experiences in education:

- Grade level
- Disability
- Previous academic performance
- Socioeconomic status
- Gender
- Race

Before describing our findings, we will return to the limitation stated above. Because this study is not designed for causal inference, we cannot directly attribute these outcomes to students' experiences of student-centered learning. Differences in outcomes across student groups may be due to differential experiences of student-centered learning practices, but may also simply reflect pre-existing gaps between different groups. They also may be the results of factors that are not being controlled for by the analytic approach. They should be regarded as a starting point for further exploration. Without multiple timepoints to compare or the presence of comparison groups, we cannot know if experiencing student-centered learning practices closed previously-existing gaps, exacerbated them, or made no change at all. Future studies should include multiple time points and larger sample sizes, and should revisit these differences with more robust statistical models. In the meantime, caution should be taken when making meaning of these differences.

Differences in Experiences of Student-Centered Learning Practices

We found three areas in which there were statistically significant differences of SCL practices reported among students in different groups: previous academic performance, perceived social and economic status, and grade level. We did not find significant differences in students' experiences of SCL practices based on their disability, gender, or race.

Previous academic performance

A series of Kruskal-Wallis tests and pairwise Dwass-Stell-Critchlow-Fligner pairwise analyses found significant differences ($p<.05$) in their experience of both meaningful assessment and student choice between high-performing students (students who said they previously earned "mostly A's") and low-performing students (students who said they previously earned "mostly D's or F's"). More specifically, high-performing students reported an average score of 3.49 on a five-point scale for experiences of meaningful assessment ($n=348$, $SD=0.90$), while students who earned mostly D's or F's reported an average score of 2.75 on the same scale ($n=20$, $SD=1.07$). Similarly, high-performing students reported significantly higher scores ($p<.05$) on measures of student

choice (mean=3.07, n=347, SD=0.89) than low-performing students (mean=2.49, n=21, SD=0.87). However, no significant differences were found in other aspects of student experience or between other levels of student achievement.

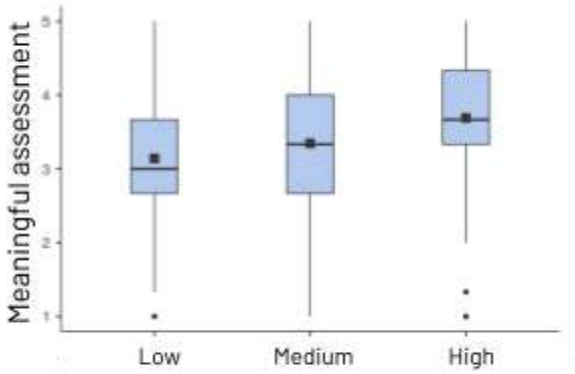
In the qualitative data, some educators expressed concerns that some students may be unable to handle the responsibility of making choices about their own learning, nor able to receive and act on actionable feedback.This may explain why the lowest performing students are given fewer opportunities to exercise agency and choice. However, previous research has shown that classrooms with strong instruction (where students are doing most of the thinking in a lesson) and where teachers have high expectations for students also produce stronger academic outcomes, even for struggling students (TNTP, n.d.)

Perceived social and economic status

A series of Kruskal-Wallis tests also found statistically significant differences in student-centered learning experiences between students who reported being at different levels of perceived social and economic status. Subsequent pairwise DSCF post-hoc analyses found statistically significant differences based on students' perceived social and economic status, with **the most advantaged students reporting more frequent experiences of student-centered learning practices in all four areas than students with less advantages.**

For example, as shown in Figure 16 to the right, students with "high" SES reported a mean score of 3.7 on a 5-point scale related to meaningful assessment practices (n=138), while students with "medium" SES had a mean score of 3.4 (n=459), and students with "low" SES had a mean score of 3.1 (n=119). Additional results are shown in more detail in Table 10 below. This persistent pattern across all measures of SCL experience may indicate an accumulation of opportunities both inside and outside of school among the most privileged students. To help minimize opportunity gaps that further exacerbate societal inequalities, teachers and schools should be attentive to ways in which some students may have access to opportunities that others do not and work to even the playing field.

Figure 17: Meaningful Assessment Experiences, by Perceived Social and Economic Status



Source: RIDE Student Survey, Spring 2025
Note: The line in the middle of each box represents the median, while the small square represents the mean for that group of students.

Table 10: Socioeconomic Variation in SCL Experiences

		High SES (*reference*)		Medium SES			Low SES		
	Scale	n	Mdn (IQR)	n	Mdn (IQR)	W	n	Mdn (IQR)	W
Flexible pathways	1-3	137	2.0 (1.7-2.3)	463	1.8 (1.6-2.0)	5.57***	118	1.8 (1.4-2.0)	4.10**
Student choice	1-5	138	3.2 (2.8-4.0)	461	3.0 (2.4-3.4)	6.79***	119	2.8 (2.2-3.3)	7.25***
Personalized support	1-5	138	2.8 (2.0-3.3)	463	2.3 (1.8-2.8)	6.39***	118	2.0 (1.8-2.5)	7.27***
Meaningful assessment	1-5	138	3.7 (3.3-4.3)	459	3.3 (2.7-4.0)	5.98***	119	3.0 (2.7-3.7)	7.22***

Source: RIDE Student Survey, Spring 2025

*Notes: * indicates a p-value of <.05, ** indicates a p-value of <.01, and *** indicates a p-value of <.001. Mdn refers to median, IQR refers to the Interquartile Range, and W refers to the Dwass-Steel-Critchlow-Flinger (DSCF) test statistic. The test statistic is in reference to the pairwise comparison between the group listed and the "high SES" reference group.*

Grade level

Grade level was the final student characteristic where we found statistically significant differences in student-centered learning experiences. A series of Kruskal-Wallis tests found statistically significant differences between students in different grades in their experiences of anytime/anywhere learning, student choice, and meaningful assessment. Subsequent pairwise Dwass-Steel-Critchlow-Fligner post-hoc analyses found numerous significant differences; in particular, older middle school students (grades 7-8) were slightly less likely than older high school students (grades 10-12) to experience student choice[14] and flexible pathways[15] activities ($p<.05$). Students in Grade 12 scored the highest in all four areas of SCL experiences, perhaps indicating ways in which students nearing graduation were experiencing more flexibility in preparation for their postsecondary pathways.

This difference between middle school and high school experiences may be due simply to differences in school norms at the four schools represented in the survey data, or due to teachers' perceptions of younger students' readiness to make choices about their own learning. For flexible pathways, the difference between middle and high schoolers' experiences is likely due to simple logistical causes: it is much easier for high school students (who likely drive their own car) to travel to off-site internships or work placements, or to participate in dual-enrollment courses at local community colleges.

Differences in Student Outcomes

In addition to differences in students' experiences of student-centered learning based on background characteristics, we also found four areas in which student outcomes varied by group. These areas were previous academic performance, perceived social and economic status, disability, and gender.

Previous academic performance

A series of Kruskal-Wallis tests found statistically significant differences between students with differing levels of previous academic performance across all six outcomes ($p<.001$). In general, **students with higher grades reported significantly higher scores on every outcome than students with lower grades.**

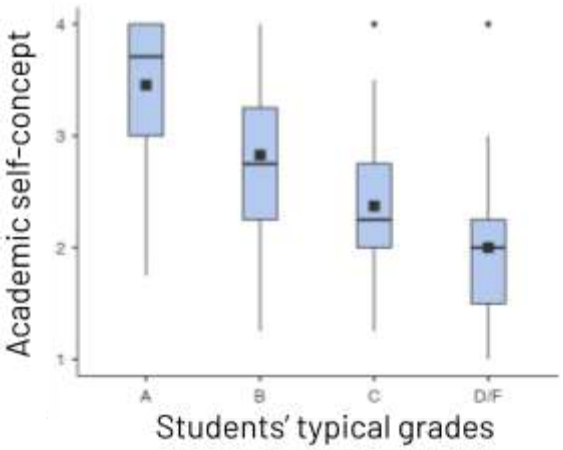
The gap between students with differing levels of previous academic performance was particularly apparent for the three most academically-focused outcomes: behavioral engagement (χ²(4, n=786)

[14] Student choice: Grade 7 students (M=2.7, SD=0.8, n=145) and Grade 8 students (M=2.9, SD=0.8, n=116) scored significantly lower than Grade 10 students (M=3.0, SD=0.9, n=117), Grade 11 students (M=3.0, SD=0.9, n=106), and Grade 12 students (M=3.3, SD=0.9, n=60). The p-values of each pairwise comparison in this group ranged from <.001 to .048, while the test-statistic ranged from 4.19 to 7.03.

[15] Flexible pathways: Grade 7 students (M=1.7, SD=0.4, n=145) and Grade 8 students (M=1.8, SD=0.5, n=115) scored significantly lower than Grade 10 students (M=1.9, SD=0.4, n=118), Grade 11 students (M=1.9, SD=0.5, n=107), and Grade 12 students (M=2.0, SD=0.5, n=60). The p-values of each pairwise comparison in this group ranged from .002 to .042, while the test-statistic ranged from 4.25 to 5.43.

= 85.0, p<.001), perceived relevance of school (χ²(4, n=787) = 43.0, p<.001), and academic self-concept (χ²(4, n=786) = 167.2, p<.001).

Figure 18: Academic Self-Concept, by Student Achievement Level



Source: RIDE Student Survey, Spring 2025 (n=786)
Note: The line in the middle of each box represents the median, while the small square represents the mean for that group of students.

For example, Figure 17 illustrates the different levels of self-reported academic self-concept across student achievement groups. Dwass-Steel-Critchlow-Fligner pairwise analyses indicated that students who reported that they get "mostly A's" scored significantly higher on academic self-concept (M=3.5, SD=0.6, n=348) than students who get "mostly B's" (M=2.8, SD=0.7, n=173, *p*<.001), "mostly C's" (M=2.4, SD=0.6, n=39, *p*<.001), and "mostly "D's or F's" (M=2.0, SD=0.8, n=21, *p*<.001). Likewise, students who said they get "mostly B's" scored significantly higher than students who get "mostly C's" (*p*<.001), and so on. This "stepwise" pattern held true almost universally across the outcomes of academic self-concept, perceived relevance of school, and behavioral engagement.

It is not particularly surprising that we see differences in academically-focused outcomes such as academic self-concept based on students' previous achievement; this pattern was also seen in the meaningful assessment section above. In the qualitative data, many school leaders described ways in which already high-achieving students thrive in a student-centered learning environment where they are given opportunities to explore their interests deeply and move at their own pace. As one elementary school principal described:

> *"I think high-achieving students enjoy [SCL] probably more than anybody. Those types of students, you could throw a book at them and they can learn it themselves, right? But if SCL is done effectively, it can give those students an opportunity to lead, and to take their learning to another level that they can't do on a worksheet or through a lecture. This approach lets them take it to a level that maybe their teacher isn't even seeing. So I think those types of students will benefit that much more."*

What is noteworthy, however, is that **there are also significant differences between high-achieving students ("mostly A's") and low-achieving students ("mostly D's or F's") in two of the other outcome areas as well: emotional engagement and connectedness to school.** Detailed results are shown in Table 11 below. This is a more troubling finding, as it indicates a significant disadvantage between the lowest-achieving students and the highest-achieving students. Previous research associates reduced emotional engagement and disconnection from school with a host of negative outcomes, such as increased delinquency, substance use, and dropping out (Wang & Fredricks, 2013). Student-centered learning and assessment has proven to be an effective

strategy for increasing student achievement for all students, and for struggling learners it is especially effective (Black & William, 1998; REL Northeast & Islands, n.d.). Although in the qualitative data school leaders from multiple districts discussed the ways in which student-centered learning practices were helping to address difficult behaviors and support struggling students, this evidence shows that there is still work to be done. Schools need to ensure that all students–particularly those who are struggling academically the most–can access the student-centered learning practices that are correlated with increased engagement, connection to school, and other positive outcomes.

