



2018-2027



UTAH EDUCATION ROADMAP

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*A special thank you to former Commission Chair, Mark Bouchard, Allison Nicholson from Utah Education Policy Center and all previous members of the Commission.

A MESSAGE FROM GOVERNOR HERBERT



For years, Utah has been heralded as the best state for business in the nation. This recognition is the result of tireless work by business leaders, policymakers, and Utah's industrious, hardworking residents. Now more than ever before, it is critical that we invest this same "can-do spirit" and collaboration into our education system. I am confident that as we unite and focus, Utah can become a leader in student achievement.

Working together, our system of education has consistently improved. Implementing this Roadmap's strategies will require maximizing existing resources while also making new investments into the education system. These investments, along with the continued dedication and hard work of Utah's parents, educators, and students and new unprecedented levels of collaboration, will put Utah's education system on the road to even greater success.

I express my deepest appreciation to the State Board of Education, the Board of Regents, and the Technical Colleges Board of Trustees, whose members work tirelessly on behalf of Utah students. Likewise, I commend the two years of outstanding work by my Education Excellence Commission, which has resulted in this Education Roadmap.

Through data-driven decision-making and evidence-based best practices, all Utah students can have increased opportunities for educational success. I look forward to continued conversations, innovations, and collaborations as we elevate Utah's education system for every Utah student.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gary R. Herbert". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Gary R. Herbert
Governor

UTAH EDUCATION ROADMAP: 2018–2027

INTRODUCTION

Utah enjoys a robust economy and often ranks in the top 10 places to conduct business in the United States (1). Utah also consistently ranks as a “Top 10” state for quality of life (2). The state’s fiscal responsibility and hard-working residents contribute to the state’s reputation and rankings, as well as to the state’s ability to attract residents and new business. To continue the state’s strong economy, however, it is essential that Utah residents are equipped with the appropriate education, skills, and abilities to compete in a dynamic and knowledge-based economy.

Education is key to Utah’s continued success. Regardless of political party affiliation, Utah residents consistently identify education as a top priority. In Envision Utah’s 2015 survey, *Your Utah, Your Future*, nearly 53,000 Utahns were presented with multiple scenarios describing potential educational outcomes for the state. More than three quarters of those respondents chose an option for Utah that included increases in state investment, a long-range plan to improve education, rigorous standards, ongoing assessments with targeted interventions to help students, affordable tuition, and increased capacity to help students access and complete higher education (3).

Utahns want our state to be among the top ten states for academic achievement by providing access for all to a high-quality education, creating opportunity for them and their children, and allowing everyone to contribute to a safe, prosperous, and neighborly society.

— Envision Utah

STRATEGIC PLANNING/WHY NOW?

While Utah, along with the rest of the nation, is in the midst of an extraordinary and irreversible demographic transformation, it does maintain a distinctive demographic character (4). Utah has become increasingly interconnected with the outside world through markets and technology. As economic growth has again accelerated, new migrants from all over the world continue to relocate to Utah for economic and educational opportunity. The cumulative impact of these trends is that Utah will continue to become much more diverse in many ways, including age, culture, language, nativity, race, ethnicity, religion, and socioeconomics (5). As a result, Utah’s P-20 education system (preschool through post-graduate) must be adaptable in its approaches to serve the needs of its changing population.

Education in Utah works as an interconnected, albeit not always cohesive, system. Early learning begins in the home with parents and families as a child’s first teacher. The public K-12 education system is governed in part by an elected State Board of Education, with much of the funding and regulation coming from the state legislature (6). Most of the day-to-day oversight of public

schools, however, happens under the watch of locally elected school boards or appointed charter boards. Post-secondary, degree-based education is available, both through the degree-granting institutions of the Utah System of Higher Education, with oversight by a governor-appointed Board of Regents (7), and the Utah System of Technical Colleges, which provides certificate-based technical training under the direction of a governor-appointed Board of Trustees (8). Private not-for-profit and for-profit post-secondary providers are also found in Utah.

In recent years there have been multiple stakeholder and education advocacy groups that have developed and championed education plans. These efforts reflect a common interest and concern about the value and importance of education in our state, and they demonstrate the rising political will to establish education as a fiscal priority. In April 2015, in an effort to unite the work of state entities and community stakeholders, Governor Herbert tasked his Education Excellence Commission to assist with the development of a strategic statewide education plan: the *Utah Education Roadmap*. The *Roadmap* does not replace each state education

INNOVATION & COLLABORATION



1 ENSURE EARLY LEARNING



STRENGTHEN & SUPPORT EDUCATORS **2**



3 ENSURE ACCESS & EQUITY



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FAMILY & COMMUNITY SUPPORT

entity's detailed strategic plan. Rather, it is designed to be a planning guide that brings together the common elements of stakeholder plans, providing greater alignment of the P-20 system, as well as momentum in the work to improve educational opportunities and outcomes for Utah students.

Building on existing planning efforts, the Commission facilitated presentations on national research and best practices from Utah higher education and public education experts, including additional research from the Utah Education Policy Center, Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute, and the Utah Foundation. Through this work, four policy priority areas emerged: Ensure Early Learning, Strengthen and Support Educators, Ensure Access and Equity, and Complete Certificates and Degrees. Work within these policy areas is built on the foundation of Strengthening Family and Community Support, and the overarching need for Innovation and Collaboration throughout the system.

