

A Brief Summary of Utah's RttT Application

The state's reform agenda:

- (a) Increasing student achievement in (at a minimum) reading/language arts and mathematics, as reported by the NAEP and the assessments required under the ESEA;
- (b) Decreasing achievement gaps between subgroups in reading/language arts and mathematics, as reported by the NAEP and the assessments required under the ESEA;
- (c) Increasing high school graduation rates (as defined in this notice); and
- (d) Increasing college enrollment (as defined in this notice) and increasing the number of students who complete at least a year's worth of college credit that is applicable to a degree within two years of enrollment in an institution of higher education.

Four reform areas (required) with a total of fifteen projects.

Reform Area One: Adopting Standards and Assessments that Prepare Students to Succeed in the Workplace

Project One: New Common Core State Standards in Reading/Language Arts and in Mathematics
Upon adoption of the Common Core State Standards, Utah will prepare and provide PD to support implementation of the new Reading/Language Arts and Mathematics Common Core State Standards.

Rationale: Utah has successfully used rigorous core standards for over twenty years. The adoption of nationally recognized, relevant Common Core Standards will provide a more stable set of expectations for teachers, students, parents, higher education, and other interested stakeholders. This will result in greater consistency in teacher lesson preparation, concept instruction, and improvement in student outcomes.

Project Two: Using the Common Core Standards to Improve Reading Instruction

Utah will (1) begin development of Web-based lesson plans for reading/language arts areas that ensure alignment across schools/classrooms regardless of variations in materials and which capture the experience and talents of master teachers and the use of best practices; (2) embed a reading strand into the science, social studies, healthy lifestyles, and fine arts cores, and CTE standards; (3) hire an adolescent literacy specialist and support staff to assist with LEA outreach, PD, and development of common core materials. (4) Implement recommendations for the expansion of the literacy initiative through eighth grade with a focus on adolescent literacy; and (5) continue to support the work of the Family Literacy Centers and the use of ELL software to assist students with acquisition of English academic language skills and increase reading/language arts proficiency.

Rationale: The adoption of new Common Core State Standards gives Utah the opportunity to address all aspects of effective delivery of reading instruction. Using lessons learned from our successful K-3 Literacy Initiative, PD, coaching, and use of Utah's Three-Tiered Model of Reading Instruction will help us implement the new Core. Expanding our literacy initiative, while implementing the new Core, will help us increase our capacity to deliver high quality reading instruction that will, in subsequent years, increase student achievement in reading/language arts, increase our high school graduation rate, and increase college enrollment.

Project Three: Using the Common Core Standards to Ensure Mathematics Literacy for All Utah Students

Utah will begin development of Web-based lesson plans for mathematics that ensure alignment across schools/classrooms regardless of variations in materials and which capture the experience and talents of master teachers and the use of best practice; create rigorous and relevant math courses that are an alternative to the traditional calculus track, while avoiding the "historic" problem of "dumbing down";

and prepare and implement recommendations for a state K-6 mathematics initiative and an Algebra mathematics initiative.

Rationale: The adoption of new Common Core Standards gives Utah an opportunity to address all aspects of effective delivery of mathematics instruction. Using lessons learned from our successful 4-6 Mathematics Initiative, PD and coaching will help us implement the new core. Expanding our mathematics initiative, while implementing the new core, will help us increase our capacity to deliver high quality mathematics instruction, which will, in subsequent years, increase our high school graduation rate and increase college enrollment.

Project Four: Ensuring Postsecondary Success

Utah will hire a project manager and support staff to create annual information for students and parents regarding career and college pathways and aligned coursework beginning at the end of sixth grade and continuing through twelfth grade; revise and add academic pathways to the career pathway materials; work with LEAs and higher education to advise and initiate secondary renewal and reform; continue coordination with higher education to ensure that dual and concurrent enrollment courses that may lead to an associate degree (AD) are offered and develop at least five areas of emphasis for ADs that include sufficient flexibility to accommodate academic and CTE issues; using lessons learned from Utah's highly effective Advanced Placement (AP) program, work with two high need LEAs as a pilot to ensure that disadvantaged subgroups have quality access to AP and concurrent enrollment programs; coordinate with higher education to review and ensure that English and mathematics courses are vertically and horizontally aligned and that other current courses required for graduation are aligned to student needs for career and college readiness; review the data and reports from current STEM initiatives and propose continued, enhanced, or new initiatives, including CTE initiatives, that increase student participation in the study of STEM fields; and work with business, industry, and higher education partners to define needs for a quality workforce and develop instruction to support acquisition of skills to meet those needs.

