

The value of public schools and education for Wyoming's economy and communities

1. **Public schools are a critical driver of economic prosperity.** By educating the workforce, enhancing productivity, reducing social costs, and fostering innovation, they contribute to both short-term and long-term economic stability and growth.
2. **Community Building: Strong public schools foster strong communities.** Schools are more than places of learning; they are hubs for community engagement, supporting local economies through jobs, partnerships, and services. When schools thrive, so do the surrounding neighborhoods and businesses.
3. **Cost Savings.** Investing in education reduces future costs in other areas, such as healthcare and criminal justice. Studies consistently show that individuals with higher levels of education are healthier, live longer, and are less likely to engage in criminal activity.
4. **Workforce Development.** Public schools equip students with essential skills—literacy, numeracy, critical thinking, and problem-solving—that are needed in today's workforce. A well-educated workforce attracts businesses, fosters innovation, and drives productivity, which in turn boosts economic growth.
5. **Boost to Local Economies.** Schools create jobs for teachers, administrators, staff, and more. They also generate business for local suppliers and service providers (e.g. textbooks, technology, food services, transportation). The presence of strong public schools attracts families and businesses, driving demand for housing and services. This ultimately leads to increased job creation and local spending.
6. **Attraction of Investment.** Communities with strong public schools attract businesses and investors, as companies look for skilled labor and a high quality of life for their employees. Companies are more likely to establish themselves in areas with access to high-quality public education, knowing they can hire a local workforce trained to meet their needs.
7. **Community Engagement and Social Cohesion.** Public schools serve as community hubs, bringing together families, teachers, and local organizations. They provide space for people of all backgrounds to come together, build relationships, and engage in collaborative activities and volunteerism. Schools host events that strengthen community ties and promote social cohesion.
8. **Improving Property Values.** A strong public school system is often a determining factor for local property values. Homebuyers tend to prioritize good schools when choosing where to live, and neighborhoods with high-performing public schools tend to see increased property values and stability. This benefits homeowners and also contributes to local government revenue through property taxes.
9. **Supporting Local Health and Wellness.** Public schools play a role in promoting the health and wellness of the community by offering nutrition programs, physical education, and health education. Schools often provide students with healthy meals and snacks, and many partner with local organizations to promote physical activity and mental well-being.