Unite and Focus for a Strategic Direction

The Governor recognizes the importance of identifying broad, yet critical, areas of focus. The four policy areas,

Ensure Early Learning, Strengthen and Support Educators, Ensure Access and Equity, and Complete Certificates and Degrees, are strategic choices in that targeted investments in these key focus areas could produce significant returns for the state. Education stakeholders can work toward common goals and operate under a shared vision to create more consistent success and transform Utah's education system to the top in the nation. *It is time to unite and focus our efforts.*

Utah leaders can begin improving the state's P-20 education system by uniting and focusing on the vision, mission, and strategies outlined in this *Roadmap* to ensure greater success for all Utah students, educators, and families. While Utah's current outcomes as measured by nationwide testing, completion rates, etc., are remarkable, especially in the context of our current status of low per-pupil funding, there is still room for improvement (9). Additionally, not all Utah students are experiencing the same opportunities for success. Persistent achievement gaps continue in many student groups, as demonstrated through the reporting of disaggregated data (10).

VISION:

Increase educational achievement and attainment for every learner at each level of the education system.

MISSION:

Utah invests in long-term prosperity for our residents by enriching the life experiences, civic engagement, and career opportunities for all by providing a robust and innovative quality education, from early childhood through adulthood.

Policymakers and educators can choose to embrace transformation throughout the P-20 system to make Utah's education system the best in the nation. This Roadmap provides direction for optimizing efforts, rather than prescribing a plan that does not permit flexibility and accountability, while honoring the constitutional and appropriate roles of the State Board of Education, systems of post-secondary education, local education agencies (LEAs), and the legislature. In subsequent years, it is anticipated that the Governor, policymakers, and others will collaboratively identify additional strategies within each of the four policy areas as needed.

Innovation and Collaboration

The overall framework which should guide the implementation of the Education Roadmap is one of innovation and collaboration. This means increasing innovative approaches in public and higher education delivery, as well as enhancing collaborative partnerships between family, community, business, and industry partners. Special focus should be placed on workforce alignment, better coordination and collaboration between education and industry, as well as creating a highly educated and adaptable workforce to meet emerging needs. We must encourage innovation that is driven by data and evidence-based practices, including, but not limited to high quality, aligned curriculum and resources; instructional methods or course delivery models; use of digital learning tools, etc. These innovative approaches must engage those at the grassroots level — individuals and groups who understand not only the needs and potential of Utah's schools, colleges, and communities, but also the power of evidence-based policy. Public-private partnerships can provide a continuum of supports that create opportunity and promote success for students by

establishing shared goals, outcomes, and measurements based on unique community needs (11). Strategic, data-driven action must be the basis for successful innovation and collaboration.

Strengthening Family and Community Support

Family and community support are foundational to the Education Roadmap. Utah's economic future depends on the quality of education its children receive and their readiness to participate as productive citizens, in work, civic, and home life (12). Parents are a child's first and most influential teachers. They play a key role in their child's education, especially in a child's early years, but also within the public education system and as students transition into the post-secondary education setting (13). Systems must empower parents to assist and lead their children. Strategies employed will vary and must be built upon the challenges and barriers faced by families with different circumstances, including families that are low income, immigrant, refugee, and English language learners (14).

Business, industry, and community partnerships play an increasingly important role in supporting families within our state education system. Successful collaborative partnerships will leverage and align initiatives around set goals determined by data-driven decision making, which will produce sustainable change to benefit students, schools, and communities. Through formal programs such as 2016's SB67, Partnership for Student Success (15), the state can provide school-community partnerships with resources to coordinate volunteers, support community schools and family centers, and establish other public-private partnership models focused on aligning community supports to positive student outcomes.

Implementing the Plan

The four key action areas of the Education Roadmap are organized in the following way:

First, the case for each area of focus is briefly described, based on national research and other Utah evidence and best practices. Next, sample strategies are listed that have a strong likelihood of improving learning outcomes and student success in each area. Finally, implementation considerations are listed, some of which may be already happening to some extent, along with information on funding implications where appropriate. The list of strategies identified by the Commission, including related implementation considerations, is not intended to be comprehensive.

Implementation considerations and funding impacts are intended to provide insights and recommendations to subsequent funding discussions. In some instances they are examples of tactics currently being utilized that align with the strategies. Identifying strategies and potential

funding for state budgetary prioritization will be subject to annual review by education stakeholders, the executive branch, and legislative partners.

As is currently the case, funding or budget recommendations reflect state, local, and in some cases, federal revenue, along with resources from public-private partnerships, and may also include reprioritization of existing funds and capacity. Funding estimates for identified strategies or tactics are not intended to replace items such as annual investments to accommodate new student growth (including capacity and capital investments in higher education), increases to the WPU to cover basic operational costs, funding for existing unfunded mandates, etc., nor should they be considered final budget recommendations. Additional vetting and analysis of all identified strategies and tactics will occur during the annual budget process.



Talent Ready Utah is a statewide initiative that connects businesses, schools, students, and adult learners to create opportunities and fill workforce needs. Talent Ready Utah provides resources such as career pathways programs, internships, and industry-driven curriculum development to support business-education partnerships, fill the talent pipeline, and train the state's future workforce.

FOUR KEY AREAS OF FOCUS



Photo courtesy of Granite School District

ENSURE EARLY LEARNING

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Early childhood experiences lay the foundation for success throughout both school and life. Quality early childhood education promotes cumulative learning, with each stage preparing for the next (16). Recognizing the importance of early childhood experiences for all Utah children is key to improving educational outcomes.

Utah has long recognized that parents and caregivers are crucial to ensuring that babies and toddlers receive the positive interactions and experiences that will set the stage for successful future learning. Evidence indicates that early learning experiences provide a foundation for future learning, behavior, and health. For children ages three and four, high quality preschool programs can have a substantial impact on early learning and development, especially for children whose families may not be able to access these resources on their own (17,18). Developmentally-appropriate kindergarten and other early childhood programs capitalize on increased opportunities for creative and child-centered activities. Extended-day kindergarten options, which provide young children with additional time to develop cognitively and

Utah has long recognized that parents and guardians, and those who care for and about children, are the most influential caregivers to their children.

socially, are particularly beneficial to students who may have developmental delays or disabilities, or who may not have been afforded quality early learning and/or preschool opportunities (19).