Table 11: Emotional Engagement and Connectedness to School by Achievement

		High-achieving students		Low-achieving students		
	Scale	n	Mdn (IQR)	n	Mdn (IQR)	W
Emotional engagement	1-4	347	3.0 (2.7-3.3)	21	2.3 (2.3-3.0)	-4.70**
Connectedness to school	1-4	347	2.8 (2.0-3.5)	21	2.0 (1.0-2.5)	-5.69***

Source: RIDE Student Survey, Spring 2025 (n=718)

*Notes: * indicates a p-value of <.05, ** indicates a p-value of <.01, and *** indicates a p-value of <.001. Mdn refers to median, IQR refers to the Interquartile Range, and W refers to the DSCF test statistic. The test statistic is in reference to the pairwise comparison between the two groups. High-achieving students refer to students who earned either "mostly A's" while low-achieving students refer to students who earned "mostly D's or F's".*

Perceived social and economic status

A series of Kruskal-Wallis tests found statistically significant differences between students of different perceived levels of social and economic privilege across all six outcomes of interest (p<.001). **In general, students with higher self-perceived social and economic status reported significantly higher scores across all six outcomes than students with lower self-perceived social and economic status.**

Upon conducting DSCF pairwise analyses, we found that **the most advantaged students ("high" social and economic status) reported higher scores in almost every outcome area[16] than students in the "medium" or "low" groups (p<.001).** This reinforces the pattern seen in the previous section, in that students with the most social and/or economic privilege may experience both SCL activities and the benefits of those activities at a higher level than other students. Similarly, **students with "medium" perceived social and economic status reported higher scores in every outcome area than students in the "low" group** (p-values ranging from .026 to <.001). These findings are further detailed in Table 12 below.

[16] The one exception was in academic self-concept, where there was no statistically significant difference between students with "high" and "medium" SES.

Table 12: Variability in Student Outcomes, by Perceived Social and Economic Status

	High Status (*reference*)		Medium Status			Low Status		
	n	Mdn (IQR)	n	Mdn (IQR)	W	n	Mdn (IQR)	W
Behavioral engagement	138	3.7 (3.3-4.0)	463	3.3 (3.0-3.7)	5.5***	119	3.0 (3.0-3.3)	8.3***
Connectedness to school	139	3.0 (2.5-3.5)	462	2.5 (2.0-3.3)	7.1***	118	2.3 (1.6-3.0)	9.2***
Relevance of school	138	3.0 (2.8-3.8)	462	2.8 (2.3-3.5)	5.5***	119	2.5 (2.0-3.0)	8.4***
Academic self-concept	139	3.3 (2.8-3.9)	461	3.0 (2.5-3.8)	2.4	119	2.8 (2.3-3.5)	5.3***
Cognitive engagement	136	3.0 (2.7-3.3)	460	2.7 (2.3-3.0)	6.1***	118	2.5 (2.0-3.0)	7.3***
Emotional engagement	139	3.0 (2.7-3.7)	461	3.0 (2.7-3.3)	5.4***	118	2.7 (2.0-3.0)	7.3***

Source: RIDE Student Survey, Spring 2025

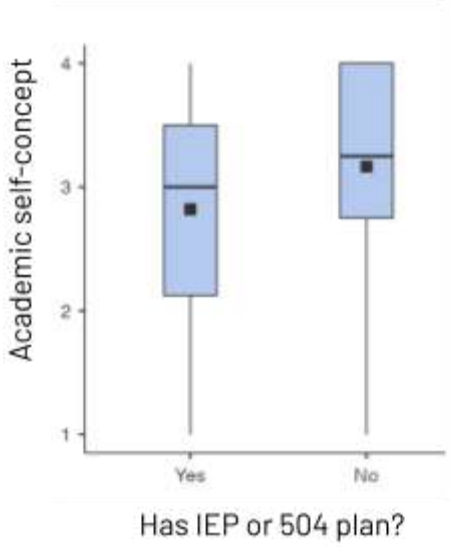
*Notes: * indicates a p-value of <.05, ** indicates a p-value of <.01, and *** indicates a p-value of <.001. Mdn refers to median, IQR refers to the Interquartile Range, and W refers to the Dwass-Steel-Critchlow-Flinger (DSCF) test statistic. The test statistic is in reference to the pairwise comparison between the group listed and the "high SES" reference group.*

We also conducted more granular analyses, including an examination of the scores from the very small group of students (n=9) who self-identified as having "very low" SES. In the student survey, these students put themselves on the very bottom rung of the ladder, which was labeled "people with the least privilege, money, education, or prestige." We wanted to explore their results in more detail because they represent a particularly vulnerable population, but interpretation of these results should be seen as qualitative and exploratory given the small size of this subgroup. This analysis can be found in Appendix 8.

Disability

Differences in outcomes were also observed based on student disability[17]: **students with an IEP or 504 plan had lower levels of academic self-concept than students without one.** DSCF pairwise analyses found significant differences (p<.001) between the two groups, with students who reported having an IEP or 504 plan scoring an average of 2.82 on a 4-point scale (n=115, SD=0.82), while students who did not have an IEP or 504 plan scored an average of 3.17 on the same scale (n=440, SD=0.75). This difference is illustrated in Figure 18 to the right. No other meaningful and statistically significant differences were found between these two groups on the other outcomes of interest.

Figure 19: Academic Self-Concept, by IEP/504 Plan Status



Source: RIDE Student Survey, Spring 2025 (n=768)
Note: The line in the middle of each box represents the median, while the small square represents the mean for that group of students.

This finding is well aligned with literature about students with disabilities, which has well documented the frequent existence of negative attitudes toward and beliefs about students with disabilities, including low academic expectations (Bani Odeh & Lach, 2024; Pak & Parsons, 2020). The literature is also clear that the most robust antecedents of academic self-concept are mastery experiences and credible signals of competence (Bandura, 1997), such as success on meaningful tasks, opportunities to revise and improve, and feedback that identifies progress. In contrast, unclear expectations, norm-heavy comparison climates, and high-stakes grading can depress academic self-concept even at comparable levels of achievement by shifting attention to rank rather than growth (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002).

Academic self-concept varies with developmental level, prior academic performance, and beliefs and biases about self-efficacy and perceived value. It is also influenced by linguistic, cultural, gendered, and other marginalized identities that shape how competence is expressed in classrooms. Students with disabilities may encounter fewer credible, rigorous mastery moments that are appropriately differentiated to their needs. Therefore, the lower levels of academic self-concept reported among students with IEPs and 504 plans is likely the result of preexisting conditions, mindsets, and structures that may have limited these students' opportunities to challenging work and feedback on growth. **Schools should interpret this finding not as a deficit of**

[17] In this study, "disability" was measured with a relatively crude self-report measure: students' responses to the question "Do you receive any extra support to help you in school, like an IEP or 504 plan?" We acknowledge the multiple limitations of this question, including the conflation of the existence of IEP and 504 plans with the general term of "disability," the possible difference between students having an IEP or 504 and feeling supported by that plan, and the possibility that students are unaware of their IEP or 504 plan.

this group of students, but rather as an opportunity to ensure that they have equitable access to opportunities to develop this important belief in their own competence and efficacy.

Gender

Lastly, differential outcomes were also observed between students of different genders. DSCF pairwise analyses found statistically significant differences between male and female students, with **female students scoring higher than male students on academic self-concept** ($p<.001$), **perceived relevance of school** ($p<.001$), **and behavioral engagement** ($p<.001$).

Table 13: Variability in Student Outcomes, by Gender

	Female students		Male students		
	n	Mdn (IQR)	n	Mdn (IQR)	W
Academic self-concept	372	3.3 (2.5-4.0)	363	3.0 (2.5-3.5)	-5.95***
Perceived relevance of school	371	3.0 (2.5-3.5)	362	2.8 (2.3-3.3)	-6.28***
Behavioral engagement	372	3.3 (3.0-3.7)	362	3.3 (3.0-3.7)	-6.48***

Source: RIDE Student Survey, Spring 2025

*Notes: *** indicates a p-value of <.001. Mdn refers to median, IQR refers to the Interquartile Range, and W refers to the DSCF test statistic. The test statistic is in reference to the pairwise comparison between the two groups.*

Previous research has indicated that gender differences impact students' development of academic self-concept, with educational environments that promote stronger gender stereotypes producing more gendered effects on academic self-concept (Postigo et al., 2022). Academic self-concept is an important underlying factor in supporting achievement, motivation, and self-efficacy, and has been shown in previous research to be influenced by social and cultural factors, especially comparison to others (Koivuhovi et al., 2020; Herrera et al., 2020). Given its importance in student outcomes, schools should attend to possible differential influences on students based on gender, and attend to the ways in which implicit and explicit gender biases influence students' views of their ability to learn, the relevance of school to their lives, and the ways in which they participate in school activities.

Findings: Research Question 4

Research Question 4
How do state policies currently support, or have the potential to support, student-centered learning structures and practices?

Enabling State Policies and Practices

Wyoming's state policy environment is quite supportive of student-centered learning, and was even prior to the beginning of the RIDE initiative. However, there was often confusion at the district level about what was permissible under state statute. As one representative from the Future of Learning Partnership explained,

> *"After the first round of pilots, we started to figure out what the barriers were that got in the way. It was interesting. Some of them were real, and some of them were perceived. Some of them were like, 'I know if I do it this way I'll get my funding. If I do it [another] way, I'm not positive."*

To help mitigate this confusion, a subgroup[18] from the Future of Learning Partnership produced a guidance document after the first year of the RIDE pilot. This document took the form of FAQs addressing a few different areas of confusion, including funding, teacher licensure and certification, work-based learning, Hathaway Scholarship eligibility, course credit through competency determination, and course reporting requirements. The guidance was well-received by participating districts, as one superintendent said: *"As the work of the RIDE program went on, the Department of Education did a really nice job of providing greater clarity for us, as far as allowing us to do things."* Particularly in the context of confusion about what the rules were, and fear of the high-stakes ramifications of not properly following the rules, clarity from such a wide set of state-level actors about what was permissible and welcome was empowering for districts.

Below we outline some of the enabling state policies, rules, and regulations that have supported student-centered learning in RIDE, including some things that have been changed as a result of the Future of Learning Partnership's work.

[18] This group was called the Wyoming Future of Learning Partnership Assessment and Accountability Committee (WFLPAC), and was comprised of two representatives from each of the FoL partner organizations. They worked closely with 2Revolutions and another consultant group, the Center for Innovation in Education.

Graduation Requirements

Wyoming's graduation requirements are articulated in Chapter 31 of state law. Section 4a reads,

> *"Graduation requirements for earning a high school diploma from any high school within any school district of this state shall include successful completion of the following components as evidenced by passing grades* ***or by successful performance on competency-based equivalency examinations****" (emphasis added).*

The statute goes on to articulate particular numbers of courses and subjects that must be taken (e.g. "three school years of mathematics") as well as other requirements such as proficiency on district assessments and certain state exams (WDEc, n.d.). However, the WFLPAC guidance made clear that students can replace those required course credits with competency-based equivalency examinations, so long as they address the same standards. This clearly aligns with the RIDE domain of competency-based learning, where progression is based on demonstrated learning and proficiency rather than seat time.