Rationale: Utah has implemented many successful initiatives designed to help secondary students prepare for college and careers. Enhancing these initiatives and using lessons learned from the National High School Center (NHSC) reports will help Utah deliver the Core in a manner that leads to greater student engagement, higher levels of achievement, and horizontal and vertical coordination between school levels and higher education.

Project Five: Improving Early Learning Outcomes

Utah will hire an early literacy specialist; review the data and reports from Utah's K-3 Reading Initiative and use the data to identify and replicate high-performing projects and practices; maintain and expand full-day kindergarten to eligible students and use data to identify and replicate high-performing projects and practices; and support early intervention programs for high-need Pre-K children by reviewing the data and reports from the Utah Preparing Students Today for a Rewarding Tomorrow (UPSTART) Early Learning Initiative (a Waterford Institute Project for in-home, computer-based preparation for school success), CTE sponsored preschools, and other state preschool programs.

Rationale: The foundation for success in reading and mathematics begins before kindergarten. This is especially true for economically disadvantaged students, English language learners, and students with disabilities. As we have learned from our Optional Extended Day Kindergarten Initiative, early intervention at the preschool level is essential to narrowing achievement gaps.

Project Six: Refinement of Utah Performance Assessment System for Students (U-PASS) Testing

Utah will UOSE will design and implement testing systems and high quality assessments that are aligned to the new Common Core State Standards and that will evaluate both student growth and status, including testing systems for English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities; design and implement testing systems that use computer technology; continue and expand the current

testing pilot; revise the high school "exit" exam requirements; provide assistance and recommendations for informal, ongoing formative assessment of math and reading in all schools; and create a common, standard kindergarten entry and post assessment.

Rationale: Utah has successfully used rigorous core assessments for over twenty years. The adoption of nationally recognized, relevant Common Core State Standards will require development and adoption of assessments that align with the new standards.

Reform Area 2 Measurable Goals: Building Data Systems that Measure Student Growth and Success, and Inform Teachers and Principals about How They Can Improve Instruction

Goal 1: By **December 2014**, Utah will fully implement a statewide, high-quality longitudinal data system to measure the academic achievement of students and link their achievement to educator readiness and preparation.

Goal 2: By **December 2014**, all participating LEAs will adopt and implement local instructional improvement systems to support the effective use of student data to inform instruction.

Goal 3: By **December 2014**, all LEA data teams, including at minimum superintendents, curriculum directors, and assessment directors, will participate in PD using the statewide data and create a plan for ongoing LEA training on the system.

Path to Achieving Identified Goals

Implementation of the following projects will allow Utah to meet Reform Area Two Goals and our student outcome goals.

Project One: Expansion and Adaptation of State Longitudinal Data Systems (SLDS)

This project consists of seven (7) activities. The first four activities summarize SLDS grant application outcomes. The Utah ARRA/2009 SLDS grant application brings several state agencies together to share de-identified data and coordinate analyses and research using those data. Completion of this project will allow Utah to fully implement a statewide, high-quality, longitudinal data system.

Rationale: Utah has a P-20 longitudinal system that meets most of the America COMPETES required elements. Utah has applied for funds to enhance its existing capabilities in its ARRA/2009 SLDS grant application (#384A1000056).

Project Two: Effective Data Access for Instructional Improvement Utah will increase the acquisition, adoption, and use of local instructional improvement systems (technology-based tools and other strategies) that provide teachers, principals, and administrators with meaningful support and actionable data to systemically manage continuous instructional improvement that provides teachers, principals, and administrators with the information and resources they need to inform and improve their instructional practices, decisions-making, professional development activities, and overall effectiveness. The original targeted completion date for this project was 2025. SLDS grant funding will be used to accelerate completion within 5-8 years.

