



Data reveals 65 percent of area high school graduates attend college

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New data released from the California Department of Education shows more than 65 percent of high school graduates from Barstow and Silver Valley school districts attended a college or university shortly after graduation.

That's lagging behind the state-wide figure, which showed that about 74 percent of graduates enrolled in a postsecondary institution.

"In a knowledge-based economy, college and career training are becoming the price of admission to the job market, so it's good to see so many California graduates taking the next step on the path to success," state Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson said.

The data represents the high school graduates from August of 2008 to August of 2009 and includes those who attended within 16 months of their graduation.

Of the 337 graduates from the Barstow Unified School District, 221 went on to college or university, about 65 percent. Silver Valley Unified School District showed nearly 67 percent of its graduates attended college.

Doug Kruse, head counselor of Barstow High School, said school officials work hard to encourage students to attend college or at least vocational training. Each year the students discuss with their counselor both their interests and the lifestyle they want to live. Kruse said he asks students what kind of car they want to drive or what kind of house they want to live in. Then he asks them if they know anyone who works two jobs to make ends meet.

"You can see the recognition on their face," Kruse said. "It's very difficult to support a family with a minimum wage job. Money isn't everything, but it certainly helps."

The data was compiled from the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System matched with postsecondary enrollment data from the National Student Clearinghouse and the California Postsecondary Education Commission.

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