Additionally, even though the language of the statute requires students to take a certain number of "school years" per subject, the WFPLAC guidance states that this refers to the volume of content typically covered in a year, not the pace at which the student completes it: "A district can award credit if the full content of the course is completed within a shorter time frame, whether it is traditional coursework and/or a demonstration of competency. Districts can decide how to offer and deliver courses based on content, not time" (WFLPAC, 2024, p. 4). Once again, this is supportive of the RIDE domain of competency-based learning.

Unlike some states, Wyoming does not specifically have any seat time requirements, though the state does have a requirement for pupil-teacher contact time (W.S. 21-13-307(a)). Pupil-teacher contact time was also clarified in the WFLPAC FAQs as referring to "time reflected in a school schedule for on- or off-site instruction and educational activities that students are required to attend, for which attendance is taken for membership calculation purposes, and that includes instruction available from a certified teacher" (WFLPAC, 2024, p. 1). It does not require the teacher to be physically present with the student at all times. This leaves ample flexibility for students to participate in learning opportunities like internships, community service-learning, or taking college courses. This clarification of existing policy supports the RIDE domains of flexible learning pathways (where proficiency can be gained in and out of the classroom) and personalized learning (where students' interests drive relevant and authentic learning to proficiency).

Inclusion of Profile of a Graduate Competencies in Graduation Requirements

After the Profile of a Graduate was launched, the State Board of Education started to discuss how to support its use statewide. The hope was that the Profile would serve as more than just a statement of vision, although that was certainly important. Instead, they hoped that it could be implemented in authentic, locally-responsive ways. To do this, the State Board of Education began working on including the Profile of a Graduate in state graduation requirements. As one member of the 2Revolutions team explained, "What we measure matters. And if we're saying these are important, but we're not measuring them, then they don't really matter, right?"

> *"I really love the Profile of a Graduate. I'm super excited to continue its implementation at all grade levels, focusing on those skills that we think will make productive citizens when they leave high school. It allows us to have a framework of skills, and for us to present opportunities to our kids in order to meet some of those criteria as they leave high school and move into postsecondary or the workforce or the military. It's good work."*
>
> - Elementary principal

Although these changes have not yet been formalized, the State Board is planning to add a requirement to Chapter 31 that would require districts to show students' proficiency on at least two of the seven key competencies (see Figure 2). Specifically, all districts would need to show that students were proficient in the first competency ("Master, apply, and transfer foundational knowledge and skills"), with the "foundational knowledge and skills" referring to the state standards. In addition, districts would be able to choose at least one of the remaining six competencies in which to demonstrate their students' proficiency. This could be flexible–different buildings could choose different competencies–but districts would need to provide documented opportunities for students to have developed these competencies. "There's a lot of design flexibility in that," explained SBE Coordinator Diana Clapp. "Districts have to identify the types of experiences they're going to allow students to have to demonstrate those competencies. I'm sure that list is going to include your traditional paper-pencil test and generic projects, but hopefully they will also start thinking about capstone pieces, how to build meaningful internships, things like that." In addition to explaining the learning opportunities available, districts will need to provide learning progressions that identify what graduate-level proficiency of their chosen competency area looks like. To aid them in this new work, the state has provided model progressions for each competency that districts can use as they craft their local progressions. The State Board is "trying to balance innovation flexibility with some statewide continuity," explained SBE Coordinator Clapp, "while also making sure it's not just a checklist."

Districts understandably have concerns about adding new graduation requirements, which is why the SBE rollout of this work has included many touchpoints with district leaders and state associations. For example, one RIDE principal who heard about the upcoming changes through his role on the Wyoming Association of Secondary School Principals said, "We've known about it for a

while, so at our district we weren't caught by surprise. We merged our RIDE work with the Profile of a Wyoming Graduate, and that allowed us to bridge the gap so it didn't seem like another thing… so we can seamlessly transition to this initiative the state says we have to do."

To support this transition, 2Revolutions has also been intentionally helping create bridges between districts' RIDE work and the state Profile of a Graduate. As one 2Revolutions team member explained,

> *"We've tied all of the work, all of the entry points, to the Profile of a Graduate. And so in many districts, part of what the conversation is now like, 'Here's some ways you might track and assess this. Here's a tool that you could use to audit this.' So we're helping to gently support that in the background with our RIDE districts."*

Reduction in State Standards

Over the past few years, the State Board of Education and Wyoming Department of Education have been working together to reduce the number of required state standards, which previously exceeded 1,800. As SBE Coordinator Clapp explained,

> *"The Board's purpose [in reducing standards] is to be able to foster innovation and student-centered practices, and reintroduce time as an element. The Board wanted to focus the standards on the key essential learnings, to learn them well, learn them deeply, and assess them well. And they've done that. I mean, we're talking 60 to 75 percent reductions in some areas."*

Despite concerns from some districts that the reduction in standards was not effective because of the state's approach to assessment (which we will explore in more detail in the next section), this intention is aligned with multiple RIDE domains (see Figure 3), especially personalized learning, which requires time and flexibility for students to pursue their interests and passion.

Flexibility in CTE Certification

Until recently, teachers in Wyoming were required to have a work-based learning endorsement to oversee work-based learning, but only CTE certified teachers were eligible for this endorsement. However, as part of the Future of Learning Partnership work, the Professional Teaching Standards Board has changed that requirement, so that any teacher is eligible to earn that endorsement. As one state partner explained,

> *"If I am an English teacher and I have a student who's working in journalism in my community, they're meeting some English standards. I could actually award English credit toward graduation through that learning experience. And the competency from the Profile of a Graduate that says 'apply and transfer knowledge'—I mean, that's it, right? They're taking what they've learned and transferring that learning into that work environment. Now I, as an English teacher, can get that work-based learning endorsement so I can give English credit for that experience. I mean, that's blowing the doors off possibilities for students!"*

As with the other supportive policies and rules, this change is aligned with multiple RIDE domains, particularly flexible pathways and personalized learning. By allowing credentialed teachers in any subject area to award credits for out-of-school learning experiences, the state has made it much easier for schools to explore alternative pathways to proficiency and graduation.

Potential Areas for Growth in State Policies and Practices

While there are strong foundations for student-centered learning already in place in Wyoming state policy, there are also areas where continued refinement would help support the work that is happening in RIDE. In this section we will outline a few areas for potential adjustment to help further remove barriers and spur ongoing innovation.

State Assessments

In Wyoming, the state assessments (WY-TOPP) carry huge weight. The state assesses students at more grade levels than is required federally, and the assessments are quite long. Despite the reduction in standards, many educators remain frustrated because the standards that were dropped were actually foundational to the retained culminating standards, and therefore have to be taught regardless. Preparation for the WY-TOPP still drives instruction and classroom practices at many schools, and thus reduces the space teachers feel they have for innovation, flexibility, and personalization of learning.

Although reducing the assessment burden has been a key priority for the Wyoming Department of Education (WDEa, 2024), many school and district stakeholders remain concerned about it. The state should consider additional reductions, such as reducing the number of high school tests or replacing them with alternative forms of assessment that are more aligned with the principles of meaningful assessment and student-centered learning.

State Accountability Framework

Many of Wyoming's state accountability measures for traditional schools are WY-TOPP scores (WDEb, 2024). However, as the state has developed its Profile of a Graduate, they have realized that Wyomingites have a much more holistic vision for what they want for their students. Adding more components to the accountability model, which better capture community priorities, would help to bring coherence between the RIDE initiative, the state's vision captured in the Profile, and the accountability structures that so often drive behavior at the local level.

The state should consider building out reciprocal accountability structures at the local and state level, which provide a more bidirectional and comprehensive vision for how different levels of the system are held accountable for school success. Reciprocal accountability is an approach to accountability that is "driven by local educators, families, learners, and the broader community.... This means not only that a school is accountable for reaching certain goals and outcomes, but also

that the district, state, and federal government are responsible for providing that school with the resources it needs to reach those goals" (Cohen Kabaker, 2025, p. 30).

To help support this reciprocal approach, the state could consider including accountability measures on climate and engagement, which are already in place for alternative schools, as well as measures of access to supportive programs and staff, in the accountability measures for all schools. This would provide a more comprehensive picture of student experience and learning opportunities. The state could also consider expanding outcomes measures to include items such as participation in work-based learning, dual credit, and other flexible pathways opportunities, thereby providing a more robust and holistic view of school success that better mirrors the breadth envisioned by the Profile of a Wyoming Graduate.

Teacher Retention and Recruitment

Recent conversations in the Wyoming Legislature's Education Committee have been focused on teacher retention, which is a concern in Wyoming. As one member of the WY Future of Learning Partnership pointed out, there are strong connections between the assessment and accountability system in the state and teacher retention:

> *"The teacher's union was testifying, and they were asked, what are the barriers driving teachers out of the field? And some of what we've heard is our assessment and accountability system. They are afraid to innovate because of teaching to the test, because that's what has been held up as valuable."*

Addressing the assessment and accountability concerns outlined above will help mitigate this challenge. In addition, state agencies should continue to provide clear and consistent messaging about the value of innovation in education, including ongoing support for initiatives like RIDE that provide support for that innovation to actually happen.

Relatedly, teacher preparation programs should also ensure that educators see their role as a guide and mentor for learning, not a deliverer of static content knowledge, and should consider placing student teachers in RIDE pilot schools to ensure that new teacher candidates are exposed to student-centered learning practices as part of their training.

Collaboration Beyond RIDE

As stated in earlier sections of this report, the collaboration of the partners in the Wyoming Future of Learning Partnership has been immensely important to the RIDE pilot districts, as it has provided clarity about what sorts of departures from the status quo were both permissible and welcome. This has been very empowering and confidence-inspiring for districts.

However, as also described earlier in this report, collaboration beyond RIDE has remained limited, with most of the state agency partners still operating in silos. Some partners still perceive RIDE as "the Governor's initiative," which reduces their buy-in to the work. In several cases, participation

has relied on a single primary "champion" within an organization; when those individuals leave, institutional buy-in to the collaborative work also often declines.

Therefore, the state should continue to invest in distributed leadership and buy-in within participating WY Future of Learning partner organizations, in order to build sustainability and deepen coherence across all initiatives. The WY Future of Learning Partnership should foster a shared culture of collaboration focused on doing what's good for Wyoming kids together, rather than emphasizing political gains or visible leadership.

Moulton Barn in Grand Teton National Park
Photo credit: Carol Highsmith, The Noun Project

Recommendations and Conclusion

Though nascent, the RIDE initiative shows incredible promise. In its first few years, it has already reached almost half of the districts across the state of Wyoming, and built a powerful state-level collaborative working group that is working to enable on-the-ground implementation while also creating a supportive policy environment. This multi-level, wide-scale effort seems poised to create meaningful changes for Wyoming students, if it is given the time to do so.

In this early implementation study we found promising early evidence of positive impacts on students associated with student-centered learning practice. Although this study is small in scale and not designed for causal inference, these findings support the theory of action undergirding the RIDE initiative, and lend credence to the importance of continuing to pilot and study this important work.

Below are recommendations for various stakeholders in the RIDE work, based on the findings of this report and the literature about student-centered learning more broadly. We hope that these recommendations will be useful in continuing to sustain and strengthen the positive impact of these educational innovations on Wyoming's students.