Utah is a leader in bringing together multiple government and non-government partners to address data-driven responses to difficult problems (20). Additional cross-agency and public-private partnerships can be developed and supported that will achieve improved outcomes through ensuring early learning for Utah's children.

Strategies for Improving Early Learning Opportunities

- Inform and support parents, guardians, and families in their role as a child’s first teachers by providing information and resources regarding at-home learning activities that support their child’s healthy development.
- Inform families who choose to enrich their child’s early learning experiences in preschool or childcare of the importance of utilizing high-quality early learning environments, and increase opportunities for high-quality preschool experiences for those children who are in poverty, are English language learners, or who have other academic risk factors.
- Increase outreach and leverage additional resources to promote the importance of early learning through new or existing public-private partnerships and public awareness campaigns.
- Evaluate existing early learning programs and explore evidence-based practices successful in other communities to establish an early learning framework that optimizes parent choice and utilizes resources effectively.
- Leverage Utah’s statewide educational technology infrastructure (UETN) to connect early childhood learners, educators, parents, and caregivers with resources and opportunities.
- Expand optional extended-day kindergarten learning opportunities, especially for those students at risk for academic failure.

Implementation Considerations and Funding Impacts

All dollar figures are estimates, intended as reference points, and may reference activities already taking place to some extent. Some of the strategies may not require funding, and some cost estimates are yet to be determined.

Upon its release in October 2017, utilize Utah’s Early Childhood Coordination report to develop appropriate strategies for helping Utah children be kindergarten ready, as measured by Utah’s Kindergarten Entry and Exit Profile (KEEP). Additional action items identified through the study may be addressed and funded in subsequent, follow-up legislation. \$50,000 with additional costs TBD
Increase high-quality preschool services for 4-year-olds who are likely to be at risk of academic failure. \$33.9M
Increase high-quality preschool services for 3-year-olds who are likely to be at risk of academic failure. \$33.8M
Expand optional extended-day kindergarten (OEK) learning opportunities for approximately 16,000 students who are likely to be at risk of academic failure. (This cost factors in the \$7.5M in the Early Intervention line item.) \$16.5M
Expand OEK for all kindergartners, regardless of risk factors. (This cost factors in the \$7.5M in the Early Intervention line item.) \$65.9M
Increase capacity in existing public-private partnerships that provide parents with free child development screenings, referral to developmental specialists, connection with community resources, web-based activities, and other materials and services to support parents as their child’s first teachers. Additional funding of approximately \$0.9M to one such partnership, Help Me Grow, could address several strategies designed to improve outreach and provide educational resources for parents and families.
Build Utah’s existing, robust statewide education network, UETN, which provides the infrastructure for numerous low-to no-cost opportunities to connect early childhood learners, educators, parents, and caregivers with resources and opportunities.
Develop and implement a public relations and outreach campaign to make parents and families aware of programs like Help Me Grow, as well as other free, online resources that exist to inform families of the importance of utilizing high quality learning environments such as careaboutchildcare.utah.gov and childcareaware.org.



Photo courtesy of Dixon Middle School

STRENGTHEN & SUPPORT EDUCATORS

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Exceptional education institutions originate with outstanding educators. In K-12 education, teachers serve a critical and direct role in student learning and are considered one of the most important predictors of student achievement (21). Research also indicates the imperative for high quality leadership within schools. Similarly, the quality of post-secondary faculty leads to increased opportunities for student recruitment and academic support, student preparation in post-secondary academic and vocational education, and expanded research and innovation. With the increased emphasis on quality early childhood services, the quality of Utah's early childcare workforce must also be addressed.

Teacher recruitment and retention in public education is a growing concern and must be addressed. According to a recent study by the Utah Education Policy Center, approximately 42% of K-12 teachers who began their careers in 2007 were no longer teaching in a Utah classroom by the end of their fifth year and 56% left by year eight (22). Educators leave the profession for numerous reasons. To retain quality educators, Utah must focus on creating conditions that support educator growth, opportunities to enhance student engagement and school

climate, support for improved instructional practices, increased availability of resources to support effective instruction, and competitive, professional wages (23).

Educator preparation programs and ongoing professional learning impact the nature and quality of the educational experience for students (24). This growth continuum includes formalized instruction, robust induction programs, educator reflection, collaboration, sharing knowledge with other educators, interrogation of practice through the use of data and evidence to improve student learning, and a culture of feedback and evaluation. Policymakers must recognize the changing demands and context of today's classrooms and provide opportunities to enhance the knowledge and skills of educators throughout their careers.

Strategies for Strengthening & Supporting Educators

The goal of having an effective educator for every student, every day requires that Utah prepares, recruits, supports, develops, and retains the best educators and school leaders (including superintendents, principals and assistant principals, teacher leaders/mentors/coaches, classroom teachers, and school support personnel).

The following strategies will lead to achievement of that goal:

- Elevate the education profession.
 - » Engage all members of the community in understanding, valuing, and positively communicating about the importance and impact of effective educators.
 - » Recognize educators as professionals by supporting their professional learning and providing the resources they need to do their work.
 - » Invest in educators and support compensation aimed at recruiting and retaining high quality educators within the K-12 and higher education systems.
- Prepare educators and school leaders well.
 - » Work through collaborative public-higher education partnerships to examine state teacher and school leader (principal) preparation and licensing programs, identifying strengths, challenges, and opportunities to implement recommendations for improvement.
 - » Support novice educators with a robust induction program.
- Support and invest in educators to build their capacity throughout the profession.
 - » Provide additional high quality and engaging professional growth opportunities aligned with the Utah Core Standards and Utah Professional Learning Standards.
 - » Support multiple career pathways for teachers that value the expertise of master teachers in the classroom and provide financial differentiation for teacher leader roles.

