Teachers Speak Out About Education Issues

TEACHER COMMENTS TO LEGISLATORS

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Dear Utah Legislators and Policymakers,

We recently sent a survey to all the UEA-member teachers across Utah and asked:

“If there were significant new money invested in public education, which of the following do you believe would have the most positive impact on student outcomes?”

(Note: The chart below shows the number of respondents who ranked the item in their top three priorities and the number who ranked it No. 1.)

We also asked them:

“What message would you like to share with your legislators?”

The following pages contain responses from educators who teach in school districts you represent. We hope you find this information helpful as you consider the public education budget and education-related legislation.

If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact a member of the UEA Legislative Team:

Heidi Matthews  
President  
heidi@myUEA.org  
801-266-4461, ext. 102

Lisa Nentl-Bloom  
Executive Director  
lisa@myUEA.org  
651-492-8894

Chase Clyde  
Government Relations  
chase.clyde@myUEA.org  
435-260-9760

Roger Donohoe  
Vice President  
roger@myUEA.org  
801-266-4461, ext. 105

Jay Blain  
Policy and Research  
jay.blain@myUEA.org  
801-641-5297

Sara Jones  
Government Relations  
sara.jones@myUEA.org
Teacher Comments (unedited)

In an online survey conducted in January 2018, teachers were asked:

“What message would you like to share with your legislators?”

More than 1,800 teachers submitted comments. We have organized their responses into the following topic categories:

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Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

In our school our kindergarten class size is 26 children, which is 52 children with two sessions to progress monitor. The expectations for the teachers are to teach a 3 hour block of literacy that doesn't include time for recess, computers or math. It also doesn't allow for time to help connect with students, especially ones that have very little time with parents.

Lorri Case, Alpine School District

If you truly want to know what is happening in classrooms/schools each of you need to sub for a week in a classroom to really find out what teaching is like. Then you may have some different opinions and willing to start doing the job you were voted in to do!

Kriss Spencer, Alpine School District

First of all, I would like to thank our legislators for the important role that they play in our democratic process. Without your service I could not do my job. As a public servant I would like to see teaching become as important as any other public servant's job. I am willing to sacrifice if I know it has merit but sacrifice without merit is useless and drains me as a teacher. When I feel that I am getting the support for my students that I need to teach, i.e. an aide in the classroom, technology, supplies, etc. I can teach much more effectively and feel that I can truly do what I intended to do when I became a teacher, Be a Change Agent! I hope that as this legislative session begins you will take into account that I might only have 28 students but half of those students need some kind of intervention. The other half might suffer if I can't get to them in a timely manner without support staff that I need. When I can have just one more body in the room I could possibly make the change for your student that would not otherwise be possible. Please help me teach the children in this state what they need to learn to carry on our democracy!

Karen Webb, Alpine School District

I stopped teaching when I stopped getting the support needed from administrators (who were too over-pressured by those above them) to maintain a classroom where students were not held accountable for poor behavior. It was a unique year when we had many transitory students who came from self-destructive homes. Those kinds of students need support before and after school so they can succeed in the high pressure environment of today's schools. We will never succeed with students whose everyday needs are not being met either because of poverty or lack of adequate supervision in the home.

Anita Price, Cache County School District

Dear Legislators, As a veteran teacher, I have watched our profession dramatically suffer in the past ten years. Not only do we have teachers that do not want to stay in our profession, they are running from it. Young people are discouraged from seeking this career path—not without reason. Teaching is arguably the hardest career and one of the most disrespected. If I were to average out my salary over the true number of hours that I work, I would be making much less than the minimum wage. I knew that teaching wouldn’t be lucrative when I came into the profession. Money wasn’t the reason I chose to work in education. What I did not know was the true lack of support and respect teachers receive. I currently teach in a classroom with 32 third grade students. There is not space in my classroom to accommodate them. My classroom budget was made for a class size of twenty-six students. That means that all of the supplies for six more students come out of my pocket. That’s on top of what I already spend to enhance my curriculum. My school email inbox currently has 53 unread emails, most of which are complaints about one thing or another, that I have not had time to read due to my other responsibilities. I arrive at school no later than 7:00, and rarely leave earlier than 6:00. I still take work home every night. I take grading with me on vacation and feel guilty if I don’t work on it after my family has gone to sleep. I am asked to create trackers for multiple students. I try to stay on top of everything that I am asked to do, and if I drop one of the forty balls that I am juggling, I am belittled. The “fun” has been sucked out of my classroom. I am moving through curriculum at a break neck pace, attempting to prepare my students for “The Test” at the end of the year. There is little to no time for slowing down to make snowflakes or, more importantly, teach about character, citizenship, and friendship. There is a disconnect between administration and the classroom. We are constantly being asked to do “little things.” However, when you have a list of twenty little things that each take a few minutes, it adds up. I’ve always known that I was meant to be a teacher. I know that I make a difference in the lives of others every day. I’ve seen positive differences happen in amazing ways.


Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

However, it's getting harder to see that silver lining amongst all of the dark clouds. We need your help and support. Our profession, our students, and the future of our state depend on it.

Katie Brown, Davis School District

Now is the time to stop messing around with teachers: let them do their jobs, pay them as professionals, back off with needless testing, stop treating educators as over-educated peasants.

Richard Heath, Davis School District

Why I teach and why I feel it is not possible to do so at this time. Too many demands with large classes and no time

Donna L. Trease, Davis School District

If I was to ever leave teaching it would be because of the ridiculous expectations I am held to and the lack of support from legislators dealing with difficult parents and students. I should not be the enemy.

Alexia Crandall, Granite School District

We would greatly appreciate being viewed as professionals and trusted to do the job that we have been trained to do.

Brooke Deardorff, Granite School District

First, I feel there is a definite need for more full time professionals to be positioned at one home school, which are trained to deal with mental health and wellness. In addition, Special Educators are being inundated with so many referrals it takes months of tracking data and testing and then those special education teachers are not full time at one school because they are so far and few between. This, in my personal opinion, creates a lack of consistency. Camaraderie between general education and special education teachers plays a key role in student gains when collaboration and consistency are prevalent. Full time teachers are not equipped or trained to deal with the rising amount of children experiencing adverse childhood experiences. It is extremely difficult to teach and learn with so many outside obstacles and emotional barriers. In many cases, the heightened demand on teachers and school communities to help students rise to academic achievement becomes an unattainable accomplishment for not only students but all stakeholders. i.e. teachers, parents, administrators, districts because of these influences. In turn, both students and teachers taste the bitterness of defeat and failure. We are trying everything to overcome so many of the hardships students face but it is a daunting task - but done with love and trust. However, it is exhausting! Often, as an educational cohort, we look at the academic aspect of children, but it seems as though we forget to ascertain whether or not our students are in a healthy socio-emotionally stable frame of mind to learn what we as educators are trying to teach them. Sure we can do clubs, and have an open door/open teacher-parent dialogue, have food pantries, wash clothes, give children gloves, talk to them when they have a rough day, and deal with the overwhelming effects of poverty on their brains and physical toll of their body, but then am I educating them academically or mentally and emotionally? Why isn't there an assessment that asks about the whole child, not just the academic child. This MAY or may not have an impact on their successes in other areas of instruction and curriculum. Secondly, teachers should be treated with respect as professionals and many in society forget the life-long impact of fabulous teachers. I still have not come to any sure conclusions as to why such a huge shift has happened ultimately giving teachers a bad reputation, but even as a first year teacher I feel the affects of this from districts, administration, parents, legislative decisions made on our behalf, and all of these people’s views trickle down through student points of view. How do we change this?

Kim Dillingham, Granite School District

Education needs to be the number one priority on every citizen's mind. We can't afford to put it anywhere but first.

Aubrey Dillman, Granite School District

Not all schools have the same supplies or opportunities and the legislators need to make sure all schools are on equal footing

Sonya Dollins-Colton, Granite School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

There are a lot of talented special education teachers. The students in special education classrooms might not score the highest on testing, but there is a lot of amazing progress that takes place in self-contained special education classrooms. These teachers and students work very hard and should not be forgotten, set aside or told to work harder to get the students up to grade level. It is our intent to work with our students to their own unique abilities and to celebrate their successes no matter how small.

Heidi Henderson, Granite School District

Homel...ess youth prevention. Teacher Salary vs. Administrative Salary. A voice for teachers

Patricia Honey, Granite School District

The frustration of testing. All students shouldn't be tested only on paper, but through observations and real life situations. Preparing for the real world requires time, patience, consistency and a knowledge of their needs individually. Allow teachers to all be paid equally from K-12. We should only be required to specialize in 1 to 2 areas to be proficient at what we teach and not make Elementary specialize is 6 + areas while Jr. High and High school teachers need one area of expertise. There are many areas of relevant that are indicators of what makes a successful student successful through the support of their teachers. Teachers in elementary are require to be experts in more areas of studies than most people who work in other fields. That is not reasonable to ask. Our pay and hours we put in are not indicators that the future leaders of our country are important, when not enough funds are put into pay or funding needs of public schools. It's frustrating to keep loving and sharing your passion for education when teachers are force to work more with less everyday.

Sandy Thuy Jensen, Granite School District

It is time to fund education. Education powers our economy, helps children climb out of poverty, and enriches our cultural environment. Please, let now be the time to fund education in Utah.

Susan Jones, Granite School District

Feeling supported and safe should be the right of every teacher in the classroom. It is sadly getting to the point that every teacher I know is planning their exit, whether leaving the profession or counting down to retirement. It is becoming a burden that we don't know if we can bear any longer.

Jenny Morris, Granite School District

It's time to put of children first. They are our future. We need quality teachers, smaller classrooms, more support from our legislators. Testing has taken over teaching.

Cindy Moyle, Granite School District

Teachers have more demands placed on them then ever before. The teacher shortage will only increase if we don't start addressing class size, teacher salary, and if we don't start finding ways to boost teacher morale. This all starts with funding, but also coming straight to the source -- THE TEACHERS, before making new laws and decisions that will directly affect students and teachers.

Rebecca Vala, Granite School District

Education is one of the most important things you are addressing this year. Please take time to look at this fact: teacher shortage. People are not wanting to enter into the teaching profession due to government micro management vs autonomy. Professionalism should be valued and encouraged. Why are we not giving trust to a teacher to reach her/his students needs with an educated accountability and not just a check off sheet that we need to account to an administrator who is accounting a check off sheet to a district ... etc. with so many requirements and restrictions that it takes more time doing that than it does teaching our students ... not to mention the stress and worry if we are doing it exactly the way it is required by our administrators (and it seems to change a bit every year just to cause more stress)? Money is not the biggest issue for most teachers ... please take the outside testing "stress" away, all the testing accountability that we have to "report" and let us teach not just account. Teachers need support. We have parent support... we need legislator support! Please... keep class size small, support full-day
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

kindergarten (as it is really first grade as compared to when you were in school), give compensation to teachers who are willing to do extras, reduce testing accountability, and give us our autonomy to do what we know how to do, namely, TEACH.

Vivian Gubler, Jordan School District

I began my teaching career in a Title I school in Granite District as a classroom aide, then became a certified preschool teacher, and finally became a certified elementary teacher. I am in my 21st year of service in a classroom, and my 13th year as a certified kindergarten teacher. I currently teach in Jordan School District. I am a teacher because I absolutely love working with, and teaching children. During the past 20 years I have seen many changes in education. One of the things that impacts my ability to teach the most is class size. My classes are usually smaller because I teach in kindergarten, but many of my colleagues do not have room for all the children's desks, and their class sizes continue to grow. Teachers in our school are told that we need to be creative and figure out ways to deal with the ever growing class sizes. My classes are usually 5 or 6 children over the optimum student to teacher ratio for kindergarten, but I feel lucky as many other kindergarten teachers have over 7 to 9 children more than is best in an early childhood classroom. I feel my love for children and teaching is used against me. I will do my job for less pay, little to no recognition for a job well done, less than desirable classroom supplies and conditions, and constant pressure to do more with less. Over the past twenty years the testing requirements have become outrageous and I am now spending so much time assessing my kindergarten students, I hardly have time to teach the required curriculum. I am a good teacher, I am always learning and perfecting my teaching skills, I have received awards for my teaching, I have taught and mentored other teachers. I will never quit my job or let my students down, they receive my best every day. The people making decisions about my students and my classroom have no idea how things work in a classroom and all the things I do each day. We need the people making the decisions to be more involved in education. Come into my classroom and my colleagues classrooms, see how we make a difference in our student's lives each day, and see the things we do with so little. Please make decisions based on actual knowledge of the issues, get involved and listen those of us who are in the trenches each day trying to make a difference in our corner of the world!

Kerry Hoffmann, Jordan School District

Before I went into education, without a degree, I was taking home, after taxes, 100K per year. I have four degrees and went into education, not to make money but to help kids, so they might have a brighter and better future. However, it took me 30 years to go from a beginning salary of 28K to 50K. We live in a very sad and disrespectful state of how our legislators treat our teachers..., those on the front line, in the trenches.

Max Weiss, Jordan School District

The students are coming harder and harder to teach. For what teachers are asked to do and what they get paid to do it, teaching is becoming a less and less desirable job.

Heidi Hall, Nebo School District

You need to address accountability for district administrators and principals: They cannot be given carte blanche to make “progressive” changes to school systems, holding teachers in check with punitive evaluation measures. Stop worrying about teacher accountability and start focusing on too many administrators (who themselves can’t teach) spending money on new methods that don’t work. We know what works: caring, committed teachers and small classes. No more tests. No more progressive programs. Back to basics. Kids need to read and write, speak and listen, learn and communicate. Let good teachers do their jobs!

Michael Thompson, Nebo School District

Utah has the opportunity to become one of the top states for education in the country. We do an amazing job on a limited budget, just imagine what we could accomplish if we were anywhere close to other states in funding.

Melanie Rice Moffat, Park City School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

The legislature should be ashamed of themselves. knowing that the teachers in Utah are the lowest paid in the nation and we have a rainy day fund. That could pay off the national debt!!!!!!! And what happened to the day that teachers taught. learning was fun and everyone got along. This consent use of testing is useless What a joke..

Federica Gallegos, Salt Lake City School District

Public Education is more and more demanding on teachers. Pressure from administrators, right up to superintendents is ever more stressful. There is a lack of help with problem students from administrators. Parents are often given more respect than the classroom teacher. Sage testing, in a big way, is as much about manipulating the computer and writing equations than about asking questions and having students show their knowledge. The i-Ready Computer Program used at our school could easily replace the Sage Testing. We get the needed data to help students progress and we wouldn't have to spend the money on SAGE and take time out of our schedule to do all the testing. Also, with i-Ready, parents would have a better idea of what the testing is about and how to help their student progress. In our school, we test SAGE three times a year. That is a a lot of time taken away from classroom teaching. It is disheartening to listen to teachers and feel their frustrations, knowing that things could be much better. So, besides the lower salaries of teaching, we seem to be asking people to enter a profession in which they will not be receiving a very high salary, but also, a profession in which you will have frustration after frustration thrown at you.

Why work so hard in education when it would be easier to earn more money and have an easier work load in another profession?

Kraig Nilsson, Sevier School District

How ridiculous the evaluation tools they are using to evaluate educators. Also that the Sage test is not an accurate way to assess school performance.

Steve Marsing, Wasatch County School District

I believe in the power and responsibility that teachers have to influence students for good. However, we need support, compensation, and respect from our legislators and the public to best help these students succeed. Teachers work far more hours than many realize and our wages are not competitive in comparison to others with the same amount of education and training in other industries. In order to attract and retain quality teachers, increasing teacher salaries and benefits must be a priority. In addition, in order to prevent burnout, teachers need more paid time to plan and prepare for high-quality instruction. With the amount of growth we are experiencing in many parts of Utah and in order to reduce class sizes, we'll need more teachers. Increasing salary and giving teachers more paid time to do what they need to do are two essential things for our students’ futures. Also, teachers should be able to focus less on end-of-level testing proficiency percentages and more on growth of the WHOLE student--academic and otherwise. I think sometimes we feel pressured to cram the core into the kids’ heads when really what they need is to learn life skills (diligence, kindness, organization, respecting for self and others, working as a team, etc.) first, and then they will be able to succeed academically. In order to be able to focus on the whole child, less pressure must be put on educators’ test scores. Yes, there needs to be accountability for teachers, students, and schools, but testing is not the only way to do that—student surveys, parent surveys, administrator evaluations, student growth, self-evaluations, etc. could all be helpful ways of showing accountability. Finally, at my school (and many others) we have many students whose problems are beyond what we, as regular education teachers, have the training to sufficiently support. We need more resources available to help those students who need more mental and emotional support than we are able to give. Thank you for your time.

Abbie Twingstrom, Weber School District

Before you write and pass a bill into law affecting education, spend significant time in the classroom teaching and working with children with the ideas in the bill. Use and test your ideas in the classroom before writing them into a bill. Write your bills with significant teaching experience, not your own student experience. Learning and teaching are night and day different. You need to know what teaching children today is like in Utah to be able to craft effective bills to help children learn and teachers to be able to help children learn. Law like the Sage test burden our children and teachers with a wasted and poor use of time. Let's empower, not burden.

Bryan Jenkins, Davis School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

As always, I spend hours of my time at school and at home filling in ridiculous objective, targets, lesson plan forms, collecting data, data, data, and more data etc... that does not support me in actual planning and teaching. It's like I have two jobs: 'professional educator' and glorious administrative/secretarial professional. They say, "When you plan your lessons"; when do you do that much less even look (and I mean look) at the next weeks materials. I work at a Title 1 school where most parents do not help their students. With free breakfast in the classroom, I've now lost 20-25 minutes of instruction time. I have to stand by the food (can't have a student do that now), log it, count it to make sure entrees match with fruit (if not, toss some fruit over to the sharing basket/but in the lunch room you can't share???), listen to several students questions or problem, take tardy slips (don't lose those while you are at the back of the room serving breakfast), reminding them everyday to do the same routine we've been doing since August, go to my computer and log onto Gradebook to enter roll, keep telling students to eat instead of talk (those that have seconds (2 milks, 2 entrees need more time), tell them numerous times to begin their self-start; we don't begin 'school' until 9:20-9:25. And that's not to mention that on Mondays the Star Spangled Banner is played and we say the pledge. Oh, and add announcements in there somewhere. Breakfast needs to be in the cafeteria where students can eat and chit chat and learn to sit at a table and enjoy a meal. Not turned around in their seats, walking around the room, shoving food in their desks (yes, they have been told over 100 times/one time we had fruit flies for weeks until I found a rotten banana and rotting apples mashed in back of a student's desk), milk everywhere, smelling sink where the left over milk is emptied....... We waste 15 minutes during small group time by 15 students going next door to get a Chromebook from a cart that needs to be unlocked, walking back, students going to their group desk seat and logging on. That's one group time wasted. I asked Donor Choose for 15 Chromebooks but I haven't been lucky with that. Sorry for the run-on's and fragments.

Robin Harman, Granite School District

Use the science and real rational of the educating process to direct your decision making and money directions. Testing is not the solution to success of students. Neither is school grading. Class size affects student outcomes. Parents and communities need to be held accountable for their children not just an educator, their administration or the school. Where the money is spent needs to be directed to these issues not charter special interest groups.

Johanna McMullin, Granite School District

My class size keeps growing, I do not have enough supplies for all of the children and need to use my own money to purchase them. My students have very diverse needs and I feel like there is no way to meet all of their learning needs, let alone the social and emotional needs that must be met. Many of my students suffer from food insecurity, have parents working many jobs to survive, and struggle to stay on task and complete work. Growth of students is being emphasized in my District, but that is based solely on test scores, not on whether or not they can get along with others and be kind. I feel as if I were just starting out as a teacher I would leave the profession. The demands put on me to fix everything are ridiculous and take me away from my own family. I feel like I am failing at work and home.

Barbara Antonetti, Granite School District

I teach kindergarten and it is becoming increasingly more difficult every year. We have more students than we have ever had before and there are more and more behavioral issues that we all deal with. These impact our ability to teach, which is not fair to the other students. Teacher morale is not as high as it once was with all that we deal with, along with the high emphasis on testing. I understand the importance of testing, but there are many factors that are not considered when children are tested. I have seen high ability children have an "off day" and perform poorly. Children who have speech issues and IEP's are not given accommodations on the DIBELS test. Kindergartners are not required to be in school, but still count in how well our classes perform on the test, reflecting back on the teacher. I spend a great deal of my own money, which I know is my own choice. I am frustrated that we are no longer allowed to ask for class donations, but we are required to pay jr. high and high school fees. I truly love my job, but the concerns stated above are concerns that I have heard from many other teachers as well. Thank you for your attention.

Hayley Brown, Alpine School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

I would love to see members of the legislature be required to spend a large number of consecutive hours in schools in their districts (NOT just token visits). "Come, walk in our shoes", see and experience what we need instead of just hear about it. State and Local School Board Members should do the same.

Susan S. Petersen, Box Elder School District

Providing teacher merit-pay by increasing the accountability for high end-of-level students scores without being able to control what happens in a child’s life outside of school is like expecting a dentist to get paid only if all of his patients have no cavities, regardless of how well they brush their teeth at home, and how strong their teeth naturally are as a result of their genetics. Most teachers work harder than other professions, but get the bad rap due to things completely out of their control. It is a highly stressful job and continues to become increasingly more stressful because of the demands imposed upon them from the public and legislators.

Sharon Cook, Box Elder School District

Get out in the schools and sub in a class. See what is happening before you make any decision.

Kim Howard, Jordan School District

I have great students and I believe all students can learn, but I have students that don't attend or when they do they have their hoodies on and earphones in. When we as teachers try to address the behavior or address any school challenge, we get bullied to keep our opinions to our self's. It never use to be that way it started when school grades were implemented.

Dave Anderson, Logan City School District

Over the past 10 years since I've become a teacher, I have seen the expectations placed upon teachers increase significantly to the point that each year, I see many of my colleagues in the profession leave the teaching profession to pursue other career paths. They have no choice but to do so after being pushed to teacher burnout trying to keep up with daily responsibilities as a teacher and attend more meetings serving on at least one school committee or being asked to create curriculum notebooks with no more pay. I, myself contemplate this action on a daily basis due to the added expectations teachers are asked to complete each year with meager salaries that can barely support ourselves and/or our families especially if we own our homes or cars. In addition, class sizes in public schools are way too big to effectively teach our students. For example, in classes that require a lot of writing from our students, it is almost impossible to give immediate, quality feedback to our students if we want to also, meet the demands of our personal lives. It feels like the golden age of teaching has passed where we were trusted to do our jobs, catering to the various learning styles of students is completely ignored by being required to give them more and more standardized tests that reflect badly on the teachers if they do not do well. For many teachers, their love and passion of teaching is getting outweighed by the increased burdens placed on teaching each year. Please do something to ease our burdens as soon as possible. We are losing wonderful teachers each year for these reasons and more.

Nathalie LeBras, Provo City School District

I would like to share the realities of the work load including the emotional burnout

Aaryn Birchell, Uintah School District

I work hard every day trying to make a difference in student's lives. I would appreciate it if some of the legislators would acknowledge that we do hard things every day under tough circumstances. We need more help with difficult kids. We need more help in the classroom with either more aide time or smaller class sizes.

Lynne Graves, Weber School District

Please come into our classrooms before making legislative choices.

Wendy Western, Cache County School District

How unfair many teachers are treated.

Michele Hart, Granite School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

I have had 30 students in my 1st grade classroom for at least 5 years now. More and more expectations are placed upon our shoulders as teachers and with that the tools necessary are not provided. We are exhausted and need advocates who will help and assist and not just tell us what to do! There is a big piece missing in all of the questions and items on the agenda and that is of the human side. We are working with children who need to feel safe, loved, listened to and not assigned as a number and put on a machine to learn.

Brenda Lanham, Davis School District

The story is simply too complicated...Everyone wants to blame the teachers when the test scores are low, when the failing rates are high, when attendance is bad. Everyone blames the teacher because it is the only person in the equation that can be controlled. It's to dangerous and political to hold parents accountable. It's not "fair" to hold the students accountable. It's never a problem with the curriculum or the class size...How many meetings I have been in where I am told a good teacher can teach any size class. So, the teacher gets blamed. We have communities in this state that are at risk. Schools in which 70% of the teenagers are reading at a 4th grade level. Entire buildings of students who are so depressed and anxious that learning is virtually impossible. But, it is the teacher that is blamed. We are told to collect more data. We are told to put our lessons into templates. We are told to only teach that which can be tested. And, therefore, teachers burn out and leave the profession. Teaching is a hard job on the best of days, but when you are constantly blamed for every single failure in the system, the job is unbearable. The real solution to these problems is for everyone to take a step back and look at the whole forest. The trees are dying.

Mary Ward, Granite School District

Newcomer English language learner students need more support and more time to learn English and the school system before they are required to meet standards expected for proficiency on standard tests

Margo Harpster, Salt Lake City School District

I'm still a provisional teacher, so I don't have a wealth of stories just yet. But what I do see in my schools are teachers who are giving up on students just a few months into the year because they're not equipped to give that student the work they need. They have 30+ other students they have to ensure meet certain benchmarks, and they're unsure of how to deal with certain behaviors so those students who need the most care and extra help get tossed to the SpEd teachers and generally forgotten. That's something that needs to change. Children shouldn't be falling through the cracks.

Maren Holmes, Granite School District

Teachers need to feel they are supported by legislators. The bar on classroom and student growth has risen to an almost unattainable level. Consider our students: some are homeless, receive no parental support, are hungry, have moved several times a year, have disabilities, etc. Our students cannot fit into a common goal. And teachers should not be considered failures if students cannot reach the state expectation. Please consider the individuality of all children in our state, in our schools.

Lori Gray, Jordan School District

Teachers are overworked with the class sizes, and the amount of testing overwhelming the teaching. It takes the brain time to put concepts into long-term memory, and students are suffering with over-testing and not enough time to learn. The teachers I work with are always talking about another mandatory test coming up. It's taking away from the kids. In the last 7 years of teaching, I have seen many classes over 30. And to be realistic, anything over 25 students at once is not teaching, just managing the load. Students learn better when there is a tight sense of community--much harder to do in a class over 25.

Erica Hammon, Salt Lake City School District

Please fund education in Utah and get out of our way and let us teach.

Kim Irvine, Weber School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

For far too long the legislature has focused on what parents and students want in education, not what is actually needed to make it work properly in the state of Utah. Now we find ourselves in a situation where test scores are dropping, charter schools are not fixing the problem, students are leaving high school unprepared, and the legislature continues to ignore the voices of those who know the solution because it is politically convenient.

Dan Evans, Davis School District

I teach at a turn around school. Our students eat most of their meals at school and for many, their teachers are the only adult they trust or have a relationship with. They love their teachers so much but they are spread so thin! On top of teaching the standards and expected to make the growth, we are teaching them basic skills that they don’t get at home. We get very little support from outside the school.

Amanda Cornwell, Granite School District

I’m a special ed teacher 11 years, ranging from elementary resource, elementary self-contained, and high school resource. This year I am an instructional coach for special ed ARLs and interns. As I take a new The burnout rate of special ed teachers is quite high, thus districts are having to rely on hiring an training people who are willing to do an ARL. THis is an alarming trend that should be addressed somehow. It is really difficult to teach everything a special ed teacher is expected to do with people who have no pre-service prep! And quite frankly, I think special ed teachers are asked to do more than is possible considering a traditional work day. It is a highly stressful job that is not worth the pay they get.

Ingrid Shurtleff, Provo City School District

I’m concerned with the push for one-on-one technology for students. I can’t get enough support for what little technology I have in my room, let alone have the demand for more tech help with students. I would hope legislators will listen to people in education rather than the hue and cry of others. We are in the trenches. A lot of the fall out educators are dealing with right now is due to “other voices”, legislation coming about because of it and later proven to not have been wise!!!

Rachel Gonzalez, Alpine School District

Please listen to the state's teachers. We are the experts in the trenches every day.

Denise Kelley, Alpine School District

I feel like I am being treated like a yo-yo and that I have to teach my students like they are robots. I understand that we need to test but the testing is out of control and my students don’t have time to be creative because we are worrying about making sure we have good test scores!

Karen Mann, Jordan School District

Teachers’ jobs are becoming so scripted and micro-managed that teachers are losing enthusiasm, too drained to be creative and scared about being judged. They no longer feel that they can contribute what is important to them without scrutiny. Testing scores do not take into account that some students who test, miss many days, and then perform poorly, thus penalizing the teacher.

martha johnston, Canyons School District

Nobody wants to be a teacher anymore. Each year I ask my sophomores what they want to do when they graduate. The percentage who say they would like to be a teacher and is much lower than it used to be. This year I was surprised to have 3/92. That is higher than the last two years. I know that all my students who said they wanted to become a teacher didn’t always follow through with it, but they at least looked at the profession and found it attractive in some way. Now almost every news story about teachers is negative. When I was young I looked forward to going back to school in the fall. I missed all of my friends that I hadn't seen or talked to in three months. And I did like learning even though there were some classes I found more interesting than others. My students don’t look forward to coming back to school. They don’t miss the social interaction because they are in constant contact. If they want to know something they can easily look it up or watch a video. When they come to school they deal with overstressed
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

adults who are under pressure to make sure their students perform well on standardized tests, including the ACT. The ACT only matters for students who are college bound. So why would a kid seeking a tech certificate spend a significant part of his/her education preparing for the ACT? I feel like all the fun has been taken away for both teachers and students. There is no freedom to ask a question and then spend time exploring possible solutions. Some teachers may be willing to spend a day on an interesting question, but most are too worried that they won't finish the mandated curriculum if they take even one day to explore. The student gets very little choice in learning about things that interest him/her especially in a small school where electives are extremely limited. School is too rigid. We must conform to the bus schedule, state standards, testing schedule, traditions, etc, etc. I still love my job and I admire the students who are willing to conform and dig in but I do believe there is a better way and I don't think it involves one set of standards for everyone. Everyone works harder, performs better, and is happier when they feel like they have some say in the path they take. I wish high school students were allowed to choose a path and work towards a goal. Everyone would be allowed to change their mind, but it may take extra time to go back and complete the requirements for that path. So what? If you are college bound their should be certain requirements that you must meet before getting accepted. If you can't meet the requirements you work harder until you can or you choose a new path. I still believe in a well-rounded education but I don't think it has to be age-based. I don't think that all of the sophomores should have to take math together. If a student is motivated and ready to graduate at 16 why not? If another is slower, less motivated, or has changed his/her path several times and doesn't graduate until 20, so what? I think we are doing our students a huge disservice in middle school/junior high to move them along no matter what. The middle school teachers can see the holes in their learning but they have no recourse. You can't force people to do things. If nothing happens to the student then they walk in to high school completely unprepared and they're forced to take math and language with people that are prepared. And eventually they believe they can never catch up so they either act out or drop out. Trying to do interventions with these students is by far the hardest part of my job. People are willing to send their child to kindergarten twice when they can see the child is clearly not ready to move on. So, why are they so willing to move their child on to high school completely unready? If the threat of staying in middle school one more year was enough to wake up 20 students, it would be worth it.

Lexa Larsen, Sevier School District

I have been an educator for 25 years and while I may not have all the answers i am greatly concerned about how in my opinion excessive testing and recording and monitoring accountability measures actually takes away from my actual teaching/facilitating or time on task for my students which i have seen to be the best thing for them. Many of us out here feel we are testing to death!

Michael Bottita, Alpine School District

Children want to learn and Teachers want to teach, but changing programs and expectations on teachers make it difficult. It requires additional time spent at school and takes the joy out of teaching.

Kathy Rockhill, Alpine School District

How a test does not define the ability of a student or the effectiveness of a teacher.

Dennise LeBaron, Davis School District

We need to seriously consider available resources that we can provide to our at risk communities so that when students are in school they can focus and perform. Suggestions could include; reliable, more affordable daycare options, parenting support, after-school programs.

Teri Edwards, Granite School District

Please stop killing elementary teachers with the ridiculous amount of data they are expected to gather weekly. Give them time to plan their lessons!

Jill Muir, Granite School District

The effect of the turn around process for schools is demoralizing to teachers and has little effect on student progress.

Kathryn Prater, Granite School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

Teaching has become too much about how our test scores compare with those of other countries, and less about teaching students to be lifelong learners. We're so worried about whether or not 5th graders can write a 5 paragraph essay that we don't have time to teach them the importance of writing for communication and the nuances of writing for fun. They can all crank out an essay using the formula, as it were, with supporting details from a text, but they can't create anything on their own, they don't know how to form opinions or ask questions, and they hate writing. We're so concerned about whether or not kindergarten students can use multiple ways to count to 100, or write a short paragraph with correct capitalization and punctuation, that we're not allowed to spend the necessary time to teach them how to interact with others, use scissors, fold paper, use a glue bottle. We are losing these so called "soft skills" and we are gaining more and more behavior problems as the students go up through the ranks with teachers who don't have time to teach them how to be people because they have to consistently worry about the damn test scores, that may or may not be tied to their job security (we're all very confused about that). Music, and other art, teachers are treated as baby sitters, rather than the professional educators that they are, so that "regular" teachers can have a little more planning time, because music, art, history, and PE aren't tested, they're not considered to be important by the legislature. When in fact they are more important now than ever because they are the subjects that teach humanity, and how to interact with others, and how to process our feelings when we are hurt or scared or angry. Teachers are overworked and underpaid, but even more than that they are treated poorly. They are not trusted to do their job - which is to teach - but rather told how to do their job by nearly every person under the sun who has never even been a teacher.

Stacy Mayren, Granite School District

I became a teacher because I was passionate about student learning. I feel like all the other aspects of teaching have weighed me down and diminished my passion. The amount of work we do outside of teaching is too much and more and more requirements keep getting put on us. Let us teach and inspire the next generation.

Vanessa Black, Jordan School District

I would like to feel that my elected officials saw teachers as valuable people who are trying to do their best at all times. To know the demands upon teachers is three to five times more on each higher than for jobs in the public sector. Real success does not depend upon test scores. I spend more time testing in some cases than teaching. Each student is an individual and has different needs and abilities. We are ignoring student straights because of test scores. Not everyone will be able to achieve the highest level in everything. To expect it is unreasonable. It is like expecting everyone to run a mile. Even the child who does not have legs. That child will be a failure because of the fact they did not meet the mark. To base teacher value based upon outcomes is also not reasonable. Do I think teachers need some accountability yes. But there needs to be reasonable expectations. I have had two students who were dangerous to the other students and themselves, in that case I had to spend a significant amount of time protecting the students from the violent student. It takes so long to get a student like that into an appropriate situation sometimes a year. In the mean while my time to teach the students is greatly reduced. Every classroom is different with different needs. Each child is different too. They are not robots or a bunch of collected data. Some have ADHD, some have fighting parents, some have divorced parents, some never see or interact with parents for more than ten minutes a day, some are just not developed physically to meet testing guidelines. Does anyone even consider that each individual learns at a different rate and by slowing down greatly we can achieve huge gains in the long run. Education about real people or is all this a political ploy to get power over the other party so our party can make all the decisions. Put people first. Teachers are people. If you run them out of their jobs where will they go. To unemployment benefits, homelessness? What then? Who is going to pay to take care of people who were trying their best to contribute to society, paying taxes and being good citizens. Doesn't it make more sense to support teachers so they can continue to make positive impact?

Janice Snow, Jordan School District

Teachers are professionals. We need to be able to do our job without yearly changes from the Legislature. We need to be able to teach, not test to heavily to show "accountability." We need to have fair evaluations that aren't cumbersome to complete.

Lori Johansen, North Sanpete School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

Constant changes to testing and requirements before any time tested outcomes can be measured are disruptive and waste resources.

Julie Wilding, Nebo School District

I'm in my fifteen year of teacher and pressure and stress that we put on our younger children is ridiculous. March through May students begin developing ticks to cope with the pressure to pass the end of year test. I've had many students crying during the Sage test. I can't stand watching little kids cry because they want to please their teacher, because their teacher is extremely stressed about raising test scores and being watched by the administrators if the kids don't perform well. I used to love teaching and I was really good at it. Now I have to have my kids do the practice Sage test every month. We can't go on field trips during Sage testing. I know kids need to be tested, but if we only weigh the cow and never feed it, when does it grow and develop?

Marie Mattinson, Provo City School District

The state is expecting teachers like me to bring kids living in poverty and at-risk situations to grade level when they come into my 6th grade classroom at a 2nd and 3rd grade level. The pressure we have to show proficiency on the state tests is very high and often unrealistic. We have been told this year that if we do not show major improvement, teachers and admin will be shuffled. We have already been trained by the best and our kids are still pretty low. The other issue I have is with the moving target on school grading. My school received a C 2 years ago, but 2 weeks later, the state changed it to a D. We worked so hard to get to that C just to have the state change the requirements of each letter grade.

Jessica Fiveash, Weber School District

The class sizes are too large to teach what is expected.

Suzanne Mackey, Canyons School District

Grading schools for test scores is not OK!

Allison Downs, Davis School District

Special Education has been on the back burner long enough

Kathleen Lamborn, Davis School District

You make decisions thinking you know what's best for all the schools, students and teachers and you never even set foot in an actual classroom. You're looking at raw, often times incomplete data. Would you for one second think like educators instead of businessmen? Come and observe classes, think about everything you put on the shoulders of teachers and try to teach something rather than making laws and rules based on what you think is best?

Maria Lee, Davis School District

Come to my classroom. See what I do.

Carol Madsen, Davis School District

My students enjoy that I do not have them do their assignments using laptops or computers. They would rather do worksheets, assignments from the book, or hands-on activities. I am telling you this because the big push is for one-to-one technology in the classroom and the kids do not really like learning that way.

Troy Murray, Davis School District

I teach Kindergarten. Every day I come to work I feed my students two meals per day, check for properly clothed bodies, dry tears, watch for bruises of the body and the soul and address them appropriately...then teach. There is so much more to teaching a child than test results. Please remember that.

Charmaine Grimm, Granite School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

Teachers don't feel that they are respected. Teachers have the summer off and they get a lot of vacation time in between. They don't realize what it is like being in the classroom.

*George Duersch, Logan City School District*


*Cindy Sumsion, Nebo School District*

Teachers are the professionals, yet legislators, administrators and parents (who believe the quick-fix ideas of legislators), are often the ones who determine how and what we teach. This is counterproductive. I believe that students would benefit if teachers were given much more discretion in the classroom, standardized testing was drastically reduced or eliminated, and pay throughout educators (including administration) was much more equitably distributed.

*Kerrie Anderson, Weber School District*

Make students a priority! Make Education a priority. There's a reason we can't keep teachers and they go to other states to teach. We are burning out. Wake up!

*Marie Christensen, Weber School District*

Come and try teaching in my shoes for a week.

*Carol Wheatley, Canyons School District*

I (we) as teachers are always going above and beyond the call of duty to help and support our students succeed. It seems that the legislators and the public (vocal) minority want to demonize and degrade teachers for not being perfect. Give the teachers the pay and the support that is needed to push to higher standards. Don't just legislate and make it harder for teachers to do their already complicated job.

*David Jones, Nebo School District*

We need smaller classes and higher pay to keep quality teachers. There are so many extra demands put on teachers too. It's hard to be a good spouse, parent, and teacher when all you do is go home and make sure everything is ready for school the next. There are too many hoops to jump through. (Spend at least 2 hours a night thinking about school) Trust us and let us do our job which is being the best teacher we can for our students.

*LeighAnn Penrod, Nebo School District*

So much of the money invested in education is not very helpful to improve student learning. Teachers are on the front lines and know what their students really need. Ask them!!!! There is Too Much Testing!!!!

*JoAnn Hanson, Davis School District*

Before any legislator is allowed a vote - 10 hours in an average school's average classroom

*Julie D. Tarbet, Granite School District*

I am concerned about so much testing for the students. It takes a lot of time away from teaching. Also, I work with all the special ed teachers and they are buried in paperwork. One great teacher quit and went back into private practice because she missed spending time with the students. I am worried that many parents aren't teaching their children respect for education and teachers...which affects the classroom and society greatly.

*Valerie K Thurnell, Wasatch County School District*

I went to school to help students to be better. Not just academically, but socially and behaviorally. It has been hard. With all the high stake testing, data collecting so that others outside of the profession can check up on me, and disrespect for teachers everywhere. Teachers are often thought of as baby sitters for their children and hopefully the student learns something. This is wrong. We have 4 year degrees and are dictated to continue our education. We are
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

paid minimally and treated as to our pay. Parents and government do not treat us as professionals who went to school to learn how to teach. They think they know best. Behavior in the classroom has decreased over the year partly because of this disrespect. Why should the students listen, when lawmakers and parents are putting down the teacher? Skilled teachers are leaving the profession because they cannot support their own families on the pay that is offered them. I once heard in one of my college classes “I might as well try teaching, I failed my other classes”. Is this the attitude we want our teachers in your child’s school?

Linda Hunzeker, Davis School District

The more we prioritize standardized testing, the more we will facilitate a generation of great standardized test-takers who accomplish little else. It’s not a coincidence that many great leaders were not stellar on their standardized test scores. We ought to get the idea: there are other things that are much, MUCH more important. But as long as we act like the test is most important, the harder it is for teachers to prioritize what really matters. We also need to take a look at Google and other companies: technology skills are not nearly as important as so called “soft” skills that are harder to quantify: communication, teamwork, persistence, grit, creativity, enthusiasm. THESE are what matters. And yet the money keeps going to standardized testing (and the parts of subjects that happen to be easy to create data from) and technology. It is so frustrating to be told to do things that are not in my students’ best interests. It is so frustrating to see the money go to what doesn’t matter.

Jon Midget, Davis School District

I volunteer 2 hours of my time at school planning, meetings, etc. and numerous hours at home doing school related activities. I'm under valued and over-worked! I appreciate the salary increase, but when will the extra hours be addressed?

Trinda Carlson, Granite School District

I'm under valued and over-worked! I appreciate the salary increase, but when will the extra hours be addressed?

Karen Haslam, Granite School District

In my half day Kindergarten classes, I am expected to teach a full day of curriculum, while doing a great deal on one-on-one testing. I need more time to work with struggling and advanced students. Look at giving us full-time aides, decreasing testing, or making our day an hour longer!

Karen Haslam, Granite School District

Teaching is more difficult than the average person understands. We are met with so many challenges, but are expected to meet very rigorous testing and expectations. We need to be valued by our legislators and we need to be valued by society so that we can be giving our students the best education. Investing in teachers means investing in our future!

Christar Krans, Jordan School District

As a teacher, there are some things that scare me about our current education system and the direction that we are headed. 1. Teacher Shortage 2. Class sizes 3. High stakes testing requirements from the federal and state government 4. Teacher morale I watch my colleagues go home every night overworked, and underpaid. If we do not address our teachers and their support system I do not believe we can maintain a high standard of learning in Utah.

Ashley Davis, Ogden School District

The students are being tested to death! Let us get back to teaching!

Mary Beth Sheppard, Salt Lake City School District

Our students deserve the very best we have to offer. After all, the kids I work with are only 9 and 10 years old. There have been so many things added to our plates, that it's no fun being a teacher anymore. Adults have polluted our schools, and ultimately it's our students who pay the price. I used to love being a teacher. I would wake up every morning looking forward to going to work. I'll continue to do my very best, because that's what my students deserve. However, I look forward to the day I can leave the profession. Hopefully legislatures will make decisions with our students in mind.

Steve Herrman, Alpine School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

Talk to teachers in real classrooms about their needs and thoughts on education rather than listening to outsiders - outside of the teaching/education field

Laurie Brown, Davis School District

For the past 3 years I’ve had over 30 students in my classroom, one year 36. It is impossible to meet the needs of students academically with that many kids in the classroom. There is not enough text books, technology or time to even come close to meeting their needs. Teaching today is different than 20 years ago. Every year I have many students facing problems of homelessness, a parent in jail/prison, mental illness, abuse, suicide and often my main job is keeping these kids safe and help them navigate through very difficult circumstances. My frustration is that I am constantly barraged with mandates that make it almost impossible to teach. I spend more time testing, collecting data, retesting, trying to reach 33 students that I have no time to TEACH or plan effective instruction. In my current school the majority of teachers are burned out and do not enjoy coming to work, this is a sad state of affairs because these people are phenomenal teachers who have been overworked, underpaid, and undervalued. There is no other occupation where so much is given beyond what is required with little or no recognition. In fact, it's almost to the point where it is expected. We do what we do because we want to help students, however, at some point enough is enough.

Cindy Anderson, Jordan School District

Reduce testing so teachers have more time to teach.

Laurie Hamblin, Jordan School District

Please just let me teach! Forget DATA!!! My students are not just numbers on a wall. Reduce standardized testing! I have had to cut out so much of my fun lessons because there is no time for them anymore. Treat us like professionals because we are. Don't tell us we're doing great when we have so little. Give us more and let us do more. Keep class sizes low and add aides to every room! Thank us with words, but also with bonuses. Give elementary teachers that teach all subjects those same STEM based bonuses that secondary teachers get. Come walk in my shoes for a few days and see what teaching is really all about!

Lynece Rowntree, Jordan School District

I feel that having severe SpEd students who continuously wander the halls creating distractions and disruptions for the main stream students should be addressed. We have three students that walk the halls ALL day long with aids because their disability is too severe for them to remain in a classroom. These students run in and out of classrooms, we have one who is a male student that keeps running into the girls locker room while girls are getting dressed. This student has injured teachers and aids because of his behavioral issues. The three of the students create major distractions and disruptions in ALL other classes throughout the day. Why do we not have a school specifically for their needs. We have to put the classes, office and bathrooms on lockdown because one of these students is out of control. Why should the entire school be locked down for one student who is out of control. The safety of other students and faculty is compromised because of these students.

Denise Howard, Salt Lake City School District

Teaching is an art- Many legislators have multiple children and understand that a standard 'do XYZ and you'll have the result you want' approach doesn't work for parenting like it does in manufacturing because children are people. Most people can remember a person or two that was able to give them a little extra attention and it was a game changer for them. As a teacher, I have 274 students this year and I do my best, but my time is so spread out that giving the kids the individual attention that really makes a difference is increasingly difficult. I still make a difference with a 1:274 ratio, but not what I could if it were 1:200 or even 1:150 ratio. We have been out of state to look at other, fantastically performing schools. None of them has ever had a teacher with more than 125 students to care for. If you could help work toward that, or at least give us props for doing what we do with double+ that number, it would go a long way. Thanks!

Bryce Shelley, Alpine School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

I believe teachers want to be successful at their jobs. They care for their students and work incredibly hard, but it is becoming increasingly impossible to meet the demands of teaching. In addition, to district and state mandates, there are more and more students with extreme behavioral issues. It is often beneficial for these students to be in a neighborhood school but we have not changed the way we do business. Schools are severely understaffed in the area of psychologists and social workers so general education teachers and special education teachers are expected to take care of behavior problems often at the expense of other students. Add to this constantly changing curriculum and programs, too much information to teach and test, too large of class size, and inadequate planning and paperwork time and you can see the reason for teachers leaving the profession.

Shanan DeVries, Granite School District

Teacher morale is at an all-time low. More is expected every year without additional support. In fact, most years we have lost support or funding that we had previously had. Students with serious issues are not getting help because schools “over qualify” students. I don’t feel that it is ethical to base student support on a bell curve. If a student needs help, they should be able to receive services regardless of how many other students at that school are also receiving services. Class sizes are too large for the amount of behavior problems prevalent, making it impossible to effectively teach the content required. This is leading teachers to leave the profession altogether. It is not a matter of east side/west side schools, it is a problem everywhere. Too much emphasis is placed on testing at the end of the year. Tests are only one measure for student achievement, yet everything counts on it. It affects students and teachers alike. This is the only thing that isn’t being changed about the school system, but it needs to be changed the most. There is no reason to base the accountability of an entire year on a single test.

Elaine Johnson, Granite School District

Give me time to teach!

Connie Kawala, Alpine School District

PLEASE - consider kindergarten when you are planning state tests. If you are requiring state testing for kindergarten, then we need support --- small class sizes (30 SHOULD NEVER BE ALLOWED - I HAVE HAD 33 IN A CLASSROOM BEFORE -------- THAT JUST BECOMES CROWD CONTROL AND BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT EVERY DAY). We need all day kindergarten and teacher aides. If they want us to meet all the standards that are required, WE NEED THE SUPPORT.

Denise Lindberg, Alpine School District

The amount of oversight and lack of respect is disheartening. We are trained, dedicated professionals -- treat us as such. We are given too many kids and expected to work miracles. We are only capable of so much and to be constantly berated is so discouraging. I grieve for what I cannot do for each of my kids with the time I have with them. Accept that we can’t fix everything and we do the very best we can for all of our children. We want all our children to grow during the year, but realize that each child grows at their own rate/potential. To expect every child to “pass” at a certain rate is a disservice to the children who do the very best they can but don’t quite make the cut. Celebrate the growth they’ve made instead of criticizing them as not good enough.

Kimberly Hawvermale, Alpine School District

Stop putting so much emphasis on testing and test scores. We need to return to developmentally appropriate practices and curriculum. Put some responsibility back on to the parents. The school system can not do it all. Reduce class sizes and treat teachers with respect. We are college educated professionals and should be treated as such.

Emily Jensen, Davis School District

I think that to attract and retain quality teachers we need to pay them well and give them class sizes that enable their very best teaching. Smaller class sizes lead to more individual attention and intervention time. Often, we are told about a new teaching strategy or management tool that is working somewhere else. We then watch the video and see how amazing the tool is. Then, we count the children in the master teachers class. Typically they have 18-22 students maximum. I have been teaching third grade for 20 years in Davis District and have 28-32 students each
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

year. I think smaller class sizes would cause teachers in Utah to be more successful. Meaning, we would feel that we
are really able to reach every student with what they need. This leads to job satisfaction and coupled with a salary
that supports our families we would be fulfilled, driven, content, excited employees. This is the best profession there
is! Now pay us enough and set us up for success. We are ready to shape the future. Help us, and it will be beautiful.