Recommendations for Participating Teachers and Schools

1. **Invest time in collaborative peer-learning and peer-coaching structures to help scale the work across departments, grades, and schools.** Although data from this study showed that there is likely organic spillover happening between teachers who are intentionally participating in the RIDE work and teachers who are not, the case studies showed that the most sustainable and smooth growth has happened in settings where leaders have intentionally built systems for that growth. Organic spillover is effective at building a foundation of interest and buy-in for the work, but actual scaling of implementation requires structured support.

2. **Focus on providing student-centered learning opportunities to the students who are struggling the most academically.** Data from this study showed that D/F students are significantly less likely to receive the student choice and meaningful assessment opportunities than their peers. It also showed that D/F students are likely to have much lower scores on emotional engagement and connectedness to school than higher-achieving students. While this pattern may be due to concerns about struggling students' ability or readiness to engage in these more agentic forms of learning, the exclusion of the most struggling students from these student-centered learning practices may inadvertently prevent them from accessing practices that would allow them to improve their grades. Although struggling students may require more scaffolding or intentional support from teachers to effectively participate in meaningful assessment or student choice activities, we recommend that teachers intentionally focus on providing these

experiences to those students in particular, to help increase their engagement in school and hopefully begin to close existing achievement gaps.

3. Similarly, **focus on providing student-centered learning opportunities to students with the least resources and lowest perceived social and economic status.** Data from this study showed that the most socially and/or economically advantaged students were significantly more likely than other students to report having had student-centered and agentic learning experiences. Although this result may also be reflective of differential access to opportunities outside of school, it is important for schools to attend to the need to "level the playing field" and intentionally provide these opportunities to students with lower perceived social and economic status.

4. Given its importance in student outcomes, **schools should attend to possible differential influences on students based on gender**, and attend to the ways in which implicit and explicit gender biases influence students' views of their abilities to learn.

5. **Schools should ensure that students with disabilities have equitable access to opportunities to develop belief in their own competence and efficacy.** Data from this study showed that students with IEPs and 504 plans reported lower levels of academic self-concept than students without them. This finding is well aligned with literature about students with disabilities, which has well documented the frequent existence of negative attitudes toward and beliefs about students with disabilities, including low academic expectations (Bani Odeh & Lach, 2024; Pak & Parsons, 2020) and fewer credible, rigorous mastery moments that are appropriately differentiated to their needs–which are the most robust antecedents of academic self-concept (Bandura, 1997). Therefore, the lower levels of academic self-concept reported among students with IEPs and 504 plans are not a deficit in this group of students, but rather likely the result of preexisting conditions, mindsets, and structures that may have limited these students' opportunities to challenging work and feedback on growth.

6. **Schools should continue to share publicly about the successes and changes they are seeing as a result of their work around student-centered learning.** Particularly in a state environment of increased scrutiny around public education, continuing to share stories of how students are positively impacted by this great work will be vital for sustaining public support and commitment.

Recommendations for the Wyoming Future of Learning Partnership

1. **Continue to invest in convening state partners for collaboration to support student-centered learning, both through RIDE and other initiatives.** Collaboration across diverse state stakeholders is one of the RIDE initiative's greatest strengths. To sustain it, a clear convener must be identified—whether 2Revolutions or a state leader. Without that anchor, the momentum the WY Future of Learning Partnership has realized risks waning once the RIDE initiative ends—a risk partners themselves have already flagged. To be

effective, that convening entity will also need to be able to work effectively across different altitudes of the ecosystem, as one member of the 2Revolutions team explained:

> *"2Rev is very much in the role of communicative glue. Yes, we're supporting districts and helping grow practices, but we also understand that what happens at the student level in the classroom is completely influenced by the systems and structures that surround that experience. So if there's a barrier, is that barrier real or perceived? If it's perceived, how do we create clarity? If it's real, how do we get in touch with the people who can remove it? So really talking from both sides, and having the trust of a lot of different people so that they're willing to share, is essential."*

This necessity of working effectively at multiple levels of the ecosystem will require intentional selection of a convener who is trusted and effective at multiple levels, seen as trustworthy and not politically motivated, and able to identify and support the needs of many different stakeholders in the ecosystem.

2. **Develop reciprocal accountability systems, and continue to refine the state assessment system to provide more meaningful, student-centered assessments.** Leverage the WY Future of Learning Partnership's strong collaborative foundation through RIDE to redefine accountability measures that promote shared ownership of student learning and outcomes between local communities, schools, districts, and the state.

   In the meantime, consider providing accountability flexibility for participating RIDE pilot districts. The state should consider reducing the number of high school tests or replacing them with alternative forms of assessment that are more aligned with the principles of meaningful assessment and student-centered learning. One potential path forward could involve identification of alternative local measures of value, and piloting the use of those local measures in addition to or in place of the existing state assessments.

   Lastly, using the Profile of a Wyoming Graduate as a guide, the state should work with districts to assess the local conditions that support or hinder students' mastery of core competencies, and create a roadmap to ensure learners in every district have the opportunities and supports needed for success.

3. **Explore creative professional learning models that support capacity-building and long-term sustainability.** Shifting practices towards student-centered learning, whether through RIDE or other initiatives, requires extensive professional learning and coaching. Data from this study indicated that districts engaged at varying levels of depth with the externally provided professional learning and coaching, and data from the case studies showed the value of having internal staff able to provide coaching to implementing teachers frequently and in-person.

One suggestion to meet this need, therefore, is a "train the trainer" model. This would build local expertise to help support the network and provide participating educators with personalized coaching on a consistent basis. Ideally, this would be paired with a school leaders network that would help address implementation opportunities and challenges. The school leaders in that implementation network should also be part of the trainer cohorts.

An additional suggestion in this area could be to identify a set of student-centered learning competencies for educators. Perhaps building on the Profile of an Educator previously developed by 2Revolutions and University of Wyoming, the state should identify what core competencies are needed for educators to provide transformative student-centered learning experiences for their students. Tailor state professional learning, as well as teacher preparation programs, to strengthen those educator competencies.

4. **Develop shared data collection expectations for RIDE pilot districts, and invest in longitudinal research and evaluation for this and other initiatives.** The RIDE initiative shows early promise, but it is too soon to assess long-term impact. Wyoming should sustain this work over time, as well as other work to support student-centered learning identified by the WY Future of Learning Partnership, and invest in ongoing research to track progress, highlight successes, and identify areas for improvement.

   One practical step in this direction is building shared expectations for all RIDE pilot districts on both implementation and outcome data they must collect to measure the impact of their work. By investing in a collective data collection plan and infrastructure, the state will lay the foundation for longitudinal research about the impact of this investment.

5. **Give it time.** Effective teacher professional development must be rigorous, sustained, and cumulative to transform practice and student learning (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017), and research suggests that full implementation of an initiative usually takes 2-5 years, with full systems change typically taking 5–10 years to reach sustainability (Bryk et al., 2010; Fixsen et al., 2005). The RIDE initiative's provision of two school years of support for piloting districts, while important, is a short timeline on which to expect to see an impact. Similar efforts in other states often provided direct support to implementing schools for much longer–for example, North Dakota's Personalized, Competency-Based Learning Cohort provided five years of support to participating schools (Ahigian & Lacireno-Paquet, 2024), and Washington's Mastery-Based Learning Collaborative provided four years of support to implementing schools (Joe & Organ, 2025). Thus, if funding permits, extending the RIDE work for a longer timeframe would be recommended to realize its full potential.

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Appendix 1: Additional Tables & Figures

Table 14: Survey Response Rates by School

	Educator survey		Student survey	
School	Educator respondents	Response rate	Student respondents	Response rate
1	2	50%	45	87%
2	11	71%	59	76%
3	16	32%	345	89%
4	25	55%	364	73%
5	14	54%	n/a	n/a
6	20	54%	n/a	n/a
7	1	50%	n/a	n/a
8	2	67%	n/a	n/a
9	2	67%	n/a	n/a
10	1	50%	n/a	n/a
11	15	15%	n/a	n/a
12	2	4%	n/a	n/a
13	9	100%	n/a	n/a
14	23	78%	n/a	n/a
Overall	137	51%	813	80%

Source: FullScale Qualtrics survey responses

Notes: Percentages are calculated compared to the staff rosters and student enrollment counts submitted by each participating school. In the "educator respondents" category, the total count sums to more than the 137 unique survey responses because some teachers work at multiple schools. Although they only submitted one survey response, they are reflected in the response rate for each of the schools where they work.

Table 15: Educator Survey Respondent Characteristics

Characteristics	n	%
School level		
Elementary school only (grades K-5)	53	39%
Elementary & middle	8	6%
Middle school only (grades 6-8)	15	11%
Middle & high	21	15%
High school only (grades 9-12)	33	24%
All grades (K-12)	7	5%
Total years of experience		
Less than 1 year	6	4%
1-3 years	20	14%
4-9 years	35	26%
10 or more years	76	56%
Gender		
Female	78	57%
Male	26	19%
Unreported	33	24%
Race		
Hispanic or Latino	3	2%
Multiracial or Biracial	3	2%
White or Caucasian	99	72%
Unreported	32	24%

Source: RIDE Educator Survey, Spring 2025 (n=137)

Table 16: Student Survey Respondent Characteristics

Characteristics	n	%
Has an IEP or 504		
No	440	54%
Yes	115	14%
Unreported	258	32%
Previous achievement		
Mostly A's	349	43%
Mostly B's	173	21%
Mostly C's	39	5%
Mostly D's or F's	21	3%
Unreported	179	28%
Gender		
Female	373	46%
Male	364	45%
Unreported	76	9%
Race*		
American Indian or Native American	106	13%
Asian	24	3%
Black or African American	30	4%
Hispanic or Latino	104	13%
Middle Eastern or North African	11	1%
Multiracial or Biracial	21	3%
White or Caucasian	520	64%
Other Race	47	6%

Characteristics	n	%
Unreported	141	17%
Speaks a language other than English at home		
No	641	79%
Yes	96	12%
Unreported	76	9%

Source: RIDE Student Survey, Spring 2025 (n=813)

*Note: Categories marked with an * were multi-select, and therefore the total exceeds 813. "Unreported" means that students either selected "I don't know," "Prefer not to say," or left the question blank.*

Appendix 2: Student Survey

Pre-survey introduction and student assent

Hi! Thanks for taking this survey!
A little info for you before we begin…

What is this survey about?
We are going to ask you about your experiences as a student in your school. This is not a test, and there are no right or wrong answers, so please tell us what you honestly think!

Why should I take this survey?
Your answers will be used to help make your school, and other schools in Wyoming, better in the future.

Who else is taking this survey?
Everyone in your school is being invited to take it, and so are students from many other schools across Wyoming.

Will anyone from my school see my answers?
No. Your answers are anonymous.

How long will it take?
The survey will take about 20 minutes. If there is a question you feel you cannot or don't want to answer, you can skip it. If you need more time to finish, just tell your teacher!

1. Are you ready to start?
    a. Yes, I'm ready!
    b. No, I don't want to participate

2. *[Display only if Q1=No]* We'd really like your opinion about how you learn at school. Your answers will be used to help make school better for future students. Do you want to participate?
    a. Yes, I want to share my opinion! *[student moves to Q4]*
    b. No, I'm sure I don't want to participate *[student moves to Q3]*

3. *[EOS message; display only if Q2=No]* Thanks for letting us know. Please ask your teacher for a different activity to do instead. *[END]*

4. What school do you attend?
    a. [Dropdown list of schools in their district]

5. What grade are you in?

a. *[Dropdown list of grades at the school they selected in Q4]*

6. Which of these teachers have you taken classes with this year? Select all of your teachers. (Don't worry, your teachers won't see your answers!)
   a. *[Dropdown list of teachers in their grade and school]*

[Next sections are displayed in random order. Demographics block always displayed last.]