- Provide resources to enhance effective teaching and learning.
 - » Invest in sufficient numbers of effective school support personnel including counselors, social workers, school psychologists, and special educators for every school, so all students have appropriate support for learning.
 - » Provide time for purposeful teacher collaboration and instructional planning.
 - » Ensure that teachers have the competencies to support diverse student needs.
 - » Provide technology-based systems and associated resources to schools to allow teachers to save time and enhance communication with parents and students.
 - » Use evaluation to create a culture of feedback and to improve teaching, learning and leadership.

The heart of the equity and excellence conversation is at the teacher level. Equitable distribution [of high-quality teachers] is influenced not only by experience and qualifications, but also by proper preparation and ongoing support for teacher development throughout a teacher's career. Recruitment, preparation, and ongoing support are all important to assuring excellence in every classroom.

— Utah State Board of Education

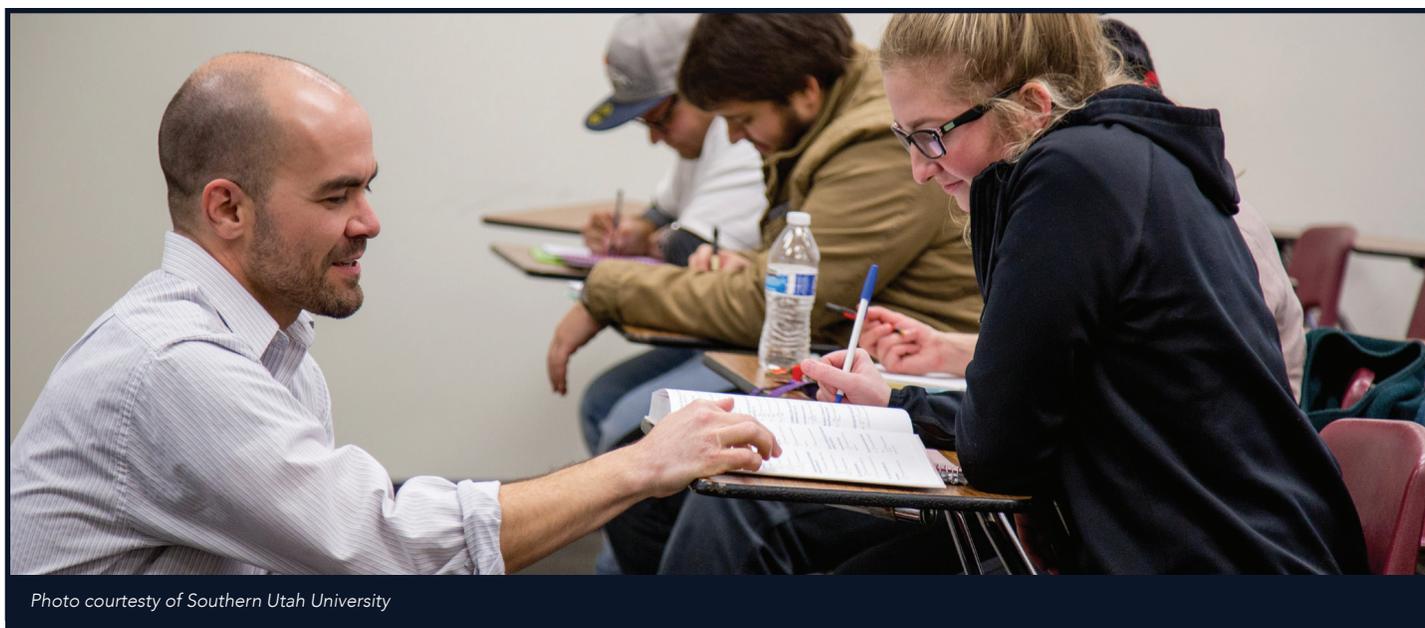


Photo courtesy of Southern Utah University

Implementation Considerations and Funding Impacts

All dollar figures are estimates, intended as reference points, and may reference activities already taking place to some extent. Some of the strategies may not require additional funding, and some cost estimates are yet to be determined.

Recognize educators as professionals by supporting their professional learning through providing additional time throughout the year to engage in meaningful collaboration and professional development. \$7.3M per additional day of professional learning.	
Recognize educators as professionals by providing the resources they need to do their work through an increase in teacher supplies funding. Cost would be \$3.2M for each \$100 increase.	
Invest in sufficient numbers of effective school support personnel including counselors, social workers, school psychologists, and special educators for every school, so all students have appropriate support for learning.	
K-6 School Counselors (no Utah standard, national standard is 1:250)	\$67.5 - \$99.3M
7-12 School Counselors (Utah standard of 1:350 and national standard of 1:250)	\$4.3 - \$29.9M
K-12 School Psychologists (national standard of 1:500-700)	\$61.8 - \$97.4M
K-12 Social Workers (no Utah standard, national standard is 1:250)	\$113.1 - \$161.5M
K-12 Special Education Teachers (Utah standard is 1:25-35)	\$0 - \$25.9M
Higher Ed Academic Advisors (national standard of 1:296)	\$8.2M
Higher Ed Career Services Advisors (national standard of 1:2917)	\$1.3M
Higher Ed Mental Health Counselors (national standard of 1:1500)	\$5.3M
Support novice educators with a robust induction program. In addition to mentoring (addressed below), an orientation program is a critical piece of any induction program. The daily cost for a statewide new-teacher orientation program is approximately \$0.8M. The appropriate length for an orientation program varies by situation and is best determined at the local level.	
Create a teacher pipeline pathway modeled after existing programs such as SLCC’s Teacher Recruitment program, or the decade-long Engineering Initiative.	
Support multiple career pathways for teachers that value the expertise of master teachers in the classroom and provide financial differentiation for teacher leader roles. Potential pathways include teacher leaders (e.g., new-teacher mentors, consulting teachers) and master teachers (e.g., National Board Certified Teachers). At the state level, the exact pathways and compensation for those pathways have not been established, as these personnel and compensation issues are the responsibility of LEAs. However, the following costs may be considered as reference points: A \$1,610 compensation increase (\$1,000 in wages and \$610 for wage-related benefits) for a mentor for each new-teacher (3,200) could cost approximately \$5.2M. The same increase (\$1,610) for consulting teachers could cost \$0.2M. The number of consulting teachers was estimated using the Salt Lake School District’s ratio of 5:1,150 for the Peer Assistance and Review program. The appropriate number of master teachers is unknown, but a compensation increase of \$1,610 may be easily scaled and used as a reference point in discussions of the desirable number and total cost.	