Deborah Sheffield, Davis School District

I think that it is important that aides in the schools be paid more. They are a very important part of the schools and it
is difficult to find people to do this job because of poor pay and no time to instruct them how to work with children with
specific needs. Or class sizes are to large and it is difficult to teach when we are required to do so much testing.
Teachers need to teach more and test less. We need more social workers in our schools to help address behavior
problems. Our class sizes are overwhelming. a

Leslie Archer, Granite School District

I would like to invite any legislator to prepare, plan, grade, and teach my class for a day or a week. Oh...and hold
SEP conferences all evening after a Valentine party with sprinkles! PLEASE lower class sizes AND don't count
Special Ed, aides, counselors, etc. as teachers per students.

Lynda Davis, Granite School District

Disruptive students/unstable families make it increasingly more difficult to teach when resources aren't there to help
students adjust/learn coping skills. We had to share our psychologist with THREE other schools last year and this
year WE DON'T HAVE ONE AT ALL! No social workers two days a week and when do you think kids flip out/run
away etc? Its when nobody is around to help. Teaching isn't possible when these situations arise

Julie Down, Granite School District

Come to one classroom for the day & teach without lesson plans!

Bonnie Hall, Granite School District

I would like to invite them to work with me for a day! I think all of them would have a very different perspective if they
spent a day in the classroom!

Ashley Raines-Parshall, Jordan School District

I have had large classes (27-31) for several years now in my favorite class of 5th grade. There is so much required of
me that is extra stressful because of being responsible for so many students.

Cathy Sandberg, Jordan School District

Support our public schools

Nikki Hill, Weber School District

Merit Pay would not be benefit students, it would just create difficulties with the teachers not sharing, and teaching
should foremost be a sharing environment to benefit all of the students. Paying teachers for students doing well on
tests is not helpful. Take the merit pay money and put it towards professional development for teachers to attend
such as ideas of how to improve their teaching and intervention strategies that would work to help students would be
more beneficial to students and teachers.

Nicole Neal, Weber School District

Any additional funding education can receive would not be wasted. I see dedicated teachers sacrifice large amounts
of their own time and resources only to be made to feel they're not doing enough because an unreliable standardized
testing system tells them so. Utah's Education could benefit greatly first from giving teachers a salary that
compensates all they sacrifice, and next by funding greater technology and resources for the classroom. Teachers
will be more energized to do the best job possible when they have less financial strain to deal with.

Sarah Martins, Alpine School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

If I could share one message with legislators it would be to put your feelings and biases towards public education to the side and focus on the wonderful children/students of our state. Be more supportive and less critical of teachers. Many times, our hands are tied and we are doing the best that we can. Our voices often go unheard, but as some of the people who have entrusted our vote to you, it is your job to represent our voices instead of special interest groups. There are no perfect teachers or parents or legislators for that matter, so let's work together instead of against each other in doing what's best for the children of our state. Also, I would like to thank those legislators that support teachers. They are those legislators who know that teachers didn't go into teaching for the money. We have no ulterior motives other than to see our students' smiling faces each and every day. When we feel valued as professionals in education, it encourages us to do our very best. And when I say professionals, we have earned that right by earning a degree in education which should be a fundamental requirement in any society. So, thank you for your monetary and emotional support.

Kammy Hanson, Davis School District

Stop micromanaging education and trust paid professional teachers to improve education.

Clair Schenk, Box Elder School District

Legislators, I LOVE teaching, but I am increasingly losing the joy in my profession. Maybe it's my district and it's emphasis on one curriculum, or the SAGE-type testing at the end of the year, or the increasing mental-health needs of the students in my classroom? Maybe it's the way my salary increases are eaten away by healthcare costs and premiums? Maybe it's feeling like there's no one REALLY listening to my concerns? Let me have a voice. Let me help inform you about what is happening in today's classrooms. Let me help you affect positive change in policy. Let me help you understand the value of increasing your investing in public education. Thank you!

Jen Buttars, Canyons School District

I would like to share that teachers are everyday heroes that deserve the same respect as fire fighters and the police. We are the people that meet with the children on a daily basis when it isn't an emergency and try to keep the students from ever needing to be seen by a law enforcement official or a first responder. This is not as glamorous, but every bit as needful. We are on the front lines trying to get every child to read so they don't become a statistic like the kids that can't read have a greater chance of being arrested and spending time in jail. Thank You for recognizing the importance of what we do and funding it adequately so that we can do our job to help each Utah student be as successful as possible.

Wendi McCloy, Davis School District

Students are currently required to complete multiple test in which the teacher is held accountable for. This includes students that have behavior issues, SPED students that do not understand the information as the material is above their level of understanding, and those students that simply do not care to take the test. While I believe that teachers should be held accountable for the progress made by their students it should be the progress made by the student compared to the same student, not progress made compared to a student from a previous year or even a different student in the same year. Each child learns at their own pace and a teacher can and should help increase knowledge and therefore the student will progress, but compared to where they began.

Dawn Christensen, Granite School District

I have always been passionate about educating children and so when all of my children had grown I decided after pondering the idea for many months that I would teach 5th grade. It is my first year teaching and I am turning 50 this year so I have a different perspective than the average brand new teacher. I spent years helping in each of my four children's classrooms, being a room mom, and always serving on the PTA. I worked as a substitute teacher, Reading Tech at a Title One school, however, nothing prepared me for how difficult it would be teaching full time. I have been blown away by the amount of time it takes to plan lessons for my students. The amount of time it takes to correct papers, the amount of personal money I have had to spend to make sure great learning takes place in my classroom. Teaching is exhausting when your students walk out the door, but then they are hours left in the day to plan lessons,
set up the lesson and find ways so that each child can learn something even though each student is uniquely different. I had never fully appreciated how hard a teacher works until I became one myself. I didn't understand the tremendous pressure they were under because of all of the tests that they need to administer to their students and how pretty much everything we do for each moment of the day is tied to a standard and is pertinent that each of our students learn and do well on their tests. It is challenging at best to teach students on grade level, but in my class, I have 6 students who go to Resource just in my class and I have students who range in grade level from 2 grade to 9th grade and they are all expected to take the same tests. I feel like it is expected to teach to my children so that they can do well on a test and not how they can best learn. Every student is learning different and at different grade levels though each student is required to take the same test. I don't understand how this even makes logical sense. I feel like my students are completely burned out based on how many tests that they have to take. I feel like the workload that is required for a teacher to be successful is placed way too high. I am a hard worker and I spend countless hours so my students can have the best opportunity to learn in a way that is both challenging and fun as I believe that learning can be fun. However, with all of the tests that a teacher needs to administer it certainly takes the fun out of learning and add unneeded stress to each student. I left a management job where I was being paid over 20 thousand more a year and I was not working any overtime and did this because of my love of teaching. Most people thought I was crazy but I wanted to do a job I was passionate about and that was teaching. I love helping children learn, but teaching should not require these many unpaid hours, and require that I spend my own personal money in order to ensure that my students have the best education. If it wasn't for my love of teaching I would immediately go back to my other job. I feel like teachers are not valued as they should be and are not given adequate compensation for all of the additional hours that they work. I can now understand why there is a teacher shortage and I realize this problem will continue to get worse unless we value educators much more and provide the additional resources they need to be successfully and so they don't have to break the bank.

Cami Vail, Jordan School District

Go to schools - not the districts - to find out what is really going on - get your hands dirty

Dana McConnell, Washington County School District

First of all, I am concerned and frustrated with all the testing we have to administer to our students. We are testing more than we ever did. While collecting data is important, instruction is critical for the students to be successful with evaluations. Second: our supply money for ink, materials, etc. is insufficient for the needs of our students. If we continue to cut the budget, our students and their ability to progress will suffer, which means we will suffer in the long run. We must remember that these children will be our leaders of tomorrow.

Teresa Brewer, Weber School District

It's time to take educating our children seriously and it's time to realize that teaching is a profession. Having teachers take more tests to prove they are professional has not improved the quality of teachers nor has it improved the pay for teachers as people thought it would if we took tests like nurses, lawyers, and doctors. We work the same number of hours, deal with similar if not more stressors, and still our pay is not equal to many professions that require the same degree of education or less. Legislators have got to realize that not everyone can teach because right now, not enough people are choosing to teach, because we don't value those who can.

Melissa Allmon, Alpine School District

I'm having a hard time enticing competent people to choose teaching as a profession. Several alternate-route-to-licensure candidates are about to quit. This is becoming a high-stress job (with increased emphasis on standardized testing) that does not offer the respect of pay commensurate with that kind of stress.

Aimee Anderson, Davis School District

I have taught at the same at-risk school for 26 years. I am passionate about teaching my students that they can be successful. It seems that my passion for teaching is often at odds with your desired outcome. I love the Core. I believe it teaches thinking and problem solving. I am not loving that I now do more non-teaching activities during my prep and home time. There are too many hoops that need to be jumped. This is a trickle down process that starts at
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the legislature. I am a professional who knows her stuff. I know how to get kids to see success and be successful. I resent being told by those who do not teach, how to teach and what success is. I resent being told that my time is not valuable. I resent being told that any person on the street can be a teacher without training. This devalues the time and effort I have given to this profession. I had planned on teaching for forty years. I am not sure I will be able to handle the lack of respect and consideration for another fourteen years.

Kimberly Harmon, Davis School District

The public education system is dying. We have neglected it so long that that we as citizens are lucky that it is still intact. We are losing teachers at such an alarming rate and if we are not careful the education system will crumble right before our eyes. Please invest in education, by decreasing the work of teachers and giving them implement time, giving us other school staff a live-able wage. Please look at how you are compensating teachers. I work in a low income area with students with severe Autism. My students make progress much differently than others and I fear that merit based pay will only stack high quality teachers in more affluent areas with students without exceptional needs. Please look at laws that protect special education teachers. I have had multiple head injuries and a broken bone from school and that's not to include the daily bumps and bruising. Provide money for protective equipment. I shouldn't have to fight for my right to work in a safe place. Before you make another law in education, spend some time in the schools. I am frustrated that those making the judgement calls have never walked a day in our shoes. Please treat us as respected citizens of society and not a fall back career. If you want the state of Utah to succeed in the future then you must invest in it, by decreasing class sizes, giving us implementation time, and letting us decide what is important to teach. Stop standardized testing, it is so very harmful to our education system in so many ways. Take a good look at Finland's education system and find ways to go in that direction.

Camille Gregory, Granite School District

Give me a reason to stay in this profession. Please. Granted, I made the wrong choice and choose elementary education. I should have chosen Math, Science, or some other STEM subject in a secondary setting. Had I done so I could have loans forgiven. To add insult to injury I finished my degree to be 'highly qualified' and I have the student loans that go along with the process. Now someone can walk in and teach in a classroom without being 'highly qualified'. Could I please be reimbursed for the money I spent at university to fulfill the old standard? Also, the only way to increase your salary is by putting in time (years and lanes) or getting out of the classroom. Isn't it ironic that you are dealing with a teacher shortage and the structure encourages good teachers to get out of the classroom. You want more STEM in education. Why pursue a higher degree in education when, according to the very same argument we give students for pursuing STEM education, a teacher could retool themselves for a new career that has all of the benefits of a 'real job'?

Ray Sahagun, Iron County School District

I teach at a school that is the most economically challanged in my District. We are the oranges among the many schools of apples. Our school is ranked high among Title 1 schools, but average when compared with the apple (non-Title 1 schools). We (the teachers and staff) work very hard to help each child grow and improve both academically and socially. We work very hard. It is frustrating to have those who make decisions for us (the legislature) not think we are doing our best. We are always learning and growing in our own field to improve, but testing doesn't show the great growth some students actually achieved during that year. Testing doesn't always show the great amount of teacher effort to help each and every student. It would be wonderful to have good faith in teachers to express knowledge and gratitude for working so very hard. Greater compensation would be nice and certainly more help (volunteers) would be welcome. However, our number one concern is helping each child learn.

Stacey Hawkes, Alpine School District

I have taught for 33 years. The students have more problems now. They have so many issues with home and family. Behavior has become a greater issue and more difficult to control. Teachers are held to a high standard, which they should be, for testing scores. However, students and parents do not have the same high standards. I would like to see students and parents have some kind of accountability for SAGE testing other than just opting their students out of the test. Teachers can be the very best and still have students who just click the buttons on Benchmark tests and
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SAGE tests. We cannot reward or punish students for test scores. It is difficult to motivate students to do their best, when there is no incentive. Yet, teachers are told that we will not get increased pay if our students do not perform well.

Michelle Hanson, Granite School District

I am a Special Education teacher of 16 years. My priority is with my students. I struggle every year seeing high school age kids struggle to read on grade level. My biggest frustration is that I do not have enough time to truly help them, because of the demand of paperwork that is required of me. This is not only Special Ed paper work, but PLC required paperwork. I am not opposed to change, and appreciate the efforts that are being made to better education for students. However, I do not see a point, when we do not have the time to truly study, prepare, and implement these new ideas. I feel the decisions are made on for teachers by people who have no idea the amount of time it takes to teach. I would like to propose extra paid time each day for teachers to prepare and work with students. I would also like to see Special Education departments in each school get funding for a secretary to help file, schedule, and arrange meeting, so that teachers can teach.

Alison Lavery, Jordan School District

Students are not a product but people; and funding, incentives, collaboration, and planning needs to reflect that.

Barbara Balch, Sevier School District

The last few years at my school, we have had a revolving door of teachers. They are well-qualified, well-trained, fantastic teachers. They left for salary increase in other districts or they left the profession all together due to stress. It is hard to hold on to the quality teachers. Teacher burn out is a real thing. We need to fix the problems that are causing new teachers to leave the profession or go to Charter schools. We need them in regular public schools. Our students need the best. I know teacher burn out is a real thing. If I wasn't where I am in my career, I would consider moving to another field. Teaching is exhausting on its own, but you throw in everything else we have to do and the pressures we are under, and it is down right horrible, to the point of a mental breakdown.

Tiffany Rudelich, Canyons School District

Teaching 4 different lab based science classes, makes it very difficult to disaggregate data generated through tests and collaborate effectively with teachers in my school teaching the same subject, much less peers more than 20 feet away from my classroom. Attempting to prepare lessons, lab activities and stay caught up with grading is impossible without devoting 5 hours a day out side of class every day including weekends.

Jana Barrow, Davis School District

Teachers have one of the most important jobs in the country, yet we are treated like dirt by the legislatures on a national, state, and local scale. Funding continues to be cut, student achievement drops, and more and more teachers are leaving the profession because we cannot offer them anything more than a life of stress and politics. We have test scores shoved down our throats and are told we are not successful based on those scores, but then are told that we need to do what our students need. We are threatened with our job security if our students don't perform on high-stakes tests, yet we are told not to teach to it. The only good thing about education is the kids, and that is putting it in the most positive terms that I can. I am sick and tired of having nothing but bad news from my administration, and told that I am a bad teacher because my students can't pass a test that was created for high-income, achieving students, and doesn't take into account the majority of the students who actually come through our public school system. When I have children, I will not put them through the disaster that is the public school system in America. That is the impact this profession has had on me as a teacher.

Grace Blair, Provo City School District

I moved from Ogden SD this year to Weber SD due to a lack of teacher support. Ogden provided some amazing training for my first 3 years, but they were not kind or fair to me or the other teachers. SUPPORT does not necessarily mean more training- it means listening to sides, sharing feedback and ideas, training when necessary to make the necessary changes, etc. It does not seem as though Weber has as much training (perhaps because I am
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not a "new" teacher) but they do seem to have the SUPPORT so often lacking. My administration is approachable and fair. The expectations for teachers are obtainable. The focus is on student learning- not just on testing. I am happy where I am, and hope that Weber does not slide down the unhappy slope that Ogden was going. Education is a job we take out of love... I nearly lost that and am happy to have found it again.

Tracy Beck, Weber School District

Students matter more than test scores. I teach ALL students. As educators we don't get to hand pick our students. Our students come to us as they are. Many are hungry or from broken homes. Many that didn't have anywhere to sleep last night. Our job is to educate the whole child not just prep them for testing.

Kellie Lowe, Davis School District

If we can stop the schools are broken stance and instead be dazzled that they work at all considering the size of the task, we might be able to tweak a few things here and there instead of lurching from one fix-all to another with no measurable, positive results, ever.

Liz Sharp, Davis School District

We focus so much on teacher accountability and school accountability, but what about parents being held accountable? I can only teach the students that come to school and stay all day. Merit pay and testing doesn't take any of that into account.

Michele Van Dyke, Davis School District

Enough with the punitive efforts to punish educators. We are undervalued and constantly asked to do more and more with no incentive. I hate my job today because of the way I am treated. I used to feel valued and not I feel nothing we do is ever good enough.

Carol Overson, Granite School District

I have been a kindergarten teacher for over 20 years. This year has been by far the worst year in regard to respect for teachers. My workload is unbearable with very little support in the classroom and now the state has come out with an impossible kindergarten test. Not only will it take from instruction time but will provide me with very little information that I didn't already know. The test is estimated to take 30 minutes per child and only the kindergarten teacher can administer the test. I have 45 students. This will take approximately 23 hours of instruction time to give.

Carrie Christensen, North Sanpete School District

I spend extra hours daily in study, preparation, and training opportunities to improve my craft. I spend my own money buying items for my middle school science class. It seems that there is never enough funding to do great hands-on science activities.. I frequently receive unfriendly E-mails from parents who can't understand why their child can't get a free ride. I feel it is my duty to give the students of my classes opportunities to grow and become well-rounded scientific minded citizens that can make a positive difference to themselves and the people in their lives. The things that I need to do this are: 1. Solid training. I went to a state funded science training this year that was ill prepared and didn't have any opportunity for teachers to experience the new technology or hands-on experiences. 2. A solid understanding of what the sage test will look like to prepare and give my students opportunities to be successful. I feel I miss the mark every year. 3. I need the proper technology, up-dated equipment, and supplies to create well-planned learning opportunities. 3. I need to know that I will be paid well and will have opportunities to get raises. I believe that merit pay creates a competitive and not a collaborative environment amongst educators. 5. I need good insurance so I can stay healthy while doing such a stressful job. 6. I am ok with the size of classes I have if I could get a technician to help set-up the experiment for my next class that will begin in 4 minutes. 7. It would be nice to have one bathroom break in day and a lunchtime that was longer than 20 minutes. I believe in education and I want to leave a mark of excellence in this little part of the world I am teaching in and I believe that you want to do the same. When you are discussing issues, please always put the rising generation of this state in the forefront of all discussions.

Doni Bufton, Nebo School District
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As an early childhood educator, I have witnessed a “push-down” of academic expectations. Our system has ignored the vast knowledge we have of child development and we are expecting young children to perform academically above their capabilities. I have witnessed students shutting down and becoming negative towards school in kindergarten and 1st grade because the expectations are unattainable for them. We need to reevaluate the core as written and use research based knowledge to determine best practices for early learners.

Connie Sorensen, Other

I have worked in a very high impact school and as a teacher it was so stressful and frightening with with parents. I was not treated as a professional and told what to do and how to do everything. I am now in a school that is not Title 1, they do not have the resources to help teach students. They need more money for technology or even the simple math manipulations. I am treated more like a professional and given more freedom to teach the way I feel best for my students. I care about my students and not just test scores. Therefore, I will do whatever I need to help them. Treat teachers like the professionals that they are.

Charlotte Hart, Provo City School District

Quality teachers matter!

Richard Magleby, Salt Lake City School District

I LOVE teaching second grade. It is my passion. It is my calling. I'm good at it too. Children who come to me already not liking school, learn to love school. What I would love to do, is teach. I don't want to fill out forms, test children to tears, etc. I am fine showing that my students make growth. However, I am not okay adding more testing, more 'data collection' to their workload or my own. I feel that teachers have become vilified. There are some “bad apples” in education, as there are in ANY profession. However, I think you will find the majority of teachers teach because they LOVE it! They love inspiring children, they love opening children's eyes to a new concept or way of thinking, they love making a difference. I really wish the legislature would focus on way to SUPPORT teachers so we can better support our students. I wish the legislators saw teachers are caring professionals who work so hard to make a difference instead of how we are often portrayed.

Stephanie Liechty, Weber School District

I teach special education and I feel like I burn the candle at both ends to be able to keep up with the paper work that I am required to do and also focus on what my students need. I feel like more and more energy is being given to the "paper work" side of my job and testing my students as opposed to teaching my students. This is NOT how it should be and it's hurting my students

Shelese Stansfield, Weber School District

I am an adapted physical educator. The high school I teach at has a Unified Sports program (peers and student athletes with disabilities learning, practicing and competing in tournaments together). This program is very successful as all of our students become so involved in activities both during school and after school hours. Cooperation, friendship and teamwork as well as sportsmanship during competition are emphasized. All students grow personally as well as physically.

Julie Hines, Alpine School District

Being a teacher in public schools since I began my career in 1987 has been an amazing and difficult and wonderful experience. It’s an honor to lead youth, to help them grow, and to hopefully be a positive impact in their lives. The challenges today are more difficult because we are required to do so much more, with so much less money, and the support from parents and society in general is just not what it used to be. The respect for the profession has diminished. This is partially due to the level of professionalism displayed by teachers. I don't want to sound like a complainer, but you get what you pay for. A lot of my sharpest students would never consider teaching as a profession. Some of the student teachers I have mentored through the years did not demonstrate passion for teaching or for the youth. Let's make teaching a highly respected and sought after career again! Put a high value on amazing educators! Find a way to attract the best and retain them with fair salaries and fair expectations, lots of
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support and Utah Schools will continue to be excellent. If not, the only ones you'll get to do this job will be desperate, unmotivated people who are only in it because they think they get their summer off.

*Kimberly Sorensen, Cache County School District*

I love teaching, I love working with students. But, I wish it was that easy. I work very hard to plan and make sure all their needs are met. I put in two extra hours of my own, unpaid time, everyday. Plus, I take work home over the weekend and I still feel like I can't get it all done. I have used a lot of my own money and resources on my classroom and students. I have a lot of behavior problems with students stemming from home or parental problems. I spend so much time disciplining and parenting students, that I can't get any instruction time in. I have 4 students that have already had over 14 absences and it's just the second term. It gets really depressing went I see other professions (same amount of education) put in less time and less stress and get paid a lot more. It's no wonder teachers are leaving the profession. Our brains tell us it is not worth it, but our hearts tell us the students are worth it. It's an internal battle that each teacher has to face and make decisions. It's a slap in the face when they hire people without teaching degrees, and I'm expected to teach and help them without any extra pay. I have been observed during snack time when I taught Kindergarten, and got marked down for not using technology. I have been marked down for not having my daily objectives listed, when in reality they were on the white board behind my principal giving the observation. I have been observed during a Valentines party and got marked down for not assessing and explicitly teaching. I got marked down for having garbage on the floor on another observation, and the students were cutting out word sorts. There is no place for the educator to write their thoughts or opinions, or defend what was really going on. We just get marked down and it makes our averages drop. There are a lot of things they can do differently on the observations to make them more valid and fair.

*Susan Horning, Davis School District*

Teachers are not being supported in the classroom.

*Mackenzie Kemp, Granite School District*

Students deserve to have veteran teachers instruct them in a smaller class size, up-to-date materials and technology. I have 39 students in a class, no new textbooks, and not enough time in the day to grade papers, build my curriculum, consult with teachers from my department, mentor new teachers, and write emails, or make phone calls home. I have been teaching for over two decades and have worked with about 25 new teachers in my field. This revolving door in our profession only harms students and puts such burdens on the teachers that continue year after year. Please consider lowering our class sizes, give us up-to-date materials, pay teachers or give bonus money to those outstanding in our field, and stop giving the Public Education money to Charter Schools that do not have the same strict guidelines to follow. Thank you.

*Susie Myers, Granite School District*

Something needs to be done to help increase teacher morale. Teachers are very highly educated, yet are treated like we are uneducated. Society cannot function without teachers, and they need to be treated that way. This would do a lot to help with the teacher shortage that we are dealing with. Privatizing education or giving more money towards charter schools is not the answer. The education budget needs to be spent on finding the most qualified teachers who have a passion for education and who are willing to stay in the profession. Public school teachers are teaching the future leaders of this state and country. Supports are needed in classrooms, not just in increased funding and decreased class sizes, but also with increased funding for classroom aides.

*Emily Saltas, Granite School District*

Please come spend a week in any classroom. Please come see the day-to-day intricacies of our day and then see how it compares to what you felt before. See how many of our students depend on school for a hot meal, for TLC, and for so many other critical survival components on top of the educational ones we also provide. Please spend more than an hour or even a day. Then go back and decide how best to serve our student populations and our future caretakers.

*Sarai T Memmott, Nebo School District*
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In the community I teach in...(inner city schools) we are the life line for their total education...You can hardly put a price on that...but good teachers are leaving because they can't meet their own financial obligations. So much pressure is put on them with no financial reward...it has to be a given.

Suzanne Williams Dennison, Ogden School District

I retired from the classroom four years ago after devoting more than forty years to the profession. I experienced many changes and shifts in the educational system during those years. But one thing has never changed. Every student deserves a well trained, qualified, caring teacher.

Trudy Henderson, Other

Growth in funding for public education in Utah began falling behind the rest of the Country decades ago but the resulting decay of services was largely kept hidden from the public for two reasons. Utah possessed some of the most dedicated hard working teachers and Utah students were largely from stable supportive homes. Those teachers are now retiring and the current work conditions are so poor that few college graduates view a career in Utah public education as a viable option. Schools are now forced to serve ever expanding social roles with students because fewer and fewer of Utah children have the stable supportive home life. Utah can no longer hide its failure to adequately fund public education. The crisis is no longer in the future. The future is now.

Charlie Matthews, Park City School District

It is important for us to attract and retain good teachers. I have friends who have quit teaching because, though they love the profession, they feel that they can no longer afford the luxury of serving our students. Not only is it a matter of salary, but of health care benefits also need to be improved. Too much of my salary is simply handed over to my health care providers -- I have less "available" money now than I did five years ago due to my increased health care and prescription costs. One co-pay for a life-saving medication that I have to take is over $400.00 on my current health care plan, which is the best plan available in my district. Last year the co-pay for this same medication was $150.00 under the same plan, while the previous year, it was $75.00. The pharmacists actually apologize to me when I get the prescription for this medication filled, explaining that my school district's health care plan has the highest co-pay for this particular medication that they have ever seen. Something has to change!

Victoria Muehlberger, Salt Lake City School District

Unfortunately, teachers responsibilities currently include parenting students. Because parents are often unable or unskilled at assisting students at home, teachers have assumed the responsibility for not only the academic success of their students, but teachers also must include ethics and behavior training. Additionally, students level of engagement has decreased due to their generations addiction to social media and technology We must find methods and pedagogy to counter the lack of parental support and student interest in academics and future success.

Anonymous, Salt Lake City School District

If they need questions answered about education, ask the experts that are in the trenches everyday. If not, they should have to spend a week doing the complete job of a teacher before they run for office so that they can understand the complexities of being an educator and the changes laws that have an affect on education without understanding the impact that they have on teachers and students.

George O. Judd, Sevier School District

I have 27 first-graders in my class and an autistic boy!! Too many very young students per teacher ratio!! Please, lower classroom

Tanna White, Uintah School District

It really bothers me that an educators wages aren't enough to support a family. What happened to the time when an individual could go to work and know that their family would be taken care of with the wages they earned. Now I am at the time of life where retirement is around the corner. I have saved my entire adult life so I can retire some day and
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now I am worried that I haven't done enough. It has put a strain on my finances over the years to prepare for the time I can retire.

Kathryn Parry, Washington County School District

I believe that teachers salaries and benefits need to be improved to hold and retain quality teachers. Make sure that all administrators are education experienced and qualified to be in an education management position.

Paul Fawson Jr., Weber School District

Maintaining quality teachers will REQUIRE the state to seriously increase the salary of all teachers, within all districts equally. Allowing districts to allocate the funds tends to allow them to reallocate it elsewhere. Many teachers leave the state or leave the profession entirely because of the lack of importance to be compensated or even trusted at times to be able to manage their own time when given time to plan meaningful and engaging experiences in the classroom. Much time is wasted in just filling the need to have committees and going through the motions of unnecessary programs felt beneficial by those who have never taught or haven't been in a classroom setting for many years. Also, in my experience, the best administrators are those who have taught a minimum of 10 years in a classroom, and just by obtaining a degree online shouldn't be the sole reason for advancing any individual. Much is learned after many years in a classroom that can't be taught by only reading a book or attending a class. Public opinion needs to change as well, that teachers are solely responsible for a child's education. True parent involvement is needed. We are educators, yes... we are caregivers as well, but much of what happens at school is first taught in the home. Public awareness may transmit to a higher respect of teachers. I know this is a difficult task, and I know most all teachers rather give up personal time and personal funds to help a child succeed, but this needs to stop. Stop relying on the individuals that entered this profession as a personal call to help others by continuing to have them make the only sacrifices.

David Van Eerden, Weber School District

Studies have shown that the larger the class size, the less effective the teacher. This is so true. In our day where teachers are being blamed, or held accountable for students learning and test scores, class size has to be taken into account and dealt with. A teacher can hardly maintain control in a class of more than 25 students, and it is very, very difficult to meet the needs of all those students, to help them learn to read, write, and do math on grade level, when there are so many students and so many needs. I think legislators need to spend time in classrooms to see the conditions, the job teachers are trying to do, and what the struggles and conditions they are working under are, to see what and why they need to make changes to the education in our state. I have taught school for 12 years and do not recall ever seeing a legislator in the school I work at. There needs to be many changes made to education to improve it, but reducing class size would be a first step in the right direction.

Gina Baird, Box Elder School District

Most teachers are very hard working and love their jobs. I take home school work every night, because it's important to me that my students succeed this year and have learned what they need to be successful in their next school year.

Susan Pratt, North Summit School District

Why is Utah ranked so low in average spending per pupil and test scores? I have now taught 5th grade classes with 28, 37, 34, 30, 31 students in each of the past 5 years. How can I effectively teach with so many students in my class? How come charter schools receive money from the state, but they aren't held to the same standards as public schools?

Peter Haslam, Salt Lake City School District

Time commitments have increased due to additional responsibilities - flex time classes requiring preparation, referrals to special programs like homework lunch and academic support, increased expectations for remediation & retesting, increased quantity and variety of parental notification, teacher training on days that used to be preparation days. There has not been additional compensation for these extra responsibilities, thus restricting my availability for the second job that I need in order to support my family. Additionally, parents and administrators are quick to criticize
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

any perceived shortcomings in any of these areas. On top of that is the constant push from state and district officials and policies to improve, putting more blame and responsibility on teachers instead of students.

Karl Powell, Weber School District

That with the shortage of teachers we should be better supporting them. No new bills to make it tougher on new teachers. Ann Millners new law is a joke. Also the state school board needs to back off and start supporting teachers for a change.

Chad Staley, North Summit School District

The present state of funding of education in Utah is appalling! It demeans teachers and also students, setting a standard for low expectations and low self esteem. This affects students all their lives.

Heather Dorrell, Other

Come to my class of 36 kids, and teach for a week. See the whole week.

Traci Parkinson, Alpine School District

The three computers we have for a small student lab in the classroom are old and not supported by the district. They are being taken away with nothing to take its place. The teacher is expected to do something like write grants to fix the problem.

Helena Langford, Davis School District

Teachers are hard working professionals with education. We need to be compensated as such. We need to have some incentive to stay and deal with the growing needs of this generation.

Jami Houle, Alpine School District

The morale of teachers is ever decreasing. Teachers need support from legislators to help them stay successful in teaching!

Holly Stuart, Cache County School District

I believe providing up to date technology in school is important. The problem comes in that technology needs to be replaced. If it is used how we should use it, then we are going to need replacement within 5 years. This is never written into budgets and is very frustrating to many of us when we go to use the technology and it doesn't work. There are days when the only thing that works in my room is my white board. That is right, not my smart board but my white board. I just ask that while getting technology into the classroom is important, it is just as important to update it periodically.

Lori Burnett, Davis School District

The role of an educator has been overwhelmingly modified in the past several years. Today's teacher in the public schools must prepare several lessons for the same classroom of students. My daughter is a high school teacher. She is often very overwhelmed preparing her lessons for an AP history class. Her classrooms have close to, or over, 30 students each. The students in each class include: IEP, 504, Foreign Exchange, ELL, along with a few high achieving. She has to prepare four lessons, in order to reach each students needs, for each class period. She also has to deal with lazy students, unreasonable parents, and members of the faculty who are so burned out they no longer participate in extracurricular clubs and coaching. She could have pursued many careers but she wanted to teach secondary public education. She had some wonderful teachers who inspired her and she longs to do the same for others. She is single and has no social life because so much time is spent writing lessons, helping students individually, and coaching. She is a GREAT teacher exhibited by the number of students who want HER as a teacher! But she is honestly questioning if she made the right career choice. She loves her students and hopes she is inspiring them through her lessons. She is a real teacher! But she is wondering about exploring other options.

Darline DeBry, Emery County School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

When I went into teaching, I went into it knowing I would not make a lot of money. However, I was allowed autonomy to design curriculum for my individual students. Now, I am spending hours preparing students for a lot of standardized tests (SAGE, SLO, District reading and writing benchmarks). I am also spending hours preparing portfolios to prove I am a qualified teacher. All this time not spent on my students is drawing my attention more to my low salary and huge class sizes. Teachers are getting burned out and that is what is causing the huge shortage.

Tami Ewell, Jordan School District

Teaching has changed so we are not only teaching but expected to entertain as well. This takes time and research and technology is moving so fast it takes time to learn. I feel that we need to decrease class sizes, increase preparation time, make sure we have quality teachers by paying more and holding them to a high standard which means giving them support in terms of continuing education, etc. I need to stay current in my subject area as well as in teaching methodologies.

Angie Pommerening, Jordan School District

No all children are equally privileged. Get out into the schools and talk to us (teachers)!

Moani Revoir, Alpine School District

Giving timely and detailed feedback to students is one of the best ways for students to receive correction and improve. Getting to know each and every child to help them learn is also very important. However, doing this with student loads of over 238 students is unrealistic without spending nights and time on the weekends to make this happen. If we don't reduce class sizes in our schools, we are just cheating our youth out of their deserved education.

Cassie Grether, Davis School District

I work as a special education resource teacher. The added paperwork involved is already a known, challenging factor. However, my greatest concern is the shortage of teachers we have to provide "specialized teaching". We have 2 full time teachers and 1 aide to spread over 52+ students with learning disabilities and/or behavior concerns. I would like the legislators to imagine meeting with a group of 6-7 peers and having the following occur during the first 30 minutes: 1- peer comes in defiant and unwilling to participate in group except for calling out off topic remarks, 2- peer begins crying that another peer is looking at him, 3- peer does not understand topic and is unwilling to listen long enough for the speaker to explain it, 4- peer makes silly remarks trying to disrupt group...and etc. The only way to address this is to have more support/aides to squelch the tiny issue before it becomes full blown and the learning stops. My point is smaller classes allow teachers to address individual needs more appropriately and quicker.

Janet Hilton, Davis School District

Come see what it's really like in a Title One school.

Krista Nielsen, Davis School District

How changes in community values and priorities have impacted expectations placed on educators.

Brett L. Taylor, Davis School District

There is a huge disparity of resources, teacher training, and needs amongst the schools in Utah. Rather than focusing on test scores and school grades that label minorities and economically disadvantaged students, and therefore the teachers of these students, as "failing", use the data that you have collected to provide resources to teach life skills and sociable behaviors to students in need. Stop building the school to prison pipeline. Start caring about the people in need, they are part of your community no matter how high on the hill you build your house.

Nichole Hillburn, Granite School District

Please spend a day in the title one schools of your district.

Janet Sharp, Granite School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

Every year the classrooms get more crowded. Every year teachers burnout because of the load and lack of mentoring. Our new teachers don't get what they need and then don't get their contracts renewed because they aren't up to standard. No wonder we have a teacher shortage.

Connie Wallace, Iron County School District

Class size does make a huge difference

Amy Patterson, Murray City School District

Come spend three full days in my public school classroom, from the beginning of class until classes end, including lunch. After about three full days, you as a legislator will be have a better understanding of the educational process!

Christine Redford, Alpine School District

Teachers are overwhelmed with the expectations to plan and prepare whole group and differentiated lesson plans, to track, perform weekly progress monitoring and create documentation for low-performing and behaviorally challenging students, to attend meetings 2 or more times a week, to fulfill CTESS requirements, to grade papers, to fill out report cards and parent-teacher conference forms, to keep in contact with parents, to deal with students' daily emotional, social and physical needs on top of teaching the state and district standards to an unlimited number of students. We are held responsible for our students' performance on district and state testing, yet get little to no state or district support with regards to student attendance or student behavioral issues. I personally, spend on average 18 -20 hours of my own time (off-contract time) weekly to keep up with the demands of my job because of the lack of paid planning time and the amount of on-contract time I have to spend doing after school duty and attending meetings. I believe most teachers would prefer to have more uninterrupted, self-directed on-contract time to meet all of the requirements of our job and to collaborate with each other, than to have any other kind of compensation. We want to do a great job educating and building positive relationships with our students but the current lack of preparation time and the unreasonable list of expectations on us make it impossible.

Kay Bailey, Canyons School District

The fact that Arizona ranks higher than Utah, and yet Utah piles more responsibilities and higher expectations on teachers, speaks volumes. How about we go back to basics for what a teacher is expected to do, and hire specialists to deal with behaviors, data collecting, and interventions for severe academic needs? And instead of piling as many students as can fit into a classroom, let's get smaller class sizes so students each benefit from more one-on-one interaction with their teacher? We have forgotten how badly teachers are taken for granted, but even more just how much impact a teacher can have, given the right circumstances.

Keith Piccolo, Canyons School District

They are out of touch with what they fill is important to mandate teachers to do with their accountability. I am an early childhood teacher who is very sad at the lack of "play" time children have. I feel like over my years of teaching I am holding these little ones to what I taught in first grade with only two and a half hours. We are programing child to not have opportunities to explore their would and make real life connections.

Patrice Holbrook, Davis School District

Teachers have no rights, the administration is given all the power, they have no checks and balances, this promotes corruption

Kristie McLeod, Davis School District

Many teachers are discouraged with the teaching profession. Between increased behavior problems, learning issues, lack of responsibility from students and parents, constant changing of curriculum, entitlement, class sizes, etc., it is a hard profession. Even though, we put our heart and soul into teaching.

Terri Wall, Davis School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

When there are no consequences for students who don't try and parents who don't help, when can we hold them accountable? If they are an equal stakeholder in the education process, they too should be held accountable. Why not take away their child tax credit. Education is a cultural importance and there are too many who do not value it. If there was a monetary consequence, there would be some value given.

Sage Harmsen, Granite School District

I think it is the same thing you hear over and over again, teachers are held accountable for so much but given less resources. We are also dealing with an increasing number of disrespectful students and parents. I would love to see some sort of parent accountability for their own child's success.

Leonora McCarrey, Granite School District

This year has been the most frustrating year for me. I feel like have no support from parents (they are unable to be reached or working 2 1/2 jobs and can't be contacted to talk them about their student), if I send a student to the office they return to me (issue solved for a minute). I'm told by administrators their hands are tied as there is no attendance court/rules anymore. I have students that are constantly tardy and interrupting my lessons. I go home feeling beat up emotionally and mentally daily. I've taught 22 years. If someone asked me if they should teach...I would answer no! We have no support, no help, and no appreciation. Why? I do appreciate the raise we got last year. It was great!!! There is more to our job than teaching. We are parents, cops, counselors, life coaches, care givers, planners, and the list goes on....thanks for listening.

Shellie Anderson, Nebo School District

As an elementary educator, WE NEED MORE HELP!!!! I need money for a teacher assistant to enter data, help with testing, making copies, etc.

Claudia Empey, Washington County School District

Quit marginalizing education and thinking one-size-fits-all packaging works when kids don't come in those packages. A business model is not best for education. Public funding is critical for education or decisions about your age related needs will be made by those not prepared.

Jill Sparks, Granite School District

We need to attract and retain quality teachers. Look at holding schools accountable for learning, but more importantly, make teaching a respectable profession again. Look at increasing funding and reducing ridiculous demands on teachers in order to attract and keep the best and brightest.

Rachelle Durrant, Uintah School District

We have to allow the teachers to have more teeth in holding kids responsible. Instead of making teachers allow kids to keep redoing things. Kids have to be allowed to fail if they don't do their part. Also when it comes to the point that the judicial system can't do anything to kids if they are on school property, so much so that if a student is going to break a law such as drinking alcohol they want to do it on school grounds we are in trouble. Also there needs to be something that balances out the money available to schools instead of having the have and the have nots. In my 30 years of education there is so much more expected both time and stress related and the pay relatively the same.

Van Park, Box Elder School District

I have concerns that often money is allocated but there are so many strings attached or in the case of technology even required vendors with strings attached that it becomes difficult to put the money toward the greatest need. Additionally we have hard working teachers. When you hear the news stories otherwise these are the outliers. Please be mindful that all teachers/educators are not children who need to be heavily monitored and told what to do for EVERYTHING or reprimanded.

Leslie Burt, Cache County School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

I welcome legislators into my classroom so they can see how underfunded and unsupported teachers are with the expectations that are placed on us. We are willing to do the work, but it is impossible to make the gains they are expecting of us without more money for supplies, technology, and salaries of support staff.

Andrea Grant, Granite School District

I work in a Title 1 school. Every year the demands on teachers, schools and districts grow without accompanying support. A new layer of expectation, policy or law is added every year. Meanwhile, the social issues that our students deal with are more difficult year by year and continue to affect more students. As a teacher, I feel stressed and pressured to figuratively (by myself) cure “cancer.” There is no one in my classroom helping meet the social, behavioral and academic needs of my students besides me. Yes, other people can (and do!) help from time to time by offering suggestions or intervening in specific behavior related instances. However, teachers need more support. We need more daily hands-on help to share the burden and create more opportunities to meet the needs of these children. I believe in teaching to the needs of those I teach, but I am only one person. In my estimation, this is why retaining teachers is so hard. The disparity of the expectation versus the day to day reality is great. The stress, therefore, is often unbearable, flattening and morale killing. It is honestly why I am loosing my love of teaching and why I am currently looking to other career avenues.

Kerri Rustad, Granite School District

Teachers need to be paid for the many extra hours it takes to meet the ever changing new curriculum demands for the technology classes, and also be provided adequate training.

Carol Meinhardt, Millard School District

While the amount of money I can deduct on taxes is decreasing, the personal cost of purchasing supplies is rising. Students come to school with less every year making it necessary to purchase items myself. This is not ideal for me or my family as that money should not have to be spent on pencils or paper. The stress teachers deal with is also increasing. With expectations rising, less parental support, not enough funds, the stress is making many of my colleagues have increased health issues, myself included, that stem from dealing with the stress.

Carrie Van Nosdol, Nebo School District

I love my job. I love what I teach, I love my students, I love my colleagues. However, I find that I get burned out, frustrated, and just plain tired of all the responsibilities placed on teachers. The job is ALL consuming. When I’m not at school I’m still working either spending my own time planning, searching for ideas, grading, discussing with others, getting more education for myself, keeping myself current, etc. my life really is not my own, it belongs to my job. I completely understand why young adults are not going into the education field and I don't blame them. I hate to see it happen, but how can I recommend this job to young adults? We’re over worked, under paid, under appreciated not only by some of our parents but by our state government as well. Teachers used to have great insurance and great retirement which compensated for the lack of pay. However that is not the case any longer. Both retirement and insurance benefits have been cut (we now have to pay part of our premiums). We are the only profession that gets punished for our experience- change districts and you get a pay cut and younger teachers are cheaper and hired first. We don't really get tax breaks either...last year I sat with $511.00 worth of receipts for items purchased for my classroom and I could deduct only $250.00 worth. We must do something to entice college students to go into education. My opinion is that the whole system needs to be overhauled. However, I only have 10 years until I can retire. I’m in it for the long haul. The system counts on that so the needed changes won’t be seen or addressed until my generation of teachers is gone and we’re destitute for teachers. We need to act now. Forget charter schools versus public schools. What good is either without quality teachers?

Michelle A. Harris, Alpine School District

We have to do something to keep teachers in the field and not looking for other jobs.

Kari Nelson, Alpine School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

Veteran teachers are leaving their profession in record numbers. We need to ask why. There has been a turn in education as it becomes a fiscal competition where parents/patrons are more important than the educators. The loss of respect from parents, students, and administrators is creating weakness. The teacher shortage is more about the treatment of teachers than just the pay. When we hire people without a teaching degree or certificate we marginalize the expertise of our profession. Then the administrations raise the expectations and hoops to jump through to simply keep a job that there are no qualified teachers to re-fill. How is that positive?

_Shelly Christensen, Canyons School District_

You need good qualified teachers and they are hard to find and keep!  
_Kristina Schade, Carbon School District_

The need to find and retain good teachers.  
_Christy Fong, Davis School District_

In many parts of the world, teaching is a valued and respected position—from the way it is viewed by students, parents, the community, and the community leaders who make decisions that impact education. Unfortunately, I feel like this is not always the case in our country and especially in Utah. Educators should be drawn here. If we want our students to be able to compete with students across the country and the world, then we need to keep quality teachers in Utah classrooms who have classroom education experience, who have succeeded in a college education program, who have done what was necessary to become knowledgeable in their content areas, who have high morale, and who feel valued. Currently, as a fourth year teacher, I have watched many of my coworkers leave teaching for other professions because of salary, because of the way teaching is viewed in our state, because of the overwhelming workload, and because of the lack of support they are receiving from parents, community members, and community leaders. Others of my coworkers are quickly trying to move away from teaching, but stay in the field of education (by pursuing counseling, administration, district employment), not because they have a desire to work in these areas, but for these same reasons. They feel obligated to move. Why can I not feel valued as a teaching professional in a Utah classroom? Why do I feel like I might need to go elsewhere one day because of the direction we are headed in this state? I am qualified, and I love my job. Unfortunately, if we continue to try to fill classrooms with unqualified teachers and push qualified teachers out with a lack of salary, with a lack of classroom supplies/technology, with a lack of how we value them as professionals—instead of supporting and helping qualified teachers stay in the classroom—then what is going to keep teachers, like me, from leaving? Our students are not going to be receiving the type of quality instruction that they need. Our students are not going to be able to compete with other students across the country and around the world. Teachers make all other professions possible, including yours as a legislator. Please help keep qualified teaching professionals in the classroom. We need your desperately need your help!

_Carly Maloney, Davis School District_

We need strong new teachers who are qualified and supported for the future of our kids in Utah.  
_Edie Rostal, Davis School District_

I am concerned about the teacher shortage. I work in a rural district that pays teachers less than many other districts. I see new teachers getting hired just to move on after a few years. More and more often, people are being hired with no teaching degree. I work in a school that just hired someone right out of high school to teach. Then, it seems like we are inundated with training to help us be effective educators. I believe this is to help those who are not qualified to teach. These ARL’s make what teachers make, and I am still paying on my student loans from when I went back to school to get my teaching degree. So, not only are unqualified people are being hired to teach, but I feel penalized for getting the education necessary to do my job effectively. Additionally, because of the teacher shortage, these unqualified people being hired require help from other teachers (because that is what we do), increasing our work load so that we give the students all that we can.

_Jennifer Jenkins, Duchesne County School District_
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

I shared with Lisa: Teacher salaries Teacher expectations Problems of Alternative License Route Science curriculum expectations without textbooks or supplies Mentor/student teacher expectations

Patricia Gotberg, Jordan School District

We have gone many years with funding that does not meet the needs of our students, especially ESL populations. We have also gone along time with inadequate compensations for teachers who teach in Title 1 schools with so many more expectations and accountability on their heads.

Sonceria Zuckerman, Salt Lake City School District

I have personally visited with Representative Quinn and he has visited my US Government classes at Wasatch HS. Accountability. Put back into law that there is RESPONSIBILITY for students to actually attend school. Parents should have more support from our state legislature to encourage students to actually attend class for some civic dialogue and learning with peers! Students need to be more accountable for their actions, especially those in high school, in regards to daily attendance. Put some teach back in to the hands of local school districts.

Dawain Mills Wheatley, Wasatch County School District

You have to address the cause of teacher shortages. Bandaids can only do so much.

Arron Wheeler, Weber School District

As far as I'm aware, teachers are the only full-time government employees that do not receive holiday pay. Teachers should receive holiday pay. Additionally, it is impossible to support a family on a teacher's salary. Administrators are abusing their power and treatment of teachers who would do well are being pushed out by poor work environments. We should be able to take "personal days" without the punishment of paying $45, which, to my understanding, is not to pay for the sub, but is punitive to deter teachers from taking personal days.

Spencer Saluone, Alpine School District

The only students failing my classes are the non-attenders. We need support from our legislators to get and keep students in school. You want test grades to improve- make attendance mandatory!

Stacy Church, Box Elder School District

While working as a Special Education Teacher. I had the opportunity to help a few students attend an ATC program while going to high school. Through academic assistance and their hard work these students completed their program while still seniors in High School. Fabulous for them, and I feel blessed to have been a part of their success. After graduation, I talked with these students and they informed me they had been hired on at local shops using the skills they learned in the ATC program. These students salaries were impressive. Much higher than my own and I had, at the time, been teaching for 12 years with my masters degree. Teachers simply do don't get paid a fair wage for everything they do. I was very happy for my students, but it really cut hard to my soul at how little I truly make as a teacher.

Melissa Fox, Davis School District

I have been an educator for many years. I feel like my work load has increased and my pay scale has not. I want them to know I work about 10 hours a day and do not get paid any type of overtime. Retirement and incentives that were there when I started teaching are not available to teachers anymore.

Lori Huey, Jordan School District

I would like my legislators to consider the following things: 1. One-to-one tech is pointless without teachers who are trained (and trained WELL) to use it. 2. Admin Rule R277-531 (the PEER framework) feels extremely controlling for such a Republican congress. Its micro-managing language makes me certain you don't trust me as far as you can throw me...I can't imagine how it makes lifelong teachers feel. (Some kindness and validation from your direction would go a long way.) 3. When you consider points 1 and 2, hopefully you can easily see why young, tech-savvy teachers like me are never going to stay longer than a few years. Fifty percent of my prep time is taken up helping my...
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

older peers figure out how to use their tech and the other fifty percent is like forced A.D.D....I can't get anything done because you have me way too hyperfocused on my PEER plan and all of the other EYE requirements. I could have a higher paying job that is less time-consuming with like-minded peers who don't require constant help and a boss who trusts and respects me...why does anyone stay longer than 3 or 4 years? I mean, would you?