Student-centered learning practices: Profile of a Graduate use

In this section, we're going to ask about how your school describes the types of skills you should be developing at school. Try to answer in general, not just for one teacher or class.

1. Wyoming has a Profile of a Graduate that outlines key competencies that all students should develop. How familiar are you with it?
   a. I have never seen this before
   b. I've seen it before, but I don't know much about it
   c. I know a little bit about it
   d. I know a lot about it

2. How often do your teachers talk about the importance of the competencies from the Profile of a Graduate?

Using what you learn in new settings (Master, apply, and transfer foundational knowledge and skills)	a. All the time b. Sometimes c. Rarely d. I don't know what this means
Solving problems (Think critically and creatively to solve complex problems)	
Communicating effectively (Communicate effectively to various purposes, audiences, and mediums)	
Making informed decisions (Identify and use credible sources of information to build knowledge and make decisions)	
Working well with others (Demonstrate strong interpersonal and collaboration skills)	
Building strong mindsets (Cultivate curiosity, self-awareness, resilience, and a growth mindset)	
Showing responsibility (Practice effective work habits, including organization, time management, attention to detail, and follow through)	

Student-centered learning practices: Real-world learning

In this section, we'd like to learn about your experiences learning outside of the classroom and whether that learning is valued by your school. Please try to answer in general, not for just one teacher or class.

1. For the classes below, think about all the classes you're taking right now.

I can complete some or all of my class requirements online.	a. Not true for any of my classes b. True for some of my classes c. True for most or all of my classes
If I complete a project outside of school, like in a club or community activity, and that project is related to a class I am taking, I can earn credit for the project in my class.	
I can earn credit for taking classes at another school.	
[Display to HS students only] I can earn credit for taking classes at a college (for example, dual-credit courses).	
[Display to HS students only] I can earn credit for completing an internship or other work-based learning in the community.	

2. You said that the following opportunities are sometimes or usually available at your school. Which of these opportunities have you personally participated in? Select all that apply. *[Multi-select, display logic based on answers to prior questions if selected either "some classes" or "most or all classes"]*
    a. Online learning
    b. Projects or activities I do outside of school, like in a club or community activity
    c. Courses at another high school
    d. College or dual-credit courses
    e. Internships or work-based learning

Student-centered learning practices: Voice & choice

In this section we're going to ask you about how much choice you have in your experience at school. Try to answer in general, not just for one teacher or class.

1. How often do you get to set your own goals for learning?
    a. Almost never
    b. Rarely
    c. Sometimes
    d. Usually
    e. Almost always

2. How often do you get to choose which classes you take based on your interests and goals?
    a. Almost never

b. Rarely
c. Sometimes
d. Usually
e. Almost always

3. How often do you get to choose what learning activities you do in class? (For example, listening to the teacher's presentation, reading independently from the textbook, watching a video, or working with a classmate.)
    a. Almost never
    b. Rarely
    c. Sometimes
    d. Usually
    e. Almost always

4. How often do you get to choose how deeply you learn about a topic in class? (For example, moving ahead to something else if you've understood a topic, or spending more time on something you find really interesting.)
    a. Almost never
    b. Rarely
    c. Sometimes
    d. Usually
    e. Almost always

5. How often do you get to choose how you will demonstrate your understanding of a topic at the end of a unit? (For example, taking a test, writing a paper, doing an art project, etc.)
    a. Almost never
    b. Rarely
    c. Sometimes
    d. Usually
    e. Almost always

Student-centered learning practices: Personalized pathways

In this section we're going to ask how your school personalizes learning to you and your unique preferences, strengths, and needs.

1. Think about the classes you are taking right now. How true are each of these statements about your current classes?

My teachers consider my interests when deciding what I will work on.	a. Not at all true b. Somewhat true c. Mostly true d. Very true
My teachers and I decide together what I will work on in class.	

If the work is too easy for me, my teachers will find a way to give me a challenge.	
If I am struggling with the work, my teachers will find a way to help me understand.	

2. How often do you talk about the following things with your teachers?

My academic goals (for example, the subjects I'd like to get better at)	a. Never b. Rarely (less than once per month) c. Sometimes (at least once per month) d. Regularly (at least once per week) e. A lot (almost every day)
How I am doing in my classes	
My strengths and interests	
My learning preferences (for example, whether I work better in a quiet room)	

Student-centered learning practices: Meaningful assessment

In this section, we're going to ask how you demonstrate what you've learned and get feedback to keep growing. Try to answer in general, not just for one teacher or class.

First we'd like to ask you about work you do for school to help you learn and practice new things, like class activities, drafts of assignments, and homework. This work may or may not be graded.

1. Does the work you do for school (like classwork and homework) help you identify what you already know and what you still need to learn?
    a. Almost never
    b. Rarely
    c. Sometimes
    d. Usually
    e. Almost always

2. When you submit classwork and homework, do your teachers give you helpful feedback on what you're doing well and what you can still improve?
    a. Almost never
    b. Rarely
    c. Sometimes
    d. Usually
    e. Almost always

3. If you receive a grade on your classwork or homework, does your teacher explain why you got that grade (for example, by sharing their rubric, identifying what specific learning objectives you mastered, or giving you specific feedback)?

a. Almost never
b. Rarely
c. Sometimes
d. Usually
e. Almost always
f. Not applicable: my classwork/homework isn't graded

Now we'd like to ask you about times when you're asked to show what you've learned and receive a grade for it, like with a major assignment or at the end of a unit or class.

4. How often is this true at your school?

To show what I've learned, I can complete a project in the community that solves a real-world problem.	a. Almost never b. Rarely c. Sometimes d. Usually e. Almost always
To show what I've learned, I can bring in something I've created in an internship, apprenticeship, or other out-of-school activity.	
My work is displayed, presented, or shared with an audience outside the school.	
I can take assessments when I am ready to demonstrate my learning, even if other students in the class will not take the assessment at the same time.	

5. In general, what sort of summative assessments do most of your classes use? Move the slider to indicate where on the spectrum best describes your experience.
    a. 0 = Only traditional assessments (like multiple choice tests)
    b. 50 = A mix of assessment types
    c. 100 = Only performance assessments (like projects or portfolios)

Student outcomes: Behavioral engagement

In this section, we're going to ask you about how you typically show up at school. Try to answer in general, not just for one teacher or class.

1. I try hard to do my best in school.
    a. Not true at all
    b. Not very true
    c. Somewhat true
    d. Definitely true

2. I pay attention in my classes.
    a. Not true at all
    b. Not very true
    c. Somewhat true

d. Definitely true

3. In school, I do just enough to get by. *[Reverse logic]*
    a. Not true at all
    b. Not very true
    c. Somewhat true
    d. Definitely true

4. When I'm in class, I participate fully in class activities.
    a. Not true at all
    b. Not very true
    c. Somewhat true
    d. Definitely true

Student outcomes: Emotional engagement

In this section, we're going to ask you about how you typically feel at school. Try to answer in general, not just for one teacher or class.

How true are each of these statements for you?

1. I think what we are learning in school is interesting.
    a. Not true at all
    b. Not very true
    c. Somewhat true
    d. Definitely true

2. I enjoy learning new things in class.
    a. Not true at all
    b. Not very true
    c. Somewhat true
    d. Definitely true

3. I like my school.
    a. Not true at all
    b. Not very true
    c. Somewhat true
    d. Definitely true

Next are some questions about what you think, feel, and do at school. Read each sentence and choose the one best answer for how you felt over the past month.

4. I feel like I belong at my school.

a. Almost never
b. Sometimes
c. Often
d. Almost always

5. I can really be myself at school.
    a. Almost never
    b. Sometimes
    c. Often
    d. Almost always

6. I feel like people at my school care about me.
    a. Almost never
    b. Sometimes
    c. Often
    d. Almost always

7. I am treated with respect at my school.
    a. Almost never
    b. Sometimes
    c. Often
    d. Almost always

Now we're going to ask you a few questions about your teachers. Try to answer in general, not just for one teacher or class. How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

8. Teachers understand my problems.
    a. Strongly agree
    b. Agree
    c. Neither agree nor disagree
    d. Disagree
    e. Strongly disagree

9. It is easy to talk with teachers at this school.
    a. Strongly agree
    b. Agree
    c. Neither agree nor disagree
    d. Disagree
    e. Strongly disagree

10. My teachers care about me.
    a. Strongly agree
    b. Agree

c. Neither agree nor disagree
d. Disagree
e. Strongly disagree

11. My teachers make me feel good about myself.
    a. Strongly agree
    b. Agree
    c. Neither agree nor disagree
    d. Disagree
    e. Strongly disagree

Student outcomes: Cognitive engagement

In this section, we're going to ask you how valuable you think school is. Try to answer in general, not just for one teacher or class.

Here are some questions about what you think, feel, and do at school. Read each sentence and choose the one best answer for how you felt over the past month.

1. I feel like the things I do at school are important.
    a. Almost never
    b. Sometimes
    c. Often
    d. Almost always

2. I think school matters and should be taken seriously.
    a. Almost never
    b. Sometimes
    c. Often
    d. Almost always

3. I feel it is important to do well in my classes.
    a. Almost never
    b. Sometimes
    c. Often
    d. Almost always

4. I believe things I learn at school will help me in my life.
    a. Almost never
    b. Sometimes
    c. Often
    d. Almost always

5. Now we're going to ask a couple of questions about how you learn. How true is this for you?

When I study, I figure out how the information might be useful in the real world.	a. Not true at all b. Not very true c. Somewhat true d. Definitely true
When I study, I try to connect what I am learning with my own experiences.	
If I have trouble understanding something I am learning, I go over it again until I understand it.	

Student outcomes: Self-efficacy

In this section we're going to ask about how you perceive yourself as a learner.

Here are some questions about what you think, feel, and do at school. Read each sentence and choose the one best answer for how you felt over the past month.

1. I am a successful student.
    a. Almost never
    b. Sometimes
    c. Often
    d. Almost always

2. I do good work at school.
    a. Almost never
    b. Sometimes
    c. Often
    d. Almost always

3. I do well on my class assignments.
    a. Almost never
    b. Sometimes
    c. Often
    d. Almost always

4. I get good grades in my classes.
    a. Almost never
    b. Sometimes
    c. Often
    d. Almost always

One last question in this section! How much do you agree or disagree?

5. If I try hard, I can succeed at meeting the goals I have for myself.
    a. Strongly disagree
    b. Disagree
    c. Agree
    d. Strongly agree

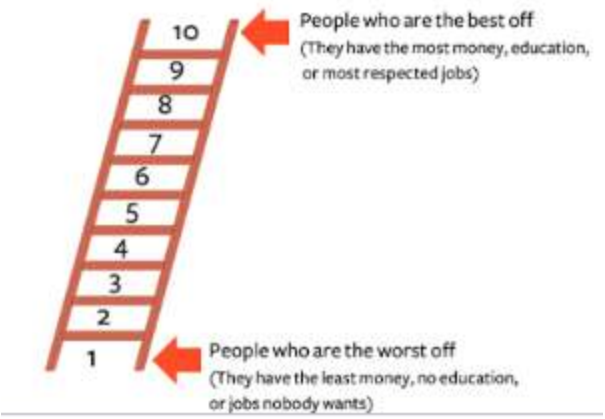
Demographics

You're almost done! We'd like to learn a bit more about you so we can help make sure that all students have a good experience at your school.