Invest in educators and support compensation aimed at recruiting and retaining high quality educators within the K-12 system by increasing average wages. The following costs may be considered as reference points:

The cost of increasing K-12 educators' average compensation by one percent is \$16.2M to \$21M

The cost of increasing USTC compensation by one percent is \$0.6M.

The cost of increasing USHE compensation by one percent is \$12.1M.

The cost of increasing USTC faculty compensation to the market level is \$1.8M.

The cost of increasing USHE faculty compensation to the median of faculty at peer institutions is \$51.6M.

The cost of increasing K-12 educators' compensation to regional market levels or based on national comparisons needs further study.

Engage all members of the community in understanding, valuing, and positively communicating the importance and impact of effective educators through a media campaign to promote the value of teachers, the quality of available education training programs, and the teaching profession. Campaign could leverage private-public partnerships, student-sourced media, etc.

Provide technology-based systems and associated resources to schools to allow teachers to save time and enhance communication with parents and students. Extension of the statewide contract for the Canvas learning management system to all K-12 schools is estimated to cost \$1.9M.

Work through collaborative public-higher education partnerships to examine state teacher and school leader preparation and licensing programs, identifying strengths, challenges, and opportunities to implement recommendations for improvement.

Provide time for purposeful teacher collaboration and instructional planning.

Ensure teachers have the competencies to support diverse student needs.

Use evaluation to create a culture of feedback and to improve teaching, learning, and leadership.