Chaela Mcdonald, Provo City School District

We need our elected officials to respect our knowledge and expertise. We are the experts. Please allow us to practice our craft as you would any other highly educated professional. We are teaching little human beings how to function in our society, not just curriculum. What we do cannot be reduced to a standardized test!

Kay Lynn Schick, Davis School District

I am in an elementary school in the Granite School District that is a Turn Around school. This program has got to be the worst thought out legislation I have ever seen. We have struggled for three years with this monster. We have instituted so many different programs that it is hard to keep track. As they are instituted the teachers autonomy has diminished to nothing. We have meeting after meeting(so many that it is impossible to see the benefits of over half of them) We have had a large teacher turnover each year which doesn't help student learning or staff cohesiveness at all. We have people continually coming in to observe our classes. All of these things raise the stress level of the teacher and the entire school. We were already headed in a great direction with our new principal before this crap hit the fan. It has become a behemoth of confusion and stress. Use this money to support teachers. Right now it is being used to stress teachers out, which in turn causes turnover. Turnover with a shortage of teachers is the last thing we need!!!!

Charles Bell, Granite School District

Support the teaching profession by making teaching less demanding and place more responsibility on students rather than teachers.

Mike Valdez, Granite School District

I work as a teacher specialist and I'm frequently asked to work with teachers that are struggling in the classrooms. More often than not, these are teachers that have not gone through the typical education programs and have not completely student teaching under a supervisory teacher. There idea that anyone off the street can teach is just wrong.

Rebecca Franchi, Ogden School District

We need to stop attempting to legislate everything about public education. There are too many mandates that limit the ability of educators to genuinely focus on student learning. By encouraging teacher initiative and providing financial support and other resources we can provide meaningful educational experiences that help students learn and retain information.

Shawn Price, Alpine School District

We work hard! Please don't make our jobs harder.

Allison Terry, Alpine School District

We are doing great things in school and balancing what parents what done for their students locally and decision makers do not see what really happens in the classroom. They need to visit a wide variety of schools rather than the select "golden child" schools. I work a full day at school with 30+ students and then spend another 4+ hours at home planning, grading, and continuing my own training. This is not a "leave it at work" job. There needs to be a greater understanding that we are professionals and are highly trained. We are a great resource - use us in the decision making process.

Steve Einfeldt, Davis School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

Teachers are leaving because of the overload of meetings and responsibilities. We are given no time for our own planning and preparation. You just assume we will do it all on our own time, and we do!!

Wendy Davis, Granite School District

Let teacher teach and remove extra requirements they do that have nothing to do with teaching

Joan Cahoon, Jordan School District

Truancy and parental accountability needs to be addressed. Educators shall not be absolutely responsible for student success or failure.

Frances Anne Dallons, Jordan School District

The demands on teachers are becoming impossible. Teachers are working tirelessly to rise to the expectations, but most teachers are just trying to help their students get through another day. Putting more pressure on the teachers to increase test scores and such is too much. Legislators do not seem to consider the emotional, physical, psychological, economic, physiological, and so forth, issues students bring to school. Educators do what they can to provide safety, counseling, reassurance, support, stability, food, and clothing for those students who need it, while maintaining classroom management and teaching the core.

Kaylyn Mueske, Jordan School District

Dear Legislators, please keep in mind when proposing legislation that there is a cause and effect that affect teachers in the classroom. Every time you add another responsibility or layer of accountability to a teacher, you are taking away time that could be spent preparing effective lessons. Teachers are human beings who have families, get tired, and are not automatic robots. Sometimes when legislators pass legislation they don’t take into consideration how that truly impacts the day of a teacher and his/her students.

Suzanne Rouse, Jordan School District

We need to address chronic absenteeism. Students are required by law to attend school, so why are we unable to hold parents accountable for getting their children to school? I have multiple students that miss one or more days per week and I am the only one being held accountable for their lack of achievement. I can’t teach them if they are not in class.

Judy Wright, Logan City School District

Undervaluing teacher input in decision making is driving teachers away from the profession.

Lori Cunningham, Nebo School District

Educators work very hard, yet we are given a very negative public opinion. It isn’t fair. In one classroom, we might have a special ed student, 3 ELL students, 2 gifted students, 4 below grade level, and the rest average students. WE have to meet the needs of all. When we don’t it is said that we are bad teachers. I would love to have a legislator come into my room, not for a few minutes, but for the entire day, so they can see bus duty, teaching, recess duty, planning, etc.

Nancy Berry, Park City School District

I do not believe they realize the socio economic and social issues that impact our students in the state. We are not all the same and equity does not mean we all get the same treatment. Title one schools are more impacted and should be recognized as so.

Leann Banco, Salt Lake City School District

Teachers are burdened by more students, more paperwork, more testing, and more credentialing requirements. I feel that all of this is taking away from the art of teaching our students. I wish I had more time to focus on lesson preparation and actual teaching. I’m always playing catch up on my assessments, data, paperwork, and other hoops
I’m asked to jump through to prove my worth as a teacher. I’m burned out. I became a teacher to help students, not continuously prove to my legislators that I’m a good teacher.

Paige E. Shaw, Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind

We appreciate any effort to aide in helping us teach our children. They will be our future leaders and should be prepared. Pour the funds and resources into having great teachers to be the guides for our students. You have to make education an attractive career choice for college students.

Lisa Aase, Alpine School District

Teachers work very hard and are not compensated for the hours that they are putting in beyond contract time to do their jobs well. I don’t know very many other jobs where once the work day is over, work is taken home with them. It’s set aside until the next day. Large class sizes (some over 42 in high schools) make it VERY difficult to give students one on one attention that they deserve. There are more requirements of us as teachers with evaluations etc. that take us away from designing and implementing fun, informative lesson plans. Burnout is high when you aren’t appreciated or provided with resources.

Becky Bailey, Alpine School District

the teacher shortage is caused because of lack of pay first and then because of lack of respect given to educators. Educators are on the bottom of the pyramid of respect. It starts with parents and then students and then administrators and teacher are left to the demands of the above three factors. Give teachers the ability to follow through with classroom policies and procedures without being overridden by threats from parents and students of being sued. Return respect and control to teachers.

Karen Finley, Alpine School District

Resources matter when trying to help students on an individual basis. As we have been mandated to help every student be successful, the difference between 25 and 35 students in a classroom becomes quite clear. It is impossible to effectively help every student in the way that they deserve when there is not enough time to talk to them. Make class sizes smaller by increasing the number of teachers. Increase the number of teachers by making this a profession that is respected and fairly compensated. Show the citizens of this wonderful state that you care enough about them to invest in their future.

Devin Fisher, Alpine School District

When I first got into teaching, I thought having holidays off at the same time as my kids would be awesome. I didn't realize at the time that teaching requires so much more than that. We don't get overtime, 'cause if we did our school would run out of funding before we were even half way done with the year! The amount we are paid is minuscule when compared to how many hours we spend to prepare our lessons. Add on top of that the high volume of students in each class, the lack of funding for science materials (I have to purchase what I do mostly out of my own pocket, which means I can't do as much as I would like), and the lack of classroom aids when they are really needed. I spend a lot of my "vacation time" either preparing for or finishing up things for my students. I've even had my family in helping, which, I can assure you, they weren't keen on doing for their vacation. And that doesn't even begin to address the teacher shortage (I totally understand how some could burn out!), the lack of respect we get from "choice" people (dare I put some partners in that mix?), and certain students, and you've got a recipe for a high-stress job with low pay and low morale. I'm not saying it isn't rewarding or that there is nothing but negative in this profession. I just wanted to get you in touch with our teacherly realities. Please don't forget us when the big guns roll in with their powerful allies and gung-ho ideas to use your influence for. We may not hold as much clout as they do, but we hold the hope of the future in our hands. Thank you.

Sharee Garcia, Alpine School District

We need to address teacher shortage, teacher morale and that teachers should be respected for being professionals.

Patrick Gleaves, Alpine School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

Education is the future; with poorly funded education comes ill-prepared citizens.

Kristin Greer, Alpine School District

Teachers and students have been waiting for many, many years to have a legislative strategic plan for education including class size reduction, increase in salaries and benefits, money for supplies and a respectful attitude toward teachers. Our students deserve the best education we can give them. And that costs money.

Phyllis Sorensen, Alpine School District

Education has to be something you are willing to invest significant money into. Without the profession being something that will pay enough for a family to survive on, there will be a serious teacher shortage. It has to be a viable option for new college graduates to choose.

Corine Barney, Davis School District

Please support our teachers and children through the necessary measures of financial funding and meaningful supports. We need more qualified teachers to support the growing population and class size epidemic teachers are facing and we need to support current teachers so that they stay in this amazing profession and do some of the most important work.

Karly Bates, Davis School District

This is about our community and funding education funds the future. The us vs. them idea needs to end.

Alyn Bone, Davis School District

Our classes are overloaded! I spend $2500 or more each year to buy supplies and technology to help my students. I am getting out of this profession and do not advise any one to enter it. We are micromanaged to the point that apathy has set in among the majority of teachers.

Sharlene Bremer, Davis School District

Special education teachers are overworked and underpaid.

Tanielle Carter, Davis School District

All students can learn! Teaching is an important! We need to provide teachers with additional preparation time and exposure to quality PD so that they can improve their craft and thus outcomes for students. Are special education teachers are dealing with more difficult student behavior and more challenging parents. On top of paperwork, their workloads are mounting with no relief in sight.

Kathy Chisholm, Davis School District

Teaching is a huge job that few realize how involved and draining it can be. We have to figure out a way to make teachers want to stick it out and stay with it!

Maureen Clark, Davis School District

How hard it is to teach without feeling valued.

Erin Fuller, Davis School District

In my experience, teachers work very hard, and are very dedicated and give many hours beyond what is expected. It would be nice to be appreciated more.

Robin Harris, Davis School District

you're not listening to the people who voted you in. You come in with your own agendas. Our state's growth in family sizes that affect schools and quality education can be the last thing funded. You can't squeeze anymore blood out of the turnip you've squeezed over the past decade. Wake up and make a significant difference in the lives of people.

C. Kirkham, Davis School District
I am a teacher and I love my job. I love the students and want the best for them. My parents and both my brothers have been or are currently educators. So I come from a long line of educators. However, Raising kids on a teacher salary has its challenges and when I was a single mom, there were times we could barely make ends meet. I was offered another job and would have made more money although it was a job that didn't require a degree. After talking to my children, they knew I wouldn't be happy doing anything but teaching. They were willing to sacrifice so I could continue in the profession I love. As a kid, I always knew I wanted to be a teacher. I am so glad I am still a teacher and wish more good people would join the profession but I hear all the time I wouldn't make enough money. Just for instance I have two grown sons who now make more then I do without a degree and I have a masters degree. This gives children the idea education isn't important. I would love to see teachers paid more so we can get more people interested in being a teacher.

Natalie Roach, Davis School District

We are in this profession because of our love of children and teaching. Over the last 10 years our workload has increased significantly, while support has not. Please consider that the policies you make regarding teachers also affects the education of the children of Utah.

Gloria Smith, Davis School District

Teachers are overworked, under paid and under appreciated. Expectations for teachers are too much, and if things don't change, teachers will quit. Teachers should have a life outside of school, but we don't. Teachers' own kids need to be their priority, but as it stands, teachers' families are sacrificing more than they should have to.

Heather Jacobson, Duchesne County School District

The number of mandates elementary is receiving is becoming a huge over load.

Jay Graft, Granite School District

I need smaller class sizes. 20 kids per class would be perfect!...or I need more funding for more aids in my class. I am a 5th year teacher and I am exhausted. I can't keep up with all the small groups, differentiation, language support, resource referrals, and interventions I am expected to do. I am worn out and ready to quit.

Michelle Hortin, Granite School District

I recently read an article about the best high school in every state in the United States. Each one had very small class sizes. Class size does make a difference in teaching ability. You can't have your class sizes unless you have more teachers. You can't have more teachers unless you offer a better salary and benefits than other places.

Paul McClatchy, Granite School District

Every child in Utah should have a safe, public school in his neighborhood he can walk to. Parents should send their children to the child's neighborhood school, a public school, which has a solid basic educational curriculum - even though they feel the school is not good enough for their child. If improvements are needed they should work together with other parents in their neighborhood, at the school level, to insist the school to become "good enough" and thereby help their community and all children. The legislature can work toward the goal of a safe, appropriate neighborhood school for all children. (This can also have the added bonus of reducing car emissions to clean the air around us.)

Kathleen Rice, Granite School District

Teachers are passionate about their careers, but without adequate living wages, small class sizes, nor supplies to be successful within the classroom, there isn't an incentive to stay in the field, let alone to encourage others to enter the field.

Joanna Timothy, Granite School District

I am a Dual Language Immersion Chinese teacher who grew up in China and have been to graduate school in the US. I have taught both in Hong Kong and the US at tertiary, secondary and elementary level. Three biggest structural
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

impediment to improving student learning are: 1. Multiple preps. Currently, I have four preps (beyond contract stipulation), two of which are brand new curriculum and two are a couple years old. Having these many preps make it impossible for me to fine tune my courses. I also have many great ideas that I do not have time to implement. If I spend too much time on one class, my other classes suffer. Consequently, no classes become as better as I'd like. 2. Lack of unstructured planning time. Growing up as a student in China, I got feedback from teacher on my assignment the same day I handed them in. That loop of practice and feedback is important for both the educators and the students to monitor learning. Lack of planning time makes individual feedback impossible. Also, having to teach 6 out of 7 periods in a day makes collaboration a luxury. 3. Students need recess. Students need unstructured free time to socialize, relax and go to the restroom. Few adults can function effectively having to go through 7 periods a day with only 4 min in transition and a 30-min lunch break. Many students, afraid of being tardy, simply do not go to the restroom in that 4-min transition time. Instead, they miss part of the class to go to bathroom. Giving students regular break will significantly help with classroom management and engagement.

Mengqi Wang, Granite School District

I would like to challenge all of the legislators to go to a school and sub for a day. It would be the administrators choice which classroom they subbed in. They should work with the teacher to see what goes into planning for a day and then stay and teach for all that day. It would be even better if they went for 3 days. I know that they have other jobs, but let them take the subs salary for that day or days. Let them work with some of our challenging students, or students who have left for Mexico for three weeks, or who come to school ill, etc, etc. I think that this should be a requirement to be a legislator that they sub at least one day a year.

Janet Wellman, Granite School District

UEA is not a liberal organization. It exists only to fight for the rights and benefits of teachers, and for practices that are best for students in Utah

Fred Ash, Jordan School District

I am a retired educator. It is sad to see that the education needs in Utah are still the same needs that were there in 1979.

Ann Hollowell, Jordan School District

We work hard, and do our very best. Please don't portray us as not trying to do our best.

Donna Allred, Juab School District

Teachers are the life blood of of our nation's future. Second to only the family.

Kirtt Myers, Millard School District

Need to pay enough money to attract quality teachers and have them remain in the profession.

LaDell Gillman, Nebo School District

What do you think the kids of Utah are worth? Do you really think the majority of teachers aren't doing the best they can?

David Rencher, Nebo School District

Last year I had a class with 29 1st graders. That's too many!

Rachel Wigginton, Nebo School District

I feel that teachers are overworked, with unreasonable expectations. There are many expectations with very few monetary rewards.

Shea Wimmer, Nebo School District
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How they are making TEACHING even more difficult than it already is by not understanding OR even acknowledging the efforts the majority of teachers make on behalf of their students.  

*Brenda Bensch, Park City School District*

I invite each member of the legislature to come substitute in any classroom for one week, including planning lessons. (You only need a high-school diploma to apply as a substitute.) When you have walked in our shoes for a week, go back and write the laws you wish you had in place. It will change your whole world. We need legislators who understand what teaching really means. We need legislators who understand what it is like to manage a class of 27 ten year olds or 44 high-schoolers. We need legislators who care that Utah spends the LEAST of any state on their students, and whose teachers are paid less than most other states. We need legislators who care as much as the students in the desks what will happen to them. We need you.  

*Mariel Boone, Provo City School District*

Focus on the key issues that teachers support, rather than political agendas that sound good to the public.  

*Darren Mecham, South Sanpete School District*

Human social issues  

*Chelsie Acosta, Salt Lake City School District*

I am a professional in education because I want to live in a better world. I am training that “better” world. Many of the rules and policies you create make it hard for me to be successful. Filling my classroom and tying my hands when it comes to discipline turns me into an inexpensive babysitter. Please value me and my time by providing the money to purchase supplies instead of having to create them myself. When a profession is valued, there aren't shortages in that area.  

*Angela T. Hansen, Uintah School District*

More funding is needed.  

*Kimberly Niday, Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind*

Same thing I say each year. Watching you guys. Smaller class sizes is must. When caseloads/classes are too big, teachers are overworked, and students don't receive the needed attention and support. Putting more educators in schools to share the load will better help retain educators. Don't burn out educators.  

*Bret Morley, Washington County School District*

Utah has good public schools and teachers. Compare the data in an objective way, with same comparisons to charter, public school before making decisions. Use data, rather than articulate lobbyists  

*Lorene A Sorensen, Washington County School District*

My legislators in North Ogden, Senator Christensen and Rep. Fawson, are continually on the wrong side of history by voting against educational funding and voting for red tape like SB 220 last year- to just name one bill among many. Utah is dead last in WPU funding-no excuse for that! They always quote the same argument "That Utah puts more money from budget towards education than any other state." That's like saying I have a really small apple pie...but I'm giving you a big piece! Its the smallest piece (WPU) in the nation, it's not enough, and I see the results first hand of Utah grossly under funding education for all these years. How they treat me as a teacher is a clear reflection of how they treat students. Not very good.  

*Paul Pontius, Weber School District*

I am lucky in my building because as a High School Teacher I only have 184 students this year. Most of my colleagues have over 200. In most of my classes I have 35 students. Sometimes I think about how hard it is for parents to teach 3 or 4 or 5 or even 6 of their own children at a time, yet we are required to give 35 students individual attention during class when we only see them for 1 hour every other day. It is really crazy when you think
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about it. It is unrealistic to give students the time and energy that they need when we have so many students in a class. We need more funding to reduce class sizes. We need to recognize and compensate teachers for the impossible task we have given them.

Kara Allen, Alpine School District

I have been teaching for six years and I have loved what I do. However, this year, I have wanted to quit many times. I have a hard class with 26 students. I don't have sufficient technology and I took a pay cut moving districts. I have to mentor new teachers on my own time and that cuts into my own planning time. I have a Masters Degree and I'm barely paying my rent. I have many other skills where I could be making double what I make as a teacher. We need more money and more respect as teachers.

Aubri Elder, Alpine School District

I love being a teacher! We as teachers can always use more resources to reach every child.

Jacqueline Hull, Alpine School District

Teachers are not receiving fair monetary compensation for the many hours of time they put into educating children in our state. It is difficult to keep giving away extra hours outside of instruction time to attend trainings and meetings, prepare materials, grade papers, and donate time to extracurricular activities. Teachers don't get to leave their jobs at the office.

Cindy Jovet, Alpine School District

Have you ever been a teacher in a classroom? The training that we go through and the paperwork and meetings that we are required to do, all the while testing and teaching massive class sizes and expecting the students to show growth, and yet, we are one of the lowest paid professions. This world would not exist without teachers. I think that our salaries should reflect the worth of the work that we do in the walls of our classroom to raise your children and grandchildren. Think about a teacher that impacted your life. Imagine what your life would have been without that teacher. We perform miracles in the classroom with VERY little funds and TONS of students. It is time for everyone to stand behind educators and make it happen!

Anabis McGill, Alpine School District

Teachers are overworked and underpaid. Simple as that. Stop putting extra work on top of them and let them teach. Most people who teach love their jobs, but usually because of pay and/or all of the extra political agendas, they leave the profession. Put yourself in their shoes. Go into their classrooms and see what they are doing. When you actually take a minute to see what they do on a daily or weekly basis, you will be surprised at the dedication they have for their job and you will see where you need to help. Stop addressing your own personal agendas and fix the education in Utah.

Ashley Oney, Alpine School District

Teachers are not the enemy - lack of student and parent commitment to education is undermining all of our efforts to make a difference. Our morale is in the toilet - that's why I would not encourage anyone to go into education for a career at this point. It's not worth it! Something has to change and targeting teachers is not the answer. WE are doing the impossible in Utah with NOTHING!

Josette Pitardi, Alpine School District

Class sizes are simply too big. Over 50% of my students are below grade level. They don't get the help they need. The kids who are on grade level don't get what they need because I am trying to help the kids who are behind. None of us gets what we need.

Lynette Burrell, Box Elder School District

Standards for teachers regarding becoming certified and re-certifying are extremely high, and we have to pay those ourselves, yet anyone who is “highly qualified” can teach due to teacher shortage. These requirements are unfair to
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I teach at an elementary school. I have many bright talented students who could use more creative ways to think. I work more than my contracted time just doing my daily tasks to keep up with what needs to be done. If I want to create really great lesson plans that engage the students each and every day I work much more than my contract time. Teachers need smaller classes and more planning time. Most of all teachers need to be paid for the hours they work!! I'm sure you are all paid for the hours that you work.

Suzanne Malloy, Canyons School District

Unless you make education a priority and back it with money you will continue to struggle with finding quality teachers.

Julie McFarland, Canyons School District

Come spend a day in my classroom. I would love to have a representative shadow me for a day. See how hard most of us work, the effort and time we spend with your children. Maybe then, you would be willing to support us better, respect us as Educators.

Kelly Avalos, Davis School District

Teachers are hard working educated people who deserve to be respected and compensated for the endless hours they give in behalf of children.

C. Braegger, Davis School District

I teach 2nd grade in the regular education side of a dual immersion school. Each year about 50% of my students are below grade level in reading. In order to better meet the growing numbers of struggling readers in my classroom, I have spent the last two years of my own time and financial resources to work towards earning the extra credential of a reading endorsement. I spend time outside of my contract hours planning Tier 2 reading interventions for all of my below level readers, as well as interpreting the data of their progress. Much of my time and energy is focused on these struggling students with very minimal support from parent volunteers or even classroom aides in the school. I would like to think that I'm doing everything possible to help these struggling learners grow. It's one thing to boast about what we do as teachers, schools, districts or the state for our highest achieving students, but we must always have the question foremost in our minds, "What are we doing for the students who struggle most?" As a legislature, I would ask you the same question. What are you doing for the students who struggle most?

Kynda Farrell, Davis School District

COME SEE FOR YOURSELF...ALL DEMOGRAPHICS IN THE STATE.

Camille Meriwether, Davis School District

Every year I spend hundreds (and my first year I spent over $1000) of my own dollars to provide my class with items like: snacks, pencils, paper, science supplies, art materials, rewards/incentives, etc. I do this because my students come to school hungry, their parents don't have money for school supplies, and because I value imbedding learning into real-life, meaningful activities such as art and science. I have to spend my own money because $300 a year does not cover the cost of all of those items for 25+ students. I have taught for 5 years, and I have NEVER had fewer than 25 students. On average, I have 28. I do not make enough in salary to continue to spend my own money on my class. I am happy to do it, because I love these kids and want them to learn, but I should not have to. I am only a fifth year teacher, and I am burnt out. I do not intend to teach another year, and not because of the kids, but because of a combination of difficult situations that exist in the teaching profession. Here are a few of the situations that exist which make teaching an undesirable profession: lack of respect from the community, administration, and legislation; low
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pay (made even smaller because of the amount that I use to fund my own classroom), lack of funding and support from administration and legislation, and large classroom sizes.  

Adree Fairbanks, Granite School District

Fund education! Put students first. Support teachers and fund them also.  

Jane Munson, Granite School District

Teacher burn out is real. After 8 years of teaching I'm considering finding a new job. I love to teach and love working with my students but the new demands each year with little to no compensation isn't worth it anymore. Teachers feel unsupported at all levels and criticized daily. We are not paid for the time we spend. Our class sizes are getting bigger each year, but our budget stays the same, or in some cases, gets lower. I have to begged parents to donate to my class in order to have paper and pencils throughout the year. How are we expected to reach our goals with no supplies to do it?

Carly Walkenhorst, Granite School District

Burnout

Tracy Castellanos, Jordan School District

I would want them to know how much money and time educators put into their classrooms.

Melody Green, Nebo School District

Students are not numbers. We may have to work with numbers to help the masses, but individual students need the care and attention necessary to grow and function in society. Class sizes should be no more than 24 to a class if possible. There should not be a class with more than 30 students--that should be against school policy. Additionally, teachers are payed less than many jobs that require little to no experience, let alone a degree. Yes, teaching is very rewarding and intrinsically motivating and satisfying, but there comes a point when teachers get burned out because they are doing too much for too little and it's hard to live off of such a little salary. After getting multiple degrees a person shouldn't have to have a second job to support themselves and a family, especially when this type of job is life consuming. School work does not stay in the classroom. Teachers should be valued more than many of the high paying, shallow jobs of the world.

Kate Ormond, Nebo School District

Educating our children is the most important priority.

Earl Gardner, Ogden School District

Teachers work hard every day to ensure a quality education for our students. Properly compensating teachers for their hard work would be appreciated. Class sizes need to go down to give students the attention they need.

Bradi Holder, Ogden School District

Teachers work so hard. Well beyond a 40 hour work week. Yet are continually required to do more & more; without lessening the overflowing work load that already exists. If teachers are required to do more & have more responsibilities, then, something should be taken out of their present workload in order to make time for the new requirements. Also, most teachers spend a lot of time working & creating things for their classrooms during the summer & are not recognized for those efforts that go above & beyond their contracted time.

Paula Hatch, Provo City School District

Increase teacher pay, lower classroom sizes

Linda Threlfall, Provo City School District

We need more money for the specialist areas.

Jay Griffin, South Summit School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

As things become more expensive for school districts, more and more of the money is coming out of my pocket. This is the only professional occupation where teachers are not only expected to fund their classroom, but the also fund the classes that are needed for licensing and increased knowledge for our changing world. I would like to see more support in these two areas, along with salary increases and class size reduction for the intermediate, middle, and high school classrooms.

Rosemarie Olsen, Washington County School District

I have been teaching in the state of Utah for 23 years. My job has gotten harder and harder every year I teach. We are asked to do so much. I have a master’s degree and four specialized endorsements on my teaching certificate yet my pay is at $65,000 a year. In any other career, with the same amount of education and experience my salary would be much higher. I did not choose to be a teacher for the money, and that is why I will always be a teacher, however, I am constantly told that I need to do more. Teachers are not the problem with education. You need to listen to what we are telling you. Lower class sizes, gives us time to plan and collaborate, support us with difficult students and parents, and quit blaming us when test scores are low. Stop tying our hands with so many controls and mandates. The last faculty meeting we had we were told we can’t ask parents to donate tissues, paper towels and ziplock baggies, i.e. grocery items. These are things that I use in my classroom every day. Where am I supposed to get the money to buy these every year??? Come spend a day shadowing a teacher. It would really open your eyes as to what it is we face every day.

Adrianna Griffey, Weber School District

This country needs better conditions for teachers. Teachers have created the past, constructed the present and they are ones helping to shape and secure our future. Without teachers, there is no Nation. We do not ask for anything out of this world, we are asking you to invest in the present and the future of our state and country.

Jose Garcia, Weber School District

My school had 34 students in each fourth grade class. A majority of the students didn't know their multiplication tables, and scored lower than any previous fourth grade year on their sage at the end of fourth grade. My principal had to fight to get the budget for a half time fourth grade teacher. We are a traditional school so we do not benefit from track time. The 1/2 time fourth grade addition has increased student performance more than 100% but I find it very upsetting and disappointing that our principal and fourth grade teachers had to fight so hard for something so beneficial to the students.

Brittney Bryan, Alpine School District

My numbers in my classroom have been climbing steadily. I do not get funding for aides or any help. We should have an additional teacher, but do not have the FTE funding. I cannot get to all of them. Children are suffering. More than 20 students in a first grade classroom where we are trying to teach children how to read is nearly impossible with one teacher. I have close to 30. It is discouraging.

BetteJo McLellalnd, Alpine School District

Public Education needs to be a priority above charter schools and online systems. 90 percent of our students attend public school. Support this. Quit taking away resources to fund personal interest businesses that are dressed in sheep's clothing as educational improvements or online services i.e. Howard Stephenson and his money grab for his technology education business. Class size is too large to provide a nurturing experience while parents are continually too busy to help.

John Paynter, Alpine School District

Please take into consideration that public education is educating the future leaders and citizens of our state and country. The children are our future. They are the people who will be taking care of you when you are retired. We need to make education our top priority as it impacts all of society for good or bad! The children are our future!

Stacy Stevens, Alpine School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

I ask for more balance in the system. If we hope to supply Utah with more skilled workers, we need to draw more elementary age students into education by helping them and their families to negotiate the system. Research demonstrates the need for early childhood intervention, and for trauma sensitive schools. Hill Walker demonstrated how these foci can alleviate the tax burden related to putting people in prison 20 years ago.

Jaynan Chancellor, Cache County School District

We work hard everyday to ensure a great education for our students. Legislators need to step up and support (including their financial duty) public education.

Vonzaa Hewitt, Davis School District

A reduction in class size is the KEY! Whatever it takes. Outcomes for students will improve AND incentives to teach will increase!

Jayne Shaum, Davis School District

Something needs to be done with education. Too much is being put on teachers and the expectations keep getting higher. It's almost impossible to do what we need to do. I think we need more support for each student. We need more teachers. The students are getting harder and it's getting harder to reach each individual student. What if there were two teachers per classroom?

Fran Stoker, Davis School District

As dedicated as the teachers are at a school like mine (high poverty, refugees, violence/trauma/PTSD, not a neighborhood school, high stress/demands on teachers, etc), we are losing teachers every year because the work environment is not emotionally, mentally, and sometimes physically safe for teachers or students. We do not have the resources to help these students; we are teachers, not licensed social workers or psychologists. The climate of this type of school, should be trauma sensitive, however, what ends up happening is that teachers are experiencing tertiary, or second-hand trauma themselves. Affects of the trauma is absent-mindedness, being late, forgetfulness, depression and anxiety, stress-related illness, weight gain, losing interest and not motivated in personal life activities, mental health care and medications. We don't have the power or resources to support the teachers, or the students. With larger class sizes, the situation has worsened 10-fold. This is one reason we are not able to keep teachers, or attract new teachers.

Heidi Jensen, Granite School District

My school has large class sizes and not enough para educators to help in these classes and in the Behavior Unit. I have 6 students out of 29 in my class who are on behavior contracts (general education classroom). We need help both in our school with more aides/para educators and PARENTS need help learning how to parent.

Karen Oliver, Granite School District

If given the resources schools and teachers would be able to meet the needs of the students we serve. Reduction in class size would enable teachers to personalize the help for the students in their classroom. This would help the overall budget spent on education in the long run because we wouldn't need to remediate as many students.

Tracy Rose, Granite School District

Teaching is rough. Teachers teach because they want to and not because they aren't educated enough to do something else with their education. Whenever you vote on anything that impacts education, think about if it will make life easier or more harder on teachers. If it will make it harder, then you will lose good teachers, bottom line. Don't use education as a way to get people to vote on more taxes. Look at programs you have going and say "is this more important than the nurse I have in 4 years knowing what they're doing?" or "would the state benefit more from this or from adults who know how to problem solve on their own?"

Jenna Meeks, Jordan School District
We need to stop bragging about how much we get out of our education system given that we spend so little money on it (compared to other states). Good enough is the enemy of great.

*Edward Potts, Park City School District*

Teachers are professionals, just as doctors and lawyers. We have to continuously maintain our credentials, just as they do. However, we are not seen in the same light as those careers. Many times we are called underpaid babysitters which is a belittling comment, to say the least. Few beginning teachers stay in the profession for more than 5 years because the stress and strain has already drained them, and they look for other options that will utilize their educational credentials. We, as educational professionals, need the public to recognize what we do. That without us, there is no future. There will be no doctors, lawyers, architects, or any other white collar workers, because we provide the basis for these professions. I hope that legislators stand by us and support us instead of hanging their heads and stripping us of our dignity. Please, pledge to promote our dedication to providing a better future for all of us.

*Misty Beckstrom, Alpine School District*

Those building new communities need to pay an impact fee to build the required new schools. I hear developers, etc., have too much clout to make that a reality. That's the whole problem. We need more schools for more classrooms to reduce class sizes, then increase teacher pay. Paying me more does not increase the number of hours in the day and there's only so much a teacher can do with 38 sixth graders. There is no time to prepare, to mentor, etc. Paying me more does not resolve that situation.

*Helen Gurr, Alpine School District*

Funding funding funding 20% increase in WPU! Aides in the classroom!

*Sam Dixon, Davis School District*

Decision makers need to spend a day in a Utah classroom. Don't make unilateral decisions when you haven't been in a classroom in 40 years. You need to see how hard teachers work, who arrives everyday, what our limitations are, what the possibilities are..

*ML Hill, Davis School District*

Every single day I worry about my 8th grade students that I teach. They have a lot going on in their young lives and not all of them get the attention they need. With my class sizes near 40 students in each class, I can't make the connection I would like to with each one. Making a positive adult connection is so important. Please make reducing class sizes a priority. There are many needs in public education. Please realize there are so many good teachers that want the best for their students. Lately I feel like my profession and public education is under attack and those that have negative feelings toward public education don't understand the pressures of teaching. I wish we could all focus on trying to fix and support our local public schools rather than take away funding. ALL students need to be a priority.

*Holly Rogers, Davis School District*

I taught first grade with 31 students, I am still surprised every day that I didn't quit. I now have 31 third graders, several of which are emotionally impaired and one that doesn't speak English. I have a very low class and feel that there isn't enough of me to go around.

*Kira Hurst, Granite School District*

Our future in Utah depends upon quality education for our children. Fund us adequately, please.

*Teri D. Jenkins, Granite School District*

I am fortunate that I can teach for the joy of it (not for the money), but each year it gets harder and harder. Less support, more hoops, and huge classes make the job nearly impossible. If people in Utah want to support our children we need to be willing to pay for the education they need and deserve.

*Kristine Marriott, Jordan School District*
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

For the past four years, I have not had a "normal" classroom environment due to not enough FTE funding from my district. One year, we had to have 2.5 teachers at my grade level with no other grade to “split” with. As a result, a 1/2 time teacher taught the 3rd group in the morning, and my colleague and I had to separate her kids and teach them in the afternoon. During that year I had 40 kids for half of each day in an elementary setting. It was miraculous that any learning went on at all. The next year presented the same funding problem and we tried having 2 part time aides share the third class for 1/3 of the day and rotated kids through as in middle school. It was a disaster in terms of classroom management for the aides, and that spilled over into the entire grade level. Once again, our test scores looked good, but we nearly made ourselves ill working as hard as we did to overcome the inherent problems that came with the model. This year, ONCE AGAIN, we didn't have enough FTE money to pay 3 teachers for 64 kids, so I have 32 6th graders (a group of struggling learners) and am barely keep my head (and theirs) above water. When is our state going to wake up to the fact that they can't keep working their most experienced and dedicated teachers to death and hope to retain them in the profession. Retirement is looking so nice right about now, and this is coming from a 29 year veteran teacher who had envisioned herself working another 5-6 years to help mold and change young lives for the better. Sigh. It is so very discouraging. Thanks.

Anne Renz, Murray City School District

When Scott Howell was my state senator, I invited him to spend a day at my school. It was eye-opening for him. He told me that no one in corporate America would put up with the kind of conditions that teachers put up with. I'd like each legislator to spend one day in a school to see the great things that are happening with teachers who care and give their students what they need.

Linda Wills, Other

Dear esteemed senators and representatives, In preparation for the coming 2018 legislative session, I invite you to come and spend an entire day at Mill Creek Elementary School in Granite School District (where I work as special education teacher) and do some or all of the following: (1) Observe a few teachers throughout the day and after hours until they go home (it's not uncommon for teachers at my school and elsewhere to stay after hours to grade papers and design lesson plans); (2) talk to teachers about challenges they face and their concerns for their students' learning and overall well being; (3) note classroom, library, technology and playground resources; (4) note classroom sizes, adult-to-student ratios, and one-on-one attention time for struggling students; (5) eat breakfast and school lunch, and observe the nutritional quality of the food; (6) eat breakfast with students in the cafeteria, eat lunch in the faculty room, and ask students and teachers questions; and finally, (7) talk to our amazing principal, Ann Kane, about the demographics, needs and accomplishments of our students, and about the commitment, skill and hard work of our teachers and staff. I know you have the best interests of the children of our state at heart. Please spend a day with some of the future parents, healthcare providers, leaders, clergy, entrepreneurs, artists, scientists, engineers, and teachers themselves of our state. I'm proud of our students; I want the best for every one of them; and yes, I worry for some of them, knowing the challenges they face in their lives. I think you'll feel the same way once you meet them, and I hope you'll share your insights with your fellow legislators. Sincerely, Helen Salas-McCarty

Listening & Spoken Language Teacher Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind helens@usdb.org 801-792-6539

Helen Salas-McCarty, Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind

The schools are educating the future generations. They need support and parents need to be held more accountable for their child’s education.

Susan Roberts, Washington County School District

The teaching profession is not treated with respect. We are licensed professionals, yet we are micromanaged by the public and asked to do more and more with less time, less money, and increased class sizes. The problems in the educational system are being placed squarely on the shoulders of the over-worked, unappreciated, and disrespected educators who are doing all they can to help kids succeed. However, no one can compensate fully for the lack of parental/home support and a student who is willing and actively participating in his/her learning.

Kristie Curtis, Alpine School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

If we could have more planning time, especially with the new Science SEEed Standards and have smaller classes as we find for more and better teachers, then retention of educators and engagement in the classroom would drastically increase is my hypothesis!

Nathalie Hernandez, Alpine School District

Let us teach, not be governed

Ryan Newman, Alpine School District

That when schools have the funding needed to hire additional teachers so that their is a reasonable amount of students being taught. When they fund for para to help with small group instruction in reading and math. We can accomplish the goals that you have set for us.

Robyn Smith, Box Elder School District

Teachers work VERY hard to meet the needs of our students. We are tired of being disregarded, and having people treat teaching like running a business. We are dealing with variables that we CANNOT control (actual little human, and their lifestyles etc). You cannot run teaching like a regular business. Give us some credit for knowing what we are doing, and being competent to do our jobs. Compensate us fairly for the work we do and help us be able to support a family on our wages. Presently we CANNOT support a family on a teacher’s salary!!!

Virginia Spenst, Box Elder School District

Teachers need to be paid more to retain them, also, studies show that class size really does not have a significant effect on students. That may be the case, however, it does significantly impact the teacher, and the teacher is the one teaching the students.

Jennifer Asay, Canyons School District

We are doing our best! Please support us. We are not the problem.

John Hill, Davis School District

Teachers are leaving the profession. We need to stop great teachers leaving the profession. We need to make it a profession people fight to be in .. not get out.

Tonya Hyatt, Davis School District

Depression and anxiety is on the rise among our students. We have too many students in our classes to be able to really know them, let alone notice who among them is struggling and contemplating suicide. They just get lost in the shuffle. I am teaching 38 students in AP BC Calculus, this class should be capped at 30 so that I can provide the help and support that they really need.

Tracey Meade, Davis School District

Special education teachers can't teach the students because there is to much paper work. Most special education teachers , don't have time to teach.

Curtis Page, Davis School District

Education should be a priority. This is the future that we are taking care of and teaching. These are the people who will grow up and take our places in life. We need good people in education who are valued, trained, and supported so that the impact that they have on these kids will make a difference. This world is changing at such a rapid pace and the educational system we have in place is not keeping up. The salaries, training, and support are not there, the educational community is not valued and many of the best teachers are leaving.

Suzy Price, Davis School District

I have been teaching Junior High and High school for 17 years, all in Utah. Teacher moral is a steadily decreasing from the added responsibilities and decreasing focus on a positive work environment. Classes sizes are too large for
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

effective teaching, and the demands for performance are increasing. Any business would say this is a bad model to follow for success. Teaching is a very rewarding experience, but I have a hard time recommending this profession to others as work environment and incentives to teach are being eroded.

Bradley Shafer, Davis School District

Teaching is hard and stressful, but so important. It is a professional position that needs to be funded as such.

Kathryn Sorte, Davis School District

I am really concerned with the continuing teacher shortage, and especially the fact that it is getting worse, not better. I don't claim to know the answer, but putting undertrained teachers in the classroom is NOT the answer. This does a disservice to the children who need an education. I believe that raising teacher pay and reducing class sizes and providing consistent, quality mentoring for new teachers are probably some of the best ways to attract and retain teachers. I am close to the end of my career, and I am concerned about who will teach my cute little neighbors and my grandchildren.

Marcia Thompson, Davis School District

Teachers are being asked to do more and more without training and with additional behavior schools. So instead of addressing the problem of why teachers are leaving, our state decides to make it easier to be a teacher. This will not fix the problem. The teachers will still keep leaving because of the high stress and low pay.

Dawn Webb, Davis School District

The primary reason we have a teacher shortage in Utah is due to the high demands - not enough prep time (which leads to planning after hours), high class sizes, finding our own curriculum for some subjects, continuously adding new paperwork and requirements to our daily schedule - coupled with low pay. If teachers were paid for the amount of work they do, there wouldn't be a shortage.

Sara Wilson, Davis School District

As a first year teacher, I feel overwhelmed with the variety of requirements for maintaining my teaching license. The same is true of testing and curriculum for the classroom. I don't see how any 1 person can possibly have the time to address all these requirements properly. It is no wonder that most teachers quit within the first 3 years. It requires about 10-20 hours a week more than the allotted contract time. A reduction in class sizes would help a lot, or part-time assistant teachers to help with things like differentiation. The process of "educating" a student has become overly complicated, and it shows in teacher retention rates, student performance, career readiness. More and more it seems like public education has become a bloated institution whose hidden purpose is to funnel more tax dollars and community donations to private corporations who "support" and supply our schools with an increasing number of throwaway products.

Charles Christopher Elrod, Granite School District

I would like to see those who vote on educational issues substitute in three different educational settings. Then I feel they would see how much more support teachers need today in classrooms. As a teacher, when I get the support I need, I have more confidence in myself and the energy to do my best.

Susan Gunn, Granite School District

The message that I would like to share with my legislators is that their votes regarding education speak directly to their priorities, and while there are certainly exceptions to this rule, by and large the Utah legislature has been far too slow to react to desperate needs in Utah's education system for far too long, oftentimes implementing "solutions" that are woefully weak and ineffective. What this conveys to teachers with whom I work is that the Utah legislature only cares about solving issues within education when they are faced with no other option than to act, and the consequent "action" taken by legislators is done only to put a faux-feather in their political cap so that they can say they've accomplished something substantive without actually having done so. We are facing a teacher shortage and yet there are people trying to make it harder for educated, experienced people that could be amazing educators to get
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

certified? Utah crams more children into the average classroom than almost anyone and yet spends among the least per pupil annually: aren't they worth more than that? There are a long list of oft-discussed issues in education, both within Utah exclusively as well as nationally, but the bottom line is this: as teachers, we are aware that an inherent responsibility of our career is doing more with less, and if the message that the Utah legislature is sending us as educators continues to be that we need to continue to do even more with far less than anyone else, not only will Utah see a sharp decline in their impressive quality of education, but we as educators will send you the same hollow, ostensible support on the voting ballot.

Macord Johnson, Granite School District

The difficulties teachers address in the classroom in title 1.

Kerry Lee, Granite School District

The teacher shortage is real and getting worse. We need to make teaching a respected and well paid profession if we are going to attract and retain high quality teachers. I have had two student teachers recently that quit education after they were finished student teaching because the pay wasn't worth the about of work and emotion they put in.

Denice Long, Granite School District

Teachers are poor, overworked and given little respect as professionals. Address those issues and you will attract and retain quality teachers.

Denice Smith, Granite School District

As it currently stands, teaching is a very demoralizing profession. We are here because we want to be a force for good in our communities, but are being treated poorly by governmental officials, parents, students and occasionally administrators. It has an effect on how effective we can be as teachers.

Caitlin Thomas, Granite School District

I was a thirty-four year career educator. Although I received supply money (about $250), it was definitely not enough to provide supplies for each of my students. It amounted to less than $1 per year per student. I taught every 8th grade student in the school, had about 450 kids per year, and class sizes sometimes as high as 40 kids. We had a student body of 1400 at Hunter Jr. High. Although my supply money was never enough, that amount definitely was not enough for teachers who were in their first years of teaching. I spent upwards of $1200 dollars per year. New teachers don't even have enough money to pay their bills, let alone spend that kind of money in order to do their job. That's definitely a reason for new teachers to leave the profession.

Penney Tyree, Granite School District

Teachers deserve MORE. We work with some of the toughest issues for very little pay. We are bursting at the seams with class sizes of 36. We have both parents and students screaming in our faces and treating us with disrespect and we can't do anything about it. Not only that, but there is absolutely no regard or respect for educators. Enough is enough. Soon, no one is going to want to be a force for good in our communities, but are being treated poorly by governmental officials, parents, students and occasionally administrators. It has an effect on how effective we can be as teachers.

Ashley Vierig, Granite School District

We are so grateful for the increase made last session to improve teacher salaries. This is a huge step in the right direction for drawing quality educators to the profession and keeping them here. I am concerned about the lowering of required qualifications for those newly hired teachers and the overall morale of teachers in general. When qualification requirements are lowered, it sends a clear message to those of us with Masters degrees and endorsements. It tells us none of that matters. "Anyone" can teach! We know this is absolutely NOT true. Just ask someone who has made the attempt and left. It is the most difficult job. A job we do every day with little to no support, no accolades, and mounting class sizes. The demands on teachers is growing every day. Teachers are asked to handle special education students that are not well served in the regular education classroom. This leads to very big
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issues. The message that teachers don’t matter and don’t do their jobs is loud and clear. We have to change this! Smaller class sizes, more pay at the starting levels, greater support and more training (not OFF contract time) is vital. Please help us change the perception of this profession. We are desperate and our students’ futures depend on these changes. Thank you.

Jaime Woolley, Granite School District

My 26 year old son told me recently, "Mom, seeing how hard you work and what you go through, I don’t see why anyone would want to become a teacher for the amount of compensation and problems you experience." My answer, "No one would do it for any other reason except that they love kids and want to help them." I think this is true of A LOT of Utah educators.

Rachelle Spencer, Iron County School District

As an educator I could not afford to buy a house. I went to a government program called the good neighbor program to be able to make it possible to afford a house. In order to afford a house I had to be willing to live in a rough rough neighborhood where drug deals happen in front of my house, where fights happen in the street, and where people pull out guns as a solution to their problems. I have had to have the police search my house once for and intruder. I have had to hide in my basement while guns and a fight were going on outside, while we had guests at our home. Is this the kind of places and situation you want your teachers who have 4+ year degrees to have to live. The first 5-10 years of a teachers career are the most low paid and most vulnerable to leave the profession. This is more likely to happen when they are not paid well and they are overworked. With the rising cost of our medical coverage and little increase in pay it has become harder and harder for new teachers to have the desire to stay with the profession.

Pam Bryson, Jordan School District

I wish so badly that I had a TA or smaller class sizes. I teach English and I spend HOURS upon HOURS giving individual feedback on student writing. My students make significant improvement the more individualized feedback they receive and the sooner they get it. It just isn't possible to do with 35-40 students in each class. Imagine 240 essays that are 5-6 pages long on top of lesson planning, meetings, differentiated teaching, etc. NOT POSSIBLE.

Megan Murdock, Jordan School District

Older schools need to be updated with technology and are just as important as new schools!

Belynda Paxton, Jordan School District

Look at all schools and not just Salt Lake area.

Jolene Herzog, Logan City School District

Again focus on teachers and their concerns. We should and do focus on the students, but teachers and pay seem to not be addressed. Lots of talk but no action.

Derek Hoskins, Logan City School District

You cannot keep adding requirements in our teaching without supporting us in them. We are lacking pay, people, and parent support.

Canisha Harrison, Millard School District

Increase pay, or good luck finding teachers. Many of the teachers today are eligible for retirement within a couple of years

Scot Moldenhauer, Nebo School District

Placing ELL students in already-overcrowded mainstream classrooms has been very counterproductive. Bring back LEP sheltered classes for ELL students.

Warren Brodhead, Other
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Most of my mediocre paycheck goes to pay for the majority of lessons and units that I do to help the students become engaged in learning with hands-on and interactive lessons. But also having to pay for all relicensing and assessments to become a highly qualified teacher takes a big chunk too. Then you have those people who decide they want to teach and they have fewer mandates put on them and fewer fees. But if I want to change to a different subject matter which should require less time then those off the street with no experience I'm being told it requires 8 classes that will take approx two years.

Drew Wright, Other

Working as a professional teacher for over 25 years, I can see that threatening tactics are non-productive such as merit pay of testing outcomes. To help students and teachers, make sure the salaries are adequate and the money is used for the schools students, not programs, or new promises. Get the money to the students.

Kimala Bosh, Washington County School District

Class sizes are way too big; I have 230 students. It's really hard to provide individualized help with over 40+ students in a class. Not to mention grading all their work, prep and planning. I've been teaching for 15 years, but I'm really wondering there is a better career out there for me because I feel so overworked, underpaid, and underappreciated. I would discourage a young person from going into teaching.

Sara Sisam, Washington County School District

Please put students and teachers first in everything you do. Out students deserve more!

Karyn Wilson, Washington County School District

They need to spend more time in public schools before they make the "rules" for student testing and success measurement.

Tina Thompson, Weber School District

Less testing and more teaching time

Sandra C. Toone, Weber School District

Being a teacher is hard on marriages and family life. In order to be the kind of teacher that you, parents, and I expect of myself, I am ALWAYS working extra time. My husband strongly disapproves of my doing that. You need to please pay teachers more for time worked so that we are not getting pennies on the dollar. Bonus pay may be the answer, but I am not sure yet. A huge help would be smaller class sizes.