Rationale: Utah has a robust longitudinal data system. For data to be used effectively to improve instruction and increase student learning, the appropriate technology must be used to collect and house the data, as well as provide accessibility to the data.

Project Three: Effective Data Use

Utah will Using lessons learned from Utah's Data Institute, Utah will provide professional development (PD) to LEAs in the use of data to inform instruction, professional learning communities and school improvement strategies, and in the understanding and use of at-risk, dropout, and graduation data. The original targeted completion date for this project was 2025. RTTT funds will be used to accelerate completion within five years.

Rationale: For data to be effectively used to improve instruction and increase student learning, district administrators, principals, and teachers must have the skills, knowledge, and dispositions they need to use data effectively.

Reform Area 3: Recruiting, Developing, and Retaining Effective Teachers and Principals, Especially Where They Are Needed Most

Goal 1: By **December 2014**, a new statewide continuum of support for developing practicing teachers and principals will be implemented.

Goal 2: By **December 2014**, 90% of Utah's K-12 teachers will participate in LEA evaluation systems that require the use of high quality instructional strategies as evidenced by appropriate and approved measures of quality instruction (including observations of teaching, student growth data, and stakeholder evaluation).

Goal 3: By **December 2014**, all participating LEAs will have in place a system by which effective and highly effective teachers and principals are identified by the schools and LEAs in which they work.

Goal 4: By **December 2014**, all participating LEAs will have in place a system by which ineffective teachers and principals are identified by the schools and LEAs in which they work and are remediated or terminated.

Path to Achieving Identified Goals

Implementation of the following projects will allow Utah to meet Reform Area 3 goals, which support Utah's efforts to achieve the State's student outcome goals.

Project One: UCSEE - Utah Continuum of Support for Educator Excellence

Part A - Teacher Leadership Pathways; Pre-Practitioner Preparation

Utah will (1) develop and implement teacher preparation program approval standards to augment current approval by National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC) and ensure quality in all teacher preparation programs in Utah. Standards will focus on millennial teachers, 21st Century learners, robust field experiences, and pedagogy embedded in content. Approval processes will include accountability measures, timelines, performance expectations; (2) design and implement a pilot resident PD school model for resident teacher preparation, including co-teaching assignments, internships, and job-embedded coursework; (3) continue the use of the Utah State Office of Education Alternative Route to Licensure (ARL) Program and expand support for ARL candidates in urban, suburban, and rural settings; and (4) adopt a statewide as an exit requirement from teacher preparation programs.

Part B - Teacher Leadership Pathways; Novice Practitioner

Utah will (1) provide a pilot program for a university and LEAs to provide collaborative induction support as a seamless transition to full licensure; (2) provide start-up funds for LEAs to improve induction programs that include release time to work with trained mentors, reduce class loads, and reduce non-classroom assignments; (3) expand rural outreach for educators to meet "highly qualified" teacher requirements through online coursework and online community support, (4) administer the Teaching Working Conditions Survey statewide in order to improve learning environments for students and retention rates for Utah educators; (5) implement statewide equitable distribution plans and monitor compliance.

Part C - Teacher Leadership Pathways; Developing Practitioner

Utah will (1) adopt high quality PD standards to ensure that professional learning for all educators results in positive changes in student learning; (2) implement the PD National Staff Development Council (NSDC) Standards Assessment Inventory (SAI) to establish baseline information regarding the effectiveness of current statewide PD efforts; (3) develop and provide resources for LEAs to provide career advancement and leadership opportunities (i.e., learning teams, coaching, peer evaluations); and (4) provide standards and innovation configurations for effective professional learning communities.