1. How old are you?
    a. Younger than 11
    b. 11
    c. 12
    d. 13
    e. 14
    f. 15
    g. 16
    h. 17
    i. 18
    j. 19
    k. Older than 19

2. How long have you been going to this school?
    a. This is my first year at this school
    b. 1-2 years
    c. More than 2 years

3. Imagine that this ladder pictures how our society is set up. Click on the part of the ladder that best represents where your family would be on this ladder.



4. Does your family own a car, van, or truck?
    a. No
    b. Yes, one
    c. Yes, two or more

5. How many times did you and your family travel out of Wyoming for a holiday or vacation last year?
    a. Not at all
    b. Once
    c. Twice
    d. More than twice

6. Do you have your own bedroom for yourself?
    a. No
    b. Yes

7. How many computers do your family own (including laptops and tablets, NOT including game consoles and smartphones)?
    a. None
    b. One
    c. Two
    d. More than two

8. In your home, are there always fresh fruits and/or vegetables for you to eat?
    a. No
    b. Yes

9. What is your gender?
    a. Female
    b. Male
    c. I don't want to share this information

10. What is your race? (Select all that apply.)
    a. American Indian or Alaskan Native
    b. Asian
    c. Black or African American
    d. Hispanic or Latino
    e. Middle Eastern or North African
    f. Native American or Alaskan Native
    g. White or Caucasian
    h. Multiracial or Biracial
    i. A race not listed here

j. I don't want to share this information

11. Do you speak a language other than English at home?
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. I don't want to share this information

12. Do you receive any extra support to help you in school, like an IEP or 504 plan?
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. I'm not sure
    d. I don't want to share this information

13. What grades did you get last year?
    a. Mostly D's or F's
    b. Mostly C's
    c. Mostly B's
    d. Mostly A's
    e. I'm not sure
    f. I don't want to share this information
    g. My school doesn't use grades

End of Survey

That's the end! Thank you so much for taking the time to share your opinions about your school. We saved your response. You're all done!

Appendix 3: Educator Survey

Section 1: Pre-survey introduction and consent

Thanks for taking this survey!
This survey will ask you about your experiences and practices as a teacher. The purpose of this survey is to learn from teachers in districts that are participating in Wyoming's RIDE (Reimagining & Innovating the Delivery of Education) initiative to support student-centered learning.

It's ok if you haven't personally had a lot of involvement in RIDE; we are interested in hearing from all of the teachers at your school and district. We know some teachers in your district have been more involved in this work than others, and that's ok!

We are not evaluating you, your students, or your school. There are no correct or incorrect answers to the survey questions. **We simply want to hear what student-centered learning practices are happening statewide.**

Your participation is voluntary and confidential. We will not share your individual responses with anyone. Your participation serves as your consent for your responses to be used in the study. If you do not want to answer a question, you may skip it, but your perspective is important, so we hope you will answer every question.

Thank you for contributing to our efforts to improve learning for all students!

Section 2: Administrative

1. What school do you work at? *[Dropdown list of schools in their district]*
2. What is your role at *{School}*? *Select all that apply.*
    a. Teacher
    b. Paraprofessional
    c. Counselor
    d. Dean
    e. Instructional coach
    f. Other _____
3. Are you part of the Implementing Teachers (participating in teach-ins) at *{School}*?
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. I don't know
4. What grade(s) / age(s) of students do you work with? *Select all that apply.*

a. Kindergarten
b. 1st grade
c. 2nd grade
d. 3rd grade
e. 4th grade
f. 5th grade
g. 6th grade
h. 7th grade
i. 8th grade
j. 9th grade
k. 10th grade
l. 11th grade
m. 12th grade
n. Other _____

5. *[Display only if Q2=Teacher]* What subject(s) do you teach? *Select all that apply.*
    a. Art (music, visual, theater, etc.)
    b. Career & technical education
    c. English language arts
    d. Foreign language
    e. Math
    f. Science
    g. Social studies
    h. Special education
    i. Physical education
    j. Other _____

6. How long have you worked at *{School}*?
    a. Less than 1 year
    b. 1-3 years
    c. 4-9 years
    d. 10 or more years

7. How long have you been an educator **total**, at this and any previous schools?
    a. Less than 1 year
    b. 1-3 years
    c. 4-9 years
    d. 10 or more years

[Next sections are displayed in random order. Demographics block always displayed last.]

Section 3: Buy-in around student-centered learning

In this section, we're going to ask you a few questions about your opinions on **student-centered learning.**

The Wyoming Future of Learning partnership defines student-centered learning as an umbrella term for four interrelated approaches (see page 5 for more details):

- **Competency-based learning** (transparent, rigorous, and flexible pathways to reach agreed-upon learning outcomes and proficiency)
- **Personalized learning** (relevant and authentic learning connected to the unique interests, passions, and needs of each learner)
- **Anytime/anywhere learning** (learning that's not limited to the classroom, but also credits out-of-school learning opportunities)
- **Student choice in learning** (increased student engagement through authentic voice and choice in decisions about how they learn and show what they know)

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about student-centered learning?

1. My school is prioritizing student-centered learning.
    a. Strongly disagree
    b. Somewhat disagree
    c. Neither agree nor disagree
    d. Somewhat agree
    e. Strongly agree

2. Implementing student-centered learning deeply will improve my school's ability to prepare all students for successful futures.
    a. Strongly disagree
    b. Somewhat disagree
    c. Neither agree nor disagree
    d. Somewhat agree
    e. Strongly agree

3. Implementing student-centered learning deeply will improve my school's culture and climate.
    a. Strongly disagree
    b. Somewhat disagree
    c. Neither agree nor disagree
    d. Somewhat agree
    e. Strongly agree

4. Implementing student-centered learning deeply will improve my school's ability to achieve better outcomes for all students, inclusive of their varying needs and access to opportunities.
    a. Strongly disagree
    b. Somewhat disagree
    c. Neither agree nor disagree
    d. Somewhat agree
    e. Strongly agree

5. I support my school's intention to implement student-centered learning at progressively deeper levels over the next several years.
    a. Strongly disagree
    b. Somewhat disagree
    c. Neither agree nor disagree
    d. Somewhat agree
    e. Strongly agree

6. What aspects of student-centered learning do you find most compelling?
    a. [Open response]

7. *[Display only to teachers]* Please read each statement in the center section below. On the left, mark how you felt last school year. On the right, mark how you feel today.

Last school year			Statement	Today		
Not at all true	Some-what true	Very true		Not at all true	Some-what true	Very true
			8. I see the value of implementing student- centered learning practices			
			9. I am equipped to implement student-centered learning practices in my classes			
			10. I believe the benefits of student-centered learning outweigh the challenges of implementing it well			
			11. I implement student-centered learning practices in my classes			

Section 4: Supports received

In this section, we'd like to ask you about the ways in which you are supported to implement student-centered learning practices.

1. Did you participate in professional learning and coaching provided by 2Revolutions?
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. I don't know

2. *[Display if Q1=Yes]* How valuable did you find the professional learning you received from 2Revolutions on the following topics?

Calibration	a. Not very valuable b. Somewhat valuable c. Incredibly valuable d. Not applicable (I didn't experience this)
Cognitive rigor	
Global competencies for deeper learning	
Grading practices	
Growth & outcomes infrastructure (transcripts & report cards)	
High-quality rubrics	
Instructional strategies & mindsets to support deeper learning	
Learning outcome frameworks	
Learning progressions	
Performance assessment	
Structural conditions to support deeper learning	
Student-driven assessment (portfolio defenses, exhibitions of learning, student-led conferences)	
Universal Design for Learning	
Validation	
WY Profile of a Graduate competencies / essential skills & dispositions	

3. *[Display only to teachers]* In addition to the external coaching and professional learning provided by 2Revolutions, have you received any of the following supports from your school or district? *Select all that apply.*
    a. Release time to observe other teachers working with students

b. A teacher, administrator, mentor, or coach observing my work with students, followed by one-on-one feedback and discussion
c. Other professional learning opportunities focused on student-centered learning
d. Protected time to work with other teachers in common planning groups or professional learning communities
e. Protected time to design lessons, units, or projects across subject areas using student-centered learning practices
f. Protected time to review student data with other teachers and discuss how to support individual students most effectively
g. Protected time to meet directly with students and discuss how to support them most effectively
h. Flexible school schedules and structures that allow us to try new things
i. Technology to support personalized learning
j. Clear direction and support from school and/or district leaders
k. Opportunities to learn from other schools and teachers doing this well

4. *[Display logic: show this question for each item selected in Q3]* How valuable did you find *{pipe text from Q3}*?
    a. Not very valuable
    b. Somewhat valuable
    c. Incredibly valuable

5. *[Display logic: show this question for each item selected in Q3]* How would you describe the amount of time and attention spent on *[pipe text from Q3]*?
    a. Not enough
    b. Just about right
    c. Too much

6. For the following statements, please indicate how true or untrue it is at your school.

Students can earn full course credit for out-of-classroom projects, internships, or apprenticeships.	a. Never true b. Rarely true c. Usually true d. Always true
Students can earn full course credit for classes they take outside of school (e.g., summer courses, online classes, or college classes).	
The school schedule includes intervention/enrichment blocks or flexible time blocks where students can receive personalized and customized supports.	
The school's grading policies are aligned with performance-based assessment practices. (For example, allowing for reassessment or requiring high-quality scoring rubrics.)	

7. What are **barriers** that inhibit implementation of student-centered learning at your school? *Select all that apply.*
    a. Time
    b. Resources
    c. Technology
    d. Funding
    e. Buy-in (students, parents, teachers, and/or community)
    f. Teacher training
    g. School policies and structures
    h. Grading and/or report card concerns
    i. Lack of exemplars or models
    j. Unions or teacher contracts
    k. State regulations
    l. Lack of clear understanding or definition
    m. Other:_____

8. Is there anything else you'd like to add about supports needed to deepen your implementation of student-centered learning practices?
    a. [Open response]

Section 5: Student-centered learning practices

[Display full section to teachers only]
Now we'd like to ask you about what student-centered learning practices are actually happening in your classroom. Again, there are no right or wrong answers here! Student-centered learning looks different in every different context, and there's no "perfect destination." We just want to learn what practices are already in place in your school and what those look like in real life.

Think about the courses you are teaching right now. For about how many of your courses is each of the following options true?

1. Students are able to complete some or all of the course requirements online	a. Not true for any of my classes b. True for some of my classes c. True for most or all of my classes
2. If students complete a project outside of school, like in a club or community activity, and that project is related to my class, they can earn credit for the project in my class.	
3. Students can earn credit for taking courses at another school	
4. Students can earn credit for taking courses at a college (for example, dual-credit courses)	
5. Students can earn credit for completing an internship or work-based learning in the community	

How often is this true in your classes?

6. How often do students get to set their own goals for their learning?	a. Almost never b. Rarely c. Sometimes d. Usually e. Almost always
7. How often do students get to make choices within a set learning activity based on their interests and goals? (For example, writing an argumentative essay about a topic they're passionate about.)	
8. How often do students get to choose what learning activities they do in class? (For example, listening to the teacher's presentation, reading independently from the textbook, watching a video, or working with a classmate.)	
9. How often do students get to choose how deeply they learn about each topic in a class? (For example, moving ahead to something else if they've understood a topic, or spending more time on something they find really interesting.)	