Cindy Hansen, Alpine School District

As teachers we work hard and put forth our time and energy and are paid little. Every year I wonder if it is worth it. There is SO much required of me and there are times its too much. Grades, core curriculum, assessments, standards, documentation, effective teaching, supplies (I spent $2500 of my own money last year), taking classes to relicense (my early childhood endorsement from another state is not accepted so I have to pay and retake classes I have already taken), and class sizes are getting larger and larger (29 kids in Kindergarten is way too much and add 2 sessions that's 60 kids I need to teach a full day curriculum in half the day and report cards and parent teacher conferences). The list goes on. Every year I look at other careers to see what options I have as I'm spent. Please see teachers load is great.

Lois Hardy, Alpine School District

I have taught Kindergarten or Preschool for 21 years. The teachers I've collaborated with over the years are amazing but so much is being required with so little being given back that most are ready to quit or move to another state. We are now required to take so many children with serious behavior issues... YES, even at 4 and 5 years old many children already have been abused or neglected to the point that they are violent, depressed, and discouraged with low self esteem or pressured by perfection driven parents that they can have ulcers, anxiety or destructive tendencies. We have many success stories, in fact MOST of my preschool children learn ALL of the letters and sounds and can
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count to 20 or beyond by the end of the year, but in preschool we only have 14 children in each class with a full time aide. The poor Kindergarten teachers are the ones that suffer. PLEASE HELP THEM!!

Irene Lynn Wilkerson, Alpine School District

We are passionate, caring, professionals who love our students and the opportunity to give them a brighter future. We work much more than our contract time preparing to make each day as meaningful as possible. We teach the individuals, and monitor and assess everyone's growth. As teachers we push our selves to utilize best practices. Most of us take classes, and earn certificates well beyond what is needed for relicensure. Through out the summer I will take classes as well go in at least once a week to prepared, adjust, or improve curriculm. I am not only not paid, but I still pay for day care. It is important to me to continually improve even in my twelfth year of teaching and implement best practices I am learning or ways to deepen understanding. I come in early and stay late to help individuals that struggle with concepts. We spend much more than we are compensated for on supplies, rewards, or things that make our lessons more meaning. I've done this for over crowded classrooms. I've had up to 32 third graders in class and 30 second graders. I care too much about the kids each year not to contact each family individually with a positive phone call through out the year and individual attention and praise. I can not do this when in my contract hours or with the legislative money allotted. I sacrifice my family time and money to help support these kids knowing I may be the only praise and love they get some days. Knowing they may not get support with reading or homework at home. As educators we do all these things because we care. Please support us support the wonderful children of Utah.

Alisa Olsen, Cache County School District

I'm a 30 year professional with a masters degree. I make a fraction of what other professionals make with similar education. Everyone talks that there is nothing more important than education, educating our children, no more noble calling than teaching. If that is true, look at how teachers are paid and treated.

Rob Stewart, Cache County School District

If we could lower class sizes, increase teacher pay based on growth performance of students rather than benchmark, or provide more classroom support- I believe that every student would benefit immensely.

Whitney Tibbitts, Cache County School District

It is sad that after 23 years of teaching, I can't hardly afford a decent apartment without the help of a second job.

Pam Martinez, Davis School District

Kids need dedicated teachers to be successful. Teachers need to feel valued to continue giving what students need. We all need community support.

Sara McKay, Davis School District

The quality of my own children and my students' education has continued to decline drastically. Very few children want to go into the teaching profession. Those who do - leave, and they leave quickly! It is an overwhelming job that is absolutely impossible to do properly within the contract time we are given. The pay is downright pathetic, especially when you consider the higher-level education and hoops we must jump through to get our jobs. Public respect towards teachers is at an all-time low. Money is put into the wrong places to supposedly create a quick-fix. I am truly scared for the future as I've watched these kids move on into life less prepared than ever. It's time to quit looking for a magical program or the fluffy words to make it appear that we are doing okay. Education is an incredibly broken system. Smaller class sizes would immediately increase student learning! Please DO SOMETHING!!

Kris Orton, Davis School District

Please don't make any more big changes to education before allowing us time to implement all of the previous changes. Also, please don't add more things to do without taking things away first. I already work 11-12 hours every day just to keep my head above water. Good teachers are feeling like bad teachers because the work load has
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become impossible for us to meet. We love helping kids, but more and more of what is being required of us takes us away from our students and they are where the focus really should be. Thanks for listening.

Lisa Prochet, Davis School District

One of my science classes contains 35 students, and I only have 34 chairs in my room. Even though I teach at a Junior High, some of my students are reading at a 1st grade level. How am I supposed to diversify my lessons so that the low students are given the time and resources that they need, while the gifted students are challenged to their full potential? With a class of 35 it is impossible for me to give every student the learning experience that they deserve.

Amanda Shea, Davis School District

Help make teaching a profession that would make it so teachers would encourage our own children to become teachers. At this point very few would ever encourage our own children to follow in our footsteps.

Todd Street, Davis School District

Teachers should be valued, respected and compensated for all their time and effort

Celeste Watkins, Davis School District

Keep good teachers who are committed to good teaching

Lisa Wright, Davis School District

We are all trying to do the best we know how. Students coming into schools now have been raised by the internet and coming less mature, lower academically, and with more behavior problems than ever. We need more support and funding.

Elizabeth Gifford, Granite School District

Additional funding needs to be provided to either lower class sizes or hire intervention teachers to help academically at risk students become proficient in reading and math. Based on the current FTE Class size of 27.5, it is difficult for a classroom teacher to meet the individual needs of every student; especially with the large number of economically disadvantaged and English Language Learner students found in many schools within Granite School district.

Janet Nerdin, Granite School District

I work with all day Kindergarten classes. I see a lot of growth for those students. They get the instruction they need, and they are absent less than half day peers. Teachers are burning out with the workload they have. Students have great emotional and behavioral needs, and smaller classes will help teachers meet intervention needs as well as better manage increasingly difficult behavior.

Marla Ward, Granite School District

Salary

Marla Greenfield, Iron County School District

As a teacher, I am overwhelmed and it only gets worse every year. I have no time to teach my students, standards increase and support from the state decreases. We don't have the capacity to continue to take care of these children, educate them, and fully take care of ourselves and our families. If you paid us more, and gave us more help, we would be better equipped to handle the increasing workload that is given to us. We love this job, but the overwhelming downsides sometimes outweigh that. Take care of your teachers, and you'll see better results. Keep standards high, and have our pay match those standards. Stop disrespecting the work and knowledge of college educated teachers by hiring random uneducated people in the community to do their work. It all starts with the teachers. What you give to teachers, you'll see an equal improvement in the students.

Kasey Chambers, Jordan School District
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Long hours, chasing down supplies to purchase, more and more and more required teaching items with less and less curriculum provided. If you require me to teach something provide me with the curriculum, training, and prep time to teach it.

Wendy Jensen, Morgan School District

Each child in my classroom has a story. The children that we are teaching today are suffering more and have more challenges than a child used to. Each year is less and less parent support. Not only is our student population becoming more difficult to help and teach, but the load we are receiving is more and more heavy. I have students who at 6 years old have already had a parent pass away. One student even commented in the middle of a lesson, “If my mom dies, I will be an orphan.” That is what was on their mind...not the reading lesson I was teaching. Students whose parents won’t help them do their homework or even let them have books to borrow because mom and dad don’t want the responsibility of a lost or damaged book. This child is low in all areas and doesn’t have a reason to learn because parents aren’t invested in them. These kids are our future doctors, teachers, pilots, managers, cooks, etc. Invest today, for a better tomorrow. We need respect for our teachers. They need more compensation for their time. We need smaller class sizes to help these kids who their teacher is the only one who is helping them with their education. To give extra love and attention to those kids who have hard lives. We need a lighter workload to spend our time on things that are of more importance.

Brooke Vaquerano, Nebo School District

Teachers work hard every day to do their best; provide them the tools to succeed.

Christine B. Garloch, Wasatch County School District

I really enjoy teaching students and making a difference in their school day. On the other hand, the way things are in education today, i would not encourage anyone to go into teaching. That is not an easy thing to say as i come from a family of a lot of educators.

Dan Hill, Wasatch County School District

The biggest battle I fight is getting parents to be supportive and involved in their child's education. I want there to be more accountability on the part of parents and students. The demands for my accountability has tripled since I have been teaching and there is no accountability on the part of parents and students. They can come every day and do nothing and they know that they will move on to the next grade and parents know that there is no consequence as well. However, if that child doesn't test well at the end of the year it is my fault! There is nothing by that child's name that says they missed 1/3 of the year, or that they never came prepared to school with anything, or that they took the end-of-year test in 5 minutes because they just guessed. I have 30 students in my 4th grade classroom and there is 1 of me. It is extremely difficult for me to be successful with that many students without extra support from home. There has to be a way to get parents to buy into the importance of an education!! Our future depends on it.

Kristie Herzog, Weber School District

Teaching is a difficult job. I always spend at least 10 hours beyond my contract hours making sure that my students are given the best that I can offer. Please reduce class sizes or find a way to pay teachers for the hours that they work beyond regular contract hours. More preparation time is needed to be an effective teacher that is able to do their job during regular contract hours.

Matthew LeDuc, Weber School District

There are more demands and less time. Students are coming with more social and emotional issues that have to be addressed along with additional educational needs.

Kim Vorwaller, Weber School District

Last year I had 32 third graders in my classroom. This year I have 25 because the principal was able to hire another teacher. It has been amazing giving my students more one-on-one time to help them excel. I have been able to work more with struggling students as well as challenge other students. They are all making huge strides in their academic
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understanding. It also has been a less stressful year. With seven fewer students, I also have fewer behavioral challenges.

Laura Laycock, Alpine School District

I think the teacher shortage we are seeing in Utah is due to two key components. 1, we are one of the lowest paying states in the US when it comes to teacher salary. 2, we are class sizes that are almost unbearable. I do not think that any teacher should have more than 25 students in their classroom.

Krista White, Cache County School District

Some kids will succeed no matter what. We need to direct resources toward getting kids caught up. I have a student who was "home-schooled" and is now suddenly entering the public school in 10th grade. He cannot write. He forms letters like a third grader. He needs one on one help and he's in a class of 35 that also includes students who have special needs and English Language Learners. This child is not a waste of money!

Karla Moosman, Canyons School District

The school system is breaking and almost broken. I have been a teacher is Davis district for 27 years. The decline has been massive!

Kayloa Anderson, Davis School District

I have taught for 8 years and almost all of those years were in the elementary grades of 1st through 3rd. My first 7 years of teaching, the classes have been upwards of 25 to 28 students. Those days were long and hard as I tried to provide for every student the best that I could. This year my school's principal took into account our numbers and worked to provided our grade level with another teacher. I now teach 21 second graders and what a difference it has made for me and my students. I am able to provide more of my time to each of them in a one on one fashion during practice time or in small groups or even one on one. This number is still not as perfect as it could be and you may think that lowering a class by 3 or 4 students would make that much of an impact but it does, I can testify to it. My students are able to learn deeper within the content, they are also less stressed out than prior years and I have even less students acting out than in prior years. I am providing more individualized help to more students during their practice time. I, as a teacher, am less stressed and more confident in teaching this group then I had been with the larger groups in previous years. I think that the ideal size would be more around 18-20 students maximum in classrooms at the k-3 grade levels. In hose grades are the ages most critical in developing the child cognitively, educationally, and socially. It is the best time to catch and correct learning behaviors, reading interventions and mathematical concepts. These class sizes would entice licensed professional teachers to stay within the profession. These class sizes would reduce stress, increase productivity and provide more data on each student as we are able to follow through with each student on a more regular basis instead of every once in a long while. It will reduce the behavior problems we deal with as we will be able to work with more students to provide for their needs. The larger class sizes do not give teachers this kind of ability in their classrooms. Legislators, I plead with you to increase the WPU and provide for a more manageable number of students within classrooms so teachers can properly manage students needs. I plead with you to ask us, those who work directly with students and their education, about the issues we are facing in our schools, but also how your legislation will impact our students and us as professionals. Each of you are welcome in my classroom anytime and I would be happy to take the time to talk with you and answer questions you have. Please consider the future and provide for the best education our students should receive.

Anna Larsen, Davis School District

As an elementary school counselor and a former classroom teacher, I have found that over the years both children and teachers have lost some of the joy or education. Standards are needed and help to create goals but when there is no time to savor the moment and create "joy in the journey", as well as reinforcing social-emotional skills, because of the academic pressures it is not as healthy an experience as it should be.

Kristine Pritchett, Davis School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

I teach Resource and have mostly Applied Skills classes where we work with kids to reteach skills and make sure they are passing classes. I always have at least 14 kids in a Skills class with 2-4 who need specific individual help. It is difficult to focus on them one at a time and still manage and encourage the rest of the class. It is a sad situation and very frustrating as I know I could provide help to increase skills if I could just have a class the size that the feds mandate.

C. Tingeey, Davis School District

I think the legislators need to talk with educators before passing legislation. Educators have first hand experience with working with students. Our experiences and knowledge need to be valued more.

Tammy Giles, Granite School District

I came to Utah from a state where all teachers are required to have a Master's degree to teach. I notice a significant difference in the respect and general teacher morale here in Utah, which I believe is partly due to the idea that teaching in Utah can be seen as a second class career or one that is just temporary until an individual finds a better position or quits working outside the home to support her or his family. I worked ten years in Utah before earning the salary I left in my previous state, yet I think the problem of morale and respect goes deeper than teacher compensation.

Rachel McKeen, Granite School District

Fund public schools properly by reducing classroom size and providing a quality educated teacher for every classroom.

Valerie Turner, Granite School District

So far all the paid time that has been added for teacher preparation has been programmed. We don't have enough time to thoughtfully plan lessons that meet the state's objectives or to provide one-to-one feedback to students in over-crowded classrooms. For improved education of students teachers need UNSTRUCTURED time to do what we already know we should be doing to reach students who are struggling in overcrowded classrooms with over-worked teachers.

Milton Watts, Granite School District

Teaching is not easy. Consider supporting what we need in the classroom (supplies and staff support) and you might not have such a teacher shortage because burnout would be less frequent.

Heidi Wright, Granite School District

Utah is getting RIDICULOUS...... Do not let people teach the children without a CORRECT Teaching degree... NO RLI or Other degrees in to teach... Also, Get a raise out there for teachers NOT District people. 34 6th graders in ONE tiny room is HORRIBLE.... Don't go and add or subtract teachers or classrooms during a year do it in the summer breaks... all decisions FINAL

Halceyn Fobert, Jordan School District

They need to personally visit classrooms...specifically elementary classrooms. (I am not an elementary teacher...)

NataLei Terry, Nebo School District

Teachers are not the enemy.

Melissa Brock, Ogden School District

If a teacher shortage is a concern, improving the teaching conditions will be the best way to combat it

Russell Lebaron, Washington County School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

The suicide rate is consistently increasing for adolescents...we need more awareness among teachers to look for preventative interceptions

Brenda Cook, Weber School District

With the human development needing different attentions in different areas at different times with each individual, expecting the same outcome for all is unrealistic. Until class sizes are reduced and non-educator legislators research the effects their mandates and decisions have on human development, we are not going to advance well as humans or a state. The overload of work to teach so many students with a lack of resources and support staff continues to burn out educators, hence a teacher shortage. If we, as a state, don't show that we value education by putting forth the necessary funding, see what happens when you lower the tax rate, and value teaching as a profession, we all will lose.

Marjean Wayment, Weber School District

I know that research says that lower class sizes doesn't affect teaching, but I think that is a very careful choice of words. A few years ago I had the biggest class size I had every had in my career, the very next year I had the smallest class size I had every had. This experience allowed me to see, very clearly, what difference it made in my teaching. While I agree that good teachers will always be good teachers, no matter the size of their class, it definitely affects management! There is a huge difference in managing 33 students and 22 students! It affects everything from walking down the hall, to stretching out supplies and materials, to how much space is left in a classroom after all of the desks are in it to accommodate those students, etc. To say otherwise is either coming from inexperience or willful ignorance. A good teacher will make it work, because they are passionate about what they do and they will do their best to not show their stress, but it makes an already tough job SO much harder!

Rachel Hill, Alpine School District

I love what I do and I wouldn't still be teaching if I didn't have a love for education and the children I teach.

Phyllis McIntyre, Alpine School District

Large class sizes is the #1 reason for the "dumbing down of America." High achieving students are ignored by teachers who are trying to keep students safe. Teacher morale is at an all-time low.

Marla Wait, Alpine School District

With the way the word is changing, it is becoming harder and harder to feel like a successful teacher. It doesn't feel great to feel unappreciated or like we make very much money, but most importantly, if I felt supported by my government and was given realistic expectations, the lack of pay would be in the back of my mind. Right now, we are being demanded of even more than ever and feel as if no one is willing to help us our, but instead give us more to do and deal with. Decreasing class sizes would be a great start to allowing us to feel like we can successfully do our job each day.

Josselyn Draper, Box Elder School District

Family and Consumer Sciences classes are important for students and provide students useful skills that they will use throughout their lives. Please support Family and Consumer Science classes

Julie Chatterton, Cache County School District

Class size matters! Currently, if I only spend 2 minutes a day with each of my students, that's 56 minutes I don't have. I'm there to make a difference. It's about quality instruction not quantity.

Brynn Dutson, Cache County School District

Far too often studies are done about class size and the determination is made that class size does not effect student learning. These studies clearly have not looked at a real classroom. In a real classroom you have a student who has been diagnosed with obsessive defiant disorder (which is even more difficult to deal with than it sounds), 3 students who have been diagnosed with ADHD (and several who have not yet been diagnosed), 2 students who are
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

performing at least 2 grade levels below the grade that they are presently in, and several students who steal, lie, cheat, and/or bully. Each of these students require double the time and effort to teach. So while on paper a teacher may show 25 students, in reality it feels more like 35. And precious time is being taken away from helping all students in the classroom to learn.

Sharon Grimnes, Cache County School District

How tough and mentally challenging it is to teach 30 fifth graders; to meet all of their needs. I would like the legislators to spend a week teaching school to see how teaching really is.

Sherrie Andrizzi, Canyons School District

We can't think of schools as a business; children are not commodities

Debra Carter, Davis School District

As a first grade teacher, I must address the class census. I have had as many as 30 six year-olds in my class. It is like herding cats. I spent more time dealing with classroom management than teaching. Small groups became difficult to manage and 1 to 1 attention nearly impossible. Students at this age are just learning how to self regulate. They need extra individual and small group time to access the curriculum. We really handicap the children when their are so many in the classroom. In addition this places a larger strain on my time. It takes longer to complete the necessary paperwork for a class and to prepare for class. Differentiation becomes a burden. Often, this requires that a teacher has to research ideas for the varying needs of the classroom. The more students there are the greater this becomes. My job is like holding two full-time positions at once. The first job is to deliver the curriculum. The second job is data input, record keeping, planning and preparing. And yes it does take around 80 hours a week. This creates an unhappy balance between work and home.

Anna Davis, Davis School District

They really should come and spend some time doing what we do. It isn't as easy as they think! Schools can't be run like businesses. They need to listen to those of us doing the job!

Kim Dennis, Davis School District

Look at the load you are putting on teachers! If we are to be successful in all the areas we need fewer students! I work in a title 1 elementary school. My students need to learn the basics with their teacher. The teacher is often their only appropriate interaction during the day. Since so much responsibility has been taken away from parents teachers teach many of the social and early childhood skills throughout elementary school. So many of our students do not see print before they enter school. Children do not have piggy banks to learn counting, they do not cook from scratch or build. We have to build background as well as teach concepts. These students know how to play with devices but not how to interact with each other or adults. Put finding into smaller class sizes and not technology especially in elementary schools!

Kathy Johnson, Davis School District

Teachers are so disheartened. The evaluation system is discouraging at best and fails to motivate improvement. There are so many "new programs and techniques" being thrown at us monthly that we have no time to master any of it. I feel like a juggler who has new balls thrown in to my act every few minutes. I can't keep up, nor can my students. Soon the balls will all fall! Our time is micromanaged and our professionalism is minimized. How can we inspire students to be their best when we are devalued by so many sources, especially administration?

Patricia Knavel, Davis School District

Thank you so much for your concerns regarding improving public education in Utah. I have been a teacher for 13 years. It has been a wonderful career choice for me because of all the amazing students and their families, and fellow educators who have influenced me in a remarkable way. However, because my class sizes are so large (28 kindergarten students per class), I struggle with feelings of exhaustion and burn out. I would love to make it 17 more years until retirement because I am really good at what I do, but some days I don't know if I will make it. What carries
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

me through it all is the positive relationships I have with my students and their families. I know how much they care for me and appreciate what I have done for their children. I would love to continue providing that service to my community.

Valerie Lindeman, Davis School District

Any increase in technology needs to be paired with training for the teachers and mentor support or the money is just wasted. Class sizes are important if you want to reach all children and keep up teacher morale.

Robin Marble, Davis School District

Appreciation for past efforts, but the key to success in any facet of life is education! Knowledge is POWER! Our future depends on it!

Dr. Norma Jean Remington, Davis School District

I am a second grade teacher who started the year with 28 students. I have five students who have been diagnosed, or who exhibit autistic tendencies. I also have five different students with life-threatening health conditions. Many of my other students struggle with both behavior and academics concerns. All of the other second grade classes at my school have a similar class make-up. Our grade-level focus has been on strengthening their behavior through a well-structured classroom environment and growing their academics by focusing on reading and math. At the beginning of the school year, I tested my lowest readers and pin-pointed specific phonics and fluency skills that they needed. Due to the sheer number of students needing help, only six of my students have the opportunity for "small group time." This is a special 30 minutes four times a week where I can work with my most challenged students while an aid takes the rest of my class. In preparing for my small group time, my school does not have any leveled reading books to help them with those targeted reading skills. The last thing a struggling reader wants to read is a boring story. In order to better serve my struggling students, I bought myself a license to a website that specializes in leveled readers with targeted phonics and comprehension skills. My students like to read these stories because they are on-level, they practice the specific skill we learned in small group, and the stories are engaging. How is it that if I need reading books to help struggling students, that I have to spend my own money to get them? I realize that I could have written a grant, but those can take months to get, and I needed them right at the beginning of the year. Why can't I get necessities right when I need them? There is a saying about the Utah education system that feels true: Stack 'em deep and teach 'em cheap. That's a poor legacy for our future.

Kathy Ritchie, Davis School District

As an educator, my priority is student learning and growth. I wish that the legislative priorities matched ours, instead of the bottom line, dollars and cents.

Melanie Tanner, Davis School District

I teach 7th and 8th grade math. I have 35 students per class, including students with learning disabilities. I have a paraeducator in only one of my classes. I can't get to every student to give them the help they need. Last year I spent over $1600 on my classroom. I haven't totaled my receipts this year, but I know I have spent over $1000. The supply budget of $150 isn't nearly enough. Not even close. In our district, teachers have very little freedom. I am a creative person with a Masters degree working a factory job. I am handed a curriculum map created by the district personnel (who haven't been in the classroom for over ten years) for every single day of the year. I am told exactly when and how to give feedback, what I need to focus on in my teaching (which is the same for everyone, not tailored to me or my students), exactly how to grade, which tests to give and when, and the district chooses which textbook we use and how often it's replaced. I wish the district's power could be limited so that I had time and freedom to teach.

Shallin Squire, Duchesne County School District

Abnormally disruptive students continue to be one of the biggest challenges that prevent other students from being able to stay focused. When you have 5 adults dealing with one student throughout the day, there's one in every other class throughout the school, then something isn't working.

Marianne Amatangelo, Granite School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

Students are the most important part of public education but it is nice to be validated as a teacher. I would like to be regarded as the professional that I am. I think that if teachers were held in higher esteem, there wouldn't be such a teacher shortage. It's the most difficult job I've ever had. (I did other things before becoming a teacher.)

Kim Best, Granite School District

I love being a teacher. I love that my job helps people everyday. However, it is becoming harder and harder to feel/be successful with the current system in place. Time is a huge factor. I need more time built into my day/week/year to be able to plan, collaborate, document, grade, communicate with parents, etc. I never feel like I am doing "enough" and that is hard to deal with when you work your hardest to be enough for the students you love.

Erin Bitner, Granite School District

Teacher respect is an issue. If we respect our students and their families by giving them the best we have to offer as we prepare them to become hard-working citizens in whatever occupation they choose, we should also be respected by legislators who make important decisions that affect all of our futures.

Toni Cook, Granite School District

I invite legislators to come to my school to truly see the population that our Title 1 school serves and to observe the vast and diverse needs these students have beyond academic skills acquisition.

Victoria Gorman, Granite School District

The impact of having a full-time aide in my All-day, Title I kindergarten class.

Patrice Hafen, Granite School District

A lot of students get stressed out with large class sizes.

Cheri Jacobson, Granite School District

Teachers need support and students also need some degree of accountability. My third issue is that students need more mental health supports and enough counselors and social workers to meet the needs of students.

Laura Pratt, Granite School District

I've been an educator in Jordan and Granite School Districts for 42 years and this will be my last year. I love my profession, but worry about what I see on the horizon. Wonderful, qualified teachers are leaving the classroom because so much is demanded of them. We need parental involvement and holding parents accountable if we are to make a difference. We need to not put so much on the plates of these teachers that they don't have time or energy to TEACH!

Lanea Sampson, Granite School District

Reduce class sizes and give us the respect we deserve. Trying to teach 36 + students in a class is more babysitting and crowd control. The Student needs to be held accountable for his/her behavior and learning.

Kerry Selk, Granite School District

I am an extraordinary and well-respected career educator with 18 years on the job, but doing well at my job pushes me to the absolute limit of my physical (and sometimes mental & emotional) capabilities. I love everything about teaching, but there is too much of it--240 students and all their issues and paperwork! I have stress-related irritable bowel syndrome, inflammation on the bottoms of my feet, occasional anxiety chest pain and stiff muscles. And I'm tired. Chronically tired. Getting through May is like ending a marathon--I get so tired I forget student names, lose my keys, leave my car running while pumping gas, etc. Excelling at this job is not a healthy, balanced way to live. Oh, and by the way, I can't recall one thing my district has done to reduce my workload in 15 years; instead top-down mandates seem increasingly punitive and disconnected with reality.

Lisa Thornbrue, Granite School District
We need support for teachers with children with mental health issues. I have seen dedicated teachers forced out of the profession due not having the proper training for how to handle a physically aggressive student or one that is very defiant. These were excellent teachers who cared about their students.

Dawn Wasden, Granite School District

Put the money that is necessary into education to bring the average spent per child to at least the national average

Stacy Wood, Granite School District

Teachers moral is low. Counselors and teachers are overworked and underpaid. reduce class sizes and counselor student ratios 1/250

Linda Tranter, Jordan School District

We need to think of the children. We need to reduce class sizes and give teachers a better environment to do what we do best, teach.

Jessica DeBoer, Ogden School District

Our students are supported by great teachers, but they face too many obstacles, the first one being class sizes. I have 3 AP English classes in the mid 40s. I cannot interact personally as needed with that many students. We cannot have discussions where everyone gets a voice, and I cannot read that many essays, giving quality feedback as much as I need to.

Kerrie Baughman, Salt Lake City School District

Teaching is a profession that deserves the highest commitment from all involved, teachers, students, parents, administration, school districts and the legislature. What we are doing now directly impacts Utah's future. We are so far behind many states and are doing many injustices to all of our students. Teachers, who haven't given up, are exhausted. Large class sizes do not make it easy for all students to get what they need. Behavior problems are showing up earlier and earlier. Students have much more to contend with every year. Teaching is the hardest job I've ever had. I have worked in business, retail, and non-profits and this, by far, is the most intense job I've ever had, with the most to lose. Please respect us and the children of our state. It feels like we are an afterthought in so many ways.

Lesley Jones, Salt Lake City School District

More student and parent accountability for poor attendance.

Joann Orr, Salt Lake City School District

Teachers are not given support. Administrators cater to students and parents before they listen to the teacher. Money will not replace the respect teachers need from the community and the students in their classrooms.

Kayleen Lyman, Sevier School District

Teachers with really hard to ensure all students in their classroom are educated. Teachers deserve respect from legislators NOT empty promises or criticism.

Hope Bruggink, Weber School District

Teaching is a challenging profession. Half the teachers in my school teach Chinese immersion classes, which are often smaller than the grade-level limit, while the other half teach classes significantly larger than this limit. Yet somehow, this continues, year after year, because the average class size is all that is considered. This is not right.

Amy Matheson, Weber School District

Teaching in today's classroom is darn hard work. There are so many kids with needs that are hard for one person to fulfill. Class size is too large. I spend way too much of my personal time (evenings/weekends) doing my job. Reduction is class size would help.

Kristin Teller, Weber School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

I have been an educator in Utah for almost 20 years. I have heard again and again from leaders and communities that they consider education to be a top priority in Utah. I understand that we have more students and unique challenges in Utah. However, the reality is that we do not have the funding to attract and retain quality teachers. Why should college students choose education as a career when the hours are long and hard, the "real" expectations for what teachers have to do are way beyond the actual expectations, the pay is mediocre, and they are constantly berated by parents of their students for every perceived problem. Teachers should be protected from being yelled at by parents and respected for what they do day in and day out. Practically, we need a long term solution to fill our teaching positions - especially at the most challenging neighborhood schools. Teachers are professionals and need to be seen and treated as such.

Janelle Griffiths, Alpine School District

Accountability, technology and PLCs have stepped up the quality of education. However, the additional time requirements for planning, collaborating and follow through is at the same time pinching the quality of teaching that is being demanded and desired to be given by educators. More planning and preparation time is needed for the educational process to reach the levels that are being pushed for.

John Petersen, Cache County School District

As a teacher I aspire to educate, condition, and prepare my students to take lead, protect, and preserve our communities, economy and planet for future generations to come. I do this with a passion that drives from being a citizen, mother, and educator of this country. I would only ask that as an educator I am recieved with trust, proper support, and a sense of being valued for what I give to our community.

April Guardado, Granite School District

Thank you for your efforts to fight for public education! The fight, however slow, is making a difference.

Betty Chamberlain, Kane County School District

As a veteran teacher I am very concerned about retaining and attracting new teachers. I want my replacement to be a good one!!!! However, many of the quality young educators are losing interest in teaching. Also many of the new teachers we interview are far below the quality of those retiring. Something needs to be done!!!!

Mark Durfey, Murray City School District

How the legislative funding for school libraries helps.

Sheryl Burton, Salt Lake City School District

I teach special education and over the last several years there as been an increase of students with diagnoses that merit specialized instruction, an increase in class sizes, but there has not been a matching increase in classroom funding. My students require a lot of specialized equipment much of which I have to buy from money that I donate. This last year I was told I was not allowed to ask for parent donations, which have helped us to meet the needs in the past. This is not okay. Teachers need to be able to ask for help from the parents, if the parents can't give it that's fine, but many would and having to wait in the hopes that the parents will ask us what we need is an inefficient process, especially when they are expecting me to simply ask for donations as I've done in the past. Another glaring problem in education lately has been our inability to pay our support staff acceptable and competitive wages, this has cause a huge shortage in our district. For the first time in almost 12 years of teaching I had to start the school year understaffed and it took nearly two months to find someone able and willing to take the job. I cannot run my classroom (I work with special education mild to moderate students in a special class setting) without my staff. Districts need increased funding so as to pay their support staff competitive wages. Legislators need to stop reassigning money that is suppose to be allotted to schools. Please stop with the lip service when it comes to education and put your words into practice.

Jennifer Gaskin, Alpine School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

If teaching students is the focus of teachers that should be the thing that is valued not all the extra work teachers have to do. It seem like there is a new requirement every month.

Merissa Jones, Alpine School District

I am all for increasing funding for education but I feel like that money never trickles down to the actual classroom and teachers. I have taught for a long time and I feel like the longer I teach the more I spend out of pocket because budgets are reduced and even administration is cutting back on supplies. I should have access to the supplies I need to do my job and to also be able to earn a livable wage. We spend way more time than people realize out of our contract hours and we do it because we love our students and want to see them succeed. We should be better compensated for that. If increasing the education budget doesn’t impact classrooms directly, then I’m not sure it is worth it. I wish legislatures would trust us to do our job. I feel like I have way more paperwork and testing than ever before. While there are some benefits to these, I find that I spend more time testing students than actually teaching. I have been well trained and know how to help students learn. Please let me use my skills to help kids. I feel like I am drowning in paperwork and breaking down tests. I just want to teach and assess my students as I know how to.

Kacey Ollekan, Alpine School District

By investing in education, we invest in our future. Teachers play such a vital role in the lives of today’s youth and are tremendously under paid for the time and effort they put in. It is a labor of love and one we are happy to do. We work hard and get more with less funding than anyone. Visit the schools, talk to teachers, and please make informed and educated decisions.

Skyler Beard, Canyons School District

Come spend a "real" day in my shoes. I don't want to you teach my class, but just come and see what I do from day to day, minute to minute, student to student. Gain a understanding of being in the education trenches without all the glory of you teaching what you'd like to teach or just talking. Please have some respect for my degrees and my importance of creating well function adults. That will become legislators, voters, doctors, etc...

Carrie Follett, Davis School District

I would like to share the multiple stories of really good teachers who come to me in tears because their health is suffering, their families are suffering, and their students are suffering because they just don't have enough hours in the day to do all that is needed.

Andrew W. Baggs, Jordan School District

My husbands pay has continually dropped the 20 years in education due to insurance costs

Laura Hales, Jordan School District

My personal success comes when my students succeed. I give 100% EVERY day. On block schedule I see 240 7/8 graders every two days. Grading NEVER ends--I spend 10-15 hours a week of my own time (totally uncompensated) preparing and grading. There is NO other profession where this is EXPECTED. I will be retiring early (age 60) in 2019 because I just can't continue to cope with anxiety and stress. Teachers can't and shouldn't be expected to continue to do more. The “badge of honor” that our legislature seems to equate with bottom of the barrel funding must stop. Compensate us for our outside of class hours, compensate us for REAL professional development. Encourage us rather than demean and belittle. Teaching is both a science (pedagogy) and and art (love of subject). It's time Utah recognized that. And my "favorite" Utahism...children are our most valuable resource. Sadly the legislature of this state fails to adequately fund education, wants to make USBE partisan, and believes that online and charter schools are somehow better equipped to educate that priceless resource. I think that truism is a lie.

Ann Peterson, Juab School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

Something needs to be done in the community to help parents learn to support their children. Some of our students most likely will not go to college and would benefit from learning skills during high school that they can use to make a living. Change the graduation requirements or have two different diplomas so that learning a skill (mechanics, etc) would be enough to graduate or earn a diploma.

Juliann Bales, Logan City School District

Before they make all the rules and pass all the laws they should be required to be in the schools working with educators at least 50 hours a year

C. Carrigan, Morgan School District

Often, I see educators leave teaching because they feel undervalued. They are able to get other jobs and opportunities that are rewarded monetarily. In order to have consistency and attract influential teachers, salaries need to be appealing. My 17 yrs. in education have continually required more of teachers without compensation. While teachers at heart want what's best for kids, they find themselves resentful of the work that takes them away from a more balanced life without compensation.

Kelly Taylor, Nebo School District

I serve as teacher in addition to two "stipend" jobs as well as numerous other responsibilities at school. I visibly/publicly work 60 hours during a week. That does not account for the late nights, when my family is in bed, I spend at my computer planning, studying, and grading. All of this with a Master's Degree, I do for 50k a year. This is just my school responsibilities. I also am a husband, a father, a son, a brother, a neighbor, a civic leader, and must attend to my financial responsibilities. Each year I ask myself more and more - How? Talk is out there about teachers need more pay, teachers need more respect. The talk has not helped my situation. Yet, the expectations are that I control/compartamentalize my stresses and give my best effort to my students and players. I need to accommodate 200+ kids and their parents. I need to meet endless rules and guidelines. Legislators, I could go on and on. We, in education, need your full respect, support, and action.

Lee Gillie, Nebo School District

They always said education is their #1 priority but actions did not show it.

Mong-Hoa LeBras, Nebo School District

Quality teachers are leaving far too fast.

Linda Brown, Ogden School District

We are drowning over here. We are drowning in a workload that increases year to year without an increase in support or funding. We are drowning in disrespect from our communities, our parents, our supervisors, and our legislators. We are drowning in students who's needs increase every time we turn around. We are drowning in Charter schools, that bleed our funding dry.

Christina Charbonneau, Ogden School District

Teaching is hard work. 99% of the teachers that I know are working really hard and educating our students because they love teaching and are committed to improving the lives of future voters and taxpayers. But I do feel like apologizing to my own childrens' teachers. As a taxpayer, I wish I could donate directly to their classroom. I know how much money they make, and I do feel guilty that we (as a community) can't find a way to pay them more. I think you need to listen to the people of Utah and improve educational spending or the people of Utah are going to go around the legislature and pass the educational funding through ballot initiatives. I'm not asking for Utah to spend as much as New York or Illinois. Let's just try to get out of last place for per pupil spending. Please! Also, don't forget about the special needs that so many schools are facing--special education students, students coming from poverty, and English as a second language students. They want to work hard and achieve their goals, but if they are in a class with more than 35 students, it becomes very difficult for the teacher to know their needs, let alone give them any extra support or help. When schools can provide paraprofessionals to translate and help teach, we can
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individualize instruction better and help more students learn. Feel free to come visit my classroom any time. Thank you, Julie Hagen

Julie Hagen, Provo City School District

The maxim "You get what you pay for" is as true with education as it is with anything else.

Joseph Burke, Weber School District

Our society puts money towards what they believe is valuable, except for paying teachers. If education is valuable then pay teachers accordingly.

Kaylene Astin, Weber School District

There is research evidence (Hattie) that proves teacher collaboration has one of the highest effects on student growth.

Laurie Key, Weber School District

One issue that has not been addressed is the lack of funding to repair older schools. We work in cold buildings without adequate insulation. In addition, student behavior is increasingly difficult to manage and we lack resources to place children in more appropriate settings so all children can learn. There is an increase in the lack of respect from parents towards teachers. We will continue to have teacher shortages if these things are not addressed.

Jeni Halversen, Davis School District

Stop making decisions based on party....consider common sense legislation and get more teacher input.

Tamara Martin, Cache County School District

The economic, political, cultural, social and often emotional success of citizens, as well as the country/state as a whole, has largely been built upon and will continue to be built upon the effectiveness of our education system. It would be naive not to see the correlation between our country's accomplishments and its public school system. Similarly, the same is true for individuals. Much of the success of this system has been built on the backs of the sacrifice of educators' time and financial resources. A commitment to being a life-long teacher is synonymous with the life-long reality of financial stress. On top of this, teachers must deal with a culture that politicizes educational spending and curriculum. It is also part of our culture to reactively and unilaterally pass poorly thought out educational laws and requirements without enough data--or enough skill to correctly analyze data. Our education system isn't perfect; neither are teachers. But any improvement for the future depends on a true investment of our public and state's resources--one that actually matches the import of public education. This includes a plan to depoliticize educational policy, a recognition of the sacrifices of educators, an understanding that education cannot be judged as a business model, and a more educated/skilled and less biased approach in understanding and gathering data that could help form educational funding and policy. It also means that our legislature should look at educator as teammates--not adversaries.

Shannon Callister, Canyons School District

After fourteen years as an elementary faculty/administrator, I have returned to full-time teaching sixth grade students. I am comfortable and confident in this decision and grateful to be a Utah educator. The past fourteen years has provided various experiences and opportunities to serve students and their families as a professional educator. Being in the classroom full-time this year, has reminded me of how critical the success of the first-year teacher is to public education. The time, effort, and resources required to prepare curricula, organize a classroom (physically, academically, emotionally, and mentally), coordinate learning with parents, collaborate with colleagues, and motivate students is exhausting, dynamic, demanding, challenging, enlightening, inspiring, and never-ending. Without tremendous support, encouragement, and insightful guidance, the first-year teacher will not celebrate a third, fourth, fifth, and so on, year in this profession. I have spent numerous days working nearly non-stop from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 a.m. the following morning to be prepared for my students and fulfill professional requirements of the school, district, and state. I have a tremendous vision and great expectations for my students. I perpetually look for ways to improve their effectiveness AND mine. I recruit families in this process and strive diligently to ensure that everything done in
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my classroom contributes to student learning. I refuse to surrender to the combined menaces of poverty, bureaucracy, and budgetary shortfalls. I frequently check for understanding of ALL parties involved in student success beginning with THE STUDENT, but not ending therein. I establish and follow clear procedures and routines to keep each student feeling safe and secure in my classroom and our school. We celebrate failure as an important step to success and we never give up. I receive smiles, tears of gratitude and sometimes frustration, handshakes, hugs, “high fives,” “thumbs-up,” notes, cards, emails, phone calls, and visits every day as feedback and insight to guide my teaching. The criticism and appreciation is generally heartfelt and constructive. I am grateful for both. As a Utah teacher, I thank you, the legislator, for your support both morally and financially so I can do the job that I love so very much! Every effort must be made by all of us to do what is best for Utah children, my students, my grandchildren, my youngest neighbors and friends, OUR SMALLEST CITIZENS. Eve Bean

Eve C. Bean, Davis School District

Not every teacher wants a bigger salary (although it doesn't hurt!). I want to have the resources, environment, and people in my school that I need to make it possible for me to help my students succeed. We need more funding and we need it structured in ways that make a difference for the conditions and needs of each individual school. When I can go home at night and know that giving my all (as I do every day) is helping my students be prepared for the future, that is when I love my job. The most likely reason I would consider leaving teaching is watching my best efforts not be enough because I don't have the time to prepare and analyze or the support personnel that could make the difference for struggling learners.

Erin Butler, Granite School District

I just returned to the classroom after being in administrative positions for 10 years and was overwhelmed with how many hoops teachers have to jump through on top of all their teaching responsibilities and the amount of time I was spending outside my contract hours to be ready to teach each day. Increasing our pay, lowering the class size and giving us more planning time would definitely help lighten this heavy load.

Camie Simpson, Nebo School District

I just want legislators to recognize all the good that is happening in the classrooms around the state. Stop focusing on the bad! Also, if you really want to know how and what I teach, come see me, don't listen to someone who wants to undermine my valuable work.

Nichol Stringham, Wayne School District

Come spend some time in public education classrooms and you will see just what we are dealing with!

Karen Gardner, Weber School District

When I was student teaching 2 years ago several teachers warned me to get out while I can. Others tried to make sure I knew how much work I was signing up for. Over all I think teachers are getting burned out by the amount of work that is required in teaching, classroom management, and all the side projects dictated by state and district leaders. They want to do what is best for students, although that is what we want teachers to do, that desire is diminished by other pressures.

Lauren Mkina, Weber School District

I would like them to understand that title one schools are not failing. The system fails us. Teachers are working harder in these schools than in any other schools. Threats of giving labels or transferring teachers are not helpful. Money and community support is what we need. I would like to propose that legislators should be required to spend time in title one schools and see what is really going on.

Melanie W Vigil, Weber School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

When we had a teaching opening at my school 8 years ago we had over 200 applicants. Now we get about 30. It's getting harder and harder to find good teachers and unless something is done soon, public education in Utah will be in crisis -- and the 700,000 kids in public schools will suffer.

Robin Brunner, Alpine School District

In order to support my family, I do remodeling work on the weekends--laying tile, painting, removing old cabinets, etc. I have a colleague who works at Geneva Rock to support his family, and another who stocks shelves at Smith's. We're a small army of salaried professionals working blue-collar jobs. We need more men in this profession in the classroom showing our under-performing boys what a responsible, professional man looks like. We need positive male role models for kids who don't have a dad at home. Yet those of us who resolve to stay in the classroom instead of advancing into administrative positions are often forced to choose between providing that example for our own children or providing that example for our students. It's a rare week that I don't put in 55-60 hours at school before heading in to my other job on Saturday. I can put in long days and hours; that's what I signed up for. But I didn't expect to have to give up any additional time many professionals reserve for their families in order to just get by. There needs to be a pathway to the sort of success that will allow teachers to contribute to our communities as teachers in the classroom and still have something left over for our own families.

Christopher Green, Alpine School District

The demographics in Utah are changing and the lack of funding is now and will continue to cause our students to be under served. We need more funding for instructional coaching and teacher support professionals that can bolster our new teachers and help retain them.

Travis Lemon, Alpine School District

I have an doctorate in Educational Administration and Leadership. I moved here from CA and 7 years of service credit was transferred with me. I am currently making half of my CA salary - I made more my first year teaching in CA (18 YEARS AGO) than I do now. I also work 1.5 hours more daily here. I am unable to get my Administrative Licensure in Utah without redoing all of the coursework, even though I completed it all through my doctorate program. In order to go into any type of leadership position, I would have to start over. I think that's ridiculous. In our classrooms, we have awesome kids who are working harder than they ever have before to meet new state standards. Having an opportunity to learn from each other and plan new curriculum is essential. I don't want more to do, I'm already working very long hours. I want compensated time to plan, develop, and research effective, research-based strategies and create meaningful, engaging units. I have no science supplies in my classroom. I have to borrow from the other teachers at the school, if they're not using the materials. We are preparing kids to work in jobs that do not exist yet. For a state that has so many children in its population and a renowned emphasis on family and education, educators are not well compensated and classrooms/schools are undersupplied. Funds must be invested in the quality of the teachers required to meet the rigorous demands of the state; to meet the needs of individual students.

Kristi Smith, Alpine School District

People think the remedy to the teacher shortage is all pay. However, it is more related to workload and the number of nonsense things teachers are asked to do on top of their teaching jobs. Teachers are overwhelmed.

Danny Esplin, Box Elder School District

In the state of Utah I do not know one person who is a teacher that can support a family on their salary. People who have the profession as a teacher either has a spouse that also works to make ends meet or they have two jobs. This is a huge deterrent in the teaching profession and it has had an effect on our quality of teachers. I have been a teacher for 8 years now and half of those years I have been helping teachers hired who do not have a degree in education. Right now Utah will hire anyone to teach and teaching is already a hard trial by fire job. Not having that background of university training on analyzing data, classroom management, how to grade, etc makes the job even harder on those hired individuals. Hiring people without these skills as teachers is not just hard on them, it's hard on the kids, it's hard on the school trying to support them and get them the training they need. I know it also decreases
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my morale wondering why I got a degree in the first place and if what I had meant anything. Raising the pay will make the competition better. Schools will have people applying for the job and be able to select better teachers. Teachers will not be taking in second jobs making them better more rested teachers and more time to plan for their students. The bottom line is if you are a parent what kind of teacher would you want your child to have? A teacher without a degree in education? A teacher who has to work two jobs?

Johanna Fyffe, Box Elder School District

Cutting health/PE programs is insane. Pay to retain teachers.

Amy Wadsworth, Box Elder School District

I have yet to return to my pay from 8 years ago if we factor in the $6,000 deductible insurance and the loss of funds we received for teacher development of about & 3,000! Most of my children, my nieces and nephews make more than I do.

Alison Griffiths, Cache County School District

I spend 9ish hours a day at work, oftentimes working through lunch to get paperwork, planning, ieps, and things relating to ieps done. I am burning out.

Melanie Jones, Cache County School District

Teachers truly care about their students and their needs. Teachers want to best for their students. Teacher retention needs to be addressed. As a fifth year teacher with a masters degree the amount of time, work, and effort put in everyday is no where near validated through pay, benefits, and value. It is extremely difficult to live off of a teacher’s salary; especially with the amount of education and experience I have which would be much valued in a different field

Ashley, Canyons School District

We are overloaded with too many programs to learn and apply for demonstrating students learning levels and to show our abilities as a teacher. There is very little time if any for teachers to actually prepare quality lessons and be effective in their teaching when we have to spend more time writing about/explaining it to the powers that be. Yes, there are a lot of programs that do help us in being better teachers, but when it takes more time than a regular working day provides, teachers become very stressed and exhausted....burned out and want to leave the profession.

Diana Bettino, Carbon School District

I am moving my fifth grade class into blended learning. We are fortunate to have 1 to 1 technology, which is fabulous. I believe that blending will bring us higher growth. The planning and collaboration required, however, is incredibly time intensive. The number of meetings and trainings we are required to attend increases almost daily, and the result is that the time I put in on my job at home is getting seriously overwhelming. I'm excited about what I'm doing in my job. I think my class is going places. But nobody can take this workload long term without damaging their health or losing mental stability. Teachers are human. Human needs must be met. There are less stressful jobs for much higher pay. We should be shocked if there wasn't a teacher shortage.

Amy Coray, Davis School District

To whom it may concern, Please take education seriously. Utah is losing many good teachers because they aren't getting paid enough. It is too hard to be an effective educator and have part time jobs to cover the bills. This is the most pressing matter. If there aren't good teachers in the classroom, it will mean a lot of work/money for schools and districts to train and guide teachers who are not licensed educators. An increase in salary would mean more retention. It would mean more time with families. It would relieve much of the stress and pressure of being a teacher. Thank you for your hard work. Sincerely, A Good Teacher

Shon Feller, Davis School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

It is scary to be an experienced teacher and see what is happening to our profession! We are not attracting the quality educators that we need to for the future! A large amount of seasoned teachers are retiring and we don't have pay or benefits to interest people to enter this critical field! This is a CRITICAL time to invest in the efforts of attracting quality educators for the future of our Utah children! Best student outcomes or technology or class sizes won't be our biggest concerns if we can't first find high quality educators for teachers. More and more demands are placed on teachers every day and parents and students are becoming more and more challenging and time consuming. Burn out rate is high!! We need more support and more $ dedicated to adequate address increasing student needs. Teacher respect seems to be declining by some. More of our own time and money is being asked of us (not being funded for classroom supplies, more meetings, more documentation required, more individualizing for more students, etc). We feel like we are being taken for granted. Our family time is being sacrificed with our increasing expectations. It is becoming humanly impossible to balance work and home life with this extremely demanding job! No wonder the burn out rate is high, no wonder we're not attracting enough high quality people to enter the field! Please invest so that we may continue to have excellent teachers to lead all that lies ahead for our students!