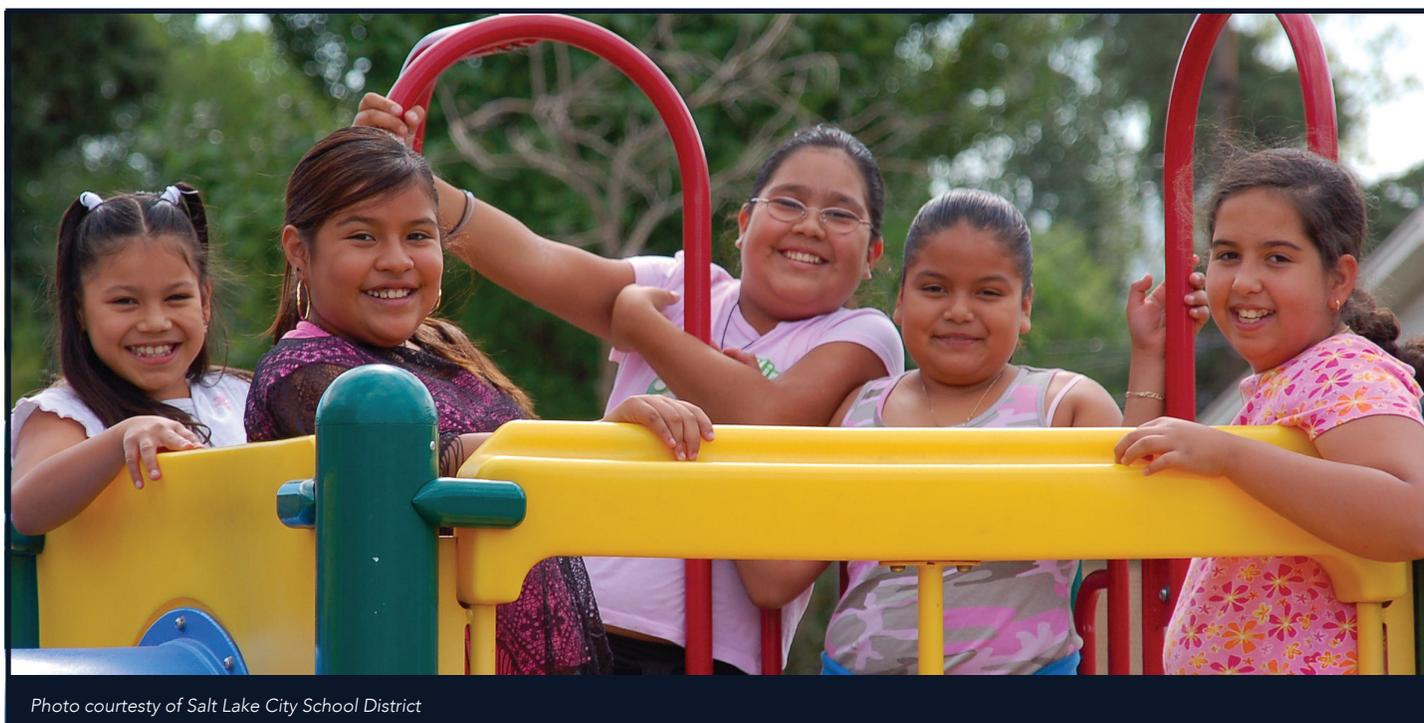


Photo courtesy of Salt Lake City School District



Photo courtesy of Utah Valley University

ENSURE ACCESS & EQUITY

ENSURE ACCESS & EQUITY

Ensuring access and equity in educational opportunities is a moral, economic, and legal imperative for Utah's ongoing growth, prosperity, and success. It is important for all students to be held to high expectations while being provided adequate supports for success. Despite an increased focus in Utah on assisting underserved populations, issues of access and equity continue to persist (25). It is also important to provide all students, regardless of location, background, or ability, equitable learning opportunities. Decisions regarding programs and services, allocation of resources, and focus on improved outcomes need to be based on empirical evidence from analysis that critically examines all respective student groups.

While Utah has steadily increased graduation rates for all student groups, significant challenges remain (26). When other states address specific education access gaps for both parents and children in low-income, urban, rural, and high minority areas, students increasingly achieve improved academic outcomes in both the K-12 and post-secondary systems (27). Utah has the opportunity, and the obligation, to act in a more intentional way to close these achievement gaps.

With Utah's fast growing, diverse student population, education institutions will need to develop culturally and linguistically responsive services and appropriate systems, including the development of an increasingly diverse teaching workforce that reflects the diversity of Utah students. Education organizations must seek action to remove institutional barriers, particularly in higher education, to ensure our best efforts moving forward for all respective students in Utah.

Strategies for Ensuring Access & Equity

- Establish and support inclusion on governing boards, administration, faculty, and staff.
- Collect and analyze disaggregated data to inform applicable policy and practice.
- Provide access to culturally competent and engaging curriculum with broad reach. Additionally, ensure LEAs have resources in selecting evidence-based curriculum which addresses the needs of all students, including those with special needs, for core courses such as mathematics, language arts, and science.

- Provide services and supports needed to meet individual student needs and avoid tracking (ability grouping which inequitably locks students into predetermined course progressions).
- Increase proper outreach and advisement to students and parents, particularly from traditionally underserved populations, on educational opportunities such as participation in Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB) courses, English language learning, concurrent enrollment, internships, etc. Provide effective support in navigating both the public and higher education systems.
- Evaluate the current distribution of state scholarship dollars to determine the most effective way to get students into and through post-secondary schooling.
- Propose state funding based on student risk factors, such as Weighted Pupil Unit (WPU) add-ons in public education, and additional support in higher education.
- Develop and maintain UETN's capacity to serve all Utah learners with an up-to-date network and services.

Implementation Considerations and Funding Impacts

All dollar figures are estimates, intended as reference points, and may reference activities already taking place to some extent. Some of the strategies may not require additional funding, and some cost estimates are yet to be determined.

<p>Consider additional state funding (e.g., WPU add-on funding) based on student risk factors. This range represents the costs of providing additional funding for at-risk students using either a base-plus model (10% base and up to an additional 30% for population concentration) or a simple add-on of 25% of the current WPU value. \$98 - \$149M</p>
<p>Likewise, consider additional funding for students in higher education institutions who may be first generation students, from low income or intergenerational poverty homes, or have other factors that limit access to, and success in, higher education.</p>
<p>Develop and maintain UETN's capacity to serve all Utah learners with an up-to-date network and services. \$4.9M</p>
<p>Increase outreach and advisement to students and parents on educational opportunities and how to navigate the system successfully. For example, Southern Utah University's Assistant Coach for Excellence and Success (ACES) program provides student advisors for incoming freshmen. The purpose of this program is both to decrease reliance on limited, and more expensive, academic advisors and ensure that freshmen receive the intensive support that may increase their persistence rate. This program could cost as much as \$4.1M and employ approximately 300 part-time student advisors if implemented statewide; and it could potentially decrease the need for full-time academic advisors.</p>
<p>Support and encourage USHE institutions to develop and expand student aid programs focused on low-income students such as "Dream Weber" and "SLCC Promise."</p>
<p>Seek to establish diversity of governing boards, administration, faculty, and staff.</p>
<p>Maintain a consistent commitment to analyze disaggregated data to inform policy and practice.</p>
<p>Provide access to culturally competent and engaging curriculum with broad reach. Additionally, ensure LEAs have resources in selecting evidence-based curriculum which addresses the needs of all students, including those with special needs, for core courses such as mathematics, language arts, and science.</p>
<p>Evaluate the current distribution of state scholarship dollars to determine the most effective way to get students to and through post-secondary schooling.</p>



Photo courtesy of Salt Lake Community College

COMPLETE CERTIFICATES & DEGREES

COMPLETE CERTIFICATES & DEGREES

Post-secondary education is increasingly important for an individual to be successful in today's global knowledge-based economy (28). Increased educational attainment can lead to significant increases in earnings over the lifetime of an individual, contribute to the ability to earn a living wage, and lessen the likelihood of living in poverty and experiencing unemployment (29). Wages increase significantly beyond a high school diploma, beginning with certificate completion and continuing through additional post-secondary degrees (30). With tuition at Utah's public universities among the lowest in the country, the estimated wage "return" for a completed degree is enhanced after just two years of working post-graduation.

Additionally, increased educational attainment among individuals benefits society. Education attainment levels can positively impact a state's economic indicators, including state gross domestic product, unemployment rates, homeownership, consumer spending, and research and development performance (31). Other societal benefits of increased educational attainment include the possibility for reduced crime rates (32), decreased public assistance and poverty rates, increased volunteerism and civic engagement, and family stability (33).

Utah leads the nation in “some college, no degree,” but Utah should aspire to lead the nation, as it once did, in the percentage of its population with a college degree.