Think about the courses you are teaching right now. How true is this in your courses?

10. I consider my students' interests when deciding what they will work on.	a. Not at all true b. Somewhat true c. Mostly true d. Very true
11. My students and I decide together what they will work on in class.	
12. The school schedule is sufficiently flexible to allow me to respond to my students' needs and interests.	
13. Students can move ahead to the next learning objective in the course if they are ready before other students.	
14. Students can take extra time to finish a topic or unit if they need to, even if other students have already moved ahead.	

How often do you talk about the following things with your students?

15. Their academic goals (for example, the subjects they'd like to get better at)	a. Never b. Less than once per month c. At least once per month d. At least once per week e. Every day
16. How they are doing in **my** class	
17. How they are doing in their classes overall	
18. Their strengths and interests	
19. Their learning preferences (for example, whether they work better in a quiet room)	

How often is this true in your classes?

20. I give students feedback on what they're doing well and what they can still improve.	a. Almost never b. Rarely c. Sometimes d. Usually e. Almost always
21. The work I assign my students is meant to help them identify what they already know and what they still need to learn.	
22. Students can complete a project in the community to show what they have learned in class	
23. Students can show me what they've learned in an internship, apprenticeship, or other out-of-school opportunity, and I will assess and give them credit for that learning.	
24. Students can take assessments when they are ready to demonstrate their learning, even if other students in the class will not take the assessment at the same time.	
25. Students can choose how they want to show what they have learned from several different options (e.g., taking a test, writing a paper, completing a project, oral exam, etc.)	

26. In general, what sort of assessments do your classes use? *[Slider]*
    a. Entirely traditional assessments (e.g. multiple choice tests)
    b. Entirely performance-based assessments (e.g. projects)

Section 6: Changes resulting from RIDE

In this section, we'd like to ask you about any changes you've seen in yourself or your students as a result of your school's emphasis on student-centered teaching, assessment, and learning.

Since your school started focusing on student-centered learning practices, have you seen any changes in the following aspects of students' behavioral engagement?

[Display these 4 questions only to teachers & paras]

1. Completing assignments	a. It has gotten worse b. It has stayed about the same c. It has gotten better d. Unsure
2. Participating in class activities or discussions	
3. Asking questions or seeking feedback about their learning	
4. Quality of the work submitted	

How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

5. In general, students feel comfortable coming to me with their problems.	a. Strongly disagree b. Disagree c. Agree d. Strongly agree
6. I am available to my students if they need to talk.	
7. My students make me feel good about myself.	
8. People at this school care about each other.	

9. How has your own practice as an educator changed as a result of your school's emphasis on student-centered learning? *[Open response]*

10. Anything else you'd like to share about your experience in RIDE? *[Open response]*

Section 7: Demographics

We want to ensure that this project effectively supports all teachers, regardless of their identity. To help us examine whether or not we are succeeding in this regard, in this section we will ask some questions about you.

1. What is your gender? *[open response]*

2. How would you describe your race? *Select all that apply.*
    a. American Indian or Alaskan Native
    b. Asian
    c. Black or African American
    d. Hispanic or Latino
    e. Middle Eastern or North African
    f. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
    g. White or Caucasian
    h. Multiracial or Biracial
    i. A race not listed here _____
    j. Prefer not to disclose

3. How old are you?
    a. 19-29
    b. 30-39
    c. 40-49
    d. 50-59
    e. 60-69
    f. 70 or older

4. Do you speak any languages other than English at home?
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. Prefer not to disclose

End of Survey

We thank you for your time spent taking this survey. Your response has been recorded.

Appendix 4: School Leader Interview Guide

Introduction & Consent

Thank you for taking the time to talk with me today. I need to do a couple minutes of introduction, and after that I'll be talking much less. The purpose of this interview is to understand your experiences related to student-centered learning and your school's involvement with the RIDE initiative. This is part of a bigger project where we are learning from four districts across the state about their experiences with RIDE, with the hopes that other districts can learn from you. There are no right or wrong answers, and I hope you'll be honest about what has been great and what has been challenging. I'm hoping this interview will take about an hour. Does that still work for you today? *[Pause for confirmation.]*

We plan to share your thoughts and experiences anonymously in our final report, but if you prefer for certain comments or stories to remain totally confidential and not be included in the report, please let me know, and we'll omit them. You can also choose to skip any questions you don't want to answer. Do you have any questions about that? *[Pause for questions.]*

I'd like to record the interview to facilitate our work on this later. I will transcribe the interview and keep it for the duration of this project, and then the transcription and recording will both be deleted. Do I have your permission to record the interview? *[Begin recording.]*

This is *[interviewer]*. I'm speaking with *[interviewee]* at *[school]* on *[date]*.

Background

I'd like to start with some background information.

1. How long have you been the *[role]* at *[school]*?
2. What makes this community and school special?

Now on to some bigger questions!

3. How would you say your school has changed as a result of RIDE?

Specific Goals & Development Arcs

Now I'd like to talk about the specific development goals that your school has been working on for the past couple years.

4. It seems like your school has been really focused on *[personalize depending on each school's development arc]*. Is that right?
    a. What was the process of identifying those priorities?
    b. Why is that the priority for your school?
    c. Do you think those have been the "right" priorities for your school? Why or why not?

5. What do you think the next priorities are? That is, as you think about continuing this work into the future (without the same external support from 2Revolutions), what will you be prioritizing?

Changes in Practice

I'd love to learn some more details about some of the changes in practice that your school has adopted through RIDE to better support student-centered learning. Let's start with opportunities for real-world learning (which we'll describe as learning that extends beyond the school building or school day, like through authentic assessments that solve real problems, learning that is applicable to the "real world," engaging with community partners, and so on).

6. What opportunities do students at your school have for real-world learning?
    a. Are those opportunities new, resulting from RIDE?
7. What did it take to make those opportunities a reality?
8. What were barriers you faced in making those opportunities available to students?
9. What benefits have you seen from real-world learning?

Another part of student-centered learning is voice & choice for students.

10. What are ways that your school enables students to have "voice and choice" in their learning?
    a. Are those written into school policy, or do they depend on individual teachers?
    b. Are these practices new, resulting from RIDE?
11. What did it take to make those norms about student voice a reality?
12. What were barriers you faced in trying to normalize and operationalize student voice and choice?
13. What benefits have you seen from increasing student voice and choice?

Changes in Policy and/or Structure

Moving on from changes in practice to changes in policy...

14. Are there any other changes to your school's policies or structures that you've implemented because of RIDE?
15. What changes to your school's policies or structures do you still WANT to make?
16. What are the barriers to making those changes?

Leadership & Buy-In

I'd like to learn a bit about support from leadership in this initiative.

17. Do you know how your district first got involved in RIDE?
    a. And then how was your school introduced to the initiative?
    b. How did it build on work you were already doing?

18. Do you remember how you felt at the beginning of this initiative? Has that changed over time?
    a. How about for your teachers — have you seen their mindset shift on this initiative over time?
    b. What has contributed to that?

19. How has the district shown its support for the work you're doing through RIDE?
    a. How have district leaders been involved as you've worked on implementation at your school?
    b. How has district leadership been helpful as you've worked on implementing student-centered learning?
    c. Is there anything that district leadership could have done differently to better support your school in this process?

20. Would you say your leadership team and staff at the school level are "bought in" to student-centered learning?
    a. (If yes) What has made them believe in it?
    b. (If no) What stands in the way of them being bought in?

21. How has your own leadership changed as a result of the RIDE initiative?

Coaching, Professional Learning, Sustainability

Transitioning to professional learning and coaching in this work!

22. Have you attended many of the coaching and professional learning sessions that your implementing teachers have gone to?
    a. (If yes) How have those been?
    b. (If yes) How would you compare the professional learning and coaching received in this project to other external PD or coaching you've received?

23. What is most helpful about the external coaching and learning support?

24. What could be better?

25. What changes in teacher mindset or practice have you witnessed as a result of the professional learning and coaching?

26. We've talked about a bunch of different supports received to make RIDE happen: external support in setting priorities, coaching and providing PD to staff, collaboration across schools and statewide, support from district leaders and state leaders… are there any other supports that have been important in making these changes?
    a. Of all the supports you've received in this journey, which ones do you think have been the most impactful?

27. As you think about the future, and sustaining and growing this student-centered work at your school and throughout your district, what ongoing supports will your school need?

Collaboration

OK, now I'd like to shift gears and talk about collaboration in this initiative.

28. What has collaboration with other schools looked like throughout this initiative?
    a. Within your own district?
    b. Beyond your own district?

29. When thinking about collaboration with other schools (whether in your district or not)…
    a. What has made that collaboration fruitful?
    b. If you were starting over, what would you change to make that collaboration more fruitful?

30. Have you attended any of the statewide gatherings, such as the statewide celebrations of learning, the spring collaboration series for building leaders, or the monthly statewide learning series?
    a. (If no) Why not?
    b. (If yes) What was it like? What did you find most valuable about it?

Closing

31. Is there anything else you'd like to share about your school's experience in RIDE?

Thank you so much for your time today! *[Stop recording.]*

Appendix 5: District Leader Interview Guide

Introduction & Consent

Thank you for taking the time to talk with me today. I need to do a couple minutes of introduction, and after that I'll be talking much less. The purpose of this interview is to understand your experiences related to student-centered learning and your district's involvement with the RIDE initiative. This is part of a bigger project where we are learning from four districts across the state about their experiences with RIDE, with the hopes that other districts can learn from you. There are no right or wrong answers, and I hope you'll be honest about what has been great and what has been challenging. I'm hoping this interview will take about an hour. Does that still work for you today? *[Pause for confirmation.]*

We plan to share your thoughts and experiences anonymously in our final report, but if you prefer for certain comments or stories to remain totally confidential and not be included in the report, please let me know, and we'll omit them. You can also choose to skip any questions you don't want to answer. Do you have any questions about that? *[Pause for questions.]*

I'd like to record the interview to facilitate our work on this later. I will transcribe the interview and keep it for the duration of this project, and then the transcription and recording will both be deleted. Do I have your permission to record the interview? *[Begin recording.]*

This is *[interviewer]*. I'm speaking with *[interviewee]* at *[district]* on *[date]*.

Background

I'd like to start with some background information.

1. How long have you been the *[role]* at *[district]*?
2. What makes this community and district special?

Leadership & Buy-In

I'd like to start by learning more about support from leadership in this initiative.

3. How and why did your district first get involved in RIDE?
    a. How did it build on work you were already doing?
4. How did you introduce the RIDE initiative to school leaders?
5. Would you say your leadership team at the school level is "bought in" to student-centered learning?
    a. (If yes) What has made them believe in it?
    b. (If no) What stands in the way of them being bought in?

6. How has your own leadership changed as a result of the RIDE initiative?

Specific Goals & Development Arcs

Now I'd like to talk about the specific development goals that your district has been working on for the past couple years.

7. It seems like your district has been really focused on [personalize depending on each district's development arc]. Is that right?
    a. What was the process of identifying those priorities?
    b. Why is that the priority for your district?
    c. Do you think those have been the "right" priorities for your district? Why or why not?

8. What benefits have you seen so far from the work you have been doing through RIDE?

9. What do you think the next priorities are? That is, as you think about the future (without the same external support from 2Revolutions), what will you be prioritizing to keep this student-centered learning work moving forward?