Natalyn Shepherd, Davis School District

The biggest drawback to teaching right now for me is not the pay. I feel that it is the lack of trust. My district does not trust me to make academic decisions and instead prefers to micromanage every aspect of my job as much as they can. Most of the new teachers hired last year were under qualified (about 90%, or 27 out of 30). Teaching standards need to remain high and the state needs to pay according to the high standards to attract and retain good teachers. In the end, we will get what we pay for.

Ed Goodrich, Duchesne County School District

Our rural district is so impacted by low teacher salaries that my newest colleague is a 20 year old with only a high school education. She has no teaching experience. I suggest that the legislature work to reduce teaching pressure and increase teacher rewards, including pay. Utah students deserve a quality education.

Kathryn Thomas, Duchesne County School District

This is an honorable and necessary profession that many people are leaving because the work load is too great and because many feel like they are not treated as professionals.

Sarah Allan, Granite School District

There have been recent incidents that a teacher position went unfilled for half of a school year. The first (Math), was filled at the semester. The second (English) has not been filled. It is now the end of the first semester. Current English teachers are taking the extra classes so that those students will be able to have a full-time teacher. Problem: 1. Education is no longer a desired career. 2. The policy of not hiring full-time subs able to teach five days a week destroys the continuity of education for classes who need the subs.

Traci England, Granite School District

Pay increase for all school staff, not just teachers and principals. In special education it is difficult to hire and retain staff.

Richard Kerr, Granite School District

Quality public education, including preschool, needs to be a number one priority alongside basic health care for all citizens.

Virginia Rothstein, Granite School District

I dare you to do my job for a day!!!!!!

Keetette Turner, Granite School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

The two major things that will help us hire and retain teachers are being paid what we are worth and being valued - not overworked (like data crunching - we are not professional data analysts) and micromanaged. I think this has been evidenced in the recent reactions to the teacher shortage.

Marc Taylor, Jordan School District

The Public Education System in Utah is in crisis. This is not a political issue to be thrown around as a campaigning pawn. Public Education must be addressed by all leaders, citizens, and businesses. We all have to be committed, be on the same page and act in the best interest of our community; society.

Alma Taylor Brown, Logan City School District

I've been teaching elementary school for 23 years. In that time, I've spent an average of 3-4 extra hours a day outside of contract time in order to be an effective teacher. For some, it may sound like I'm not organized. To others I'm an award winning, effective teacher whose students love to come to school and who feel they have learned while spending time in my classroom. Let me use today as an example. The last bell rang at 3:10. It is now past contract time at 3:55pm. I've spent this time with a parent, answering e-mails from other parents, reading an article sent to the entire faculty by our administrator, answered a survey from the district concerning our language arts program, and am now writing to you. I still have 5 journals to read, several assignments and one assessment to record into the computerized grading record and finishing touches on tomorrow's lesson plans to put into place. I could come early in the morning, but I already have to be here early for a faculty meeting. There's just never enough time. It's so easy to get burned out. I'm old, from a generation of hard working, get the job done people. This new generation of young teachers is not willing to give the time, blood, sweat and tears to only be given more and more things to do with few materials, directions, and paid time to do them in. No wonder young people no longer aspire to be teachers! It's exhausting and many of our young teachers cannot qualify for a mortgage for a suitable house for their families! I appreciate the pay raise of the last year. It was a great start. It's time to look at other ways to assist teachers, to fill their buckets so they can fill the buckets of future citizens and community leaders.

Tina Nilsson, Murray City School District

Student success starts with supporting our teachers.

Charli Quinonez, Murray City School District

We need to be trusted to do the work we have committed to do. As with all professions, there are few who make it hard for the rest. Teachers do not need legislation passed to remind or tell us how to do our job. We are tired of trying every whim or educational philosophy that comes around and is then legislated to us to follow. Stop moving the goal-post and allow us to be the professionals we are. Please pay us as if we were truly professionals. My daughter in-law started her career making more (by almost double) than I do after working 10 years in the teaching profession. We both have a bachelor's degree. To help address the teacher shortage, pay and compensate us what we are worth. Please remember that we do not "have summer off". We work during the summer perfecting our craft, attending conferences, and attending classes to better ourselves in the profession we love.

Auralee Brooks, North Sanpete School District

When will we value educators? We are professionals and need to be duly compensated and given support at the school to meet the continuing list of tasks taking us away from our focus on student instruction and outcomes. We need skilled people.

Bryce Bird, Nebo School District

We have amazing students who are achieving incredible things. They need mentors who are quality and interested in helping students succeed. Teachers need to be paid more so that they want to stay in education. It's very hard to stay motivated to be in the classroom when you know your salary could double if you took a corporate job. The state should not continue to rely on people who do this job out of the kindness of their hearts. The state needs to make teaching a valued profession. The more they can do to support teachers, the better.

Angela Nederhand, Nebo School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

We have made good strides but there is still much to be done in order to secure the future of public education in Utah.

Stan Peck, Nebo School District

Teacher burnout is our current reality. Kids are coming with big issues that are not education related. We have to address these issues, as well as their education. It is draining to teach all the subjects, and do therapy on the student whose mom is in jail, who is living in a camp trailer, who has Obsessive defiant disorder, who thinks she is a boy and wants to transition to a male PLUS manage 30 kids in a classroom. Then spend 15 hours of overtime a week without pay, and want to stay in the profession. I have been teaching for 11 years. I spend much more of my time jumping through the hoops the state requires than planning for my lessons. Every teacher i know says, "When can I just be in my classroom and just teach?" More support needs to be given to teachers for dealing with behaviors and emotional issues. We can't spend our whole day doing therapy. It's not fair to teachers, nor the kids that are happy and ready to learn. Something has to change.

Lisa Peterson, Nebo School District

Teachers and other educators (I am a Speech Language Pathologist) in Utah are expected to work for free. Without donated time and money from us, the education system here would collapse. It is appalling.

Betina Workman, Nebo School District

Everyday I make a difference in the classroom. My students are excited to see me and I love them. I would love to feel that teachers have that same respect from the state of Utah. We have a teacher shortage because teachers do not feel respected for the differences we make each and everyday. We need to find a way to attract and keep teachers...emphasis on the keep.

Amy Dunn, Ogden School District

While working in a turnaround school in Ogden School District, I was expected to spend @ 3 or 4 hours outside of the contract time to visit parents or study teaching techniques. This was expected of all the teachers in the school, regardless of their levels of expertise. It made a poorly paid, professional job unattractive and took too much time away from my family life. Worst of all, it took time I needed to spend diagnosing my students' needs and planning for their academic activities and success. The practice was in contrast to what I had learned to be beneficial to my students' learning. It was extremely frustrating and made me feel less effective as a classroom teacher and very unimportant as a professional.

Linda Edwards, Ogden School District

I teach a behavior support class for the most at risk children in Provo City School District. These children have experienced severe trauma in their homes, including physical, emotional, and sexual abuse. As a result these students have mental illnesses. My co-teacher and I act as a social worker, therapist, mother, and teacher. We both have been attacked numerous times, as well as have had our room destroyed. One of our students would deficate in his pants daily and become violent and/or run away when confronted about it. All of this, and I only make a little over $31,000. I'm exhausted, I feel burned out, and to be honest, may not come back next year because of the physical and emotional exhaustion.

Jackie Martin Cooper, Provo City School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

I have a 26 year old son on the ASD spectrum. I fought the insurance coverage problem for him 23 years ago for many years. This year, I had to and am continuing to fight it again. I was discouraged to know that this is a problem that many parents in our state are still having to fight. We have made leaps and bounds in the medical world to understanding what helps these children, and yet we still have NOT mandated insurance companies in the state of Utah to cover autism (including the simple process of "classifying" or "diagnosing" someone who is on the spectrum. There are over 30 states in our nation that have mandated insurance companies to cover autism, unfortunately, Utah has not. We need to push this through our system to help our children.

Mary Johnson, Alpine School District

Teachers are feeling very beaten up. We're tired and discouraged. We've been blamed for everything. There's very little respect from parents and legislators. Spend some time in a classroom. See what we do. Just because you went to school as a kid doesn't mean you have the faintest idea what it's like to be a teacher. I've been to the dentist a hundred times. Would you let me work on your kids' teeth? Of course not. Neither do you know what it takes to create a successful classroom. We need to be listened to and really heard. We need support. We need to be paid enough that we don't need second jobs that take our focus and energy away. We love what we do. We want your children to reach the stars. We're working so hard. Don't just say you support us, show you support us.

Jake Southworth, Alpine School District

Children are not numbers and schools need to not be treated like businesses. Teaching children has so much more significance than any data/testing will ever show, and we need to focus on educating the whole child and not just focus on subjects that are tested. I am all for training and teaching with the latest/best practices that have been researched, but this doesn't happen without significant time spent on lesson plans, material development, and assessments created to measure learning. It is not fair to implement new curriculum standards or give teachers new assignments or expectations and expect them to invest their own time to always create materials, learn new material, and organize and prepare it all to be able to teach it. This job can be, and usually is utterly exhausting and doesn't just affect a teacher but also their families. We do it because we care, but you can only care so much and for so long. Probably the only other professions that put in the kind of time that teachers do, are given time during their work day to prepare and learn information necessary to do their job, and have a great deal of responsibility expected are paid a whole lot more. More pay would definitely make it more worth doing, but honestly there just isn't enough time in the day to do all that is expected even if we were compensated. Most people just take for granted what has to go into teaching to pull off even minimal success and don't realize what it takes to really accomplish some of the amazing things that we do, most of what can't be shown on a standardized test. I think what public education (well any education) does is crucial to most kids' lives and to our society, which is why I do what I do and will continue to do as long as I am capable. But we can't do it alone and need the support of parents, politicians, and the entire community that we live in because we're all interconnected, so it's important we understand each other and work together. Thank you for all you do in support of public education.

Heather Stewart, Alpine School District

I love teaching in Alpine district but I continue to actively search for a higher paying position out of Utah state. I'd prefer not to move but I cannot start a family or pay student loans on the salary I make. I have to coach multiple teams, supervise every after school activity, and participate in every teaching incentive/extra hours program I can just to try to make a living wage. I've taught for 6 years, but I cannot maintain this pace much longer. Moving just one state over ensures a $12k starting raise compared to Utah and a limit of 28 students per classroom. That's difficult to pass up.

Lee Tortorelli, Alpine School District

A teacher's day does not begin at 7:30 a.m. nor end at 2:50 p.m. We take our work home--prepare lessons for the next day/week, grade papers, contact parents, update grades, communicate with other teachers and much more. We love what we do but we are underappreciated by the administration and the legislation. Because we enter each day and help kids to learn and to grow in a safe, inviting environment, we too need an "atta boy". Those can come in many forms. It is proven that employees in any industry work harder for employers who recognize, empathize, and
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reward their hard work and celebrate their successes. Education should be no different. I love when my students tell
me they love and appreciate me. I love it when my employer recognizes my time and effort in and out of the
classroom. I appreciate it when the legislature passes on funding that increases my pay because they know and
understand the value of an "atta boy" and a keep up the great work. We are working together to "grow" Utah kids.

Laura McKee, Box Elder School District

As a mother and a teacher, I appreciate the quality of education taught by a teacher that has time to prepare
appropriately, feels valued and is encouraged to update skills and technology. They must utilize this training and new
skills making it available to their classroom with training provided. I know this is not the teacher's financial
responsibility but ends up that way, due to funding deficits and high needs to stay current and effective.

Rachelle Kendrick, Cache County School District

We need to retain and attract quality teachers. Pay us like other professionals. I do just as much as an accountant, a
tax adviser, a nurse, or any other college educated professional. In fact I give up more of my free time than most
other professionals just to make up lesson plans, grade work, help out at school functions and get training to help me
become more computer literate or updated on the newest best practices. I hardly ever have a "free weekend". When
I am gone, it is important enough to have a substitute. Please treat what I do with respect and appropriate
compensation.

Ruth Mudrow, Cache County School District

Get with the times...don't make any legislation 're education until they have been in the classroom at least a week. No
one tells an attorney, doctor or even a mechanic how to do their jobs, why is it that everyone else has a say in what
and how we teach? Pay us for our time. Utah is getting to be more expensive to live in. I know of teachers - teachers
who are sole breadwinners or who are divorced, widowed or single having to work two jobs to make it here in Utah.

Mary LeCheminant, Canyons School District

I know that the conversation isn't just about money, but logically, if you pay teaching professionals a competitive
wage, you will not only attract higher quality people, but you'll be able to expect a higher quality outcome. People
work to earn a living. Give quality teachers a better way to live and you won't lose them to other fields.

Shanalee Sadler, Canyons School District

Why am I as a teacher automatically bad, until I prove to you otherwise.

Bret Thomas, Canyons School District

Last year due to teacher shortage and district money I had 32 fourth graders. Their reading levels spanned from 6
words per minute to 157 words per minute. I had students with IEPs and 504s for behavior. We did not have a math
text, science text, and piloted a writing program. I was responsible to have my students show growth on the sage
test. We were lucky to just make it through the day without some major interruption, or catastrophe. All the while I'm
being paid about the same as the local garbage collectors.

Jared Chiara, Carbon School District

That I am often (approx once per week) in my classroom until the last minute before the silent alarm goes off (9-10
PM) in an effort just to stay caught up in my responsibilities. I am ALWAYS in my classroom every day at 6 AM, no
later.

Geoffrey C. Bovey, Davis School District

I love teacher work days. I love the opportunity to effectively plan and prepare engaging lessons and materials for my
students. As a teacher, I would love to have teacher work days more often. I feel I would be a better teacher and my
students would learn more.

Sharlie Howe, Davis School District
Most parents are not present in a student's education. We are a babysitter. Students need parent involvement to be successful.

Stacey Howell, Davis School District

We can't give students a top rated education if teachers are not given time to plan and collaborate with each other.

Mark Hyatt, Davis School District

Our parent teacher conference time has been cut in half this year. First of all, the time remaining is not enough to really sit down and plan/conference with the parents. So we are supposed to "schedule another meeting." While this may be able to happen within the 30 minutes we are contracted (aka. paid) after school, that time is already taken up with lesson planning, grading, and a multitude of other teacher tasks. So basically we are being forced to meet outside of our contract time with the parents. Teachers are undervalued. We are creating the future. Without the proper tools, time being the key, the vast majority of us will not succeed with more than only a few students.

Crista Killpack, Davis School District

Teaching is becoming an even more difficult profession. While educators are beholden to parents, administration, and counselors too, teachers have no advocate or voice against unfair practices and treatment without fear of retribution. There needs to be an evaluative practice for administration and counseling that teachers get to be a part of. These positions of "power" should undergo the same scrutiny and observation as educators.

Carina Kinney, Davis School District

I work with over 200 junior high students everyday; Grades 7, 8, and 9. I often work through my lunch in an effort to keep up with grading and preparation. I also go in early and stay late. More often than not I put in at least an extra 20 hours per week at work. There are increasingly more administrative tasks to attend to and higher expectations of excellence to achieve. However, with the increase of time and effort there has not been equal merit. I need a $5,000 raise and great benefits for the work I do. I can't appreciate a raise in the form of “better” or “increased” health care benefits. Benefits should be benefits not pay! Pay me money to pay my bills with. Pay me money to help me feel not only appreciated and valued for excellence in teaching your children, pay me money because of the value of the occupation itself and the personal time, talents, education, and experience I a provide on a daily basis to ensure your future and that of your posterity are good and full. Invest in me and I will do everything in my power to protect and grow your investment!

Laura Larsen, Davis School District

Special Education does use a lot of education money but is important in so many ways. Our special ed. students have a very positive influence on the gen-ed population. Our students SPED- learn so much about how to function in the real world from being with and watching the gen-ed population. However, in so many schools not all technology in the gen-ed classroom is given to the SPED classrooms. Also, some schools in our district have all the bells and whistles (smart while others limp along with broken windows and orange water. Resources should be evenly distributed, especially schools within a district. Let’s be fair and above board.

Barbara Lovell-Waddell, Davis School District

When I first began in this profession, I considered it the best job in the world. About five or six years ago, that attitude changed with more government intrusion and mandates but no increase in pay. The last two years, there has been a District takeover of the classrooms with mandate after mandate that has taken away more teacher autonomy and teacher innovation and has increased the work load with no increase in compensation. Any enthusiasm for this job has been completely crushed.

Eric Gubler, Duchesne County School District

There is a lot of professional development which is very helpful. However, what we really need now is time to implement what is expected. This time could be paid time after school, time during school etc.

Cindy George, Granite School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

My job is hard. I know all jobs can be, but it is emotionally, logistically, creatively, and temporally demanding.

Benjamin L McGowan, Granite School District

I have a 6th grade program my district has committed to that requires 90+ minutes to teach effectively then threw us into a junior high setting with this program and have larger classes and 45-50 minutes to teach. No time whatsoever to help struggling students, or time period to do nothing but direct teaching! The district doesn't care & our grades will be compared to the rest of the 6th grade in our district who are still elementary schools and other middle schools with programs made for that time frame. Not fair, and this is how we burn out teachers!

Belinda J. Nelson, Granite School District

I have taught for nearly a half century and still feel that my standard of living has not raised as many other professions, yet cost of living has increased at an alarming rate. I still remember my nephew graduating from high school and starting out in business for $10,000 more that I was making after 10 years of teaching.

Sandra Peck, Murray City School District

Teachers are extremely important to the future of our world - help us to feel important, be properly compensated have the time and resources to do our jobs the way they should be done.

Annie Taylor, Murray City School District

Kids achieving great things because teachers are allowed to teach. Stop making their job hard and treat them like professionals.

Tim Mendenhall, Nebo School District

As a first year teacher I am totally swamped. I am at school everyday until after six and come home and work another two to three hours after dinner. However, I feel like no matter how hard I work or how well I do on evaluations my efforts will not be recognized with benefits nor monetary bonuses. I am not even entitled to a paid maternity leave until after I have completed three years of teaching, which is just ridiculous!

Erica Murdoch, Nebo School District

Teaching is a challenging job. Teachers work tirelessly trying to do the best for the students they love. We work countless hours and deserve to be compensated and respected.

Deon Youd, Nebo School District

Teachers work above and beyond to provide the best education and classroom experience for their students. We need to have adequate planning time and more paid prep time at the beginning of the school year. It feels as though we are expected to work many extra hours without pay at the beginning of the school year (and other times throughout the year) in order to be prepared. Please add a few more paid planning days at the beginning and throughout the year.

Riliann Stettler, Ogden School District

This is my fourth year teaching, and I am burnt out. I would say I am an excellent educator, but because of the mandates put on me by both the district and the state I feel that I can't do this anymore. I love teaching, I love my students, but I feel I am slowly being left with no choice but to leave. I'm begging you, raise teacher pay or figure out how to retain quality teachers. Figure that out by talking to current teachers who are in the thick of it and listen and care about us. We need help.

Riley Hanni, Provo City School District

I am a special educator for students who need significant support (behavior support, physical therapy, feeding, toileting, etc.) and I cannot do my job without para-educators. Unfortunately due to the low pay, low hours, and lack of benefits, we cannot keep them. Between myself and the other self-contained teacher we have lost 5 excellent para-educators in two years. They have gone on to higher paying jobs, a less intense workload, and often careers
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with benefits. As long as para educators are capped at $12 an hour--no matter how well trained, experienced, or overqualified they may be--are limited to working 29 hours per week or less, and expected to be highly qualified for their positions, we will not be able to fully staff our classrooms. Without a full staff, our classrooms cannot run efficiently and we cannot provide the quality education that our students deserve and are legally entitled to under federal law.

Tierra Healy, Provo City School District

As much as education is fulfilling in and of itself, it is still a job that should be paid for what it's worth. Educators should be compensated for the incredible time, effort, and dedication they bring to the profession - not treated like the job is the reward itself.

Christine Lavallee, Provo City School District

Please, please, please focus on the needs teachers have. We have a system where teachers are both overworked and used as the scapegoat when they are often not the problem. Please recognize the adverse role some districts have on growth in individual schools. Legislate that schools have more autonomy.

Robert LeCheminant, San Juan School District

I am physically and mentally exhausted at the end of the day. Sometimes it feels like there is little support. We certainly don't teach for the money, but it would be appreciated. Also, the lack of respect from students and parents is getting ridiculous.

Elaine Carter, Uintah School District

Spend a week with us and see how much we care, do, and make a difference. Then understand why so many teachers work 2 or more jobs.

Stephanie Reed-Tippet, Uintah School District

I have been an educator for 14 years. I LOVE teaching but a few years ago I decided I needed a 5 year plan to leave teaching. I couldn't do it anymore. The pay, the lack of support for supplies, the lack of support with large class sizes and behavior students. The sense of moral in my building... all these things made me cry almost everyday that year because I couldn't do it anymore but I LOVE teaching. Something has got to give to help support our teachers! It isn't just money- yes we need higher salaries but not because we are greedy, but because this is a stressful job! We face so much stress and pressure everyday as educators and then to face the additional stress at home of how do I pay my bills? How do I buy a house or save for the future or even go on a vacation to relax (I work in the summers to have extra money to help survive the rest of the year)? it is all the stress together that are making teachers crack and breakdown. We ask for college degrees and masters degrees and endorsements which all come with student loans for many- we need to pay teacher enough to pay back those student loans. Student loan forgiveness programs are such small percentage of the cost of student loans. If as a state we can reduce some of the stress and burden teachers face in their lives as a whole- the stress of the classroom wouldn't be as great a burden since the load would have been lightened.

Elizabeth Brown, Wasatch County School District

Please come spend a day or two in special education classrooms. Get to know what our daily challenges are and see what a great job we are doing.

Glenda Gray, Wasatch County School District

When I'm paid more for my time, I feel valuable and more willing to do a better job for my administrator and students.

Tina Crawford, Washington County School District

There is a lot of talk about why we are losing or not attracting new teachers. From my experience it comes down to that the demands on teachers increase every year. The students become more difficult every year, the principals and districts demand more every year and so much time is spent in meetings rather than actually preparing, and the pay
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doesn’t make it worth the stress and hassles. For double the pay it might be worth all the stress and unpaid overtime. We also definitely need more support and options for unruly students. I’ve had 5 year olds curse me, yell at me, and hit and bite me. And I have a very structured well run class. It is not that I’m not doing my job. We have emotionally disturbed children in the regular classroom and 5 min with the counselor doesn’t fix it. In years past they’d be expelled. Now they want to fix the teacher, not the kids. When I meet a young person who says they want to teach, I warn them that teaching is a small part of what you actually do.

Jean Doty, Washington County School District

More money needs to go directly to teachers that is not funneled through the hands of the district and others. I need more money to help my individual classroom. I don't need more regulation of that money and hoops to jump through. I don't see increases coming down to me to use- grandeous plans for technology don't make it elementary schools. How about asking the teachers how they want to spend the money on technology individually? Now there’s an idea-huh?

Lee J. Claycomb, Weber School District

Ask a teacher about what teachers and classrooms needs. And, commit to spending time with teachers and as teachers before deciding up issues that affect students and teachers. I choose to teach, but to do so has been expensive in so many ways: I often PAY to do my job, PAY to keep my job, PAY with my a decline in my health due to rising expectations on my part and a lowering of understanding and support on your part.

Cassie A Cox, Weber School District

Teaching is a very rewarding profession. We work extremely hard. It should be a profession that others seek rather than one many stay clear of. This could happen if teachers were payed better and had the needed resources and time to better their instruction. Planning and collaboration time is important. Having this in place will help retain teachers as well.

Tina Satterthwaite, Weber School District

Over the 12 years I have taught, I have witnessed many changes and new programs being implemented. It is so hard to keep up with changes in education, by the time we start to become proficient with one system, it changes, let's minimize program changes and focus on what really matters: finding ways to attract and retain good quality teachers in our schools, and then supporting them so that they can do their jobs each day without overburdening them with too many meetings, too much paperwork, or too many extra duties and assignments.

Rod Buttars, Cache County School District

There are classes that you are making required that the students and teachers alike do not want to participate in. These classes are meant to “promote” and give “exploratory” experiences to different careers in the CTE department. I am speaking specifically about College & Career Awareness (CCA) and Digital Literacy (DigLit). What it comes down to is that you are taking teachers away from teaching their content to force them to teach CCA. This is making us lose teachers because no one wants to teach CCA full time. I think the class is great because the students get a lot of different experiences, however, making it full time and required is killing the specific content classes our school offers. Digital Literacy does not need to be a full semester, every-day course. The DigLit curriculum could easily be added as a few weeks to the Exploring Technology class. It is stretching the curriculum ridiculously to make it a full year. By making these classes required, you are taking students away from our specific content classes (i.e. FACS, Exploring Technology, Manufacturing Technology) that they want to take! You are also taking students away from opportunities to take foreign languages, music, drama, and fine arts, thereby eliminating their programs as well. Please rethink the decision to make CCA and DigLit required. It would be better for all, including students, if you do.

Emalee Brown, Canyons School District

Remember that teachers are teaching our future. You get what you pay for!

Cindy Nottingham, Davis School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

I would like to share how important CTE classes are to introduce students to the trades. There are many high paying jobs that are not filled because students don't think they can make a good income in the trades. Through introduction and training, high school students may start their career right out of high school, many may go on to further their education with an associates degree or a Bachelors in that trade.

John Lindsay, Grand County School District

In a state with a severe teacher shortage, I find it interesting that we are trying to change the criteria used to hire new teachers, rather than fix what is wrong with the system and support the teachers we already have.

Tamra Fulmer, Jordan School District

PLEASE show respect/validation for the teaching as a profession. I work very hard at my job and my student's test scores validate this. However, I also spend an inordinate amount of time helping a new third grade teacher at my school (who has a degree in Animal Husbandry- so it made perfect sense for you to decide she could now teach third graders effectively?). She is a darling girl who I like very much. But the responsibility to teach her how to be a teacher has now fallen to me and the rest of my already over-worked team. We didn't sign up to teach teachers- our job is to teach students. Now on top of teaching students, we are also expected to carry the load of teaching new teachers??? NOT OK!!!!!!! Require a teaching degree, please!!!

Elise Brown, South Sanpete School District

I don't think any legislator should make any changes to education until they have spent months in a school seeing what is really going on, and have had to teach a class in a public school.

Deborah Schmock, Salt Lake City School District

Teachers are professionals - the lowest paid professionals. Utah teachers are amazing! They impact lives inspite of little funding, large class sizes, and so many mandates,

KaLynn Sheffer, Uintah School District

Teacher and substitute teacher shortage will not go away until the legislature makes these jobs beneficial both monetarily and emotionally to perspective teachers.

Laurel Cloward, Weber School District

As a special educator for over twenty years and having seen a slow and steady increase in the amount of regulation. This year we've had an overwhelming increase in regulations that will take even more time away from my students, but will also cause an increase in work and huge increase in the size of student files. None of it will increase the quality of education for those students. In fact, it has reduced the amount of time I can put into helping students. One other thing.......what is the deal with allowing parents to keep their kids home and have no responsibility to get them to school? Schools are held accountable for increasing the skills of kids who are not here. Our hands are tied because we can't do a darn thing about kids who aren't even here. Example: A parent wants the district to provide private speech therapy for a student whose child only attends 55% of the time. I can tell you that if anyone asked me if they should pursue a career in education and particularly in special education I'd say and emphatic, "NO!" I love the kids and I love teaching them. I love all of the people who work in my building and those in my district that I work with. However, over the 25 years I've been teaching the kids and parents keep getting harder and harder to work with. I spend well over $1000 of my own money every year just trying to provide what they need. I bought my own Ipads to the tune of $2500 a couple of years ago because I had students who needed access to some technology to allow them to convey their ideas in writing. If it weren't for how much I love my students I wouldn't do this. In addition, the amount of time we spend testing kids is absurd.

Marian Hellstrom, Weber School District

I am currently in my third year of teaching ELA in a junior high along the Wasatch Front. Many of my fellow friend teachers have left the profession to seek employment in other places outside of education . The underlining reason and common thread for their decision is the disrespect the feel from students and parents. Second to that is the
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increased demand of responsibility for teachers in and outside the classroom with little to no compensation and sometimes a lack of support. Myself, I could be a teacher for a long time. I'm a good teacher and if I keep going I know I'll be great. It is a rewarding profession. However, the thing that I foresee and one of my biggest struggles that ultimately is pushing me out the door is the disrespect of students and the lack of support from administrators being willing to listen to all sides of problems that arise in the classroom. Is there legislation for that? I'm not sure. With the teacher shortage happening, I question whether people are really looking at the reasons why teachers are leaving.

Amy Kendell, Weber School District

This is the third year that I have had to deal with a kindergarten child who has serious mental issues that impact my entire class. We need more in the building help to deal with troubled students. When the principal is out who gets to tend these students? I know I can teach but I am considering if I want to keep doing this job.

Betty Rabe, Weber School District

For too long teachers have been seen as people who only work 9 months of the year and only short hours in a day. Teachers work year round they might only teach 9 months but they work year round. It was ridiculous that most of the districts in the state teachers got huge raises but Alpine district gave a token raise. Whether we like it or not the message sent there was that we were not valued and what we do is not that important. Those on the firing line should get the raises they are the ones paying the price.

Vicki Dorius, Alpine School District

Teaching is a very demanding job. It taxes us physically, emotionally, and mentally. We are required to make hundreds, if not thousands, of decisions every day, which is exhausting. We spend a lot of our "time off" on planning, preparing, and taking classes or attending conferences to become better teachers. Often times we are asked to do more with less, and we do it. We are invested in each of our students and are heartbroken, at times, at the hard things they endure at such a young age. But we do it willingly and love it because we are making a difference! It would be so nice to have real support and recognition for what we do with increased compensation, but also respect for us as educated professionals who are dedicated to our students, who are our future. I invite you to go into a classroom, or two, and see the amazing things that are happening in our schools. Talk to students and teachers and find out what works, what is great, what can be improved, etc. Schools are amazing places! Come and learn the things that have the highest impact on student learning. Or you can look up John Hattie's research on that. What you learn will surprise you. Take the time to understand what is really happening in our schools before you introduce and/or vote for legislation that will impact thousands of teachers and students. I again wholeheartedly invite you to spend time in some classrooms, mine is always open.

Angie Herman, Alpine School District

I wish the legislature and parents and even administrators really understood the amount of time teachers spend doing their job outside of the school day. Three to four hours extra hours per evening is par for the course in this profession. During the school day, I am busy teaching lessons and working with students. Contract hours are insufficient to prepare lessons, create differentiated instruction, grade papers and tests, figure out intervention strategies, research new methods, prepare technology enhanced lessons, respond to parent emails, etc. etc. etc. Burn out is very real! Increasing expectations feel completely unrealistic. Most days, as much as I love my job, I am just exhausted. One of the most disheartening aspects though, is all this extra time is just expected. We are frequently "offered" opportunities for professional development and additional training after school hours or on weekends. It is stressed that they are "voluntary" which just means - you are volunteering your time without compensation. If you don't take advantage of these trainings, it reflects negatively. Most other professions compensate you for extra training and extra work; we never get overtime pay or comp time. Many will say, but you get summer's off - that should make up for it. In summers, we are technically unemployed - that is unpaid time, which ironically most teachers spend prepping/decorating their classroom, taking workshops, prepping lesson materials, spending our own money on supplies, etc.

Pam Hyer, Alpine School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

Over the past several years, I have seen first year teachers leave the profession after only teaching one or two years. The biggest reason was that they felt like they did not have enough positive support from their principals and/or grade level teams. I would hope that while we have a teacher shortage, there would be a better plan to support these new teachers. (Extra training...especially lesson planning and classroom management)

Barbara Nelson, Alpine School District

I understand that educators are not licensed doctors. Teachers are in the "trenches" everyday, year after year with children. They see patterns in behavior and learning. When a student shows behavior or learning outside of these common patterns teachers tend to want to know why. Then they tend to want to help, because usually these observations show needs in these children. It would be so helpful to the students, their families, and the school environment if teachers could really work with doctors or other trained professionals. So often teachers are told they don't qualify in raising red flags in behalf of student behavior and learning. Sometimes the students only have a teacher that can raise those warnings. I grow weary seeing students unhelped because a teacher isn't qualified to raise concerns. I would hope that procedures could be developed that would be beneficial for everyone involved when teachers notice concerns in behavior and learning.

Lisa Prestgard, Alpine School District

I truly appreciate their efforts to create a sound education system for our great State. Sometimes, however, I feel like decisions are based more along party lines than on a thorough understanding of the "on the ground" reality of the needs/issues that are affecting teachers/students every day lives. Is there a way to host every legislator for a day- to have them try the job so they can get a feel for what real issues are? Just a thought! If they had to be in a classroom for a day- and teachers had to be up at the Capitol building trying to hash out policy, maybe both sides would come to a greater understanding of the realities of the assignment- thus providing more common ground. Just a thought!

Julie Siebach, Alpine School District

I would like to see legislators visiting with actual teachers and trying to understand what it is really like in a classroom. There are so many additional factors that teachers have to deal with everyday, and I don't think anyone who is not currently "in the trenches" can comprehend. (Even former teachers forget exactly what it's like.)

Julie van Dijk, Alpine School District

We are working as hard as we can. We care about our students as individual learners and want them to succeed. Teachers are professionals that spend hours outside of school working to help students.

Matthew Woolley, Alpine School District

I am a highly qualified and certified teacher. I love my job. I advocate for students to do their best.

Katie Wilkinson, Canyons School District

Support teachers so we can focus our time and energy on the kids.

Britni King, Carbon School District

I stay until 6:30 every night, preparing lessons, answering emails from parents, and doing everything that is asked of me. That's 2-3 hours of overtime every night that I don't get paid for. I also take papers home, after that, to grade. If I worked out my actual salary, it would be very depressing. This is an extremely hard job, that we do happily. It would just be nice to have some support and appreciation from our legislators and community.

Jori Barton, Davis School District

I would like them to come spend a day in my classroom. If you are going to make rules about education, spend some time with us. I have invited them to my classroom, and haven't seen one show up yet!

Annette Brewer, Davis School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

Elementary school is every bit as important as high school. There should be attendance requirements that parents are required to meet.

Jean Ernstrom, Davis School District

Many teachers are not in the profession for money. We knew going in that it is a service profession. However, the difficulty of the day in and day out of this job is underestimated. You never leave the classroom mentally; in fact it usually takes a month in the summer to gear down and a month to prepare. There is always something that needs your attention. And because our “product” is people who come with tremendous challenges, our brains never turn off. We are now required by law to handle them medically, emotionally, psychologically, academically, socially, behaviorally and turn out an exceptional ‘problem-free’ product. Because we can't legislate parenting, we legislate ‘in loco parentis’ (the teachers) to the point where teaching and spreading the joy of learning is diluted. Please think carefully before demanding more—we are a societal institution, but we cannot bear all of society's burdens.

Jennifer Hogge, Davis School District

The demands on new teachers make it very difficult for them to succeed, especially for CTE or science teachers. Inheriting a new classroom(s) can be overwhelming. It is not uncommon for me to be at school for 12-14 hours to manage all of my classes, each with several students who have IEPs and 504s; I have 3 classrooms which need organizing, inventory, repairs; I also have to do shopping for specialized materials and equipment on top of, lesson prep, researching, marking and contacting students and parents. There are simply not enough hours in the day for me to meet all the needs of my students, at the expense of my young family.

Jonathan Lai, Davis School District

Utah teachers are dedicated to their students' success. They are amazing and creative to achieve all that has been asked of them with so little time

Jennifer Low, Davis School District

Quality teachers and how they can work with parents are the most important direct impact on a child's educational experience. Please stop heading the other direction.

Sheri Ruvalcaba, Davis School District

The benefits of implementing arts programs at our school, specifically our school choir, yearly play production, opera by children. The arts matter!

Cynthia Szymanski, Davis School District

I have been teaching over 10 years and I am considering leaving the profession. This is even after receiving a sizable raise this school year—which proves to me that no amount of money will make people stay in a profession where they feel disrespected and overburdened. I want legislators to understand the reality teachers face on a daily basis. I want legislators to understand that not all teachers in Utah teach students from middle-class, white backgrounds (which is what most legislators are, and therefore that is the kind of school their kids attend), and not all teachers teach sweet elementary-age students. I have 35-40 students (12 to 14 years old) per class, I teach nearly 300 students due to the alternative schedule my school has chosen (think of the amount of grading that entails for every assignment), I have students swear at me and call me a ‘bitch’ on a regular basis simply because I have high expectations for behavior in my classroom, and I have had students throw things at me on 3 occasions. Administrators either have little power to do anything to deal with these students, or choose not to use it. Students feel they can get away with anything. It seems the more I try to teach and do my job well, the more the students hate me for it. What other profession deals with that?! Maybe it is a situation unique to the middle school age—I do not know. But I do know that this is not a job I can continue doing long term. Before anyone assumes I am just one of the ‘bad apple’ teachers, please know that I am a good teacher. I have been asked to mentor new teachers, I have been department chair, I have received awards, I am frequently suggested as a teacher for new teachers to observe, my students perform better than the district average on tests despite the school having a high population of minorities and students of low socioeconomic status, and receive excellent ratings/reviews from administrators. Yet at this point I am thinking “I will do anything to
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get out of this profession.” I need respect from students—or at least, fewer disrespectful students to deal with at a
time—and respect and understanding from district personnel and legislators.

Janelle Baker, Granite School District

Come visit our schools and look at the dynamics of our student body. We have great kids but we also have parents
that do not parent and students who only want to cause havoc and have no accountability. We need a way to deal
with those few so that the many can learn and receive more attention.

Carol Cabanillas, Granite School District

Please realize that teaching is hard. It’s not something anybody off the street can just walk in and do. I would love to
stick a legislator in a classroom as if they were a new teacher and tell them to teach, so they could see what it’s really
like.

Nad’a Carter, Granite School District

There’s no better investment we can make for our state and country than to invest in our children’s education. Thank
you for supporting us as we give our time, talents—physical, emotional and mental for our students.

Lisa Foster, Granite School District

I am so tired of busy work the district makes up for us to do during our PLC and PD times. They want us to do all of
this stuff but never give us any time to implement it. I need more planning time. Not more days to work. Just plan
more planning time.

Pam Garvin, Granite School District

All of the professional development is not helping to be a better teacher. It takes time away from working with
students and it really doesn’t add much to my teaching. Teachers need more time to work on their own lesson plans,
correct papers and manage the day to day work in the classroom.

Jane Jones, Granite School District

Teacher Burnout

Judy Mangum, Granite School District

Being an effective elementary school teacher is SO much work! Our paid planning time is minimal compared to the
amount of lessons that need to be planned and prepared to help students meet the Utah Standards in all the subjects
we teach. More paid hours for elementary teachers to plan and collaborate would help teacher morale
(acknowledging with $ the need for time to plan well for students) and impact student learning. (Perhaps an extra
hour once each week would be a place to start.)

Jennifer Motzkus, Granite School District

The amount of work teachers are expected to do is monumental. Every year I have been in education the tasks
expected for teachers to accomplish increases. The district may eliminate some or give us easier ways to accomplish
them, but then they add three or four others. We also have been given paid time to collaborate, and paid time to plan,
but the district tells us what to collaborate on or they make us attend a professional development. "Here’s is a raise"
they say, "come for 15 more hours of professional development."

Suzanne Olson, Granite School District

Anything that can be done to help educators help our students to live happy and productive lives is worth the financial
commitment you make to education. We are here because we love and care about these kids - support us so we can
best support our students.

Patty Taylor, Granite School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

Currently this year I have 6 kindergarten students that have birthdays in August. Causing my classroom to be very young. I have had a yearlong battle managing behaviors because of how young they are. I feel as if all I am is a babysitter for these kids. If the deadline were moved back to December I feel like student learning would be impacted. The learning wouldn't come as quickly if at all.

Megan Vargo, Granite School District

Last year I had a VERY out of control child. He was in counseling but we still had to deal with him. He kept leaving my room, disrupting the class by making noises, crawling around the classroom, throwing things on the floor, roaming around the class during lectures and activities, then other kids started copying him. For 38 years I have been able to control my classroom so it was not lack of trying on my part. I was constantly having to stop my teaching to deal with this child. The class test scores were down that year, we did not get through the curriculum like we should have and sometimes had to leave the room because this student was out of control. This year I teach next to a teacher who has an autistic boy who hits her, licks her, body slams her, bites her and throws scissors, etc. at other students that are in the class. She has had to evacuate her classroom for the safety of the other students and the safety for herself as the student attacks her when he gets upset. They come into my room so I now have 62 students crammed into my class. We try to keep class running as usual but it is a disruption. These are the kind of students that are hampering the learning of the 30 kids in the class. PLEASE help find a solution for these kinds of problems.

Robyn Walsh, Granite School District

Spend a day at school so you understand education

Glenda Butikofer, Jordan School District

After a long career in teaching I have finally retired but I'm still very sympathetic to educators and the difficulty they have managing all the expectations. Over the past 30 years of teaching I've seen the stress from outside sources mainly the district, principals and legislature do very little to support educators from the constant barrage of requirements. With my retirement I feel relief of no more ringing bells running my life, or parceling my time under an hour increments. With my time now I can finally plan for my families needs without always having 13 things to do at the same time. I'd like to help more in the schools but for the first time in so many years I am just enjoying being able to govern my own schedule without so very many restrictions on it.

Janet Reed, Jordan School District

Facebook post from January 4, 2018: All week I've been trying to find a reason to continue teaching. I am so burned out on all extra crap we have to do. What is expected of me as a teacher is ridiculous. I've been trying to think of any other profession I could stand doing. It's been a really rough week. I know I need a change but I don't know what. Then something happened today to remind me why I got into teaching. It reminded me of what is important. It was so significant that I've even determined to stay and put up with all of the crap. I got into teaching for the kids. I've always known that but I had forgotten until today how important it is. I know I won't be a great influence on every kid that comes through my door. Most of them will forget me and that's okay. Most of them won't remember the distributive property, how to write a persuasive essay, or their Greek Mythology. Some kids will though. Some kids will leave my classroom with an increased love of learning. Some kids will learn why math is important or will leave with an interest in Science or a love of Theater. Those kids make it worth it. The kids who make me stay in the profession though are the kids who need me. Even if one kid in my whole career is influenced for good then it is worth it. Some kids have such terrible things going on outside of school that my classroom is the only thing stable in their lives. For those kids I will learn the new reading program, collect all the useless data my district requires, and jump through every hoop.

Sharon Rinehart, Jordan School District

We are overworked and under appreciated. People say we only work 9 months but we work crazy hours after work and weekends and during the summer. I would like to feel like all the work I put in is being appreciated.

Nicole Stott, Jordan School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

Businessmen need to actually visit and experience a classroom especially in the rural areas and become acquainted with the plethora of pitfalls in education. Mostly home life and lowered expectations of students from parents and legislature. My teachers here at my school have a very high interest in the students and their success. Were here because we love kids but some want to leave to make more money in industry to support the family. The hugest pitfall for me is the lack of respect or expectations from parents, administration and legislatures. There are no consequences for children. They are not allowed to fail, can move forward without doing their work and they know it. They don't attend school even though truency notices are sent. They don't do homework because their either gone to sports which is more important or no one on the parents end to lay down consequences and expectations. Teachers can't parent every child 24 hours a day. We can present the material in a variety of ways, we can be empathetic to their emotional and mental needs to an extent, we can make consequences here in class but if these aren't supported outside of school. We are considered the failures. This country with the destruction of families and homes and the ability of everyone to receive welfare with no effort "entitled" is the root cause of poor education. Not your teachers. More testing of students is not the answer. It doesn't represent the efforts of a teacher but of natural ability and home life.

Teresa F Harris, Millard School District

Teachers are hard-working, dedicated, intelligent individuals who are professionals. We need your support. We don't need to be managed in every tiny detail of our profession.

Tami Stevens, North Summit School District

I feel like education is so over the top hard on us as teachers. I feel like I am never prepared enough because there is so much to teach and so much expected. I am exhausted and overworked. I feel like I could work 24-7 and still not be fully prepared like I would like to be. I think there are way too many standards. It is unrealistic to think that there is time in our daily schedules to fit all of the standards in, especially in all areas. Students can't retain information if we keep throwing it at them at such a pace. Maybe we should focus on just a few skills and get really good at them, instead of the all the stuff that is expected. It is not good for students and it's very overwhelming for me as a teacher. I always feel like I am not good enough, and that is largely due to the ridiculous amount of information that I am supposed to teach. Especially with no help. We lost Core Academy and pretty much all of the trainings that used to help us feel confident to teach the Core.

Karen Burt, Nebo School District

I'm a teacher, I don't have time to address everything that needs attention.

Jamie Huston, Nebo School District

Every few years I am asked to jump through a new hoop to prove that I am an effective teacher. I challenge you to come and chat with the teachers and students at our school to see how "effective" we are. There's a lot of busywork that I'm asked to do and hoops to jump through in order to justify the allocation of funds to teachers. But how often are doctors asked to PROVE how effective they are?

Jak Kadish, Nebo School District

I would truly like to invite them into our classrooms to see our day to day interactions with students.

Liis Rametta, Park City School District

Teachers are asked to do so much and the teaching of the students suffers because of it. We need more time to teach.

Robert Bunker, Provo City School District

Teachers have and will continue to work hard for the students regardless of what the legislature does, BUT it is time for us to be recognized for the hard work, the hours of donated weekly, the out of pocket donations, the long summers of prep, the struggles with challenging parents and students, the lack of support from administration and
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

the minimal respect from the community. Teachers love the work but need to be able to quit their part time jobs to make ends meet.

Donna Chantry, Provo City School District

I spend on an average of 60 hours per week at the school doing my job. I am not the only one that works these kind of hours. As teachers, we are asked to do more and more things, seemingly without regard to the time it would actually take to get the tasks done. What can be done about the unspoken expectation that teachers have to work outside their contract hours?

Andria Halbert, Provo City School District

I would really like someone to address the issue of making certified qualified teachers sit out a year after they retire. If we could hire retired teachers immediately after they retire it would sure help with the teacher shortage and finding qualified teachers.

George Henrie, South Sanpete School District

I have been a teacher, a principal and now a teacher/principal. The work load and public expectations are unreal. Our students that are entering Kindergarten are not prepared to succeed in what has been the traditional learning environment. But it is not possible to meet these students where they are without smaller classes or an additional trained person in the classroom. The attention span of our students is very limited and they need to be taught a different way. But I can honestly say that flying the education plane in the classroom while trying to build it is not going to work.

Louise Willoughby, South Summit School District

I have taught in a self-contained functional academics classroom for the past four years. My first year, I only had one assistant and my students’ education (and my personal sanity!) suffered. I now am adequately staffed, but know of many cases where teachers lack classroom support because of the low wages for the position or underfunding of special education. Increased pay and support for special educators and the work we do is imperative to ensure better student outcomes and reduced future costs.

Amy Firestone, Salt Lake City School District

It is hard to recommend the educational profession to others, when the respect for teachers and the teaching profession is low. Public Ed is blamed for many things that are beyond our control. With the pressures of class size, limited funding, meeting individual needs, testing, continuing professional development, preparing materials and lessons, grading, assisting ELL and Special Needs students, 504 accommodations, and more, this job can be overwhelming. Even with summers off, most of us are taking classes and workshops, and developing curriculum. We work hard to help our students succeed, and when all our work is judged by a test score, we often feel defeated. I want you to know that all classroom learning is not transferable to a graph or chart. Not all learning can be gauged by a standardized test.

Jean VanderToolen, Salt Lake City School District

Public education is top priority

Marilyn Erickson, Sevier School District

You can say that the effect size of classes doesn't matter to student learning, but it does affect the teacher's emotional well-being. You don't feel like you do anything very well.

Penny Flory, Wasatch County School District

I hope that you know how much extra time teachers put in without compensation. We spend our own money to provide for student needs. We come in early and stay late. Please remember to vote for funding for education.

Cathy McCann, Washington County School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

The need for support staff - title 1 aides, reading aides, etc. They are the lowest paid, first cut during reductions, last rehired, but make all the difference in giving 1/1 support to struggling children.

Diane Nay, Washington County School District

Paid time to work on lesson planning before school. Allowing for time to collaborate with colleagues. We don't have time to do this with out cutting into other time for planning.

Brenda Keegan, Weber School District

-Research exactly what a school is required to do -Learn first hand what a teacher is required to do -Experience what it is like to be in a classroom, and for several days

Gerry Sianez, Weber School District

I am one of those teachers statistics show is unlikely to stay in the profession long. I have taught for five years, but am still teaching . . . at the moment. I love my job except for the fact that it is increasingly difficult to remember I love the problems the students cause and the overwhelming workload when I feel like I do not have any knowledgeable support from the legislature. People who run businesses and politics who have never taught a class should not dictate how my classroom is to be run. Instead, I would like support from the state and for them to recognize that more and more students are coming to classes all across Utah with sadder home-lives and more emotional and physical problems. Yet, we are still considered as sub-par institutions when these students don't "blow those tests out of the water." I would like policy to be more flexible for the backgrounds from which these students come.

Shae Tervort, Weber School District

Please communicate why it's not okay for our test scores to be high? The writing assessment just changed because our students are doing well with persuassive/argumentative writing so now the test has been changed to be more challenging. I don't understand it nor does the public!

Karen Congram, Granite School District

It is unfair to hold teachers responsible for student scores, when you just got rid of laws for truancy. I have 3 students this year that miss literally 50% of school and I am still held responsible for their scores. It is so discouraging to work so hard and have your teachers scores published. Parents don't know if you have students that don't come to school, or a lot of resource students, or other factors that skew the scores. They only see your overall score and then we are judged on this. It is so stressful for teachers. This is a major reason teachers get discouraged and have threatened to quit.

Valerie Hathaway, Juab School District

We are doing the entire school system a great disservice and cheating students of a quality education when we do not give them well paid, qualified teachers and do not hold charter schools accountable for test results.

Tracy Bell, Granite School District

Students need to be the focus of all concerned and involved with education. Politics and test scores are driving everything and kids are being forgotten. Assessment and instruction needs to be driven by student needs and be developmentally appropriate. Standardized testing, constant data meetings and testing, and a lack of the "basics" are taking away from what elementary students truly need to be successful...a firm and solid foundation. We don't teach a grade level such as 2nd or 5th. Instead, we teach an age group that has all levels crammed into it: from from beginning readers all the way up to high-school level readers because there is no accountability on students and parents to make education a priority. High stakes testing has created a host of issues for parents, students, and teachers such as anxiety, stress, cheating, etc.