Part D - Teacher Leadership Pathways; Experienced Practitioner

Utah will (1) adopt a new teacher leader licensure level with accompanying performance standards, performance assessments, coursework, and criteria for advancement; (2) develop a cadre of teacher leaders who are expert in using formative assessment to improve student learning resulting in capacity building for LEAs; (3) develop models of differentiated staffing options (i.e., full-time release: one-third with new teachers, one-third on school projects, one-third working with universities; and (4) provide leadership opportunities for teacher leaders outside of the classroom to enhance their content knowledge and leadership skills.

Rationale: Utah is in the process of establishing a statewide continuum of support for developing and practicing teachers. This initiative will help ensure that Utah educators will have opportunities for personal advancement and ongoing PD and support throughout the scope of their career. It will also help ensure that Utah students have access to high quality instruction in every classroom.

Project Two: Principal Leadership Pathway

Utah will (1) improve administrator preparation programs through: (a) development of state standards that include a strong focus on instructional leadership and (b) review and revise entrance requirements into principal evaluation programs; (2) work with LEAs to develop and implement collaborative induction and coaching programs for principals; (3) develop and implement principal standards of practice focused on instructional leadership; and (4) provide high quality PD, including online communities, face-to-face instruction, and regional academies for practicing principals.

Rationale: Utah recognizes that the key to sustaining high quality instruction in every classroom is the school principal. Developing a continuum of support beginning with quality principal preparation and continuing support will ensure that principals will have the skills, knowledge, and dispositions they need to be effective instructional leaders. This will help ensure that Utah students have access to high quality instruction in every classroom.

Project Three: Measures of Instructional Quality (supports Reform Area Three Goals 2-4)

Utah will (1) revise the Utah Professional Teaching Standards to incorporate measures of instructional quality, stages of career of development, and expectations of student growth; (2) combine the services of two online vendors to provide models of instructional excellence including video vignettes, online communities, and online resources; (3) create model tools to facilitate measurement of instructional quality and provide technical assistance for LEA adaptation and implementation; (4) develop and implement a statewide framework for annual teacher evaluation, which includes parental input, student growth, and measures of instructional quality; and (5) create a state framework for principal evaluation focused on instructional leadership with technical support and PD for effective implementation.

Rationale: Utah's current evaluation system requires that teachers and principals be evaluated every three years. This system is used to inform full certification, retention, tenure, and potential removal from the profession. This project will add measures of student growth and instructional quality. It will also change evaluations to annual evaluations, inform professional development, and be used to fairly inform compensation and promotion.

Project Four: Performance Pay Pilot Program

Utah will (1) analyze the data and results from the Differentiated Compensation pilots and prepare and implement recommendations; and (2) continue using the Public Education Job Enhancement Program (PEJEP) to increase the number and percentage of effective teachers teaching mathematics, science, technology, and special education.

Rationale: Utah will continue its performance pay pilot program using state and local funds. This program is helping Utah recruit, reward, and train effective teachers.

Reform Area 4: Turning Around Our Lowest-Achieving Schools

Goal 1: All Title I schools identified as persistently lowest achieving will immediately begin one of the four school intervention models.

Goal 2: By **July 2010**, Utah will have a system in place to identify secondary non-Title I schools that are at risk of becoming persistently lowest achieving and begin school improvement intervention.

Path to Achieving Identified Goals

Implementation of the following projects will allow Utah to meet Reform Area 4 goals, which support Utah's efforts to achieve the State's student outcome goals.

Project One: System of Support for Title I Struggling School

Utah will continue its established System of Support for Title I School Improvement Schools using Title I School Improvement and ARRA School Improvement Grant funds.

Rationale: Utah's System of Support has been very effective in preventing Title I schools from reaching the persistently low-performing schools designation. This program is helping turn around Utah Title I schools by focusing resources on research-based strategies that lead to increased achievement.

Project Two: Preventing Low-Achieving Secondary Schools

Utah will use lessons learned and RTTT funds to prevent select non-Title I secondary schools from becoming persistently low performing schools.

Rationale: Utah's System of Support has been very effective in preventing Title I schools from reaching the persistently low-performing schools designation. This program is helping turn around Utah Title I schools by focusing resources on research based strategies that lead to increased achievement.