Coaching, Professional Learning, & Sustainability

Speaking of professional learning support, I'd love to hear more about what that has been like.

10. As part of this work, I believe you received some funding. What has that been used for?
    a. Could you have done/continue to do this work without that funding?

11. As part of this initiative, I know you've received some coaching and professional learning. What has that been like?
    a. How would you compare the professional learning and coaching received in this project to other external PD or coaching you've received?

12. What is most helpful about the external coaching and learning support?

13. What could be better?

14. We've talked about a bunch of different supports received to make RIDE happen: external support in setting priorities, coaching and providing PD to staff, collaboration across schools and statewide, support from state leaders... are there any other supports that have been important in making these changes?
    a. Of all the supports you've received in this journey, which ones do you think have been the most impactful?

15. As you think about the future, and sustaining and growing this student-centered work throughout your district, what ongoing supports will you need?

Changes in Policy and/or Structure

Now I'd like to learn about concrete changes in policy, structure, or practice that have been implemented as a result of RIDE. I'll be talking to school leaders about the changes in practice implemented at the school level, but I'd love to learn from you about anything at the district level.

16. Are there any changes to your district's policies or structures that you've implemented because of RIDE to better support student-centered learning?
    a. (If yes) What was that process of change like? How did it happen?
17. What changes to your district's policies or structures do you still WANT to make?
18. What are the barriers to making those changes?
19. Now I'd like to zoom out a layer to talk about state-level policies and structures. Are there any changes that have been made to state policies because of RIDE that you know of?
    a. Or alternatively, any changes to how you've understood what state policies allow?
    b. (If yes) What was that process of change like? How did it happen?
20. Have any state policies gotten in your way as you've worked to implement student-centered learning?

Collaboration

(If time) Now I'd like to shift gears and talk about collaboration in this initiative.

21. What has collaboration with schools in your district looked like throughout this initiative?
22. Have you collaborated with other districts?
    a. (If yes) What has that been like?
23. When thinking about collaboration (whether in your district or not), what has made that collaboration fruitful?
    a. If you were starting over, what would you change to make that collaboration more fruitful?
24. Have you attended any of the statewide gatherings, such as the statewide celebrations of learning or the monthly statewide learning series?
    a. (If no) Why not?
    b. (If yes) What was it like? What did you find most valuable about it?

Closing

25. Is there anything else you'd like to share about your school's experience in RIDE?

Thank you so much for your time today! *[Stop recording.]*

Appendix 6: State Leader Interview Guide

Introduction & Consent

Thank you for taking the time to talk with me today. I need to do a couple minutes of introduction, and after that I'll be talking much less. The purpose of this interview is to understand your experiences related to the Wyoming Future of Learning partnership and specifically the RIDE initiative. This is part of a bigger project where we are learning from leaders across the state about their experiences with RIDE, with the hopes that their experiences can provide valuable insights to other states and districts that are newer on their student-centered learning journey. There are no right or wrong answers, and I hope you'll be honest about what has been great and what has been challenging. I'm hoping this interview will take about 45 minutes to an hour. Does that still work for you today? *[Pause for confirmation.]*

We plan to share your thoughts and experiences anonymously in our final report, but if you prefer for certain comments or stories to remain totally confidential and not be included in the report, please let me know, and we'll omit them. You can also choose to skip any questions you don't want to answer. Do you have any questions about that? *[Pause for questions.]*

I'd like to record the interview to facilitate our work on this later. I will transcribe the interview and keep it for the duration of this project, and then the transcription and recording will both be deleted. Do I have your permission to record the interview? *[Begin recording.]*

This is *[interviewer]*. I'm speaking with *[interviewee]* at *[department/agency/org]* on *[date]*.

Background

I'd like to start with some background information.

1. How long have you been serving in your role as *[role]*?
2. What made you want to do this work?
3. What is your *[department/agency/org]*'s role in the Wyoming Future of Learning Partnership?

Leadership, Buy-In, and Collaboration

I'd like to start by learning more about support from leadership in this initiative.

4. How and why did your *[department/agency/org]* first get involved in the Wyoming Future of Learning Partnership?
    a. How did it build on work you were already doing?

5. Would you say others in your *[department/agency/org]* are "bought in" to student-centered learning?

a. (If yes) What has made them believe in it?
b. (If no) What stands in the way of them being bought in?

6. In addition to the RIDE pilots, I know the Wyoming Future of Learning Partnership has also supported project-based learning PD. What other initiatives is the partnership working on to support student-centered learning?

Now I'd like to shift gears and talk about collaboration in this initiative. It's pretty amazing to see so many partners across the state working together on something like this!

7. What has collaboration looked like throughout this initiative...
    a. With others in the WY Future of Learning partnership?
    b. With implementing districts and schools?
    c. With 2Revolutions?
    d. Others?

8. When thinking about those collaborations...
    a. What has made that collaboration fruitful?
    b. If you were starting over, what would you change to make that collaboration more fruitful?

Changes in Policy and/or Structure

Now I'd like to learn about concrete changes in policy, structure, or practice that have been implemented as a result of lessons learned from RIDE and the Wyoming Future of Learning Partnership's work so far.

9. Are there any changes to state policies or structures that have been made to better support student-centered learning?
    a. Or alternatively, any changes to how you've communicated what state policies actually allow?
    a. (If yes) What was that process of change like? How did it happen?

10. What changes to your state's policies or structures do you still WANT to make to support student-centered learning?
    a. What are the barriers to making those changes?

11. What do you think are the most important changes in practice that this work has unlocked for students and schools?

RIDE Pilots: Enabling & Inhibiting Factors

12. I know that there have been a lot of supports received by school districts to help RIDE happen: external support in setting priorities, coaching and providing PD to staff, collaboration across schools and statewide, support from state leaders... are there any **other** supports that have been important in making these changes?

a. Of all the supports you've seen provided in this journey, which ones do you think have been the most impactful? Why?

13. Have there been any obstacles you've faced as you've worked to expand student-centered learning across the state?
    a. What have you and the other members of the WY Future of Learning partnership done to address/overcome those obstacles?

14. When you think about what's made this project successful, are there any other factors that have enabled it to succeed that we haven't touched on yet?

Sustainability

15. As you think about the future, and sustaining and growing this student-centered work throughout the state, what do you think will need to be true?

Those are all the questions we have for you today. Thank you so much for your time!

[Stop recording.]

Appendix 7: 2Revolutions Interview Guide

[Same consent process as other interviews]

Introduction

1. How and why did 2Rev first get involved in the RIDE work in Wyoming?
    a. What was the state looking for that you were well-equipped to provide?
2. How would you describe 2Revolutions' role in the RIDE work?
    a. What has your personal role been in this project?
3. What has surprised you in this project?

Project level

4. Of all the different supports 2Rev has provided in Wyoming, which pieces do you think have been most impactful? Why?
    a. Which pieces of the puzzle would you do differently in the future? Why?
5. What did you change from cohort 1 to cohort 2?
    a. How have those changes been received? Have they had the impact you hoped?

State level

6. What has collaboration at the state level looked like?
    a. What has gone well?
    b. What have been challenges or things you would do differently in the future?
7. Is the state preparing to sustain and grow this work in the long run? If so, how?
8. What state policies or statutes are currently supportive of this work?
9. What state policies or statutes currently stand in the way of this work?
    a. How are you addressing those? How is that process going?
10. What state structures, practices, or norms are currently supportive of this work?
11. What state structures, practices, or norms currently stand in the way of this work?
    a. How are you addressing those? How is that process going?
12. Have you seen any changes in state leaders as a result of this work (e.g. mindset, buy-in, support, etc.)?
    a. If so, what do you think triggered that change?

Local level

13. What has collaboration at the local level between 2Revs and each district looked like?
    a. What has gone well?
    b. What have been challenges or things you would do differently in the future?
14. For the cohort 1 districts who are wrapping up year 2, what has their sustainability planning looked like?
    a. Are you confident this work will continue / grow after the RIDE pilot support ends? Why or why not?
    b. What will be lost when the RIDE project and funding conclude?
15. What changes have you seen in local (district and school) leaders as a result of this work?
16. Do you know how the local community has perceived changes?

Conclusion

17. Overall, what has 2Rev as an org learned from this project?
18. Is there anything else that has impacted the success of this project that you'd like to mention?
19. Anything else you'd like to share about this work?

Appendix 8: Additional SES Analysis

As discussed in the main report, after analyzing the differences in SCL experiences and outcomes across students with "high", "medium", and "low" perceived social and economic status, we then conducted more granular analyses focused on the very small group of students (n=9) who put themselves on the very bottom rung of the ladder, which was labeled "people with the least privilege, money, education, or prestige." We wanted to explore their results in more detail because they represent a particularly vulnerable population. However, interpretation of these results should be seen as qualitative, given the small size of this subgroup. Therefore, although the experience of these nine students is certainly important, and we will discuss it in detail below, a word of caution: ***this should be interpreted only as applying to these particular nine students, not as generalizing to "very low SES students" more broadly.***

This small group of **students with "very low" perceived social and economic status (1 on the 1-10 scale) reported lower outcomes in behavioral engagement, sense of connectedness to school, and sense of relevance of school than students with higher SES–even those with just marginally higher SES**. Although the estimates may be unstable given the small size of the subgroup and thus should be interpreted with caution, the differences in means were both statistically significant and sizable, ranging from 0.5-1.1 on a 5-point scale. For example, the mean value for sense of relevance of school among the 9 students who placed themselves on rung 1 of the SES ladder was 1.8 (SD=0.7), while the mean value for the 110 students who placed themselves on rungs 2-5 of the SES ladder was 2.6 (SD=0.6).

Interestingly, these three particular outcomes all measure students' sense of "fit" at school–their participation in school activities, sense of acceptance and belonging, and belief in the value and usefulness of what they are learning. Thus, **this finding may indicate a need for schools to attend to the culture and climate of the school, ensuring that it feels welcoming, approachable, and valuable for students experiencing the most poverty and marginalization.** Importantly, students with "very low" SES do *not* show as statistically significant gaps from students with higher levels SES on the other outcomes of interest (academic self-concept, cognitive engagement, and emotional engagement), which are all more learning-focused.

There was some promising qualitative evidence indicating that SCL practices may help to close some of these gaps in students' sense of "fit" and connection at school. In the more active and collaborative classroom environments often created by SCL practices, students who may have fewer connections, such as newcomers, transient students, and multilingual learners, have more opportunities to build relationships. As one instructional facilitator explained,

> *"Any time you can get kids to talk about their learning with each other, you're going to help them build relationships. And with those transient kids, those ELL kids, I feel like that helps them–just that sense of belonging, that we're in this together, and we're going to work towards this goal together."*

Appendix 9: Design Principles

2Revolutions designed the overall RIDE experience around the following key design principles, which are central to its learner-centered methodology:

Principle	Description
Empathy	Intentional listening at the district level to ensure alignment with local efforts and to customize plans for each district's unique goals.
Vertical alignment	Capacity building with educators, cross-functional design teams to address emerging barriers, and direct collaboration with superintendents to maintain alignment with district priorities.
Public celebrations of learning	District and statewide showcases as strategies for change management and storytelling.
Statewide coalition	A guiding body to coordinate the work and address system-level barriers hindering district pilots.
Focus on scale	One of the guiding principles of the work within districts was to spread it to impact more learners and deepen the potential learning.