Tricia Adams, Iron County School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

I teach at an "at risk" school. We are on turn around alert. The teachers at my school go above and beyond what is required for their classes. We appreciate the money the legislature gives us, but I am still spending hundreds of dollars of my own like all teachers. Our kids don't have a lot of parental support to encourage them to read and parents are so busy making ends meet that the student's school experience suffers. It is no fault of the student's, but they are the ones being punished when schools are graded on test results. We all love our students, or we would not be in this line of work. We want them to succeed, but expectations are so high and we're teaching so much to the academic core, that the student is not being taught to make them a more rounded individual.

Kris Fisher, Granite School District

With increased class sizes, students are not being given the support that they need. Last year I had a class of 32 first graders, with one having extreme behaviors. I left school frustrated and exhausted. It was the first year that I really had the idea that any other job would be easier than this and I wondered why I was putting myself through that every day. This year I have 32 sixth graders, and while that is more manageable, I feel like I can't give the time and attention that they each need during this critical time in their life. We have the chance to touch their lives and make a difference but that is extremely hard to do with such large class sizes and other demands of testing and teacher accountability.

Amber Parry, Granite School District

My biggest concern as an educator are the students who come through my classroom door already tired, stressed and upset because of their home life. Their needs are not being met and with such large class sizes I'm supposed to somehow motivate them to "let it go" and focus on learning. Then when that doesn't really work I am graded on their ability to test well regardless of their circumstances and that they are over tested. I'd like my legislators to work in a title I school for 6 weeks, and their pay, insurance and overall job rating be based on a test that would sum up everything they taught those little 10 year old kids in ONLY six weeks. Schools and teachers cannot control the minds of others, not even the precious little people we teach. It is hard to stay motivated when your own professional ability lies in the hands of a child. We do not feel you can control the factors or outcomes. What keeps me going is not pay, not the incredibly long, in depth evaluation sheet. I keep going for the kids I know may not remember how to turn a mixed number into a improper fraction. I hope they will remember feeling important, smart and know someone believes in them.

Vivian Rose, Tooele County School District

If merit pay is funded, focus should be on student achievement that is not solely based on standardized testing. Teachers in special education settings often have children who do not do well on standardized tests, and this should not be the only way to gauge the effectiveness or qualifications of teachers. In addition, recent budget cuts to classroom supply funds has made it difficult to provide/replace materials needed for child success in classrooms. Hiring teachers without a teaching degree and expecting seasoned teachers to "mentor" them in vital strategies such as classroom management is unreasonable. Teachers are not compensated for the number of hours they work outside of contract time in order to help the children be successful and complete other required assignments. Mentoring unqualified teachers is yet another responsibility on which experienced teachers are expected to undertake in already strenuous circumstances, without additional compensation. In order to keep qualified teachers, districts/state should offer incentives such as helping with student loan repayment and increasing salaries of licensed teachers, instead of trying to fill positions with persons unexperienced or uneducated in the field of teaching. Hiring persons who have not graduated from an accredited college with a degree in teaching is like a "slap in the face" to those teachers who have worked for such an achievement and indicates to them that their hard work is unrecognized and unnecessary. Not everyone can be a teacher and it is high time that they are recognized for what they have achieved and not given the indication that they can be replaced with anyone off the street. Teachers are what makes all other professions and without them other careers would cease to exist.

Tina Cole, Alpine School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

Why is it always a battle with legislators to fund public education? Utah is a state of family unity, so why not provide what is best for children without always having to prove why we need money to support education. I would love legislators to come spend a week in my classroom and school, so they could see for themselves why public funds are important. Teachers put in so much extra time to planning for their student's learning without compensation and yet, they are still being told it's not enough, plus the message being sent from legislators, we don't value our teachers, you are just expected to meet all the demands, so quit whining about it and just do it. The teacher shortage comes from low pay and demanding expectations, I feel legislators created it to begin with.

Jacquelyn Austin, Cache County School District

As someone in the education system it feels like the people making decisions don't really understand what it is like to be at a title-1 institution or what teachers actually do. And I feel like they make uneducated decisions that don't directly affect them, and so they aren't changing or fixing the issues. They need to go visit a school and educate themselves.

Lauren Avelar, Salt Lake City School District

I am in an older school and technology is not equal from school to school. We are charged with preparing students to go out and succeed but lack the technology to help them succeed in a world driven by technology.

Janys Hutchings, Alpine School District

Supply & Demand. Return Pension Benefits and increase Teacher pay then the Teacher shortage will go away.

Emmanuel Kepas, Canyons School District

I feel like teachers and legislators are on the same team. We both want what's best for the students in the state of Utah. We want to see our students achieve as high as they can. Sometimes, it feels like well meaning legislation undermines that team goal. We have an end of year test that is intended to help assess students and inform teachers of their teaching. By law, those same tests cannot be included in student grades and students can opt out of them for no reason whatsoever, yet teacher effectiveness is graded on those test results. We both want to see every student succeed in school, but parents can pull students out of school at any point of the year (for family vacations that could be scheduled during calendared breaks in the school year) and it is up to the teacher to get those students back up to speed again or we are the ones who have failed. We want to allow parents to have more of a choice in their student's education, but not all charter schools are held to the same standards with each other, let alone public schools. We want the best teachers in every classroom in the state. We want people who will go to whatever lengths necessary to reach every student in every chair in every classroom in every school (I'm not going to talk about compensation at this point, that is already a well know problem). We then allow people in the classroom with no knowledge of how to manage a class of 30-35 students (or more) because they demonstrated content knowledge on a test and they have taught Sunday School for years. Meanwhile we have seasoned teachers who spent years in college programs learning not only the same content, but how to engage learners of all levels and from different cultures. This seems to undermine that same vision of hiring and retaining highly qualified educators. Again, I firmly believe we are on the same team. I know that every legislator wants to see Utah schools and students lead the country in every aspect. It feels like there are unintended consequences with some legislation that has been passed in recent years that we, as a team, could address to better help Utah students live up to their potential and become the future leaders this state needs. We all want a better future for our children. I think that our team can do that. I know we can.

James Eric Perkins, Jordan School District

I am now looking at the end of my career with 28 years in and contemplating how much longer to go. I have watched the pendulum of educational reform swing in so many different politically motivated directions at the expense of student learning, I am not sure anyone knows if anything that has been done really helped our students learn. What I can say is that I hope my students know that I cared about them. In the end this is what a good teacher is. I hope that they LEARNED along the way of course, BUT truly I want them to know that they can do great things if they believe and TRY. They are not alone. Learning can be difficult and not everyone learns lessons at the same rate. Just keep
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trying. I do love teaching. That is why I stayed in this profession for so long. BUT I do wonder if our politicians understand the wealth of talent they have in the field of education? If they honestly and truly know our worth? We are the ones our children see everyday. Day in and day out. Good, happy days and bad, sad, unhappy days. We see them for 6 to 8 hours plus a day for 180 days a year. We often become their surrogate parents, big brothers, sisters when there is no one at home. We walk a very fine line to help teach them to be upstanding moral citizens, teaching right & wrong, and in some cases we are the only ones in their lives that care enough to do so. I have seen so much change in the world and education but one thing that really hasn’t is respect. Educators are still under the stigma of “those who can DO and those who can’t TEACH” This simply is NOT true. Those who CHOOSE to teach, do so because they are special enough to realize that teachers prepare the future. They care about the youth that are in their care and a desire to help them reach for their dreams & goals. They teach them that the world is what they make it. Nothing worth having is just given to them. They work for it. They help them learn how to be the best version of themselves. That they can design what the future looks like. I know these all sound like idealistic platitudes, but they are what has kept me coming to school every day. So what is my point.-- I am worth more than I am earning. I work harder than most CEO’s. My value is defined in the love and care I give my students. Money doesn't solve all problems but it does help to show respect for what we do. Question-- why would a bright, talented educated young person want to make a career choice when the world (Our political decision makers) does not value the profession. The compensations are better in the business world. --That students are more than a number scored on a random test. That life isn't some pen & paper test, it is doing. Yes Life is a test of sorts and how we live it is what demonstrates what we have learned. What we value. So what do you value?

Karen Draper, Weber School District

I've been teaching almost 30 years. I'm an excellent practitioner, have written several books for teachers, and travel the US presenting to teachers, all while working full-time in a Title I school here in Utah. Sadly, if I could retire, I absolutely would. The pressure that is put upon teachers and students with all of the SAGE testing is turning our schools into anxiety-ridden institutions. Principals, teachers, and students are almost constantly on edge. The money spent on these test is outrageous. And, to what end? Better accountability? For whom? I have a 4th grade son who is in an advanced academic program. I am an involved parent. I know where he is academically and I know how hard his teacher works. Scores on the SAGE do not better inform me, in fact, since the tests are mere snapshots of my child’s performance on any given day, I mostly discount the testing results. I realize not all parents are as heavily informed or involved, but the legislature should listen to people in the field when they say, "We are completely stressing our students and teachers out. There will be and already is massive burnout.” All of this contributes to an increase in the anxiety in our society as a whole (look at the current national rate of teens with depression and anxiety), and will cost the state of Utah more teachers. Make teaching about teaching. Learn from countries who don't over-test their students, yet have amazing learning outcomes. Please do all you can to change the climates of our schools by getting rid of the majority of the tests you’ve put in place.

Janiel Wagstaff, Davis School District

As teachers, we work diligently every day. Teachers in the high-risk schools work even harder and deal with stress on a high level. It would be nice to be appreciated instead of criticized when growth is small. It's not because we don't believe in our students or don't try. That's why I have always opposed Merit pay. We already put in the time and then some. I like how Granite actually pays a bit more twice a year in Title I schools because it makes the struggle of seeing little growth more bearable. From personal experience, I went from a B/C student in 7th grade to a straight A student. The difference--my parents were going through a divorce at the time. I can still remember the day that it felt literally like I was walking out of a cloud. I know that many of my students are experiencing the same thing. It does affect their learning ability. Be mindful that we celebrate even the smallest of achievement in a troubled demographics. Sadly, the tests are a constant reminder for struggling students that they are failures. How many times do we have to test and beat them down?

Phyllis Miller, Granite School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

Teachers, like firefighters and police officers, need to be valued to keep quality people in the profession. Legislators and the public need to be made aware that a school grade doesn't mean everything. Testing results are overemphasized.

Rachel Pehrson, Granite School District

The new attendance laws have crippled the high schools. Students and parents are not accountable for much and all responsibility has been put on teachers with little backing from the districts or state. Students need to be accountable for their actions. The grading system of schools often punishes schools and teachers for the actions of students and parents.

Arlene Herrick, Alpine School District

I’d like to share what an awesome job teachers in our school are doing with their students. Students are getting a great education no matter what the test scores may indicate. Our teachers are dedicated, caring, and go above and beyond the call of duty!

Melanie Lane, Davis School District

Teachers are inadvertently being held accountable for students attitudes toward testing. Many times, students know more of the content than mandated tests indicate. Students are not motivated to do their best, just to complete the task.

Kristine Davies, Granite School District

For more than three decades educators have been disproportionately held accountable for student learning, lambasted in the media, and “teacher proofed” by district approaches to assessment and curriculum. Multiple factors have contributed to this deprofessionalization of the teaching profession, but many of these factors can be traced to one focal point in time: April, 1983. In 1983 “A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform” exploded onto the educational and political scene. At its heart was a deficit-based approach to educators and students, calling teachers "beleaguered" and students “at risk," and providing five broad recommendations for improving our nation's schools. Embedded within these recommendations were imperatives that laid the foundation for the reforms that still drive education today, including the standards and accountability movement, standardized testing, and alternate routes to licensure. These reforms, which are now the norm, have been embedded into our national policies throughout the years, as evidenced by No Child Left Behind, the Obama-era Race to the Top initiatives, and most recently the Every Student Succeeds Act. The message of “those who can't do, teach” is pervasive throughout society. In order for education to successfully retain teachers and positively impact student learning, it must transform the profession into a place where talented people of all races, cultures, and identities wish to come. In order to achieve this lofty goal, public education must tap into its internal capacity for change at a systemic level, and public policy must support public education in this endeavor, not undermine it. When considering bills this session, please consider this: increased competition, increased accountability, and other “innovative solutions” are no longer innovative and were never solutions. More than thirty years of lackluster results are testament that these quick fixes are not fixing anything. At the end of the day, it is the capacity of those who enter our state's classrooms each and every day that will transform education: not technology, not external pressure, not external solutions. Bills that treat teachers from a deficit perspective only exacerbate the problem. Teachers enter the classroom with strong intrinsic motivation to succeed and help their students do the same, but deficit-driven measures slowly erode this commitment to excellence. Instead, consider that every teacher has something to contribute. Every teacher has something to bring to the table. Build on public education's strengths, and public education will not disappoint. In creating public education, the United States created one of the most innovative systems in the world. Please consider carefully how your efforts will serve to either support or undermine this amazing feat of our democratic society. Thank you.

Cindi Dunford, Granite School District

Teachers are under a lot of pressure, which is being transferred to students. We need to put the fun back into teaching and learning. A lot of expectations on students is not developmentally appropriate.

Robyn Gardner, Jordan School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

I love my job and my students. Currently however I fear for the future. Our schools are being judged using assessments which the students are not accountable for. Teachers are then being asked to look at data based on those same faulty exams and make decisions that then affect hundreds of students. It is a circle of ineffectiveness to the extremes. Get rid of SAGE or make student accountable ON THEIR GRADES for the score. Additionally the respect a view of teachers is dropping. Where we were once viewed as professionals doing the most difficult and important job now we are seen as someone to blame when their child fails.

Christopher Nichols, Jordan School District

Please treat educators like the professionals that we are. Please stop passing all these testing and accountability laws adding to all the hoops we have to jump through. Just let us teach.

Shaunti Turner, Jordan School District

The classroom of today has changed in negative ways because of an overwhelming focus on Sage test scores. Teaching to the test is just one problem. Poetry, art, creative writing, hands on experiments to name a few are left out in pursuit of test taking strategies and computer programs that are "guaranteed by the vendor" to raise scores. Very sad.

Ellen Bennett, Washington County School District

I am held responsible for the progress of the students in my class, yet I can do nothing when the child does not show up to school, or when the child refuses to put effort into their learning. There are situations where I do all in my power to help a student to learn, yet I know that the child could do so much more if these other factors were not getting in the way.

Cheryl Parkinson, Weber School District

Stop requiring teachers to do more with less! Also, quit requiring so many tests (probably more from the district) to where we feel like we are always testing.

Liz Halloran, Jordan School District

Our daily demands. All the moving parts that go into teaching students, people, on a daily basis. The demands are increasing, but also the demands for mental health and emotional intelligence. Our students come hungry, stressed, abused more and more every year. We need smaller class sizes to support these students as well as intervention systems. Basically money for new programs and more teachers. We are here for students. We are not whining entitled people. We just want to do our jobs well.

Jennie LaFortune, Murray City School District

Listen to our educators needs for their students.

Harriett Arreola, Salt Lake City School District

Teaching is much more complex than people outside of teaching realize. Standardized tests do very little to measure student knowledge and success.

Ben Breinholt, Granite School District

Help us help the students of Utah!

Rett Neale, Salt Lake City School District

I have worked for over 21 years in the public school serving children/students with various disabilities. There have been years where my caseload has been upwards of 90 students. Somedays, to say this job is difficult would be an understatement. I receive legislative funding, which I am grateful for, but my district does not give any additional funding. In order to “qualify” for an aide, I have to prove how overwhelmed I am, which makes me feel incompetent. I am currently working in a special needs preschool setting where four classrooms range from 12-17 children with only one or two “model” children. The rest of them have an IEP, which requires specialized services. In one classroom
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there is a student with Downs Syndrome, five with Autism, and two others with lesser known diagnoses, and most are non-verbal. Few of these children are potty trained, almost all have mild to severe behaviors that have to be handled, and the manpower and salary is not near enough for the job that is required of me, the teacher, and of her aides. We love the children, and that’s why we power through and come to work everyday. However, your consideration regarding salary, teacher shortages, and funding would be greatly appreciated. Thank you for your time.

Kimberly Budge, Alpine School District

6th Grade Core Class sizes of 41 kids!

Kevin Brindle, Wasatch County School District

When I started teaching history, we had class sizes around 26-28. We had 3 trimesters (180 days) to teach our students about US history. We were able to include fun activities and tell stories to bring history alive. Now in the Cache district, one school has reduced US History to 2 trimesters (120 days) and Utah History to 1 trimester (60 days). We barely have time to get through the basics in US History and only about half in Utah. History is a core class, but is being treated like an elective or an expendable course of study. We want to hold our students accountable for their knowledge of our history and government, yet we are reducing our teaching of the subject. Also with the reduced number of sections being taught our class sizes are averaging 36-38. Kind of a mixed or contradictory message.

W. Kyle Stolworthy, Cache County School District

Class size does matter, SES of the school does matter. Teachers know better than legislators.

Emily Christensen, Granite School District

More focus on the whole child and not on testing.

Olynn Elliot, Salt Lake City School District

Quit mandating curriculum for public schools because they don't have a clue. Teachers have to fix the problems the mandated curriculum cause

Jeff Marston, Salt Lake City School District

We need more resources for our west side schools. We need smaller class sizes and more behavioral support for students that struggle.

Amy Milenski, Salt Lake City School District

I will tell you first that I love my profession, my students, my principal, my colleagues, and living in Utah my entire life, but we have had some issues that need addressing as of late. Salary is a huge issue in Utah education! Every human being has to go through an education for his or her profession, so we should value the teaching profession the most. Many teachers, myself included, have over 20 years' experience with Masters Degrees and several other endorsements, which give us extra years of college education. Most of these added courses are to benefit our students in the classroom, yet, sadly, our salaries do not reflect our knowledge or experience. Our state should respect and appreciate those educators who have continued to teach and worked to increase their personal education by giving them increased pay. Many states hold dear their teachers who are highly educated and show appreciation in higher salaries. Consequently, Utah college graduates are turning away from the education field because of low pay, little recognition for their skills, and no respect. In addition, I cannot begin to tell you, how many teachers give much of their salary in supplies to their under-privileged students, without expecting anything in return except a smile and a thank you. Now, I understand that the small supply stipend teachers receive from the state is going to be axed. Utah's Governor Herbert said in his state address, the Utah sales tax collected from Amazon purchases would go toward education. Where did it go? Currently, our education system feels more like "Life Depressed" than "Life Elevated." The school attendance is important! Since legislation has changed our laws for student attendance, we do not have students/parents held accountable for education. In our local schools, we see an
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increase in absences in several students, and our high school teachers believe there will be a decrease in high school graduates. Teachers and schools should not be held accountable for testing scores when students do not attend school. Students will always miss school if they can because they underestimate the value of education. If our youth fail their complete education, Utah will have a future society of illiterate people, unable to live in a functioning society. This will increase our welfare population, homelessness, and crimes because they will not have any proper job skills or be able to attend college. We must bring back mandatory education. Instead of being "Life Elevated," Utah will become "Life Deflated."

Michelle Fidell, Carbon School District

Teachers work hard, and aren't treated as most professionals. We are struggling with keeping qualified teachers because the pay isn't great, and the load too much. The testing also is way too much throughout the entire school year.

Jennifer Bodell, Granite School District

Educators are often expected to pay for their own training, or to sit through 'standardized' training at their schools that does not apply to their specialty/interests. This causes a feeling of disrespect for our time and creates friction between educators and administrators who have to 'provide' these trainings. We are professionals, and as such should be given opportunities to choose what we would like or 'need' to improve our teaching, not given a 'one size fits all' generalized 'workshop' with no paid time to use the information so that we can create something that would be used to better the education of our students. Also, changing the testing 'system' every few years is a disservice to both educators and students, as students are now focusing on navigating the 'system' rather than showing their knowledge on the content. Instead of spending time teaching the content, teachers must take time out to show students how to navigate the new 'system'.

Alisha Kerby, Granite School District

Every year I have excellent students who opt out of taking year-end exams because of their parents' political reasons. Their absence distorts records of my performance and my school's performance which feeds the perception that the education system doesn't merit respect. It also teaches students that if they don't agree with something, they are not accountable for it, which any worker in any workplace knows is not how life works. The state's inability or unwillingness to address this problem in a meaningful way is embarrassing.

Michael Henriken, Jordan School District

Teachers are over worked and under paid. Then on top of teachers being underpaid we tend to use our own money to buy supplies, and things we need for our classroom. Teachers often (typically every day for me) take work home, or we stay late to work, and do work when we are not being paid, because we have so much to do in not enough time. Standardized testing doesn't really measure how much the students are learning in class, because they aren't motivated to do the best they can. The tests also do not take into consideration how much they have grown as a person, (learning the life long skills they need to succeed as an adult).

Coy Taylor, Nebo School District

I wish that your decisions would be based with the end of the line in mind. All I seem to hear is that, "We just gave the teachers this...", when in reality with all the other factors, sometimes teachers do not get that. Tell it for what it is. (Not popular, I know) For example, "we just gave the teachers 7%, but with the rising cost of insurance, and declining enrollment, teachers will probably not get any of it." I'm the one that has to tell the public the truth and we the teacher come over as whiners. Your truthful support would go a long way. Secondly, I am losing a lot of teaching time to accomplish every new mandate that comes down the pike. I'm feeling less and less like the teacher I was hired to be.

Chris Rasmussen, Logan City School District

Teachers work so hard just so we can jump through hoops. The Sage is not working. Help students to be successful and don't take away the arts, activities and other areas. Students need a well rounded education.

Kaylynn Dara, Salt Lake City School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

I feel that testing is overdone and that teachers have to “teach to the test” in order to keep their jobs and keep their schools with a positive rating. Teaching should be driven by their desire to enlighten young minds and inspire their students to love learning, to empower them with the information and skills they will need to achieve their life goals and to make their lives better. In essence, to become lifelong learners.

Paula Cloward, Alpine School District

If you want retain/recruit good teachers you need to reward them ($$). Test scores are not the only way to measure teacher's success. I know several good teachers that teach the less motivated students and do a great job. If we only look at test scores, no one will want to teach those classes. Second, we need students in class in order to educate them. Teachers have no control what happens outside of their class. We need student/parents to be accountable for their own/students attendance.

Brad Crowther, Alpine School District

Linking student performance to teacher pay, much more complicated than that!

Wendy Gladden, Davis School District

It doesn't matter we get lip service and you do what you want to do.

Alan Hansen, Davis School District

Veteran teachers are not given the respect they deserve!! We need more planning time. We need people who can do data analysis all the data and then show the teacher the results. We don't have time for all that data. We are doing data and tests more than we are teaching. This teaching gig is for the children. I was a child of the 50's. I can read do math and have a Masters degree all without the data. We were learning not taking tests, teachers were not taking a good amount of the day putting in data. We were kids and we excelled.

Cyndy Mikesell, Jordan School District

Stop Micromanaging. SAGE is a good test - but everyone needs to take it and have it count on their grade. Parental rights are important, but so are parental responsibilities, if you are going to legislate one, you have to legislate the other, they aren't independent of each other.

Tony Romanello, Jordan School District

Teachers need to be accountable, ADMINISTRATION NEEDS TO BE ACCOUNTABLE TOO. Teachers need to feel supported and listened to not just told what to teach and how to teach it. What we are doing in education today is only failing our students.

Cheryl Thomson, Box Elder School District

Teachers in Utah are some of the best and they put forth a great effort to provide students with what they need. They put in a great deal of time and effort to do this, a lot of that time is on their own time and late into the night. Having time to collaborate with others is important.

Rhonda Harrison, Millard School District

Please stop trying to micromanage teachers. Treat us like the talented, dedicated professionals we are. All of the education bills proposed every year lower morale and constantly move the target we are told to shoot for. Stupidest bill ever passed is the one saying we can't use SAGE scores on a student's grade. What a waste of time and money. They have no ownership in the test so the results are useless.

Michelle Bagley, Alpine School District

Good teachers get punished by tests like SAGE. I was intentionally given a group of students who really struggle to pass math. It is a great anxiety to them. If you went to my class you would see how much they learned and the progress they made. It was incredible. Unfortunately when it came time for sage, since there is no accountability, they all just clicked through the test which reflected on me. I was then told I was a bad teacher because of the
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students would not try on the SAGE. For reasons like this I am actually looking to leave education despite pleas from the counselor begging me to stay since I am their go-to teacher for students who struggle in math.

Randall B Barker, Alpine School District

Teachers are incredible professionals that come in early and stay late everyday. They go in on weekends and spend their breaks and time at home preparing, grading and always trying to be better and find better ways to help the kids they teach. Yet there is always more being asked and more being demanded of us. We want to give and I work with incredibly dedicated people. We don't get paid like other professions so we should at least be trusted that we are putting in our hours and trusted to have benefits that are reasonable. Higher pay would also retain some of these amazing people that dedicate their whole life to serving and teaching the children of our future everyday.

Kimberlee Hamilton, Alpine School District

I feel as though my students see me as a “test giver” instead of a teacher. I realize students need accountability for their learning. But why can't it be project based or hands on based more than paper and pencil or computer? I feel as though I cannot give those kind of assessments because of how much drill I need to give to be able to have the students ready for the “test”. Which then really only makes me look like I was a good or bad teacher based on a test they take once and at the end of the trimester. It doesn't show the countless hours of class discussion where the students are engaged. The test only shows one moment in time.

Megan Cranmer, Box Elder School District

Our kids represent our future, and without quality teachers they won't be prepared for the challenges. Our students need real life experiences that prepare them to move into the workplace. Taking tests only measures what they KNOW, not what they can DO. Our curriculum needs to address all of the Four C's—Collaboration, Critical Thinking, Creativity and Communication—if we want to ensure a great future for our state, nation, and world.

Steven Hendricks, Davis School District

Our students are tested to death and need real-world skills taught in elementary schools (I am not an elementary school educator) including coping and resiliency skills and how to be a student....skills they are not seeming to learn. By the time they get to Jr and Sr High--it's too late.

Michele Belmore, Granite School District

Testing students does not work to make teachers accountable. All that is happening is the testing company is making money from education. Start rewarding the teachers that do an excellent job instead of killing our morale by always wanting more from us.

Marcia Ingram, Granite School District

I work with significant cognitive disability students I am a lifelong teacher but feel under appreciated in my school because my students will never “met standards” but my students make gains all the time that are not measured by standardized testing or testing in general. I want my students to know they are important to you even without their test scores.

Athena Poole, Granite School District

Do you remember your teachers? Do you remember how they taught you to succeed? Is your success today merely the result of good test taking skills? Did your teachers help and encourage you to explore your interests and to seek more learning just for the fun of learning? I am so concerned as I look to the future. I see fantastic test taking skills in our students but I do not see the love of learning, creating, exploring. We hunker down on the computer and parrot back what will be on the test. We improve our test taking skills electronically. But we seldom take the time to explore, to pursue interests, to create. We should be worried about our students as they become adults. I fear that our country will no longer be the driving force in exploration, creativity, development. We may be the leaders in test taking but will that take us where we want to go? There is such a focus on collaboration, professional development, and peer coaching that teachers no longer have planning time or creative time of their own. Yes, we have the computers and
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technology, but we don't have the time to make lessons exciting, inviting. We aren't given the time to teach. I wouldn't want to be a teacher if I was starting out now! There is so little joy, delight, or thrill in teaching. It's all paper work, testing, training, more paper work and more testing. Does anyone respect a teacher? No, not really. Everyone is critical of everything we do. I have taught for 29 years. I turned down a promising career in medicine to become a teacher. Little did I know then that my passion for education would be extinguished by disrespect, tests, trainings, meetings, meetings, and more meetings. We are losing so many wonderful teachers because their passion to teach is squelched by the bureaucracy of teaching. If we truly want to give our students the best, then we need to take careful consideration of how we are treating the best!

Pyper G. Shelton, Granite School District

Please stop demonizing teachers. We work hard and are doing our best. It is hard to teach when we spend the bulk of our time administering mandated testing. One of the biggest challenges with teacher shortages is the substitute shortage. Limiting their hours to 29 a week is crippling our schools' abilities to meet the needs of students because interventionists are being pulled to substitute.

Rachel Sorensen, Granite School District

Evaluations change, grading changes, testing changes, content change....Find something that works and stop changing.

Marcie Judd, Kane County School District

Increased restrictions on teachers have stifled creativity and created in students a dislike for education. If it isn't fun, students don't want to learn.

Alan Schultz, Ogden School District

Trust that professional educators know what they are doing.

Bryant Baird, Salt Lake City School District

I'm getting tired of the negative messages about teachers. We are professionals who attended college, have additional degrees (sometimes lots), and are trying to do our jobs. If teachers were treated as responsible adults, school cultures would change for the better. Also, too much priority is being put on testing. We are not our testing, and current testing does not show what great things our kids are learning and know.

Deidrien Booth, Weber School District

Teaching is HARD, and it is getting harder. We need real support. We need schools to be empowered to stand up to parents who want to dictate what we do. We need to have a voice in how students are evaluated and in the use of standardized measurement--especially how standardized tests are used to judge teachers. When there is NO REPERCUSSION on a student for lackluster performance, we are merely judging teachers on their abilities to bribe students to try.

Holly Leake, Weber School District

I get tired of hearing how bad our education system is compared to testing of other countries when we test everyone, even student with accommodations where other countries filter out students before high school who have challenges and test the rest.

Kevin Aston, Alpine School District

If we expect our students to be successful and for the school systems to improve so that each generation can progress, we need better teachers who are more committed. Teachers should have a better salary which would be based off of fitting requirments, such as Bachelor's Degree, to prove dedication to the profession.

Alexa Martin, Alpine School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

Teachers and quality schools are vital to the success of our community as a whole. Please provide us with the support we need to best do our jobs.

Joanna Hammel, Park City School District

Help me, help you, to help them, so they can help us

Lori Ruth, Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind

Education is the key to a productive citizen. Make it a priority.

Joseph Mellen, Wasatch County School District

I spent thousands of dollars on my education and training. I spent hours and hours honing my craft. Because of administrators who are more interested in climbing the slippery pole than treating teachers as colleagues, I am no longer teaching in the subject area of my major. This is one example of many other teachers where we are not being treated as professionals. Yes, money is important. But as long as teachers are being treated without respect, the teacher shortage won't be fixed.

Johnny Aird, Davis School District

The unpaid time and overall commitment that I give to my job that goes unrecognized and uncompensated.

Jennifer Mattson, Canyons School District

Children learn from their parents. If the parents don't value education they won't help their children to improve and value learning. Get the parents off "free money" and get them working for what they receive to help them understand that education and working are the way to provide for your family.

ReNae Jackson, Davis School District

They are making very important decisions, that unfortunately many of them do not have enough information or experience to address. I want them to spend some considerable time in the classroom teaching, and experiencing a classroom situation in Utah before they start deciding what is important and what is not.

Gloria Holmstead, Granite School District

My job, my passion for everything it entails doesn't end. There is an unwritten expectation that as a professional I am "on call" all the time looking out for the needs of my students inside and outside the school walls. I wish better pay was given for the demands this amazing job requires. I am a dedicated teacher and love what I do but having a Masters +30 seems like more pay should be extended. I am worth it.

Tracy Warencki, Nebo School District

So many good things happen when we are allowed to do them

Shannon Iseminger, Weber School District

Teachers impact all people's lives through the process of helping children learn how to read and write.

Karen F. Sheets, Davis School District

Students deserve highly qualified teachers, small class sizes to meet individual students needs, that if it's not broken don't fix it. Students need a variety of classes and for students to be college ready they need to have a full schedule of credits all 4 years and middle school curriculum needs to continue to have a rigor to prepare them for high school.

Denise Dewsnup, Millard School District

Education is vital part of a better society, if we care so much about families and children here in Utah you can show it by supporting education legislation that betters schools and helps keep professional and qualified employees in our state.

Lauren Rich, Davis School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

Charter schools and public schools must be held to the same educational standards (accountability). Utah education should use ESSA as a guide for better education of our students. Utah is competing NATIONALLY for quality teachers. Utah's quality of life is not as good as it has been in the past because of air quality and higher cost of living. Those cannot be used as recruitment vehicles as in the past. Teacher compensation is becoming MORE of a priority in obtaining quality teachers!

Dennis Heidel, Granite School District

Charter schools are receiving public funds but not being held to public standards. When a student moves from public to charter, the money doesn't follow the student. If public schools are held to a high standard, anyone receiving public funds should be held to the same standard. Charter schools are stealing funds by taking public students and then handing them back to public after money has been taken. A loop hole has been provided and not fixed. Teachers leave public schools because it has been made harder then charter schools. Rules are being made by people on the hill, when they have never been a teacher. They do what they want and don't listen to the people who put them in office.

Clint Sanderson, Alpine School District

I work in a school building that is getting close to 100 years old. No earthquake proof. No sprinkling system. It is literally sinking into the ground. Yet the east side wealthy got priority (for the most part) with the last bond. The population of the school is 70% free and reduced lunch and bout 37% Hispanic. The political activity of senate leaders does not prioritize the citizens of my area. With the continual funding of charter schools our district has diverted money for years to fund its failed experiment. We perform well as a school with the population we serve. The charter school only takes the upper middle income indirectly segregating the cities population with the busing policy of the school. That sounds like segregation to me. Fund public schools in the districts and dissolve the charters into the districts to help districts diversify where the money goes and maybe equalize the monster that our state has created with charter schools. I work in a school building that is getting close to 100 years old. No earthquake proof. No sprinkling system. It is literally sinking into the ground. Yet the east side wealthy got priority (for the most part) with the last bond. The population of the school is 70% free and reduced lunch and bout 37% Hispanic. The political activity of senate leaders does not prioritize the citizens of my area. With the continual funding of charter schools our district has diverted money for years to fund its failed experiment. We perform well as a school with the population we serve. The charter school only takes the upper middle income indirectly segregating the cities population with the busing policy of the school. That sounds like segregation to me. Fund public schools in the districts and dissolve the charters into the districts to help districts diversify where the money goes and maybe equalize the monster that our state has created with charter schools. Senator Hatch has the idea as many of the other legislators that we take only the best and the brightest. "Part of what makes America so special is that we welcome the best and brightest in the world, regardless of their country of origin." Well guess what? We don't. We take every student that walks through our doors. Charter schools do not do this, they are selective and kick out those who don't fit. Public schools take everybody, regardless of being the best and the brightest. The state legislators need to get off of their elitist high horses and start thinking about everyone and how we can all make it work rather than segregating in charter school mentality.

Robert Lyman, Provo City School District

Increase access to endorsement classes for special educators. I am currently working on a math endorsement and cannot find the final two classes to finish the endorsement. This is very frustrating. I am committed to obtaining the endorsement, but feel that there are too many "hoops" that we educators must jump through to get endorsed. It shouldn't be so difficult! I am also concerned with the requirements and who sets them. Perhaps there should be more online options as teachers are self directed learners. How can I get more involved with this process?

Julie Beane, Canyons School District

Teachers are critical to our students and their futures. However, teachers are not treated with respect or like the professionals they are. They have to spend so much time "proving" they can teach and jump through so many hoops that it is not worth the compensations. Teachers no longer have a lot of control in their classroom. Often we are expected to teach everything without support from home. Teachers have become the only ones responsible for a student's education (students and parents are not held accountable for their students' learning). The teacher shortage will not improve until teachers are treated with more respect and are compensated fairly. No one wants to work in an environment where they are treated negatively when they can work in many other fields, receive better compensation, and have a more positive work environment.

Sara Doty, Davis School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

Coming from out of state, I took a huge pay cut to teach here. When bargaining my salary, my district did not acknowledge that I have completed not only my SPED credential and master's credential, but also completed 65+ units for my multiple subject credential (to teach k-8 general education). They said that because this coursework was completed before my master's degree was conferred it does not count. I tried to explain that in California, they offer the option to complete a SPED credential as well as a multiple subject and then add your master's. So, my credential was conferred first in August and my master's was conferred in November. I tried to explain this to them that the credentials are independent units of each other and therefore should be counted. This is very frustrating since my district in California honored the amount of units I completed and Utah will not.

Tori Hoffman, Granite School District

I feel like I am constantly being held to a higher standard as a teacher, but my students move on to the next grade regardless of their performance. Students are apathetic about their grades and progress. It is hard work to keep 25-35 students interested in anything. Some are very advanced. Some need lots of extra attention. As a teacher, I am supposed to be able to find ways to differentiate, but it is difficult. There are not many people skilled enough to be effective. We are losing teachers and there are not new ones coming because they realize how difficult it is and for little pay.

Michelle Hatch, Logan City School District

No everyone can teach or lead teachers -- it is a highly skilled profession. Teachers impact all future careers through the work we do. Treat teachers like the professionals we are and support our work and efforts as we care about children and their futures.

Jenn King, Park City School District

I am a department chair in a high school for special education and my last several hires are on an ARL. We can't get and retain good special education teachers. We need to pay better so we can retain these teachers who teach the most highly impacted students in our society. We will pay in a big way in the future if we fail to educate these students well.

Wendy Nichol, Provo City School District

It is an insult to the nearly 30 years of teaching and 7+ years of learning, testing, and endorsements I have worked so hard to achieve to be considered a professional to have charter schools hire anybody they want to teach whether they are qualified or not. And then to lower the standards as a way to stop the teacher shortage is another slap in the face. If you you want teachers to be professionals, then treat them as such! If there were a doctor shortage you wouldn't pick just anyone off the streets. Why would teaching be different. If you want to attract good teachers, then they need to be paid well. Too many new teachers are leaving because they realize they can't make it on a teacher's salary. There are too many requirements piled up on teachers for the amount of money they make.

Angela Williams, Provo City School District

I went through the ARL program to become licensed. We should require a more rigorous licensing program and expect more of our teachers in an effort to increase pay to a respectable level. More meetings is not the answer. Meaningful training and licensing sessions to make the licensing program more meaningful

David G. Smith, Cache County School District

As a special education teacher in a resource setting in elementary school, I do not have any time during contract hours to do my paper work for the IEP's or hold IEP's during a time that parents can attend. I spend hours of my own time to complete these tasks. I do get time at the end of the year or the beginning of the school year to help with this. However, what I really need is to be able to collect the additional pay during the year when I am putting in the time to comply with the law.

Colleen Jensen, Granite School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

I would like to invite a legislator to come join my classroom and see what the students are learning. I believe when they see the good that we do, they would be more willing to pay teachers more rather than us always saying we don’t get paid enough.

*Marilyn Blakley, North Summit School District*

I am a relatively new teacher and worked for years to get here. Now that I am here I don’t want to stay because I don’t feel valued at a professional. I could go get a higher paying and “easier” job tomorrow but I continue to sacrifice time and money because I want to help students. But if the constant disrespecting of teachers from the legislature doesn’t stop I cannot stay for the sake of my own mental health

*Greg Jorgensen, Nebo School District*

It feels like we are headed in a direction to dilute and undermine the qualifications of our job. We seem to receive less trust and more “babysitting”, we seem to incentivize new temporary and under-qualified teachers rather than seasoned and educated ones, and to be putting a lot of money into “alternative” education such as charter and online schools. All of these things compound the current problem of diluting the quality of education.

*Michelle Green, Washington County School District*

We must stop putting unqualified educators in front of students. They don’t deserve to have a year of their education wasted with a teacher who doesn’t know what they’re doing.

*Elcena Saline, Canyons School District*

The accountability teachers are having to do through all the assessments is wasting valuable instructional time for students. In addition it is putting extra stress on the profession by having teachers have to teach to the test so that they can get the portion of their salary that says they are proficient educators.

*Linda Auwerda, Murray City School District*
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

I am more concerned about the respect teachers receive than the money they receive. While teacher pay may affect whether or not people go into teaching, it is the lack of respect that causes them to leave teaching. I am not sure why this issue is not addressed. When teachers give their all to their job, it is very disheartening to have achievement in testing be the only criteria for good teaching. Some of us are dealing with students with extremely challenging lives and if we can help them grow in any way, we are grateful. Why do we not have a growth mindset as opposed to an absolute achievement mindset? Students are not cookies to be cut out of dough to come out the perfect shape. They are human beings who are struggling to make their lives work, some under very difficult circumstances. The reasons I tell people not to go into teaching have nothing to do with money and everything to do with respect.

Teresa Dickson, Provo City School District

Fear is gripping education to the point that no one can express differences without being branded with the term “negative” and this branding passes through the association of superintendents where there is extreme commitment to protect each others reputations without regard to open perspectives and improve from anonymous evaluations. The toxicity in education is causing tremendous teacher turnover.

Anonymous, Provo City School District

I am a teacher of reading to the lowest achieving 1st graders in the Elementary. I have had many years of training and experience. I am an expert in my chosen field. Yet even with the best teaching for each individual child I can’t get some of them on grade level reading. Please, please, take into consideration that there are individual challenges for some children and provide the necessary funding to get them individual help.

Kristine Proulx, Alpine School District

I think that grading schools does not accomplish what is perhaps intended--especially when the bar was changed at the end. That's like giving students a criteria to get an "A" and then after they do the work changing the criteria because too many students were getting "A's." All that is accomplished is that the test becomes meaningless.

Ilene Washburn, Alpine School District

One message I would like to get across to the legislators is how can you have a "high" stakes test when attendance for these students is horrible? When are you or will you acknowledge that parents need to get their children to school. Absenteeism is high in certain areas of the state. Make it the parent's responsibility not the teachers!

Beth Stamey, Box Elder School District

There is a lot of good happening in education which needs to be celebrated and encouraged. There also needs to be more accountability on all stake-holders for how they use time/money.

Brooke Blair, Davis School District

Come on another day when something needs to be addressed, such as teachers being held accountable for SAGE scores, yet they cannot hold the child accountable. Teachers being held accountable for student progress, (really just held accountable for scores), but parents and students are not accountable for attendance and other such issues. I come from a “Blue Ribbon School” and I believe I could represent my faculty well. Also, look to best practices for student learning, not for parent happiness when you are writing or voting for legislation. Don't patronize teachers.

Heidi Briscoe Holmes, Davis School District

Technology is a great tool, but it won't replace good teachers. We need to support the teachers we have in the schools and trust them to do their jobs.

Kristin Van Brunt, Davis School District

School districts are hiring new teachers with no teaching credentials or experience and paying them the same as highly qualified teachers who have a degree in the field of teaching and have completed hours of observations and demonstration teaching.

Denise Huffman, Duchesne County School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

We are the people best qualified to make decisions about education.

Jo Daley-Croft, Granite School District

As a veteran classroom educator with over 25 years, I have witnessed the educational changes proposed to improve and strengthen public education, however, the only real result has been a negative perspective of public education in which teacher accountability has exponentially increased while student/parent accountability has diminished making the teacher the scapegoat; students receive a free public education that has a considerable value, yet students/parents are not held accountable for their part if the bargain; I believe students/parents should have to reimburse schools for educational expenses if they do not meet specific guidelines such as attendance (limited absences/tardiness), completion of assignments/tests, and failing classes (limited Fs); students often get disenchanted with a class or teacher and stop attending or trying, and the responsibility is placed in the teacher to motivate the student which may never work, but just like adults in jobs, we are expected to meet specific metrics in order to keep our jobs and receive salary increases and/or bonuses; attending school is the job of the students, and their pay is reflected in their letter grade; As generally reflect a good student (retained employee) whereas Fs generally reflect a struggling student (released employee); responsibility for the educational value of a public education needs to be placed back on the students/parents which will reduce student discipline issues and increase student engagement

Ed Mondragon, Granite School District

The biggest issue I face with my students this year has been trying to get them to buy in to their education. While trying to hold teachers and schools accountable, we have forgotten to hold students accountable for their own learning. Students are not self driven to learn and perform well on assessments, and face no risks or rewards for working hard and doing their best. We need an assessment system that engages students, challenges them to do their best, and rewards them for their progress. Many of my students favorite activities are game based, wouldn't it be cool to have a game based system that made students want to succeed rather than just sit and stare at a test and click to be done. Students need to be held accountable for their learning.

Jared Newbold, Granite School District

Teachers should not be held accountable for the inaction of their students. I also don't believe in passing students to bring up graduation numbers.

Melanie Owens, Granite School District

There is a strong correlation between student achievement and SES. Rather than blame teachers and schools for poor student achievement, why doesn't the state look at the factors outside of the school that are contributing to school failure, and try and address those needs first? One day I called a student's home because his family did not show up to SEP Conferences. The chaos in the home was so loud, that my colleague sitting across the office from me could hear the yelling, screaming, and crying through my phone as I tried to converse with the parent. This student's learning is inhibited because of the chaos in which he lives. If society truly wants to help this student succeed in school, we need to address the factors outside of school that are preventing him from succeeding.

Kristen Pearson, Granite School District

Quit trying to tell trained educators how to educate.

Jill Thackeray, Granite School District

I have watched the school system from a parents point of view, moved to watching the school system as a PTA active member point of view, and now I am a teacher seeing it from a teachers point of view. I have seen many changes over the 20 + years I have watch education. We should inspire to have good people helping teachers and students succeed in life. However, I have watched as the worst teachers with the lowest standardized testing scores move up the ranks of the school system. How is moving a bad teacher up a good thing? When you the legislator wanted to make a change in education, you should be looking for the best of the best in their field. The teacher in the classroom making it work. Not the person that has been out of the classroom for many years that did not do a good
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

job while in the classroom. Also, the legislators need to keep each district in check, making sure they are all following the same rules. Personally, I have been not hired for a job, only to find out that the district has hired someone else that did not have my qualifications. For example a reading specialist without a reading endorsement. In my district, to get out being "called out" on this lawsuit they immediately changed the title to reading coach, giving them the freedom to hire the principal's friend. Breaking the rules like this should not be happening, and this is the reason many qualified teachers are leaving the field of education. When teachers that do not do well in the classroom get moved to well-paying jobs, and qualified teachers get skipped one more time. These teachers get skipped because what they do in the classroom, does make a difference, and it makes the school scores look excellent; administrators do not want to lose those scores, even a the cost of losing that educator.

Christine Hunter, Iron County School District

Please pay teachers and recognize our years or service. National Board Certification funding

Carmen Buchanan, Jordan School District

The High School that I teach at received an "F" grade. My kids go to this high school. I have them come here because it is an excellent school. The grading system is flawed. It is arbitrary and rigid. It does not reflect what is really going on in a school. It seems to me that it's main effect, if not purpose, is to discredit public education. We need to find a better way to evaluate the job our schools are doing.

Issac Beh, Murray City School District

I believed the increased focus on charter schools is a mistake. In order to truly benefit the majority of Utah students, emphasis needs to be placed on supporting the public schools. Charter schools don't have to play to the same rules, can toss students and teachers out at will, and yet still dip into the pocket of public schools. The charter school system is not a system that will benefit all of Utah students, and continued emphasis on this may leave many students hung out to dry, especially those with lower socioeconomic status.

Erica Boyer, Nebo School District

I don't think that legislators take into consideration everything that happens in a class/School when they decide to grade schools. Not once on any of my testing results sheets do I get an asterisk noting that normally my brightest students opt out of testing, my students that have missed 29 days of school during the year, or my students with active DCFS cases. I would like a legislator to come to my classroom for one day and see what it's like before they put anymore requirements on teachers because we are burning out our best teachers with testing and paperwork.

Heidi Dimmick, Nebo School District

Teachers need to be fully trained at accredited colleges/ universities

Angie Erickson, Park City School District

Our students are our top priority. I am not afraid of being held accountable for student outcomes, but I must be held accountable for what I have control over and in a fair manner. I do not want to be in competition with my colleagues (students who struggle pay for this) or held to an arbitrary standard. If my students make strong progress, from wherever they start, I should be recognized for that.

Holly Tippetts, Provo City School District

Teachers work hard to provide for student learning in an increasingly hostile environment. Educators should be treated as the professionals they are.

Kelli Neuteboom, Salt Lake City School District

We as teachers show up each day to help students the idea that we are somehow responsible for all of societies ills and can fix anything is unreasonable. Not everyone can do our job and for the most part each teacher does their best.

Lori Daniels, Weber School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

Our teachers are among the lowest paid in the country and our class sizes are among the largest. When you increase teacher pay you attract more quality people to the profession. When you increase funding for public schools, you make an important investment in our children's and our state's future.

Mark Gatto, Alpine School District

I think teachers also need to be able to talk to parents about disabilities that they see within students.

Alene Weakley, Alpine School District

Students are our future and they deserve the best teachers possible. To attract and maintain the best teachers they need to be paid more and have more time to plan.

Donna Anderson, Davis School District

This world we live in is a difficult one. Students come to school less prepared, with less support from home, and many behavior issues. Instead of helping teachers confront these issues, or provide incentive to feel valued, teachers are constantly asked to jump through hoops, fix things that are not really broken, and implement gee whiz programs at the whim of people who are out of touch with the classroom. The sooner teachers are looked upon as professionals equivalent to those with equal education, the sooner the public will stand behind teachers and education as well. Set the example, actions speak louder than words!

Cori Burns, Davis School District

My students are the future and they will be taking care of us one day, let's make sure they are getting a good education and support.

Margaret Jensen, Davis School District

Class size does matter!

Anjanette McNeely, Davis School District

It is time for you to start treating educators as professionals and to stop creating mandates and programs for us to follow. Get out of our classrooms and allow us to do what we have trained and qualified to do -- teach! We appreciate financial support, but the constant meddling in our profession has destroyed any incentive we have to creatively solve the problems that we face. You do not over-regulate any other profession and you do not have the training and experience to micromanage us. We invite you to actually sit in classrooms and try to manage them, rather than attend the dog and pony shows that you typically see in the schools. We love our students and we are deeply invested in their success. Please allow us to do the jobs for which we were hired.

Debbie Quigley, Davis School District

As a technology teacher who supports the entire staff and teaches all grade level classes I see the many needs of the students and teachers. We need to lower class sizes for teachers. Having a class of 37 fifth grades is unacceptable and detrimental to student learning. We also need to increase teacher salary to recruit the most talented and committed educators to provide the rigorous and high quality education that our students deserve.