— Utah State Board of Regents

The six year post-secondary completion rate in Utah is generally less than the national average, although this varies by institution (34). When extended to eight years, however, graduation rates increase to approximately 53%. Since many of Utah's post-secondary students enroll part time, another measure of college completion that is meaningful in Utah is total post-secondary awards per full time equivalent student. In academic year 2016, Utah System of Higher Education institutions granted 26 awards per 100 FTE student (national average is 20.8 per 100 FTE), and Utah System of Technical College campuses granted 212 awards per 100 FTE (average length of certificates is 450 hours) (35).

The importance of “one, two, four, or more” years in post-secondary completion benefits individual Utahns and the state as a whole. Increasingly, stackable credentials and partnerships between the K-12 system, USHE institutions, and Utah’s technical college system provide new and meaningful opportunities for both Utah’s traditional college students, as well as under-employed adults.

Strategies for Completing Certificates & Degrees

- Recognize the importance of students graduating from high school ready for the rigors of college and career by using the state K-12 accountability system to report on appropriate metrics, i.e., ACT scores, CTE credits, college credits earned, etc.
- Deploy additional school counselors and post-secondary advising corps in high schools to address college and career readiness.

- Support the use of technology and information to help students explore educational options, including information regarding careers and the certificates and degrees associated with career pathways.
- Assess and build capacity in programs that respond to high-demand jobs, including the use of stackable credentials, for traditional students and adult learners.
- Invest in technology infrastructure for digital teaching and learning that leads to completion of certificates and degrees.
- Support the state’s K-16 Alliances.
- Increase the availability of workforce-aligned stackable credential programs as well as work-based learning opportunities for students through programs like the Governor’s Talent Ready Utah initiative.

Implementation Considerations and Funding Impacts

All dollar figures are estimates, intended as reference points, and may reference activities already taking place to some extent. Some of the strategies may not require additional funding, and some cost estimates are yet to be determined.

Support the use of technology and information to help students explore educational options, including information regarding careers and the certificates and degrees associated with career pathways through the state’s UtahFutures.org webportal. \$2M
Deploy additional school counselors and post-secondary advising corps in high schools to address college and career readiness. (This cost range is the sum of the calculated costs for K-12 counselors and academic and career services advisors in higher education. See “Invest in sufficient numbers of effective school support personnel” in previous section.) \$81.3 - \$138.8M
Support and strengthen K-16 Alliances. The creation of a dedicated staff position at each USHE institution to oversee the respective K-16 Alliances could cost \$0.6M.
Increase the availability of workforce-aligned stackable credential programs as well as work-based learning opportunities for students through CTE programs and the Governor’s Talent Ready Utah initiative. The average grant for a Strategic Workforce Initiative educational pathway was \$0.2M. The average grant for a Talent Ready Utah partnership was \$0.2M. The desirable number of additional pathways and partnerships is unknown.
Recognize the importance of students graduating from high school ready for the rigors of college and careers by using the state K-12 accountability system to report on the percentage of high school students obtaining college or CTE credits.
Invest in technology infrastructure for digital teaching and learning that leads to completion of certificates and degrees, including technology/data systems that support the assessment and awarding of credit for competency-based and work-based learning to help better recognize skills and experience in the workforce.
Leverage technologies to improve transition between high school and college including e-transcript delivery and more standardized student application and financial aid service experiences.

FUNDING CONSIDERATIONS

The Governor's Education Roadmap highlights critical areas that are essential to ensure that Utah's education system is among the best in the country. Providing high-quality and affordable education is key to Utah's future prosperity (36). At the same time, Utah needs to make prudent investments and manage its budget in order to maintain competitive tax levels and preserve an environment where business can thrive. Implementing the Roadmap's strategies will require maximizing existing resources while also making new investments in the education system.

Both public and higher education in Utah operate on a model of shared funding: higher education is funded primarily through a combination of state tax revenue and student tuition/fees, while public education funding comes mainly from a combination of state and local tax revenue. State law authorizes local school districts to impose discretionary property tax levies, subject to certain limits. Collectively, a significant amount of district property tax capacity, or headroom, remains available as of FY 2018. Every school district has unused property tax authority although this unused capacity varies by school district and by availability for operations or capital uses under current law. While local funding effort is an essential component of education funding, changes to existing regulations governing the use of these levies may need to occur in order to maximize a district's capacity and flexibility.

Knowing when and how much to invest into education must be based on a rigorous process that sufficiently funds education while promoting economic prosperity. The approach should adhere to the following budgeting principles:

Adequacy: Since an educated population is a foundation of civil society and future prosperity, education must be funded at a level that affords each student the opportunity to achieve excellence.

Balance: A budget must balance the demand for increased revenue with the need to maintain a healthy economy and competitive tax climate.

Prioritization: As in a good household budget, spending priorities must be established to avoid unnecessary spending and overspending.

Re-evaluation: Priorities and spending must be periodically re-evaluated. Focus on policies, programs, and practices that have proven to be less effective than others should be shifted, and the funding stopped; the focus and funding should be redirected for improved outcomes.

Maximization: Existing resources, especially expensive facilities, should be fully utilized, which may mean changing parents' and students' expectations about education.

Innovation: The budgeting process should act as an impetus for experimentation and innovation based on sound, evidence-based practices that lead to previously unreachable heights of achievement.

Accountability: When industrious Utahns sacrifice income for the collective good, they must have confidence that it is spent appropriately and with maximum efficiency.

Local Control: Communities must have some flexibility to adapt certain policies, programs, and practices to meet unique needs.

Local Effort: Communities are responsible to provide a proportionate share of funding for budget priorities through local revenue generation, re-prioritization, innovation, etc.

