

# Our Schools Now: Teacher and Student Success Initiative

February 27, 2017

## BACKGROUND/CONTEXT:

- Effective teachers are the foundation of a successful school, and impact student achievement more than any other factors in the school building.
- State Income Tax in Utah is used exclusively for Public K-12 and Higher Education.
- Tax cuts in the recent past have diminished funding for education in the state by \$1.2 billion per year.
- These tax cuts coupled with our large number of children is a recipe for low spending per child.

## OUR SCHOOLS NOW: TEACHER AND STUDENT SUCCESS INITIATIVE:

- Raises personal income tax rates from 5% to 5.875% to increase funds for **K-12 and Higher Education** (including technical colleges) in Utah.
- Estimates that this increase will raise \$750 million each year.
  - This translates to roughly an additional \$1,000 per student per year. The value of the WPU (the basic unit of state education funding) is currently \$3,184.
  - Schools with 1,000 students could be allocated an additional \$1 million dollars per year.
- Creates a special account, separate from other education funds, where the additional tax money will be collected and distributed to schools that develop specific plans to spend the money to improve their school.
- Allows for the greatest degree of local control and decision making at each school by requiring schools to develop their own unique plans for spending the new money, tailored to the greatest needs for teachers to be successful in helping students at individual schools.
- Provides accountability for how the money is spent, with payments based on positive results.
  - If schools don't meet their targets for improvement, they receive a proportionate amount of the money.
  - To receive their full allocation each year, schools will need to continue to make improvements.

## TEACHER AND STUDENT SUCCESS INITIATIVE IN K-12 SCHOOLS

- The additional tax money is appropriated to the Utah State Board of Education (USBE) to distribute to LEAs (school districts and charter schools) based on the existing WPU distribution.
  - For the first two years, schools will receive their full allocation allotment of new funding to implement the plan.
  - For the third year and beyond, a school needs to meet performance metrics and standards to continue receiving the full funding. If a school does not meet these targets, it receives a proportionate amount of the money.
- Each LEA is required to create a framework with goals and priorities for its schools.
  - Each school creates a **Teacher and Student Success Funding Plan**, aligning with the LEA's framework.
- A portion of the funds may be used to increase teachers' salary schedules, with the remaining majority to spend on new interventions and other tools to help teachers improve outcomes for their students.
  - Schools can spend additional funds on reducing class sizes, extending teacher contracts, professional development, hiring additional teachers and other support personnel, technology, early learning, or other reasonable uses to impact improvement.
- Schools are monitored on demonstrated improvement in reading and math for students in grades 3-8, and on demonstrated improvement in graduation rates and college and career readiness indicators for grades 9-12.
  - LEAs determine valid and reliable measures of progress towards these goals.
- School performance goals and progress reports will be reported on State Board and LEA websites.

## SCHOOL PLANS

Elementary and middle school plans address the following areas, and schools are measured and funded as follows:

### **Math Performance or Growth** (accounts for 40% of funding)

- 75% or more of a school's students must demonstrate proficiency on a math assessment; OR
- A school must show 1 percent improvement in the number of students demonstrating proficiency on the math assessment compared to the prior year.
  - If neither of these metrics are met, the funding allocation is decreased proportionately based on the school's performance compared to the prior year.

### **Language Arts (LA) Performance or Growth** (accounts for 40% of funding)

- 75% or more of a school's students must demonstrate proficiency on a LA assessment; OR
- A school must show 1 percent improvement in the number of students demonstrating proficiency on the LA assessment compared to the prior year.
  - If neither of these metrics are met, the funding allocation is decreased proportionately based on the school's performance compared to the prior year.

### **One additional valid and reliable measure** (accounts for 20% of funding)

- Determined by the school and approved by the LEA

Secondary school plans address the following areas, and schools are measured and funded as follows:

### **Graduation Rate** (accounts for 40% of funding)

- A school's graduation rate must be 93% or higher to receive its full allocation under this metric; OR
- A school must show a 1 percent increase in the graduation rate from the prior year.
  - If neither of these metrics are met, the school receives funds proportionate to the difference in its graduation rates between the two years.

### **College and Career Readiness** (accounts for 40% of funding)

- A school's percentage of students demonstrating college and career readiness must be 70%; OR
- A school must show a 1 percent increase in those students demonstrating college and career readiness from the prior year.
  - If neither of these metrics are met, the school receives funds proportionate to the difference in its proportion of its students demonstrating college and career readiness between the two years.

### **One additional valid and reliable measure** (accounts for 20% of funding)

- Determined by the school and approved by the LEA

## TEACHER AND STUDENT SUCCESS INITIATIVE IN POSTSECONDARY

For schools serving students after they graduate from high school, the proposal:

- Requires higher education institutions (technical colleges, community colleges, and universities) to **focus on helping students access an affordable postsecondary option, complete their degrees and find employment.**
  - These institutions are not only measured on these student completions and job placements, but also the extent to which they serve groups of students who have not traditionally attended and completed college, such as minority students and those who are the first in their families to attend college.
  - Focus on Current Workforce Needs: Additional measures include how well these institutions are graduating students who are ready to step into Utah's newest jobs that employers are having a hard time finding enough qualified candidates to hire.