

State gives school district top ranking

Superintendent: 'I'm proud of these kids'

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Telluride has a lot to brag about: Skiing, mountain scenery, festivals galore. Add one more to the list: highly accredited schools.

The Telluride School District recently announced it is "Accredited with Distinction" by the state of Colorado. This represents the highest level the state ranks schools.

This accreditation is based on Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP) testing, ACT scores, preparation of students for post-secondary success, school safety measures, attendance and drop-out rates, and is determined by the Colorado Department of Education.

Superintendent Mary Rubadeau called the ranking validating and credited the district's success to a program called Individual Mission and Assessment Plan (IMAP).

In its 11th year, IMAP teams teachers up by grade level to focus the core areas of reading, writing and math with the children of that grade. Kindergarten through sixth grade teams are divided by grade, and seventh through 12th grade have grade level and subject IMAP teams.

Kristin Hoins, the technology and enrichment teacher for the Telluride Intermediate School, said IMAP is a way for teachers to collaborate and customize lesson plans for students' needs.

Before school starts each year, teams will get together and look at student data and test scores, and then get to know their students to assess strengths and challenges.

They will break kids into small groups for advanced learning plans or place children in academic remediation plans to address specific needs identified by the IMAP teams.

"We customize the instruction in the classroom and we're working on more targeted goals over the course of the year," Hoins said. They use examples of the students' work to track progress, and Hoins says it's a success for both the students and the teachers.

"IMAP has proven to be successful over the years," Rubadeau said.

The program is also helping Telluride schools close the achievement gap for students living at poverty level or English as a Second Language students.

"They're growing more than our regular population," she said. "Something we're proud of."

CSAP scores also played a role in the accreditation process, with students excelling in all grade levels. All grades and all subjects averaged 59 percentile growth, compared to the

state's average of 50 percent. The district saw exceptional growth in fifth, sixth and eighth grade.

"I'm proud of these kids," Rubadeau said. "They take these state tests seriously ... and they work hard."

Parents or interested community members can access Telluride's data on student achievement and other accreditation information on the state's website: www.schoolview.org <<http://www.schoolview.org>> .