Rebecca Baggett, Granite School District

Help our teachers

Sharon Poulsen, Granite School District

Education of our children should be one of the top priorities, not something that is taken care of among the last priorities.

Karen Reynolds, Granite School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

Teachers work hard and long to assure their students succeed. When there are more than 25 students in an elementary classroom a teacher spends most of the time disciplining and managing the class. Everything is not within a teacher's control, parents should be held accountable. I see and hear stories of parents blaming teachers for their child's poor grades or behavior. Many things begin at home. Misbehaving students in elementary schools is a real problem and must be addressed. Teacher burn out with these students is overwhelmingly high.

Becky Schaap, Granite School District

We are losing good teacher because of low pay and lack of support. Teacher can not live on their salary alone!!!

Callie Naccarato, Nebo School District

I believe in elementary schools one-to-one devices are not the answer to higher test results, etc. Elementary students need paper and pencil practice to learn the basics that will help them to understand apps and programs as they move on to higher grades. If devices are available to elementary students, they should be taught coding rather than just using them for app practice. The state of Utah also needs to pass an education budget that will attract and keep quality teachers in the field. Not only do salaries need to be increased, but other compensations to make teaching more inviting should be addressed: smaller class size, better insurance options, and respect for the teaching profession. The teacher shortage needs our attention now for long-term solutions which should not include allowing under qualified applicants to teach in the classrooms. Another issue I believe is a great concern is the general lack of respect for educators which directly affects teacher morale and longevity in the profession.

Sharron Bird, South Sanpete School District

If you want this to be a thriving destination for business and culture, you need to stop being the last in the nation in terms of school investment.

Mary Angela Elegante, Salt Lake City School District

I really am doing the best I can. I am not sure why you are telling me how to do my job or how I am doing it. Please come visit my class and see what we are doing instead of just giving a grade.

Michael Yamashita, Weber School District

We care and we are trying so hard! It takes real champions to do this job with so much pressure and responsibility, and so many obstacles to work around.

Chelsea Alley, Alpine School District

Please do what you can to lower class sizes and increase teacher pay and benefits.

Amy Williams, Jordan School District

Keep education as your first priority during the upcoming session.

Michael Yardley, Weber School District

Effective education can't happen in crowded classrooms. Our fourth grade classes have 34 in them. I have only 25 students--but am teaching both first and second grades (what's known as a split). If you want to increase student learning and success--put fewer students in a classroom.

Jackie Granger, Granite School District

Education is significant to the future of our society! We need to respect the field and keep up, make changes when needed to correspond to the needs and demands of society.

Amy Ross, Granite School District

Teachers salaries in Utah are far below the national average. This will NEVER attract college students into the profession!!!!

Megan McGinley, Salt Lake City School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

Our students are our future. If we short change them, we are only short changing ourselves in the end.

Karen Eyre, Weber School District

I love teaching here in Utah. I understand that we do not have the funding other states do because of the number of children we have in the state. Please realize I am doing my best with the resources I am given.

Vicky Litchford, Box Elder School District

I love being a teacher. But I feel undervalued and unappreciated for the hard work I do. I do whatever it takes to do a good job and I don't always need compensation for what I do. But I want to know that my hard work is appreciated at the state level. Being a teacher is the hardest but best work you can do.

Nena Hill, Davis School District

Trust your teachers. So much money goes to curriculum development in the last few years. It is time to have the money go toward lowering class size and supplies and computer programs for the classroom.

Diane Walker, Davis School District

This year we have a situation in our 6th grade that makes it so that we have 3 classes of 24 kids in the morning. But, because we have only enough FTE for 2.5 full time positions, we have a teacher who only teaches half-time in the mornings. With this, I take 10 of her kids and the other afternoon teacher takes 11 of them. This makes it so that we have 34 and 35 kids each afternoon and all day every other Wednesday. (We started the year with 36 in each class) 34 may not seem like all that many, but it has been extremely difficult with coordinating schedules and being able to manage some behaviors. The kiddos from the morning teacher don't see us as their "real" teachers and their level of respect for us as well as their work completion is significantly lower. Although we have been managing as best as we can, having 34-35 6th graders is just a lot of chatty kids to have in one classroom for 2.5 hours a day. Our classrooms are pretty crowded with desks and that is just one more thing that makes keeping the kids on task and teaching effectively more difficult.

Madison Moore, Weber School District

Please treat teachers like the professionals that we are!

Ryan Waite, Weber School District

In the state of Utah, we have so many children, and we need to make education their first priority. Utah should be leading the nation in producing students who are capable and innovative thinkers. We need to rethink priorities and put all kids first. The "magic bullet" is lower class sizes, support for teachers, both mentoring and professional development as well as high salaries. We should be able to choose from the best of the best teachers, not be scrambling to put bodies in front of students. Please put education first. It will pay off! Thank you.

Theresa Stanton, Cache County School District

High teacher attrition is due to newer teachers feeling that maybe they can do better for themselves and society by doing something else. check out 80000 hrs and why they say not to become a teacher.

Josh Dimick, Canyons School District

That early intervention is critical in helping students progress and get to an age appropriate level.

Carey Comejo, Davis School District

That teachers need more respect and support. Not just more hoops to jump through.

Corinne Eliason, Davis School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

I have been teaching for ten year and each year my class size has gone up. I am up to 28 kindergartners per class. TWENTY EIGHT! I know that other kindergartner teachers have more than me. This is a problem all across elementary and secondary levels. Who wants to come into the teaching profession where you get paid very little (can’t be a one income family) and have extremely large class sizes! Things need to change.  
Kristine Guest, Davis School District

If education is really a priority, put money there. Money speaks. Let us use End of Level Testing as part of the final Grade. Motivation. Standards based grading.  
Carleen McNees, Davis School District

Please come sit in our classrooms and see how much time we spend on student behavior, parent communication, and monitoring asthma and allergy issues. See how spending time to catch students up who have been absent takes time away from other students. See how much of a difference could be made in EACH child’s education (accelerating or remediating) if there were fewer students in each class.  
Kathy Sutherland, Davis School District

Please increase teacher salaries! This alone will draw more capable people to consider this amazing occupation.  
Karen Sutherland, Davis School District

We can’t adequately meet the needs of our diverse learners with so many students in our classroom. Raise teacher pay, if you wish to increase teacher retention rates.  
Nicole McCrea, Granite School District

Please listen to the suggestions that educators give. We know what we need better than anyone else.  
Shaina Runolfson, Granite School District

Increasing access to technology equipment without support in training teachers and students to integrate the equipment is futile.  
Debra Springer, Granite School District

Students need to be in class to learn. We need more support for attendance policies that still allow parent autonomy but also communicate the importance of quality education for youth. Utah seems to have a negative perception towards public education. We need our legislators to prioritize it and speak positively about it to help the culture of learning together as a community.  
Becky Beckstead, Nebo School District

We need qualified teachers in Our classrooms! And we need to raise teacher pay to be able to retain new teachers so they stay in the profession.  
Kathleen Anderson, Park City School District

The lack of qualified teachers is distressing. I believe that teaching is profession and a hard profession. You wouldn’t want a doctor that was learning the job as he/she goes and hope that the other doctors in the office are there to support them. It is important to get qualified, skilled teachers- our students are too important to hand over to just anyone off the street. If you believe that teaching isn't a profession or that anyone off the street can do it then I put a challenge to the legislators. Come to any school: 1. agree to spend a week in a classroom as the teacher 2. make the lesson plans, prepare everything, etc 3. pick a subject area to really focus on and teach a unit 4. test the students at the end of the week and be judged on your teaching ability. This small experience would be eye opening into a difficult but rewarding profession.  
Amy Nelson, Salt Lake City School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

Pay raises that do not get drained into admin over teachers.  

*Keith Flood, Alpine School District*

All students deserve a quality education that meets their individual needs.  

*Mark Milne, Alpine School District*

Place more value on the education of our children by paying teachers more and lowering class size in elementary school.  

*Vickie Richey, Alpine School District*

I currently have two 8th grade science classes with 40+ students in a high impact school. The majority of those students fall into some at-risk category; they are in transition, ELL, have an IEP, long running list of behavior issues, attendance issue, etc. In a class of 40 I cannot support these students. I have been made into a baby sitter. I believe ALL kids can be successful but we are creating an environment where we are not giving students the kind of support they need by simply cramming as many of them as possible into a room. It is near impossible for me to get around to each student in any significant way. I also do not enough lab equipment/consumables to support that many kids at one time. I have had many of the students in those classes come up to me and tell me they HATE my class because of all the kids that are not paying attention, being loud, being disrespectful, etc. I do not have poor classroom management or a difficult time creating relationships; My yearly evaluations show that. There is simply TOO many at once. I have had simple requests like, "Please take out a pencil" rebuffed with derogatory comments. I feel that I do not get paid enough to have to deal with situations like this.  

*Robert Violano, Canyons School District*

Teaching is hard and should be respected. Improved pay and much more support is needed if teachers are to be retained.  

*Robert Osborne, Granite School District*

They have already heard all the stories - we need districts to step up and put money into keeping and retaining quality teachers and staff. Legislators do put money into education, but it doesn't ever make it to the teachers. District Admin use most of it. So I would like the legislators to ear mark the money for teacher salaries and other support staff/stipends.  

*Brad Burtenshaw, Nebo School District*

I am grateful for those legislators who truly are friends of public education and public educators. I recognize the daunting challenge of funding the education of our children in this state, but our mainstream public schools must remain the main focus. I need small class sizes to be able to get around to all my students. I never came into this profession to get rich, but I need funding to continue to at least match the rise in health care for my family. And I need legislators who do their best to collaborate with me and my professional association and not work against us. We have to keep building bridges, not tear them down. Thank you, Perry Ewell 28 year veteran Public School Teacher  

*Perry Ewell, Nebo School District*

Teacher morale is low. Our class sizes are huge. We need more paid planning time in the summer. We need a raise.  

*Suzanne Parker, Provo City School District*

I think increased pay would help teachers be teachers and not hold a summer job as well. I also think districts should honor step changes. Example: I had 18 years in a previous district. I wanted to move closer to my aging parents and my new district will only aknowledge 8 years. It equaled a 20k pay reduction. Ouch. However, it was necessary. Now I am teaching over 250 students on 40k.  

*Cassy Moon, Sevier School District*
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

Students are becoming increasingly more difficult to teach and we need more resources available to access not punishment or testing incentives.

Tracie Jackson, Weber School District

Higher pay for educators will attract more top students to education.

Cindy H. Garrett, Alpine School District

We are no longer able to load up our classrooms with lots of students when so many of our students have special needs from Language, Speech, Resource, Etc. We need smaller class sizes so that we can give these students the attention they need. We also need to realize that the Arts and Sciences need to be integrated into our curriculum. I have participated in the Opera By Children program for 2 years and my students love this opportunity. Please fund training and opportunities such as this mentoring opportunity that helps a teacher learn how to put the Arts in their classes.

Elizabeth Hart, Alpine School District

I began my career in education as a detour from a career in the business field. I have never been happier! I joined this field of excellent men and women in the hopes of bettering the future and helping students to reach their full potential. There are times when this is very difficult. When students don't have access to the supplies/tools they need to learn, when my class size is over 30 (out of my 13 years teaching, I have had a class under 30 only once), and when my opinions and needs are not respected as a professional by others. I feel that there are numerous times when a teachers’ opinion is ignored to save money or to make things easier for state/country leadership. I understand that the needs of those in the field of education are many, but THERE IS NO OTHER AREA THAT IS MORE IMPORTANT. If children are not built up at a young age, you will only see negative consequences as adults. “It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men.” --Frederick Douglass

Christine Anderson, Davis School District

Having prep. time is highly important. It will definitely benefit the students when teachers are prepared.

Gerlit Buffington, Grand County School District

Teachers are professionals who, for the most part, really do know what they are doing and are trained for their profession. Don't believe that an untrained and inexperienced person can step in and teach a class flawlessly. It takes more skill than most of our legislators realize.

Emily Box, Granite School District

One year a teacher at my school had a smaller class than she had ever had. She said that she couldn't believe how well the kids did that year with her being able to spend more time with each student. I told her she should tell the legislature about it, but she said she was afraid if she did our school would lose a teacher because the enrollment was too small. Isn't that messed up? Shouldn't we be able to give examples of things that work without being punished for it?

Shauna Tanner, Granite School District

It is a great day to be a Mustang!!! You are invited to Herriman High to talk to our students, sit in our classrooms and see how much is being done to ensure that our kids are going out into the world prepared for whatever comes next!

Kim Searle, Jordan School District

Almost each one of the legislators, if they are long time Utah residents went through the Utah Education system and they have done fine. Let the teachers teach without interference.

Adam Shumway, Davis School District

"Stack them deep and teach them cheap" has got to end! That is nothing to be proud of.

Rebecca Smith, Davis School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

I think class size and respect for educators needs to be addressed as the top priorities.

Gina Graham, Granite School District

Since I began teaching, when everyone was talking about how class sizes were too large, and was even featured in a local news story back then about the class size issue, class sizes have still steadily increased. Students are being cheated out of the quality of education that they deserve.

Sutton Morgan, Granite School District

I have a student who repeatedly threatens teachers, students, anyone in his way though vulgarity and insults daily. He writes kill lists and tells students he has guns and is going to kill other students. He affects every one's teaching time daily through his daily issues. But, there is nothing we can do, because he is in special aid. He screaming for help, but the district won't listen. Something bad is going to happen and I am very worried for my students and yet the district won't listen. My school isn't the only school dealing with this. Schools need more support with disciplinary issues. I am doing everything I can. We have a social worker that comes to our elementary school twice a week. We need more support. I have been teaching for 15 years and the amount of social issues has increased exponentially.

Please help.

Celeste Ratto, Granite School District

Reducing class size should be a priority for legislators. The large class sizes that we are dealing with are negatively affecting our students' learning. It is hard to provide individualized instruction to meet the needs of our diverse learners when class sizes are large. Also, educators need to feel valued and respected by legislators. They should take the time to visit schools and talk with teachers in order to learn more about the issues they are deciding upon.

Karen Vasquez, Granite School District

class sizes are the one of the biggest impacts on learning for students. It is hard as a teacher to get to every student when there are 50+ students in a class. a lot of students get left out and there is not enough time or planning to reach them all.

Rodny Wells, Granite School District

I have 31 students in my class. Their abilities range from 1st grade to 5th grade reading levels. Half of my class are ESL students. With 31 students it is impossible to give each of my students the attention they need and deserve.

Tammie Wilson, Granite School District

Something needs to be done about defiant children that will not behave. There needs to be more qualified rooms, schools, places to put children who do not fit into general education classroom. Demands are too high for many of these students to succeed.

Amanda McCullough, Jordan School District

I barely have time to fill out this survey because of planning and other assignments related to a new term beginning.

Kaye Brockbank, Nebo School District

Teachers deserve to be paid a lot more and small class sizes improves performance of students!

Joan Mills, Other

Utah has a very large, very young population. We cannot continue to educate our population, with the standards and levels necessary to compete in a global economy at the level at which we are currently working. The public must understand that if they want their children educated, then the legislators need to raise taxes or cut the tax exempt status for larger families.

Annie Wallace, Park City School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

That Utah schools lack appropriate funding for the number of kids we are serving. Additionally, we need to recognize that the majority of teachers are giving their best to students. Class sizes need to be capped at 25, dependent upon school population and number of BD cases. Lastly, collaboration and quality PD or PLC time for educators is key to build professional capital in each educator and in return we will see a narrowing of the achievement gap.

Alice Correa, Salt Lake City School District

I do not feel respected and valued as a professional.

Janine Parker, Salt Lake City School District

The best thing I can do for students is to provide individual feedback on their successes and areas of need. This means less students or more staff in my classroom. When students experience success so do teachers.

Dana Emery, Tooele County School District

Many of the recent legislative decisions have simply taken all decision making, and power away from schools, principals and, most significantly teachers, and put in the hands of parents.

Summer Cornelius, Washington County School District

I took a almost $8,000 pay cut to move to Utah. I would love to see more incentives for senior teachers to want to move to Utah.

Nolan Hansen, Alpine School District

Many of problems with teaching just stem from a lack of funding or lack of personal finances. I know many people who would be great teachers or drop out of teaching simply because they can't make a good living off of it. If you increase the pay to match teacher appreciation, then you will keep or gain good teachers. Also, schools need more money in general to support their programs and students. The current system does not create a good environment that makes teachers feel appreciated on a consistent basis or that they are being paid worth their time.

Jeffrey Sosa, Alpine School District

High quality teachers provide effective instruction which leads to student success. You can not get around having high quality teachers in every classroom if you want Utah's students to lead academically. There is no quick fix through technology or alternative route to licensure to improve education opportunities for Utah's students. Pay a fitting salary to attract those who you would have teach your child.

Madaline Chilcutt, Canyons School District

I work at a highly impacted Title I school. The staff at my school is amazing. We face many challenges throughout the school year, such as homeless students, students from poor backgrounds and bad situation, high behavioral problems, and low academics. Our school has pushed through all of the hardship and we have come out shining in the end. We make a difference in not only these students educations but their lives. We teach them not only math and reading, but also how to be decent successful human beings that can contribute to our society. This year much of our funding was cut and we did not have nearly the supports we need to help us in our classes. We need more interventionists in the school to help teachers target the students that are extremely behind. I currently have fifth graders learning their alphabet for the very first time. We need more money to obtain the services these student need and deserve. I also believe that teachers that work under these difficult situation found at a Title I school should be rewarded by higher pay. We have a very hard time keeping teachers at our school, because of the things we have to deal with and handle everyday of our lives. It is a very emotionally taxing place to be.

Raschell Davis, Canyons School District

I would like my legislators to know that SPED teachers are extremely underpaid compared to the rest of the country, we are losing them because of this.

Laura Guillaume, Davis School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

Education needs more money so people will value teachers and learning.  

_Marilyn Merkley, Davis School District_

This is a hard job, and a big responsibility, to educate our future leaders and community members. In order for teachers to be able to handle the stress and commitment and time it takes to do this job well, we need a more professional career salary. Right now we are being undervalued and pushed aside.  

_Beth Christophersen, Granite School District_

One of the major issues that needs to be addressed to solve the teacher shortage program is the constant negative treatment of teachers by the legislature. If you truly value us and the work we do, increase our funding to try to catch up with the per pupil funding enjoyed by so many of our colleagues throughout the nation. If you want to attract people to our profession, treat us like professionals.  

_Kurt Twining, Granite School District_

The #1 way to reduce the teacher shortage and increase retention is to increase the income. The more financially viable the career becomes, the more people who will consider it. People keep dancing around this because nobody wants to fork out the dough. The fact is, people are going to go where the pay is. Better pay = more applications. Everybody knows that teachers get paid s##$, so who can be surprised when a high schooler sits down with their counselor and declares the idea because, they "want to make more than that." You know it's what happens. Everybody knows. It's so obvious. Where the pay is, there too will the people go. Stop ignoring it. Stop pretending it's this, that, or the other thing. It's the pay. I LOVE my job. LOVE IT! But if another job were to open for me that I would also enjoy and pay me more, I'll quit teaching and go do that, because I have a family to provide for and a retirement to save for. The teacher's world pivots on the hinge of the paycheck. Everybody acts like being a teacher is some great moral calling; it's not. It's a job, like any other, and we do it to get paid. The entire world expects us to be these high moral giants, but then they pay us barely more than the janitors. This discrepancy is not how you win new converts to the educator pool. The rule goes: "You get paid what you're worth." Well, that tells me that the district, state, and union don't think I'm worth much, and perspective teachers see that. You don't think these college kids look at the pay scales and think, "Huh, they must not want me that bad." They do. I thought that. Lucky for them, it was the path I choose anyway. Pave the path with gold and watch students stampede down it.  

_Sterling Whipple, North Sanpete School District_

There is very little incentive for teachers to stay in the career for the long haul. Things are in place to attract teachers to the profession and monies are spent for Level I teachers to be mentored or coached. Teachers with many years of experience need learning opportunities and incentives, too!  

_Deana Coates, Nebo School District_

"SALT LAKE CITY — Qualifying special educators could earn stipends starting at $4,000 annually under a legislative proposal that is similar to bonuses now paid to teachers of mathematics, some science disciplines and computer science. The proposal by Rep. Val Potter, R-North Logan, and Sen. Howard Stephenson, R-Draper, would cap the stipends at $10,000 a year. Potter, addressing the Utah Legislature's Public Education Appropriations Subcommittee on Wednesday, said the stipend is needed to address a shortage of special education teachers."(Marjorie Cortez November 8, 2017) I am a Special Education teacher. I have been teaching for 26 years. As I look over those years the amount of paperwork associated with my job is astounding. I teach math classes. My students are doing the same work as the regular education students but at a slower pace. I help team teach in Inclusive Math classes as well, yet I am not eligible for the stipend that math teachers are receiving. I am usually the last car in the parking lot to leave and that is due to the many IEP’s I am thoughtfully writing for my students. My hours by far exceed those of regular education teachers. Many nights after I take my own children to their events, make dinner and run errands, I cozy up to my computer to write the rest of the IEP I couldn't finish while at school. I am not complaining but stating the facts of my job. I chose it and as you can see after 26 years I am still going strong. Being compensated for my extra hours would be a wonderful way to say thank you and we recognize the extra hours you spend being a Special Educator! There are coaches of all sports that spend many additional hours at the school. They receive stipends.
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

Since we are in a teacher shortage, this stipend would also be an incentive to encourage more individuals to pursue the career of a Special Education Teacher!

Kristie McMurdie, Nebo School District

Utah has gotten away with underpaying teachers for too long. I work 60-80 hours a week, have over a decade of experience, hold a Master's degree plus over 30 additional graduate credits. I have invested thousands and thousands of dollars into my students. (Last year I spent over $2500 out of pocket.) I am passionate, innovative, and exactly the type of teacher that Utah needs to attract. However, I make $50,000 a year. I took a $20,000 pay cut to come to Utah and work more hours than I ever have in the past. I have zero intention of teaching in Utah beyond a couple more years. They can't compete. This year, I know of 3 quality colleagues leaving because of the pay. I witness first hand the lack of quality in candidates because of the shortage. Some of the hires are appalling and I would never stand for my child to be in such a class. Nobody should stand for it. However, if we want quality, we have to pay for quality. Then we can afford to be picky and get and retain the best.

Nicole Guzman, Provo City School District

The lack of pre-service teachers signing up for undergraduate elementary education courses at our local universities is MIND BLOWING! We are suffering! How do we get exceptional people to be the teachers our next generation so desperately needs? I am a sixth generation educator of Utah children. Ten of my siblings or their spouses are current teachers. Our teaching family is struggling to get even one child of our next generation to even look at teaching! Our children are exceptional students (having been educated and tutored by some very outstanding teachers), and are not even interested in the education field. All of them are looking elsewhere for their college degrees. They have seen first-hand how hard we have worked, and what we have to show for our extensive efforts, and are not interested! In fact, in the case of both my father and grandfather, a family farm is the only thing that kept the family with food on the table, and modest clothing on our backs. Excellent health insurance, that was extremely cost effective during the late 60's and throughout the 70's was the drawing factor toward education for my father. In my case, I have lived below the poverty line (this includes with advanced schooling beyond a Bachelor's Degree) for most of my married life. Even with careful budgeting, there have not been enough funds for braces, if we also wanted our four children to play an instrument and participate in school sports programs. Please support "Our Schools Now" and do everything in your power to make being an educator "WORTH IT" again!

Teresa Toluta'u, Provo City School District

If the government is going to treat education as a business, they need to start investing in it and training those policy makers in the art of running a successful company.

Mercedes Barica, Salt Lake City School District

Lack of paid planning time negatively impacts students. Teachers spend many hours everyday without pay to planning. Teacher morale is low and the younger generation of college students are not choosing teaching as a profession.

Alison T Brown, Salt Lake City School District

Will you please recognize that your decisions have long term consequences. Listen to the UEA as they represent the teacher voice in Utah. Teachers have solutions that will fulfill the needs of public education.

Kelly Peterson, Sevier School District

When you value education by paying teachers as professionals, seeking teacher input on education matters and funding for student growth you will be able to attract and keep quality teachers.

Terie Maxfield, Weber School District

The number one way to improve education is to retain good educators with pay, benefits, and lowering class size.

Gerald Dibb, Alpine School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

I am a school counselor member of UEA and a passionate supporter of public education and know public ed, with the appropriate funding and resources, is where all student can achieve at high levels and we need to continue providing that support from the legislative level rather than limiting what educators can do to help my students, your students and everyone’s students come out of high school prepared to take on the life that is next for them. As a counselor, I can see the impact our educators make on students, especially those who don't have the opportunities or resources and it can make all the difference. Public educators are in this profession to make that difference. Please support them.

Maja Stocking, Alpine School District

Teaching needs to be recognized as an extremely important career and funding should be of the state's top priority. Benefits and retirement plans should be similar to other state employees such as police officers and firefighter packages. Underfunding, underpaying education is inexcusable.

Jana Gold, Canyons School District

Things have changed since you went to school. We no longer have a homogenous population where everyone has mom at home to build on the school day. Stack 'em deep and teach 'em cheap will no longer get it done.

Scott Stucki, Canyons School District

It is time for people who know nothing about education to stop making all the decisions regarding education. It is time for our legislators and their family members to stop getting rich by building charter schools. It is time for teachers to have the same retirement benefits as other professions and it is time teachers were treated as professionals. It is time for Utah to spend the same amount of money per student on education as the top spending states in the country...it doesn't matter that we have more students.

Candace Peters, Davis School District

Teaching can be a stressful, demanding profession, but one with many rewards. Having to fight for every dime of compensation, year after year, instead of having those needs met just adds to that stress.

Shauna Robertson, Jordan School District

That the pay scale this year was very unbalanced!

Carolyn Videtich, Jordan School District

We need more long-term solutions to solving problems in schools.

Joe Anson, Nebo School District

Teachers are the future. Treat us with dignity and support us with all your might. We are teaching the people who will be running our cities, counties and country in a very short time. You get what you pay for. Maybe that is the main reason there is a tragic teacher shortage. WAKE UP!

Suiska Rhodes, Ogden School District

Recently one district stated, "When we pay teacher more they perform better." Please pay teachers a fair salary. I recently returned to teaching after being home for 16 years. The pay has not increased much since I left but the demands have and the cost of living. Please quit having the conversation on “how to retain great teachers” if you are unwilling to recognize the greatest problem, pay! Please let teachers feel they are important and doing an important job by compensating them fairly. A single person might be able to survive on a this salary but not with a family.

Tricia Biggs, Provo City School District

Utah has always been way too cheap and I really doubt they could change

Jocelyn Cook, Weber School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

It's devastating when you love your students and teaching but feel afraid you won't be able to provide for your family on a teacher salary.

Becky Diamknd, Alpine School District

Support new teachers financially. Reduce district office money. Greater evaluation to district office done by teachers, retired teachers and district office personnel.

Crystal Deatry, Box Elder School District

Please make education a priority for funding.

Sonia Alberts, Davis School District

Teaching children is one of society's greatest duties. Remember that today's children will affect the quality of life today's adults will have in the future. Unprepared, unsuccessful people effect everyone negatively and burden society. We must do all we can to give every child the opportunity for a positive life by preparing them to function successfully.

Mike Dennis, Davis School District

We need to look at the teacher shortage in a serious way, no longer is it just a problem...it is an epidemic. I believe we can have an extremely high quality of education in Utah if we took the time and money to invest in it.

Alissa McManus, Davis School District

Before you make more rules and regulations regarding education, do you best to actually go into schools and talk to teachers. If you want to improve the quality of education in Utah, you must invest in it. You need to invest in the quality and quantity of good teachers, you need to make sure they have the supplies and technology they need to teach and you need to fund education. We cannot expect to be able to compete with other states or internationally if we rank dead-last in student spending.

Kiera Beddes, Juab School District

Make education--our students and teachers-- a priority in Utah!!!

Lara Rude, Park City School District

1. I am a millennial teacher who loves her job. My passion effects students lives in a positive way every day. This passion is decimated by a culture that blames the teacher and school first. In fact, it makes me want to take my talents and passions somewhere else. Families and communities are are breaking down. Schools are not the only solution, and they need more support if we expect them to address these global issues. 2. Please continue trustland and teacher supply money funds. They make a huge difference in my school and classroom. A website celebrating the impact of trustland funds in my school: https://sites.google.com/wsdstudent.net/elawithaugustin/home/trust-lands-teacher-supply-monies?authuser=0

Jenna Augustin, Weber School District

Every January the State Government announces their top priority is education. At the end of the legislative session it is announced that the most money is going to education. Then why in 15 years have I never seen money change anywhere in education?????? So where is the money going?

Lesa Cox, Alpine School District

Career and Technical Education and its role in APPLYING educational skills for students in real-life situations is important. Keep funding it!

Monica Milburn, Alpine School District

I work with amazing people. My district is full of forward thinkers and is doing amazing things with minimal resources.

Kristina Brown, Cache County School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

Please pay teachers what they are worth! We will not be respected as educated professionals until we are paid as much.

Amanda Kissell, Canyons School District

I am retiring after 31 years in the classroom and every legislative session of my career I have basically heard the same message. “We would like to do more for education but we can't this year because of .....”

Todd Landeen, Canyons School District

I believe it is in the best interest of teachers and students alike to increase funding of our public schools.

Cheri Arrowsmith, Davis School District

Think of some ways to hold parents accountable.

Nancy Bittner, Davis School District

Find another way to get funding for schools other than using property taxes.

Sarah Ahlander, Granite School District

Their investment in education pays off dividends for a lifetime. Less folks needing public assistance, etc. down the line.

Sharon Jensen, Jordan School District

When children know that their community is refusing to fund their education, they begin to believe that their education must not be very important. There is hardly a less dangerous mentality about learning to cultivate in young minds.

Megan Denney, Murray City School District

The lack of respect for the teaching profession is the root of the issue. When funding (ie. the legislature) supports teachers the community will support what we do.

Allison Atkin-Bagley, Park City School District

Public Education is under attack, nationally. Utah has been known for its support of community-strengthening organizations. Please put our resources in line with that! Also, the fine arts, health, and PE are just as ESSENTIAL as math, language arts, and science (maybe more).

Andrea Butterfield, Salt Lake City School District

Every time a news story makes me sad about the future of our society, something good happens in my classroom. A student makes an observant comment, another one may be kind to someone struggling...lowering the priorities and the standards of our schools lets kids know that adults are only interested in themselves. It also means that the future is being influenced by people who know that they are unimportant in the "big picture". Is that what Utah needs? We need to be a better example by prioritizing education and the brighter future that is possible.

Krista White, Washington County School District

I love teaching, but I lack the access to technology that would benefit my students.

Holly Daines, Weber School District

Public schools are committed to helping every student succeed, regardless of their background, economic status, or learning level. Our state needs to ensure that it is doing everything it can to strengthen and support public education above any other educational institution. 12-k schools impact the majority of Utah's youth, if we as a state expect to have an educated, driven, and successful future we need to invest in the cornerstone of our society, public education.

Zachery Venstra, Weber School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

My school maintains six full time science teachers. Last year two science teaching positions needed to be filled. They posted and each received two applicants. Only two each. Of the four applicants only one had a provisional teaching license and another had an inactive license from many years ago. It is becoming very hard to find trained teachers to fill vacancies. In the five years I have taught at this school we have gone through 8 science teachers that were hired taught a short time and have since moved on to other professions. That is serious turnover. My school is not a Title 1 school, the building is less than 15 years old, our students largely come from well-to-do families who are very supportive and involved. I can not imagine what teacher turn over must be like in schools with more challenging demographics. Please Help!

Danny Cooper, Alpine School District

Spend time in schools to see what is really happening.

Michael Corbett, Alpine School District

I have two professional degrees - I teach because I love children, but the demands that are put on educators - constant evaluations, lack of funding - class size and supplies. Is very discouraging - it's no wonder there is a teacher shortage. I have a daughter that I tried to discourage from going into education, but she felt it was her "calling" where she could do the most good and now that she is teaching and wanting to purchase a home, town home or condo she can't qualify because she does not make enough money - so she spent 4 years paying for an education and she is now employed in her field but she doesn't think she'll be able to stay in the field and make a living for herself. I think that shows such disrespect for educators. I think being a teacher is treated as a great second income but not to live solely on and I think that is very sad and contributes to the lack of qualified teachers.

Traci Latimer, Alpine School District

My son is a talented, dedicated teacher. However, after 5 years in the profession, he has decided he can no longer afford to teach. He is looking for another profession. He, he wife, and his 4 children are living in a 3 bedroom apartment because he doesn't make enough to purchase a house. They barely cover their monthly expenses. It is a crime that as hard as he works, he cannot adequately support a family on a teacher's salary. You will never attract the best and brightest to the teaching profession unless you cover the bottom line, a living wage.

Karen Longmore, Alpine School District

When anyone could become a teacher with a bachelor's degree, I felt under appreciated. I am in my first few years of being a teacher, but wondered why my education and training was not being valued. Being new in the profession, I think I bring a new excitement, but unfortunately discouraging factors tend to be the topic of discussion and concern. I would like to feel more valued. It bothers me that schools become desperate and higher anyone. Not everyone can be a teacher. Some people who teach now, should not be teaching. Maybe there needs to be higher standard for teachers and be measured?

Ali Peterson, Alpine School District

We need to attract more people to pursue a teaching degree, but we need to attach more money to it.

Becky White, Alpine School District

After 25 years of teaching I still love my job. I feel students need to have some accountability for their performance not just teacher performance. All are important. Teachers need to be respected to make decisions and be paid as professionals

Pamela J Hawkes, Box Elder School District

Extra money for special education, math, science, etc isn't fair. We all work hard. No job in education is easy.

Amy Bassett, Cache County School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

The teachers of Utah are very dedicated. We spend so much of our own time planning lessons and completing extra work, attending meetings etc. It would be so nice to receive a raise and compensation for our extra hours. I know I have mentored teachers and student teachers who are discouraged even at the very beginning of their careers, at how much personal time is required in the teaching profession to be a dedicated teacher. I think there will be a huge teacher shortage in the near future if it is not addressed soon. Our hearts are in the teaching profession, but because of our families and our financial obligations, we may not be able to serve there. Thank you.

Michelle Hamp, Cache County School District

If we invest in our education system, especially our grades K-3, it will have a more long term benefit for our state.

Amelia Ostler, Cache County School District

It is frustrating that the message sent from the alternate teaching programs is that anyone can be a teacher. I also think sex education should be taught in Utah schools beyond abstinence.

Amy Olsen, Canyons School District

Too long have legislators denigrated teachers and our role (not everyone can teach). The teacher shortage was created by previous legislatures and now the state is paying for it. You have failed to appreciate us and our contributions. It is time to pay us what we deserve. It is time to show you support teachers. You've also ignored other state employees. It is time to give us all a healthy raise.

Tom Alleman, Carbon School District

I feel that teacher salaries are not commensurate with the work teachers do and the background education they have. Teacher salaries need to be increased so we can attract qualified, high quality individuals to be teaching our children.

Janette Duffin, Davis School District

Lowering the bar on the qualifications of teachers does not improve education for students anymore than lowering the qualifications for doctors would improve health care. I believe that our state legislators understand this concept, but believe that the push to lower the qualification standards for teachers, in an effort to address the teacher shortage, is driven by primarily by economics and politics, which should not be the basis for making decisions in education. If you want to increase the teacher pool, while at the same time improving the quality of education, make the job more appealing. Many teachers love what they do, but are driven out due to financial reasons and a lack of support from some legislators who view teachers as adversaries instead of partners.

Zachary Hansen, Davis School District

We need to attract and retain quality teachers. Salary and being thought of as true professionals is the best place to start.

Kim Yoho, Davis School District

standard based grading not working; higher salaries; more teacher funds so we don't have to pay out of pocket; moral in our districts

Carlina Corun, Duchesne County School District

We have dedicated our life to these children. Please respect our profession.

Karen Erickson, Duchesne County School District

I would like to feel valued as an educator.

Elizabeth Sampson, Duchesne County School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

I know many highly educated professionals who would be amazing teachers and have expressed their desire to teach, but are choosing other opportunities based solely on the fact that teachers don't earn a competitive salary. One of the major indicators for success of students in the classroom is a quality teacher! The proposed plans to reduce the education needed to become a teacher, and therefore reducing the number of highly qualified teachers is a poor idea and will decrease the outcome in learning of students. I think its sad that students are missing the opportunity to learn from the best of the best.

Sheena White, Duchesne County School District

I have been a special education teacher for 5 years and I feel so lucky to work at a school that is so supportive and "student driven." Our school focuses on the outcomes of our students to ensure all students are learning the essential standards, showing growth, and developing into people who will be positive contributors to society. With that, I know how hard each of my colleagues works in order to progress our students forward. As educators, we need to be treated like all other professionals and have a pay scale that represents our college experience and correlates with similar degrees in various fields. I know there are multiple educators who feel undervalued because the amount of work and effort they put into their job doesn't reflect their salary. Providing educators with a comparable wage system as other professional is a step in the right direction to getting and keeping quality teachers.

Lacia Ashton, Granite School District

I love my job. I love being with the students at the high school level. Lately, I don't feel like I'm trusted to my job. We are losing many good professionals to other high paying fields that are less stressful.

Shirley Izaguirre, Granite School District

Teacher will need to be paid similar salaries as other professionals if you want to keep quality teachers or encourage college students to major in education.

Katherine Robinson, Granite School District

Please stop causing the problems in education! Please show that you value education and children by funding our schools, paying the professionals who instruct them like professionals, and insisting that the adults in the classroom are qualified (i.e., licensed) to teach them.

Dayna Jones Shoell, Granite School District

Visit schools and talk with teachers -- actually listen and base decisions on teacher feedback. This is currently not happening. Respect and compensation is not valued by our legislators toward our educators. Nothing is ever done until there is a crisis - like the teacher shortage. The teachers can give the best feedback for standards, budget and needs for educations.

Stephanie A Wood, Granite School District

Students are being taught by unqualified teachers, this makes a huge difference in student learning. We need to do more to attract and retain qualified teachers. This is the rule of supply and demand. We have a limited supply of qualified educators, there is a demand for them. We need to treat educators like they are important and they matter.

Robyn Brown, Iron County School District

I love teaching in Iron County and have been blessed to do so for the past 27 years. During this time, I've seen many changes in the educational paradigms, practices, procedures, and approaches to funding and licensing. The current approaches to to finding and keeping great teachers are a huge concern for me. I want the best for our amazing students and having interns and too many inexperienced (APT) or other pathways to licensing cheat students from those that are highly qualified. These short term fixes should not be the rule for the long run. Please work towards permanent funding for highly trained educators that will last for a long haul. Last year helped with getting us a little caught up with the rest of the US, but lets keep it going. It saddens me and hurts the pride that I have in Utah doing so many things right educationally and then still be last in the nation to fund education (the per pupil$). Please help.
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

us fully fund growth every year, enable our districts through the WPU to keep us insured and grant cost of living increases, let us be passionate professionals that don't need to come begging every Spring.

_Megan Nelson, Iron County School District_

I have worked hard to further my education, earning my Master Degree in Ed. and endorsements in ESL, Early Childhood, and Gifted and Talented. I have taken every opportunity to sharpen my skills and improve my teaching abilities. I consider myself a master teacher after 25 years of dedication to the profession. I have received wonderful feedback from students and parents and many benefits from my profession. What I have not received is the satisfaction that my salary is one I could raise my children on solo. If I were not a dual income family, I would be just short of qualifying for public assistance. I have also been frozen on the lane system for over 11 years, without any meaningful salary increase. I find this extremely disheartening. I see this as a direct correlation to the teacher shortage.

_Carolyn Dailey, Jordan School District_

Seasoned, high quality educators are undervalued and underpaid. New teachers without training and licensure come into education for 2-3 years and leave because they lack pedagogy skills. High quality educators leave because the lack of respect as evidenced by low or no pay increases.

_Lucia Evans, Jordan School District_

As a 20 year veteran, I have seen this job change significantly the past 7 - 10 years. We are losing teachers like crazy. We are hiring ill-equipped teachers and expecting our veterans to train them on their own time and dime. This is not good for the students or the teachers (new & veteran). Retired teachers are coming back less - and who can blame them? We need to pay our teachers enough to make it worth them staying in this profession. If you don't do something soon, I am truly afraid of what our education in Utah will look like when all us 20-somethings are gone....

_Kelly Giffen, Jordan School District_

A first year teacher in Park City makes more than I make now after 7 years of teaching. While I think it's great they can afford that I feel it's time for the state to step in and make sure that all districts have the money for that kind of a salary schedule. I feel this would settle the district hopping down.

_Brandon Larsen, Jordan School District_

Too many good teachers are leaving the profession or are retiring too soon due to economic pressures. Good teachers need to be valued and appreciated and they need to be able to raise their families without having to worry about being able to pay the bills.

_Matthew Runyon, Jordan School District_

I have a son who wanted to do what his dad does. I told him not only no but hell no. He has a bachelors degree in engineering, he has been working for 5 years and makes much more money than his father who has a masters degree and 35 years in education. Who would ever encourage a son to go into education. That being said I think it is a good profession for women who want to work and raise a family, therefor we now have a profession of women.

_Jim Wiscombe, Morgan School District_

Unlike other districts, Murray chose to increase salaries of ALL teachers, instead of just new teachers. I am extremely grateful for this increase--we just had a new baby and we are able to better afford those expenses. We need to help all teachers, not just new teachers, have these new wages. We need to increase teachers and staff's quality of life so they can better serve our students. We need to make the wages large enough so people can support a family on our wages. That's how we're going to get and keep quality teachers.

_Shelly Gearheart, Murray City School District_
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

I would like my legislators to know that I love my job. But I can’t stay in my job when they don’t support it. I’m good at my job. We are consistently losing good teachers in Utah because our legislators value big business and money more than they do our students, our teachers and education. Its sad. Stack ‘em deep and sell ‘em cheap.

Amy Roberds, Murray City School District

I am a mentor and instructional coach who supports Special Ed teachers who are just starting out or dealing with difficult situations. It’s hard for me to see how much is expected of them, especially how much time is required outside of contract time, for the amount of compensation they receive. Many of our new teachers are not fully licensed, which adds an extra burden on their mentors and schools to get them up to speed while they work on their licensure. In order to help our most vulnerable students, additional funding is needed.

Julie Beckham, Nebo School District

Unfair teacher pay in Washington school district compared to other high cost of living areas in Utah

Phil Ekker, Nebo School District

We need quality educators. I work as a mentor working with teachers in their first 3 years of teaching. Alternate route to license is not the same as going through a college training program where teachers learn classroom management skills and public relations skills. It’s very difficult for these new teachers to learn how to teach by being thrown into a classroom, even if they are experts in the field they are teaching. We need to do everything we can to make teaching a desired career. Our future depends on it.

Pam Haney, Nebo School District

Better pay will enable us to keep and gain better educators. Our students are those that will become the doctors, business men, and lawyers in the future and we need to have the same reputation among those professions.

Arielle Soto, Nebo School District

That quality teachers deserve decent, professional wage.

Betty Jo Anderson, Ogden School District

Treating teachers as professionals with a professional salary will attract more qualified people into the profession.

Cindy Wilcox, Ogden School District

Teachers work hard against so many outside influences and situations to help their students make a better life for themselves. We are not respected or cared for and the attitude towards education shows it. I have taught in both a public school and a charter school in this state and have to say the charter school was terrible.

Heather Blakley, Salt Lake City School District

Quality pay will increase demand for excellent teachers who won’t turn over every three years. I have mentored 6-7 student teachers and it apparent that the more you can make the teaching profession attractive to motivated candidates the better everyone will fair.

Matt Dimick, Salt Lake City School District

Invest in educators retirement, put ALL teachers in Utah back at 2%! This will help encourage more to enter the field.

Lisa Sten, Salt Lake City School District

Teachers have a challenging job, and no matter how dedicated they are to their students, can easily be pushed out of the classroom due to lack of reasonable salary, support, and unrealistic job responsibility. Please consider how your decisions impacts our society in the future as students learn from you how to respect or disrespect an invaluable profession.

Caryn Willardsen, Salt Lake City School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

Most teachers are well educated, professional individuals who feel called to the profession of teaching. They should be treated as professionals in their field and compensated accordingly, both financially as well as with public recognition of the importance of the job that is done in the classroom. This would help with both the problems of teacher shortage and teacher retention.

Chalynn Thomas, Uintah School District

While teacher shortage is a problem, tenured teachers are being encouraged by administrators to retire early. This is counter-productive and adds to the problem. If sign-on bonuses and increased salaries are being offered to teachers just entering the profession, why aren't stay-on bonuses and increased salaries being offered to teachers who stay? Changing school districts as a teacher is a huge decrease in pay, unless one changes districts in which they teach within the first 2 years of teaching. This should not be the case. A teacher who has been teaching for 10 years at X amount of dollars should be able to hire on with another district at the same salary as they left their previous district.

Joy Bement, Weber School District

Teaching is a not a profession that a person simply "tries out." Every time a teacher comes and goes it hurts students. Students deserve committed teachers who have invested in this profession for the long haul, teachers who are trained and educated, teachers who understand pedagogy as well as their content areas, and teachers who understand the brains and minds and hearts of the students they are teaching. Invest in teachers, and, in turn, teachers will invest in our most precious resource: our students.

Jennifer Graviet, Weber School District

I love teaching, but I’m getting tired of legislators, parents, and the community not treating my like a professional. I have a masters degree in my subject. I spend countless hours keeping up to date and to improve myself. I wish people trusted me to make decisions about my class. I wish I was fairly compensated for the work I do. I am considering a move to another state or a different career all together. Utah needs to make changes if they want to keep the good teachers they have.

David Mildon, Weber School District

I have master degree and teaching more than 10 years, both my husband and I work, I need a part time job also to provide for my family of 6 children, my friend who has work outside school system makes a lot more than I do. If I work outside the school system I do not need to work 2 jobs.

Annie Burr, Alpine School District

I am a 3rd year teacher who works hard for my students. I am constantly changing lesson plans and ideas to meet their needs and keep their interest. By the end of the school day, I have taught academics, solved social problems, listened to students who are concerned or worried about what is going on at home, comforted. I love the children dearly and I care about them. But by the time they leave each day, I feel exhausted emotionally and physically. Then the planning begins. Each day I plan math, science, history and language arts lessons for 30 6th graders. Recently my husband has become ill and unable to work. We are a two family household, and despite the hours of work and effort I put into my job...I cannot pay the bills...for just two of us. It can be devastating and incredibly depressing to go home knowing I’ve put in more hours and worked harder than many of my friends in the corporate world, and wondering if I’m going to be able to put food on the table tonight. If we truly want good teachers, we shouldn’t expect them to need second income (either from working two jobs or from a spouse) to be able to survive in todays world. We often discuss how difficult it is for students to learn when they come to school hungry. It too is difficult to teach when I come to work, knowing that my very best won't provide financial security for the month.

Tess McCleskey, Alpine School District

My need for a second job does not make me a better teacher.

Gary Peaslee, Alpine School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

I love teaching! I am willing to make a lot of sacrifices to teach because I love it so much, especially monetarily. However, I have considered finding different employment for the benefit of my family and our futures multiple times. I also have a number of friends who would make amazing teachers and have even said they would love to teach...if teaching paid more. If education is to be taken seriously, and if teachers are to be truly respected as professionals, then they need to be paid as professionals, and treated like professionals. And merit pay is not the answer. That is being treated like a salesperson and teachers are not selling anything. They also don't pick their product (thank goodness) but they take what they are given and they work to help their students grow and flourish. Please help teachers be paid like professionals. If you want to give them bonuses for great work, that would be a great “bonus”, but a bonus should not be needed to survive, because then it is not a bonus. A teacher's base pay needs to attract highly motivated and hardworking individuals.

Matt Thornton, Alpine School District

I am tired of having on the weight, responsibilities, restrictions, regulations and educational red tape. We are currently told by legislators what we should be doing, how we should be doing it, and then how we are not doing a good enough job. Anyone that has NOT been teaching in a classroom, directly infront of studentw within the past year, doesn't understand or appreciate the REALITY of education. I have been on both sides, the classroom is where the magic happens, yet so many players that aren't in the classroom seem to THINK that they know more than the people that are actually working on the front lines everyday. When I worked at our district office, I didn't have to do lesson plans, prepare for a sub. I did do many important things but nothing that comes close to being back in my classroom now! I am sorry but I am using faith and respect for people at the top, they are losing good teachers, they are all patting themselves on the back becuase Utah teachers do sooooooooo much with soooooooo little. To people on the outside that is just wrong! Utah legislators, and local school boards are " Selling the students of Utah OUT!"

Lorie Rasmussen, Box Elder School District

I work an average of 10 hours a day during the week, and still end up taking home an average of 3-5 hours of work including grading, lesson planning, and parent e-mails. In addition to working 50+ hours a week teaching, I work a second job in order to make a modest living and prepare for unexpected expenses. I was hoping that my recent pay raise would be enough to allow me to quit my second job, but it was not. Many of the experienced teachers that I work with feel undervalued because recent raises where significantly smaller for teachers that have more education and experience.

Barbara Reese, Canyons School District

If teachers are paid more, the best/brightest will go into teaching. Have them read The Smartest Kids in the World by Amanda Ripley (which discusses this idea of teacher pay and it's effect on student learning). Utah could lead out on this, since we value education. :)

Laura Harris, Davis School District

Teaching is getting harder, and we are less respected, including pay and support.

Kate Johnson, Davis School District

Our students need support in dealing with life. I remember one afternoon seeing a student running down the hall in hysteria screaming at the top of her lungs that she had just gone home to lunch and saw her mother in bed with another man. She was hyperventilating and a kind loving female teacher ran into the hall and put her arm around her to provide help and compassion. It was inspiring. The main role of a teacher is to inspire students to want to learn and to be there when they struggle with life. I remember a student that would come and see me every day after school and I knew that he did not have anywhere else to go for support.