Utah is fortunate to have professionals and experts that care deeply about educating students and preparing them for the future. Relying on their expertise, along with creating systems that monitor progress and provide feedback will help to ensure that Utah's students and educators thrive.

Utah's Tax Structure

The state's tax revenue growth is not keeping pace with economic growth because Utah's tax structure is not aligned with the current economy. This creates significant funding challenges for the state and for local governments dealing with the very real and immediate impacts of population and economic growth, including the costs of

Utah is fortunate to have professionals and experts that care deeply about educating students and preparing them for the future.

educating more children from both internal population growth and in-migration.

In addition to the structural economic issues, the state has also made policy decisions to reduce the tax base over time. This includes a proliferation of tax exemptions, exclusions, credits, and reduced tax rates on specific items. Although many of these are well-intended and some may even be necessary, some are essentially government programs run through the tax code, thus lessening the degree of scrutiny given in the appropriations process. The combined effect of the multiplication of instances of



Photo courtesy of Utah State University

preferential tax treatment is to reduce available revenue for services, such as education.

The state budget continues to earmark large amounts of sales tax revenue for transportation, leading to slow General Fund growth even in the midst of strong economic growth. These earmarks were likely caused initially by the impact of General Fund revenues not keeping pace with economic growth and not providing sufficient revenues for the transportation services many demanded. The combined effect of all of these shifts is to minimize the available revenue for services, in particular for public education and higher education.

Education stakeholders must engage on the issue of the narrowing of the tax base. Even if a new tax exemption or tax credit that further narrows the tax base could potentially improve long-term economic competitiveness, the short-term revenue losses which reduce funds available for education should be covered through a counterbalancing, base-broadening of the tax structure elsewhere. This counterbalancing principle should include not only legislation that impacts the Education Fund, such as income tax credits, but also bills that impact the General Fund, such as sales tax exemptions, which not only impacts higher education but also public education as education funds are shifted.

As stakeholders unite and focus around the Education Roadmap, it is imperative that a comprehensive examination of the entire tax structure be undertaken

collaboratively. Throughout 2017, the Governor convened working groups to address tax reform, including the Tax Review Commission, and tax reform discussions with legislators are ongoing. Utah needs to modernize its tax structure to broaden the base, lower the rate, and better align the tax structure with the modern economy. This will also include examinations of both remote sales tax collection and user fees. While people may enjoy not paying the tax that is currently due through online purchases, the state tax revenue losses create a very real impact on the state's ability to fund education. Additionally, significant revenue is shifted away from education to help subsidize services, such as transportation and water, which should be based more on a user-fee approach.

The successful implementation of this plan will necessitate education stakeholders working with the broader business community to determine a path forward in grappling with the issue of an antiquated tax structure aligned with a goods-based economy while much of the economic growth is occurring in the service sector of the economy. Utah needs to maintain its workplace competitiveness not only nationally, but also internationally. This is accomplished by maintaining a competitive tax structure while also ensuring a highly educated workforce aligned with market demands.

Additional resources can be found at www.utah.gov/governor

MEASURING PROGRESS:

ENSURE EARLY LEARNING

STRENGTHEN AND SUPPORT EDUCATORS

ENSURE ACCESS & EQUITY

KINDERGARTEN READINESS

METRICS

- *% of Students Determined to be Kindergarten Ready by the Kindergarten Entry and Exit Profile (KEEP)*

POTENTIAL STRATEGIES

- Support parents by providing resources regarding at-home learning activities.
- Inform families of the importance of utilizing high quality early learning environments.
- Increase opportunities for high quality preschool experiences and optional extended-day kindergarten for children with academic risk factors.
- Increase capacity for organizations, providing parents access to free developmental screeners and support.

PROFICIENCY IN CORE SUBJECTS

METRICS

- *Average Proficiency Rate in Math, English Language Arts, and Science in Grades 3-8 on state assessments*
- *4th & 8th Grade NAEP Scores (Math, Reading, Science)*

POTENTIAL STRATEGIES

- Provide resources to enhance effective teaching and learning, including sufficient support personnel.
- Prepare educator and school leaders well.
- Support and invest in educators to build their capacity throughout the profession.
- Consider enhanced state funding based on student risk factors.
- Maintain a consistent commitment to analyze disaggregated data to inform policy and practice.

The above metrics are some indicators of student success.

Additional metrics and progress may be found at www.utah.gov/governor

METRICS AND POTENTIAL STRATEGIES

COMPLETE CERTIFICATES & DEGREES

POST-SECONDARY ACCESS & READINESS

METRICS

- *ACT Scores*
- *Advanced Credits Completed*
- *H.S. Graduation Rates*
- *% of Utah Students Enrolled in a USHE or UTSC institution within 5 Years of Graduation*

POTENTIAL STRATEGIES

- Increase outreach and advisement on educational opportunities and provide support in navigating both the public and higher education systems.
- Deploy additional school counselors and post-secondary advising corps in high schools to address college and career readiness.
- Support the use of technology and information to help students explore educational options.

POST-SECONDARY COMPLETION

METRICS

- *Yield of Awards per FTE Student*
- *% of Population with Degree or Certificate*

POTENTIAL STRATEGIES

- Evaluate the current distribution of state scholarship dollars.
- Invest in technology infrastructure for digital teaching and learning that leads to completion of certificates and degrees.
- Support and strengthen K-16 Alliances.

WORKFORCE ALIGNMENT

METRICS

- *Number and % of Awards in High Demand Fields*

POTENTIAL STRATEGIES

- Increase the availability of workforce-aligned stackable credential programs as well as work-based learning opportunities for students through the Governor's Talent Ready Utah initiative.
- Build capacity in USHE and USTC for workforce-aligned programming.

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