Dan Pitcher, Davis School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

I work in special education and I invest a great amount of time to write IEP’s keep abreast with laws and appropriate lingo, collaborate with teachers/staff in an effort to better teach the students and for planning unique and successful lessons with differentiation and scaffolding. Increasing paid time to teachers for such activities could greatly increase teacher morale as well as provide better opportunities for student learning as teacher morale increases.

Comeo Torres, Grand County School District

Support teachers by recognizing the education they received and the importance of shaping students to be future leaders. Stop cutting funds to schools.

Rochelle Deeter, Granite School District

Value us, just like you value other like-educated professionals.

Amy Nagle Jones, Granite School District

Our job requires skill, knowledge and is important to our society.

Colin Williamson, Granite School District

Utah public schools deserve the best. We have the highest percentage of children per family in the nation. Our children are our future.

Gail Sardoni, Iron County School District

Help! Please support us. You will never be sorry you supported those that take on the responsibility of helping to educate our children.

Tania Falcon, Jordan School District

I have worked as a teacher for 28 years. My first 15 years, I could only afford a house with no garage and one bathroom. Finally in 2008 we moved into a home with a garage but now I have to work evenings Monday through Thursday to afford it.

Tyler Howell, Jordan School District

I can't afford insurance through my district (Jordan...), which is pathetic and shameful.

Scott Sommer, Jordan School District

Teachers deserve to be supported, not thrown under the bus when it's convenient. Also, we should be compensated more for how much time and effort we put in to making a difference for our kids.

Tyler Ellertson, Juab School District

I'm tired!!!! I'm tired of fighting for my students. I'm tired of supplying my classroom out of my own funds. I'm tired of fighting standardized testing that doesn't actually test what students have learned. I'm tired of legislators, who have no knowledge of a classroom environment, deciding what should happen in my classroom. I'm tired of rural schools being segregated from the Wasatch Front schools. In my 26th year of teaching, I'm tired of fighting for the same things year after year.

Kate Carney, North Sanpete School District

I find it outrageous that a state that values family and education pays its teachers so poorly and treats them like second class citizens.

Rebecca Antares, Nebo School District

Respect teachers with proper pay and benefits to take care of burning out teachers and increase interest in the profession.

Jeffery Hendricks, Nebo School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

I never would have gone into education if I would have known it would be like this.

Lori Thomas, Nebo School District

INCREASE TEACHER PAY!!!!!!

Steve Hoagland, Piute School District

I work in a low income, high risk, Title 1 school and we work so hard to help our little friends feel safe and happy for part of their day, everyday. We should be able to take care of ourselves and our families with our income. Some of our teachers have to have two jobs to make ends meet. We are running from the second we get here until the moment we leave. When we get home, we are worrying about the difficult circumstances our students are living in. Teachers should be honored more for the things they do; better pay, better insurance, etc.

Suzanne Martinez, Provo City School District

If you don't make this a desirable profession you won't get people to invest. You get what you pay for.

Penny Christensen, Sevier School District

Public school teachers are doing more for less! The expectations continue to rise with little State and Community Support. Teaching is a profession that should be supported to the fullest...it is a hard job.

Shauna Mills, Sevier School District

How I came to Utah from Illinois and did not get all my endorsements on my teaching certificate, took a $20,000 pay decrease, after 20+ years of teaching I had to retake the Praxis (Utah did not recognize Illinois's version), and I only received 7 years of credit.

Justine Schwarz, Uintah School District

I love teaching but is very hard to stay a teacher. I currently have 4 different employers in order to stay on top of my bills and maintain the basics for my family. I am stretched very thin and it has a negative effect on my teaching. If my salary was increased I would have more (time, energy, funds) to give to my school and my students. It is pretty simple, if you pay teachers better you get better teachers.

Zack Alvey, Washington County School District

Without quality teachers, quality education of our children will not happen.

Jennifer Farish, Washington County School District

Support for severe special ed teachers

Brittany Stull, Washington County School District

It is about timer to treat teachers (not administrators or other employees) to a decent pay increase!

Clyde Ellertson, Weber School District

If it takes a village to raise a child then the village needs to be accountabale. Teachers are professionals and should be paid accordingly.

Linda Fox, Weber School District

Talk to teacher BEFORE writing new curriculum/law/evaluations

Laryrn Jones, Weber School District

Too many teachers are taking on multiple jobs, and compromising quality teaching in an effort to make ends meet.

Jaxson Schreck, Weber School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

Teachers need to feel appreciated and respected by legislators. Increasing teacher morale will help in retaining highly qualified teachers.

Diane Anderson, Alpine School District

I have been an educator for 12 years and feel that we are not viewed as skilled professionals. My colleagues give all they have to their students and their learning being valued and respected as qualified professional who are skilled at their craft is the one major factor that keeps educators from staying in the profession.

Kira Beck, Alpine School District

I started teaching February 1, 2008. It's been 10 years. When I started there were six brand new teachers, myself included. Today I am the only teacher of those six who remains in the profession. We must do more to retain good teachers!

Skipper Coates, Alpine School District

On a yearly basis I serve as a mentor teacher b/c we don't have enough FTE so my department has a revolving internship position that puts more strain on the existing teachers.

Rachel Jorgensen, Alpine School District

Retention of public education teachers during their first five years is terrible. It needs to be fixed!

Mark Taylor, Box Elder School District

Teachers are the ones educating doctors, engineers, business CEOs etc. They are professionals so treat them as such and quit acting like the degrees we get don't mean anything and that you all know better than we do how to do our jobs. Come do it and live it for awhile and then you can maybe begin to think or say something. Just because science and technology are important, doesn't mean that everything else isn't. Most of those degrees and careers are now saying that those classes may not be the most important skills they need, but that the skills they get in Humanities, English, Debate, Theatre and music are more valuable. And if you can't read or write, you can't do any of the other subjects so how are they any less important or valuable to have teachers in yet you pay them more in bonuses, stipends, forgive more in student loans, etc....these are just a few things that are creating your teacher shortage and could easily be addressed.

Tanya Roundy, Canyons School District

As an educator and sole breadwinner of my household I am reconsidering education since the salary is not enough to live on for a family of three. I'm an incredible teacher who has been teaching for ten years.

Kristi Curtis, Davis School District

Technology is great but nothing will replace a qualified, committed teacher, interacting personally with students!!

Jean Ernstrom, Davis School District

Listen to the teachers who are in the classroom, they are the ones that know where improvements can be made. Have the legislators come and spend 3 weeks in a classroom and really see what it is like

Sybil Jemmett, Davis School District

Hiring a retired teacher is just smart. The districts would be getting a seasoned teacher at a lower rate! It doesn't make sense to have a waiting period.

Laura Perry, Davis School District

Teachers need to be treated with respect if young people are to be attracted to the profession. Please provide teachers with the tools to do their jobs effectively.

Valerie Shekarforoosh, Davis School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

I'm concerned about some of the things the district is doing to increase teachers. There are people with little or NO experience in the classroom, and are being pulled into classes completely unprepared. I realize there is a need, but good grief! It's not even the APL people I'm talking about, it's the people with 5 district classes and NO student teaching. This demeans other teachers, and makes it seem easy to be a licensed teacher. It demeans those that are going through the alternative path, and especially those district employees that have been working to become licensed for the past 18 months.

Terri Strawn, Davis School District

It's frustrating to have gone through all the proper education to have become a qualified teacher, and yet probably close to half the teachers at my school are on ARL. It's even more frustrating that those doing an ARL have a seriously low retention rate in education. As a qualified teacher I lose respect, because teachers can almost come from anywhere and just be able to get a job teaching Utah's students. I lose even more respect when unqualified teachers are not getting the job done, and it brings down the whole level of respect upon the educator community.

Gordon Garrett, Duchesne County School District

Thank you for trying to support us in our classrooms as we support Utah's students. Every day our students have amazing accomplishments that may sound small but my students and I know about the countless hours of practice and failure before we could finally celebrate our success. Celebrate our success with us! We hear from every corner about all the failings of the education system (mostly from people who haven't entered a classroom for decades) but we don't hear enough about the successes. It starts with you. Instead of teaching your constituents that something is wrong that you are going to fix, show them all that is right. Our teachers are incredible and our students are smart. Our parents care about their children and our legislators want to see them succeed. Let's get that message out there.

Shantelle Ford, Granite School District

I am a Special Educator. My school is allocated 1.5 FTE for Special Education. We started the school year hiring someone for the .5 position. Because of surplus procedures, she was moved to another school a month into the school year. Then we were assigned another .5 teacher. She was incredible, but the transition made her home situation difficult because of distance. She decided to resign. So we now are on our third teacher and it is only January. Think of the disruption to students and loss of instruction time. We have spent countless hours creating schedules and recreating. Now think of the Special Education legal paperwork that has not had the appropriate attention. We are still trying to fix all of the files out of compliance from last year's alternative route to license "teacher". The students are not making progress when they are not being taught. We need to ensure that certified teachers are hired and retained for the benefit of all of our students.

Kaylin Lythall, Granite School District

Too many men are not going into the field of education because they can't support a family on a teacher's salary.

Carolyn Creer, Nebo School District

I have taught over 25 years and my pay has not increased in the past 8 due to increases in insurance and little increases in pay. What are you going to do to RETAIN veteran teachers who contribute so much?

Rebecca Anderton, Provo City School District

I find it very concerning that over 50% of the teachers in my district (Provo) are in their first 5 years. Teachers don't have time to become experts if they leave the profession before they have time to get good at what they do.

Heather Williams, Provo City School District

Listen to your educators. We really do know what is going on in education.

Sharee Jensen, South Sanpete School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

I do not think that teacher pay is the root of the educator shortage. I work with a variety of teachers as an instructional coach. I believe the reasons for the shortage include the following: Educators are not respected as professionals. The responsibilities of a teacher increase every year, but support and resources do not.

Tammy Gibbons, Salt Lake City School District

Teaching is a profession with wonderful intellectual challenges and the opportunity to make a difference. Innovation and taking learning forward can happen through teacher leadership. However, the approach to licensure, position descriptions and access to innovative PD that models the future of learning is limiting potential. STEM learning and the new SEED standards need to be funded and teachers supported with curriculum, PD, materials budgets and coaching.

Wendi Laurence, Salt Lake City School District

The lack of support for teachers and working conditions make teaching not worth it anymore. No amount of money is worth the stress of teaching.

Gaylene Greenwood, Weber School District

I love my job as an Educator and hope that the legislature will do their part to ensure that people who love to teach will want to become teachers in the future.

Tracy Stokes, Weber School District

Each January I become stressed and depressed because of the attacks on my profession by the legislators.

Mike Bowden, Alpine School District

Teachers work hard and they care about their students. Utah provides an awesome opportunity for education. I grew up in a different state and I am amazed at the opportunities Utah students have. We don't need more laws to make teachers do things. There are so many qualified and amazing teachers in Utah. Stop making their job more complex.

LaNell Brown, Alpine School District

There are more and more demands on teachers every year. More regulations. Without more pay. Teachers are planning to retire earlier and young teachers don't plan to stick around. I am on year 30, with plans to stay another 5 or so years. If things keep changing, I will leave sooner. My younger teacher friends often talk about finding other jobs.

Kristina Caldwell, Alpine School District

Please spend at least a day in school (preferably at every level) shadowing a teacher to help you understand the challenges teachers face and make better decisions on behalf of education.

Leslie Dalton, Alpine School District

Just because our students have grown up around computers does not mean they know how to effectively use computers. Also, the biggest thing that holds students back in my class is attendance. Every student who fails does so because they are consistently absent. My "lowest" students are earning decent grades because they are in class working each day. I am happy to stay late for as long as is necessary to help them understand and complete the work. What gets frustrating is when I am taking time away from student has put forth effort to help a student who wants to do just enough to earn credit and hasn't shown up to class for weeks. They might make it through high school, but they will lack the habits employers want in their employees.

Monica Earl, Alpine School District

Listen to current educators on the issues, and put less stock in standardized test scores.

Bjorn Freeman, Alpine School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

I love teaching. I have spent over 100K to be a teacher, taking out loans to go to college as a single mom. I have dedicated a lot of my “down” time to preparing daily for my classes. Tighten up the rules for children to miss school in Utah. The pull-outs for extravagant trips are many and trivial.

Sheila Harding, MEd, Alpine School District

There is a direct connection between the amount of money you pay a professional to the amount of respect they receive from the community for which they provide services. The Utah community, while family and education friendly, still negates the importance of quality teachers. This dismissal of the importance of quality teachers and quality schools is shown by the community’s over all support of charter schools and unwillingness to pass bonds and tax laws to increase funding for schools and hiring teachers. An example needs to be set by our political leaders to support teachers not just with lip service but with the pay they deserve. If they are paid as a true professional and leader of the community and not paid like a slave or a servant to the community, the respect will be finally given to the teachers that this nobel profession deserves.

Rebecca R. Johnson, Alpine School District

Teachers are burning out at an alarming rate, and we can no longer attract people to the profession. This is because those in school recognize that the demands of the job do not match up with the pay. We need your help! Please pass legislation that will help education and teachers, not punish them.

Brenda Mair, Alpine School District

Educators need to be treated like professionals. When it comes to pay and evaluations, we get treated more like waiters or waitresses than professionals.

Cody Medler, Alpine School District

I have been teaching, coaching and mentoring for over 20 years. During that time, I have felt supported, appreciated and even revered by students, colleagues, admin, community members etc. Everyone I meet wants to tell me how that “one teacher” changed their lives. In contrast, I feel that public education and my role as a teacher is vilified by our legislative bodies and at times the school board. Over the past two decades our legislators have increased regulations, increased testing requirements, increased rigor of teacher prep programs, taken money away from public ed for pet charter programs that are public in name only, have ignored the failure of those same charter organizations while continuing to penalize public schools and teachers. In addition they have decreased accountability of parents and students from high stakes testing and attendance but then turned around and held teachers and schools, responsible for scores. They have determined to grade us and our efforts, then moved the benchmark for those grades so that more schools fail. They have destroyed the validity of a really good benchmark test (SAGE) in the name of too much testing and then legislated that our students have to take ONE MORE Civics test to graduate. They, the legislative body talks out both sides of their mouth, don't invest in really knowing what education is like, claim to know better and in general have gone out of their way to break us. I dread the legislative session because as much as I would like to allow myself to be ignorant, I can't and I feel like every legislative update contains another battle that educators will need to fight while trying to focus on doing our best for students. I would like to tell them to GET OUT OF OUR WAY and lets us do our jobs!

Michelle S. Ormond, Alpine School District

I'm a special education teacher in Utah. After receiving my degree at BYU, I soon found out that my degree was no longer enough to qualify to teach in a secondary setting, even though my license declared I could teach k-12. Upon learning this, I had to take additional classes to get my math endorsement (an additional 2 years), in order to teach in a secondary setting, and for my classes to count towards my student's graduation required credits. If the original courses taken at the Universities is not enough to endorse special educators in a secondary setting, why do we allow the licenses (level 1 and 2) state that they are?

Curtis Twitchell, Alpine School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

I feel that the value of good teachers is generally minimized by the legislature. I don't feel that the legislators truly have the best interests of the students and the teachers at heart. Money is always the focus, not the kids and what is best for them and their futures.

Sandi West, Alpine School District

I have taught for 13 years. My father taught and retired as a teacher. My grandfather and my great grandfather were judges. I am so happy and blessed to be a teacher and follow in my father's footsteps. I love being a teacher and working with young men and women. Please do what you think is necessary to improve the quality of life for students, communities and education employees. I trust your judgement at the end of the day I believe that you have the best interest of students in your hearts. I for one have seen some great changes and have endured some real challenges. I will always be a teacher regardless of what you do.

timothy david jones, Box Elder School District

I have had many students return to visit with me after completing high school or in their senior year. One student, who had formerly declared that school didn't matter, told me recently that he stayed in school and that he "finally got it"...that being in art class had made him want to stay in school. He also said that he was an honor student and was on track to graduate with high grades. Elective classes in middle school are sometimes the glue that holds these students in school. Sometimes that is all it takes, because when they mature enough to really see what they can do for their future (and sometimes it is in the arts or health field or P.E.), they are able to step up and be a participant in their own destiny.

Shelley Smyka, Box Elder School District

I've been teaching for 17 years. The amount of policy changes that come by way of legislation has dramatically increased in the last 5 years. I wish our senators and representatives would back off of constantly making changes. We are still working on implementing policies/laws that were introduced 4 years ago. If something really is beneficial to students, teachers are willing to change and adapt. However, constantly changing on us makes us wonder what's the point. They'll (the legislature) will only send something totally different next year. Think long term not just what looks good right now.

Joylynn Gonzales, Cache County School District

Legislate judiciously. We do not need so much legislation for schools and teachers to perform! A good measure of how well a community is working is if people are able to govern themselves. Hire well-trained teachers and let them do their jobs instead of legislating something different every year. New programs don't last long enough for them to be considered effective or ineffective. Students and teachers are on a constant roller coaster! A business model doesn't work with education and education's goal of educating our next generation.

Lori Robinson, Cache County School District

Teachers are great people who in almost all cases are doing the best jobs that they no how to do. They are dedicated professionals. We do have a few bad apples in every school and we need help getting rid of them, but we shouldn't be judged as a whole by the actions of the few. Teachers are feeling worn down because the only messages we hear throughout the year is how awful education is in our country. We need to find ways to counter that message. Our public needs to know how good the education system really is in our state.

Joel Winkler, Cache County School District

When I spoke in front of the education committee, every single member was on their phones or playing on their computer. Not one made any eye contact. I am one of the teachers in the trenches who work with students (40 in some classes) and I know what reality is. You should show respect to people who take time to come and inform you since you are not in the classroom every day. To get respect, you must also give respect.

Robin McConkie, Canyons School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

School climate!!!!!! Attidudes

Lee Averett, Carbon School District

With all the "administrators" (principal, superintendent, school board, state school board, state superintendents) we don't need more people setting the agenda. I understand that we are public servants, however, we don't need 70+ percent of legislation on education. All the administrators have degrees in education and administration and are amply qualified to "govern" our profession. We get so much "extra" from the legislature that I don't feel have the expertise to direct our profession. I believe educators care more about educating our students than anyone else excepting their parents.

Cynthia Daniels, Carbon School District

As a new teacher who is currently taking more classes, in charge of our school quiz bowl, teaching broadcasting and newspaper, the demands for new teachers can be too much.

Hollie Grange, Carbon School District

With each additional mandate that teachers are expected meet, it becomes increasingly difficult to do what we do best, TEACH. The additional time in planning and grading or the additional unpaid meetings and trainings we are expected to attend has an impact on how well teachers can do their jobs and still keep balance in their lives.

Christina Bruckman, Davis School District

VALUE educators.

Nona Edwards, Davis School District

I understand that you have all attended public school, but times have changed. Please take a few days a step into the schools to see the challenges first hand.

Pam Harwood, Davis School District

I love the Ted Talk by Ken Robison, How to Escape Education Death Valley. Over the years, I have seen the view of education change to an industrialized process where more testing and data is required thinking that will make education better. Teaching is a creative profession...I really don't think many of us went into it for the money and having someone that isn't a teacher tell us how to do our job better is quite discouraging. We have, or at least if feels like teaching has a very low status and if something isn't working, teachers are the first ones blamed. We need to invest more in our teachers, raise the public's view and confidence in teachers, and invest in professional development.

Michelle Heninger, Davis School District

Teaching can be so fulfilling. It can also be quite discouraging. I often feel legislators don't understand the typical teacher. We're grateful for our positions, but it wouldn't hurt to feel appreciated by others a bit more!

Jill Jones, Davis School District

The arts are important. I have had multiple students find their passion in music, because they were "forced" to take a music class. I have had students that arts classes are where they feel confident, welcome, and like they have a talent, where they might not in traditional education. Please always consider the repercussions of changing the structure of elective courses. We have a strong tradition of music in the state of Utah, but some recent decisions will have a significant impact on our programs.

Angie Petty, Davis School District

Teachers are not the enemies of legislation and regulation. We want what is best for the children we serve and for our own families. We are professionals who have spent years bettering our craft through training and additional education. We ask for the respect due to professionals of our caliber.

Charlotte Pfeil, Davis School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

It is getting harder to keep the good teachers. A little loyalty and support of the classroom educator would go a long way to keeping and attracting the best teachers.

Robert Reed, Davis School District

I work harder now than I did when I started teaching 27 years ago and I get less respect from legislators and parents. Students have no accountability, it’s all the teacher’s “fault”. While teachers need to be accountable, so do students and parents.

Melinda Stecklein, Davis School District

Kids need caring teachers that can help them learn AND become civically responsible people.

Trisha Syversen, Davis School District

STOP the onslaught of untrained personnel entering the teaching profession!

Pat Taylor, Davis School District

I am an Ivy League educated teacher. I could work in many sectors for far more money. I love my job. What I want is to be taken seriously about my profession.

Laurie Williams, Davis School District

It’s hard to know where to start. I feel like we jump through hoops constantly trying to leave no child behind, but our best efforts are useless unless there’s some buy in from parents and students. We have no recourse, even if a child fails a grade level, and they know it. Education is a privilege and should be treated that way, not like an unnecessary inconvenience that gets in the way of vacations.

Cynthia Woodward, Davis School District

Come into our classrooms and teach for a week!

Cindy Bateman, Granite School District

Come and substitute in some classrooms and see what we actually go through each day. Attend a parent conference during which a parent takes no responsibility for raising their child and then blames the school because there are problems with the students.

Janet Berg, Granite School District

I have been teaching public school for 17 years. Sadly, the longer I teach, the more I have noticed a very disturbing trend in the lack of respect for public education and public school teachers. We are professionals who love our students and do our absolute best to help them succeed academically and begin their journey as life-long learners, as well as begin developing into responsible members of our communities. It is very disheartening to hear government officials speaking about public education in such a negative manner. We take our jobs very seriously, going the extra mile to participate in professional development and working toward earning additional degrees beyond what is required, spending our own money on supplies for our classroom, paying for lunches and other things some of our students require, among many, many other things. We love our jobs, we love our students, and we deserve the respect of our community and government.

Kimberly Cretsinger, Granite School District

Please understand we are dealing with people; students, teachers, admin, parents, using a business “model” to create growth, incentives, or “best practices” is not in education’s best interest.

Sheryl DeGering, Granite School District

Many students who struggle in STEM classes flourish in the arts, FACS, music. It is important for students to know how to survive in life and be a great employee in addition to STEM.

Vivian Evans, Granite School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

More and more teachers and aides are being physically abused by their students. Many are leaving the field. Schools are NOT safe places for students or teachers, so we should stop promoting them as such. If teachers are allowed to be bullied or physically abused by their students without having consequences for their actions, what kind of message is this sending to the rest of the students? We are only breeding the next generation of criminals. They will believe that if there are no consequences at school for such actions, then there will be no consequences in society, either. ALL students should have consequences, even if they are special ed students or students with autism, ADHD, etc.

Julia R. Henkes, Granite School District

My principal keeps asking me to contact the parents of students who are disruptive in my class. When I do I get yelled at by the parents and accused that I am picking on their child. It is not worth my self esteem to call parents of students who are disrespectful. I see where they get their attitude. Reason #1 to leave the profession.

Kristine Johnson, Granite School District

I have too many colleagues, myself included, that are licensed teachers that are having to jump through so many hoops and yet we are giving the ARL program less hoops. How is that right?! Don't you want licensed teachers to stick around? Why wait for a person to go through the ARL program when you could work with an already licensed teacher!

Elizabeth Laguan, Granite School District

As a new educator I was so excited to join this profession and give back to our community. However, after two years it is becoming increasingly apparent that the teachers in the trenches have little to no input on policy. Between the state and district school boards as well as principals who are required to follow through with the wishes of the boards, there is little no consideration for the individuals running the classrooms. Teachers need to be a part of policy. We know what the policy on paper will look like once it hits our classrooms. Please consider forming a panel of teachers to help answer questions and inform policy. Visit our classrooms and ask us how current and upcoming policy changes are affecting our abilities to meet the demands of our students and their families.

Karli LaMar, Granite School District

I teach 3rd Grade in a Title 1 School. I also have students write letters to either Santa or their parents (their choice). This year one of my students asked Santa in her letter to not bring her any presents, just keep her family together, no fighting like the past year. All kids are really good, no matter what school or area they come from.

Kathy Lyman, Granite School District

We have teachers and students at our school who feel unsafe because there is a student who threatens teachers and student, brings a gun scope to school, attacks students, etc. This child is afforded all kinds of protection because of his disability, but what protections do teachers and other students have against a mentally unstable individual who threatens and harms others. It is very discouraging and hard to come to work when the workplace is unsafe.

Janna Mills, Granite School District

I would like to respectfully request that legislators actually see what happens at Utah Schools. Not just a 6 minute walk through, but rather a day or even a week of volunteering, or mentoring in a typical Utah school.

Kathryn Anne Nelson, Granite School District

Teachers need to be a respected and valued profession.

Patrick Newbold, Granite School District

Thank you for your continuing support for educating the next generation of citizens.

Joanne Ribeiro, Granite School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

Teachers are leaving due to too many poor principals. Districts that don't fund incentives for teachers are big dismotivators.

Debra Rossi, Granite School District

Schools would do much better if people making decisions were people who actually worked with children.

Lorraine Skeen, Granite School District

These children are our future. It is our responsibility to stop making them political pawns. They need to go visit Jessamine county Kentucky. They revamped an old middle school and turned it into an early childhood center where only kindergarten and preschool takes place. The kindergarten teachers have the resources they need to teach and are not a forgotten grade level. I had the privilege of visiting classrooms in this school a couple of years ago and it was amazing.

Kelli Wendlandt, Granite School District

That they need to spend two weeks in the classroom before they presume to know what teachers have, want, or need.

Jason Wild, Granite School District

Please restore my teaching time stolen by administrators.

Jeff Corry, Iron County School District

I started teaching five years ago. Since that time I have seen several EXCELLENT teachers leave the profession because of students who are violent. It seems as though the teachers and principals are powerless in regards to the 1 or 2 students in each class that continue to disrupt the class with violent outbursts. Parents argue that teachers aren't doing enough and that their child has a right to be in school regardless of his or her behavior. In my opinion, this is the biggest issue I see in teaching today.

Lacey Butterfield, Jordan School District

Did the education bills passed over the last 10, 5, 3 years have the intended results? If not, what actions have you taken to correct matters? If so, what can be done to maintain or increase the positive results? How have you used teachers as a successful resource when making decisions related to public education?

Crystal DeMass, Jordan School District

I'm a great teacher who doesn't feel valued.

Robyn Derbidge, Jordan School District

Please put yourself in our shoes before you make laws. Take the time and go substitute or work in a classroom, and not one of those easy classes. Be a teacher for a day without the sub plans...be sure to have engaging lessons that meet core standards, get it all in with the time you are given, make sure students meet mastery and don't forget to have it all corrected and entered into the grade book before the day is through. Most importantly, be sure each of those students knows that you care about them and are there for them!

Joann Gibson, Jordan School District

Public schools are not your enemy. Please stop treating us like everything we do and think needs to be approved and monitored by babysitting legislature.

Cindy Mitchell, Jordan School District

Get out and visit schools and classrooms across the state. Talk to teachers and genuinely listen to their concerns, difficulties, and successes. They know what is best for their individual school.

Ashley Mortensen, Jordan School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

Please don't forget how important the teacher is in education. Remember that many things are learned as you travel the road of life. Please don't throw away your seasoned, older teachers. They have a lot of wisdom to give!

Lois Mortensen, Jordan School District

I've taught in elementary schools for 37 years. Each year we get more requirements from you, more students, less money for supplies, lower salaries (when looking at the cost of living), charter schools building new buildings while public schools have buildings that still don't even have air conditioning, more tests we are required to give, more pressure on teachers to perform even in schools where the population is challenging, etc. The legislature needs to realize what a good deal they have with us and start being grateful for the amazing job we already do. Support us in what we feel is best for our students and stop pushing your own agendas. Teachers in other states get paid more, have less students, and have planning time each day with PE, computer, art, music teachers to take students so teachers can plan.

Virginia Raiser, Jordan School District

All of these laws/regulations are made about education without anyone ever stepping foot in a classroom or asking teachers what they think! It's a whole different world "INSIDE" the classroom.

Kelsey Roundy, Kane County School District

Public education is vital to our society.

Ruth Ann Weight, Millard School District

This past session we saw a lot of positives and I believe most teachers are grateful to the legislators who are doing a great job of looking out for public education and taking into consideration input from educators when passing legislation.

Eric Names, Murray City School District

The children are the future of this nation, and we need to invest it the future of our nation.

Jodi Beck, Nebo School District

Teachers work hard every year to make sure their students are successful. Why are we not being paid what we are worth, and why is it fair for you to make us at will employees.

Shandy Burnside, Nebo School District

Teachers are working hard to help children learn and provide a safe and happy place, but many times I feel like teachers are under valued and unappreciated! It makes being a teacher really hard. I believe positive messages from the government and showing support for all the extra time and effort teachers put into their job would change the moral. We put many hours in to our job that no one appreciates or recognizes, well maybe our spouses because they get frustrated by it!

Natalie Mecham, Nebo School District

Teacher morale is at an all time low - we are treated as less than professional and consistently expected to do more with less and increased number of students every year.

Kristel Peterson, Nebo School District

Most teachers work long hours and spend a lot of time and their own money trying to make up for the shortage of funds and resources in Utah. Respect teachers!

Ginny Sivak, Nebo School District

I love my job!

Doug Welton, Nebo School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

As a retired school principal, who has returned to the classroom because I love education, I am very concerned about our ability to hire and retain teachers who not only are prepared to teach but who love to teach and nurture students. So many times we hire people who appear to be just what we need in our schools and they leave the profession before they can truly impact our students because they can't afford to teach, or because they get tired of the abuse of teachers by the public.

*Cindy W Cunningham, Ogden School District*

They need to support teachers, especially teachers who have taught for several years !!!

*Vera Young, Ogden School District*

Teachers make the world go round!!! Teachers need to feel valued!!

*Janetta Dalton, Piute School District*

It often seems that teachers are on a different "schedule" than other professions. We are held responsible for things out of our control. I wish that legislators understood this - it would be like paying them on the number of people they got to vote.

*Daphne Budge, Provo City School District*

I have worked a long time in education. I am a professional. I know what I am doing. You do not listen to me.

*Jill Day, Provo City School District*

I'm tired of people who know nothing about educating who try to tell us how to do our jobs.

*Christy Giblon, Provo City School District*

I work hard. I make a difference in the lives of the children that I teach. I would love to have legislators take a day in my classroom and see the time and effort in preparation and in loving and teaching the children. This is the place to be.

*Linda Gunn, Provo City School District*

Long ago, I read a passage. It said: "My (communication problems) stifled my voice and silenced my spirit." That is a statement that I never want to hear from a student at Rock Canyon Elementary. The ability to communicate is vital to our ability to interact socially, learn and display that knowledge in the educational setting. If all other abilities were to be taken away, the ability to communicate would be the last one that I would want to lose. That is why, over the last 42 years... I teach.

*Carrie Mecham, Provo City School District*

I feel like legislators and teachers are often portrayed as enemies of one another. Maybe it's one-sided and teachers just feel picked on by legislators. I hope that legislators know that teachers only want the best for their students, which is, I think, what legislators want too. Teachers have years of experience and knowledge that could be helpful to legislators and making educators feel listened to is one of the greatest things the government to give us. I wish they could trust us to know what we're talking about and trust us to do the right thing with the responsibilities we are given.

*Arti Teemant, Provo City School District*

Teachers are discouraged. I would never encourage any of my own children or family to enter the profession.

*Rebecca Williams, South Summit School District*

Please be mindful, as a legislator, that teachers are not puppets. We are diligent and hardworking citizens. We have attended college and worked hard for the degrees we hold, just as engineers and business people hold. In some instances, we have attended as much schooling as a Dr. or lawyer. We take our work serious, and strive to remember what is best for our students. Please visit the schools before you make decisions that impact our lives. Not
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

for a couple of hours, but for a couple of days. Sit in on some of the faculty meetings, or visit classes and talk to the teachers. We are not enemies, and can gain valuable information from one another.

Mark Bishop, Salt Lake City School District

For any legislator to understand education and the issues faced by teachers they need to come into our schools. Talk to teachers, students, parents and the other faculty. How can legislators make such important decisions about the education system and schools when they aren't there or are only having conversations with a select few?

Misty Clark, Salt Lake City School District

Too many principals have lost touch with what a teacher's job entails. Fellow teachers should have strong input on how a teacher is scored - as much or more than a principal.

David Clark, Salt Lake City School District

1. We need technology but not at the expense of a classroom situation. Online education is good, however in our day we need to continue to have a classroom situation in which students can associate with one another, learn to work with each other and socialize with each other. The online forums on Facebook and news organizations would show us that as a people we need to learn to solve and face issues together, not apart.

Roland Dearden, Salt Lake City School District

I would share how difficult it was for me to move to Utah. Removing some of the fees was a great step, but I am a highly-qualified former state teacher of the year that is nationally recognized and you put me on a level 1 license as if I'm straight out of school and took 4 years of my experience away. That's not how you attract and retain good educators.

Meghan Everette, Salt Lake City School District

We work very hard to ensure that every student succeeds and should not be demonized or belittled.

Sarah Herron, Salt Lake City School District

I am a professional educator. I work hard to make sure my instruction is excellent and my students are giving as many opportunities as possible to engage with material, explore what makes them curious, and discuss tough topics.

Anna Kogan, Salt Lake City School District

I work in the Career and Technical Education field. So many times we as CTE teachers are treated as if we are not as important as other “core” teachers. Yet, it is our classrooms that students learn how to apply science, math and language arts concepts. Here they learn why those concepts are important and how they fit into their future lives. More and more in today's society we need skilled laborers- these skilled laborers come from our teaching and our curriculum's.

Connie Wyckoff, Salt Lake City School District

We are having a hard time attracting quality educators on a consistent basis. Utah universities are reporting all-time low enrollments in education programs. We have to increase the professionalism and trust of Utah's public education in the public's eyes.

Paul Murdock, San Juan School District

Why are we having to re-certify and re-qualify in our profession where others do not?

Chai Sanders, San Juan School District

Focus on the right things. You need to be a support to teachers not an enemy.

Jill Anderson, Sevier School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

I am currently at school 10 hours per day (6:00 am to 4:00 pm) in an attempt to stay on top of planning, correcting, and preparing for each day of school. I still often spend 4-12 hours in the evenings and weekends to get everything done. I have 30 years of teaching experience and feel fortunate that I don't have a family at home (other than a husband who feels like a widower) for whom I must also devote a lot of my time. While USBE has provided great PD and the internet has incredible resources, both of which have improved my practice and my students' learning, I need time to take advantage of those resources and to collaborate with other educators. Valuing teachers by providing time within a regular day to work on their practice by having additional preparation time and coaches that can organize and structure collaborative work among teachers, I feel, would help ease not only my burden but the burden of those teachers who like me give too much of themselves to their students, classrooms, and schools.

Renae Seegmiller, Sevier School District

I've worked for a charter school where I've seen teachers being treated unfairly. They also have used teachers cactus ID numbers to gain money and had an unlicensed teacher teaching under them.

Carmella Abel, Tooele County School District

Teachers put up with a lot of disrespect from legislators, the state board, news media, all the way down to the students. Teachers deserve respect!

Lanae Moulton, Tooele County School District

The obsessive focus on family in Utah detracts from a school's ability to put every CHILD first. Not every child comes from a stable and loving family. By supporting parent efforts to open extraneous charter schools, home school without accountability, and not enforcing attendance laws, many children without family advocates suffer. When you put “family first” above all else, you put children last.

Mallory Goodman, Uintah School District

Teachers are educated professionals. We want to looked at as a respected profession. We are not babysitters. We all have 4 to 6 years of College and hold numerous degrees and endorsements. We are also asked to do more than any other job. Just because we care about children and their welfare we are looked down upon instead of regarded as a trained educated professional

Jane Walker, Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind

I love my job! I would like to be treated like a professional and not made to blame for all that is wrong when students are not passing. Students are amazing and resilient, but many have no support at home. When we are trying to be teacher, parent, and friend we need to meet the needs we can, with the best of our abilities.

Monique Fausett, Wasatch County School District

The role of athletics in schools is getting ridiculous. I almost lost my job because I didn't want to coach the cheerleading squad. Either the role of athletics needs to be reduced or teachers should not be pressured into being coaches.

Brielle Brosier, Washington County School District

Teachers are professionals who have spent years learning and improving their pedagogical skills. To assume that it is easy to be a teacher and anyone could do the job is deeply offensive. Teachers need to be respected for the dedication and passion they bring to their jobs. The best way to combat a teacher shortage is to treat teachers with the respect they deserve. Let teachers focus on their passion for teaching rather than additional measures that supposedly improve the quality of teaching, but in reality reinforce a negative view of the profession. Let us teach!

Madalon Wilson, Washington County School District
Respect for Educators / Teacher Morale

I am a second career high school math teacher (retired from Air Force) and I love math and teaching. Unfortunately the push to increase graduation rates, large class sizes, chronic student absences, and general lack of respect for teaching as a profession expressed by the media and public figures have convinced me to explore other options.

Matt Chini, Weber School District

We need to cut money/spending in the state higher up to save money not hurt those who are trying to support their families.

Ranel Cox, Weber School District

The public view of teachers is very poor, I hear the phrase "what's wrong with our schools," constantly! If we are so terrible then how come I have half my class not wanting to take a Christmas break! They would rather be in school! The kids love school, they love the friends, the challenge, the learning. We need concentrate on what's right with education and stop focusing on what's wrong.

Elizabeth Dickey, Weber School District

The educators in my building have implemented a STEM emphasis, new math program, systematic intervention system and collaborative team process in the last 7 years. They work their guts out and our results continue to improve for all students. They are an intelligent, caring, committed group of professionals.

Lisa Gilstrap, Weber School District

I have written my thoughts so many times. I don't believe our legislators listen at all.

Susan Stoddard, Weber School District

Teachers need to be able to address negative situations without fear of retributions. There needs to be consequences for students negative behavior.

Mindee Welchman, Weber School District

We should be embarrassed about what we pay teachers in this state for all they do. Not respecting them this way, allows students and parents to not respect them either.

Jennifer Whitesides, Weber School District
Teacher Shortage

It's time to take educating our children seriously and it's time to realize that teaching is a profession. Having teachers take more tests to prove they are professional has not improved the quality of teachers nor has it improved the pay for teachers as people thought it would if we took tests like nurses, lawyers, and doctors. We work the same number of hours, deal with similar if not more stressors, and still our pay is not equal to many professions that require the same degree of education or less. Legislators have got to realize that not everyone can teach because right now, not enough people are choosing to teach, because we don't value those who can.

Melissa Allmon, Alpine School District

Teachers need to feel appreciated and respected by legislators. Increasing teacher morale will help in retaining highly qualified teachers.

Diane Anderson, Alpine School District

I get tired of hearing how bad our education system is compared to testing of other countries when we test everyone, even student with accommodations where other countries filter out students before high school who have challenges and test the rest.

Kevin Aston, Alpine School District

I am an educator with both regular education certification and Special Ed certification. I currently have a caseload of 47 students. My group sizes are NOT small group. I am not taking a lunch so that the students have smaller group sizes and I still have 12-14 in a group. It is not as effective as having a smaller caseload and more individualized services for these students who need the extra help. I have a great supporting staff and they are hesitant to refer students who need help because of my caseload. We need to do what is the best interest of the children we are serving.

Melvina Austin, Alpine School District

Teachers work very hard and are not compensated for the hours that they are putting in beyond contract time to do their jobs well. I don't know very many other jobs where once the work day is over, work is taken home with them. It's set aside until the next day. Large class sizes (some over 42 in high schools) make it VERY difficult to give students one on one attention that they deserve. There are more requirements of us as teachers with evaluations etc. that take us away from designing and implementing fun, informative lesson plans. Burnout is high when you aren't appreciated or provided with resources.

Becky Bailey, Alpine School District

I have been an educator for 12 years and feel that we are not viewed as skilled professionals. My colleagues give all they have to their students and their learning being valued and respected as qualified professional who are skilled at their craft is the one major factor that keeps educators from staying in the profession.

Kira Beck, Alpine School District

I am a special education teacher. I love my students but it is getting harder and harder every year to give them what they need in order to be successful. The amount of paperwork is overwhelming and my group sizes just keep growing because there is not a cap on how large a resource class can be. When my class gets larger I do get more aide time, but that doesn't help with the amount of paperwork and prep time required to give adequate services to my growing number of students.

Mickelle Bowling, Alpine School District

When we had a teaching opening at my school 8 years ago we had over 200 applicants. Now we get about 30. It's getting harder and harder to find good teachers and unless something is done soon, public education in Utah will be in crisis -- and the 700,000 kids in public schools will suffer.

Robin Brunner, Alpine School District
Teacher Shortage

My school had 34 students in each fourth grade class. A majority of the students didn't know their multiplication tables, and scored lower than any previous fourth grade year on their sage at the end of fourth grade. My principal had to fight to get the budget for a half time fourth grade teacher. We are a traditional school so we do not benefit from track time. The 1/2 time fourth grade addition has increased student performance more than 100% but I find it very upsetting and disappointing that our principal and fourth grade teachers had to fight so hard for something so beneficial to the students.

Brittney Bryan, Alpine School District

I have worked for over 21 years in the public school serving children/students with various disabilities. There have been years where my caseload has been upwards of 90 students. Somedays, to say this job is difficult would be an understatement. I receive legislative funding, which I am grateful for, but my district does not give any additional funding. In order to "qualify" for an aide, I have to prove how overwhelmed I am, which makes me feel incompetent. I am currently working in a special needs preschool setting where four classrooms range from 12-17 children with only one or two "model" children. The rest of them have an IEP, which requires specialized services. In one classroom there is a student with Downs Syndrome, five with Autism, and two others with lesser known diagnoses, and most are non-verbal. Few of these children are potty trained, almost all have mild to severe behaviors that have to be handled, and the manpower and salary is not near enough for the job that is required of me, the teacher, and of her aides. We love the children, and that's why we power through and come to work everyday. However, your consideration regarding salary, teacher shortages, and funding would be greatly appreciated. Thank you for your time.

Kimberly Budge, Alpine School District

Stop decreasing teacher pay and benefits while pretending to give increases to teacher pay and benefits. If you want to recruit and retain teachers, you need to compensate them with pay and an environment conducive to teaching and learning.

Mark Burton, Alpine School District

In our school our kindergarten class size is 26 children, which is 52 children with two sessions to progress monitor. The expectations for the teachers are to teach a 3 hour block of literacy that doesn't include time for recess, computers or math. It also doesn't allow for time to help connect with students, especially ones that have very little time with parents.

Lorri Case, Alpine School District

I feel that testing is overdone and that teachers have to "teach to the test" in order to keep their jobs and keep their schools with a positive rating. Teaching should be driven by their desire to enlighten young minds and inspire their students to love learning, to empower them with the information and skills they will need to achieve their life goals and to make their lives better. In essence, to become lifelong learners.

Paula Cloward, Alpine School District

I started teaching February 1, 2008. It's been 10 years. When I started there were six brand new teachers, myself included. Today I am the only teacher of those six who remains in the profession. We must do more to retain good teachers!

Skipper Coates, Alpine School District

If merit pay is funded, focus should be on student achievement that is not solely based on standardized testing. Teachers in special education settings often have children who do not do well on standardized tests, and this should not be the only way to gauge the effectiveness or qualifications of teachers. In addition, recent budget cuts to classroom supply funds has made it difficult to provide/replace materials needed for child success in classrooms. Hiring teachers without a teaching degree and expecting seasoned teachers to "mentor" them in vital strategies such as classroom management is unreasonable. Teachers are not compensated for the number of hours they work outside of contract time in order to help the children be successful and complete other required assignments.
Teacher Shortage

Mentoring unqualified teachers is yet another responsibility on which experienced teachers are expected to undertake in already strenuous circumstances, without additional compensation. In order to keep qualified teachers, districts/state should offer incentives such as helping with student loan repayment and increasing salaries of licensed teachers, instead of trying to fill positions with persons unexperienced or uneducated in the field of teaching. Hiring persons who have not graduated from an accredited college with a degree in teaching is like a “slap in the face” to those teachers who have worked for such an achievement and indicates to them that their hard work is unrecognized and unnecessary. Not everyone can be a teacher and it is high time that they are recognized for what they have achieved and not given the indication that they can be replaced with anyone off the street. Teachers are what makes all other professions and without them other careers would cease to exist.

Tina Cole, Alpine School District

Teachers work hard and truly care about the success of students. We do all we can with large classroom sizes, limited resources, and low pay. Students deserve to have more quality time to learn in a smaller group setting. They deserve to have all of the supplies needed for academic success. Teachers deserve to be paid for their hard, heartfelt work, and this would put an end to the teacher shortage as well. Many people can’t afford to teach, and that is tragic.

Tiffany Coles, Alpine School District

My school maintains six full time science teachers. Last year two science teaching positions needed to be filled. They posted and each received two applicants. Only two each. Of the four applicants only one had a provisional teaching license and another had an inactive license from many years ago. It is becoming very hard to find trained teachers to fill vacancies. In the five years I have taught at this school we have gone through 8 science teachers that were hired taught a short time and have since moved on to other professions. That is serious turnover. My school is not a Title 1 school, the building is less than 15 years old, our students largely come from well-to-do families who are very supportive and involved. I can not imagine what teacher turn over must be like in schools with more challenging demographics. Please Help!

Danny Cooper, Alpine School District

Spend time in schools to see what is really happening.

Michael Corbett, Alpine School District

If you want retain/recruit good teachers you need to reward them ($$). Test scores are not the only way to measure teacher’s success. I know several good teachers that teach the less motivated students and do a great job. If we only look at test scores, no one will want to teach those classes. Second, we need students in class in order to educate them. Teachers have no control what happens outside of their class. We need student/parents to be accountable for their own/students attendance.

Brad Crowther, Alpine School District

The teaching profession is not treated with respect. We are licensed professionals, yet we are micromanaged by the public and asked to do more and more with less time, less money, and increased class sizes. The problems in the educational system are being placed squarely on the shoulders of the over-worked, unappreciated, and disrespected educators who are doing all they can to help kids succeed. However, no one can compensate fully for the lack of parental/home support and a student who is willing and actively participating in his/her learning.

Kristie Curtis, Alpine School District

It’s devastating when you love your students and teaching but feel afraid you won’t be able to provide for your family on a teacher salary.

Becky Diamknd, Alpine School District

I think we need to stop saying we will just need to do more for less.

George Durfee, Alpine School District
Teacher Shortage

Speech Language Pathologists fulfill a vital role in the education system, but as with math/science/tech teachers, there is an serious shortages partly due to a shortage of SLPs in general, but also that salaries for SLPs are much higher in other settings. This shortage may need to be addressed specifically at the state level.

Arlene Erickson, Alpine School District

I am an adapted physical educator. The high school I teach at has a Unified Sports program (peers and student athletes with disabilities learning, practicing and competing in tournaments together). This program is very successful as all of our students become so involved in activities both during school and after school hours. Cooperation, friendship and teamwork as well as sportsmanship during competition are emphasized. All students grow personally as well as physically.

Julie Hines, Alpine School District

We need schools out here in Eagle Mountain. Our city is growing extremely rapidly, and we need more classrooms and more teachers to keep class sizes down and ensure quality instruction for the kids here.

Rachel Ferguson, Alpine School District

Increased teacher pay = more and better teachers

James Finley, Alpine School District

the teacher shortage is caused because of lack of pay first and then because of lack of respect given to educators. Educators are on the bottom of the pyramid of respect. It starts with parents and then students and then administrators and teacher are left to the demands of the above three factors. Give teachers the ability to follow through with classroom policies and procedures without being overridden by threats from parents and students of being sued. Return respect and control to teachers.

Karen Finley, Alpine School District

Resources matter when trying to help students on an individual basis. As we have been mandated to help every student be successful, the difference between 25 and 35 students in a classroom becomes quite clear. It is impossible to effectively help every student in the way that they deserve when there is not enough time to talk to them. Make class sizes smaller by increasing the number of teachers. Increase the number of teachers by making this a profession that is respected and fairly compensated. Show the citizens of this wonderful state that you care enough about them to invest in their future.

Devin Fisher, Alpine School District

Special education needs help. There are children with disabilities that are not receiving the help and services they need so desperately. They are being denied a chance to succeed in life. Public school is failing them by not paying special educators and their aides more. The teacher shortage is creating despairing issues. I was placed in a severe special education classroom this year as a first year teacher with 16 students. It was incredibly overwhelming to say the least.

Brynn Frazier, Alpine School District

Please think through long term consequences of your measures that you pass. An example of this is last year when you passed the bill that took the court system out of attendance. Attendance has dropped significantly. Especially for the minority and low income families. They do not often see the benefits their child can receive through education or do not have the skills to get their child to school daily. The choice you made to include that piece in your bill will affect Utah’s poor and minority students for generations.

Mary Gale, Alpine School District

When I first got into teaching, I thought having holidays off at the same time as my kids would be awesome. I didn't realize at the time that teaching requires so much more than that. We don't get overtime, 'cause if we did our school would run out of funding before we were even half way done with the year! The amount we are paid is minuscule
Teacher Shortage

when compared to how many hours we spend to prepare our lessons. Add on top of that the high volume of students in each class, the lack of funding for science materials (I have to purchase what I do mostly out of my own pocket, which means I can't do as much as I would like), and the lack of classroom aids when they are really needed. I spend a lot of my "vacation time" either preparing for or finishing up things for my students. I've even had my family in helping, which, I can assure you, they weren't keen on doing for their vacation. And that doesn't even begin to address the teacher shortage (I totally understand how some could burn out!), the lack of respect we get from "choice" people (dare I put some partners in that mix?), and certain students, and you've got a recipe for a high-stress job with low pay and low morale. I'm not saying it isn't rewarding or that there is nothing but negative in this profession. I just wanted to get you in touch with our teacherly realities. Please don't forget us when the big guns roll in with their powerful allies and gung-ho ideas to use your influence for. We may not hold as much clout as they do, but we hold the hope of the future in our hands. Thank you.

Sharee Garcia, Alpine School District

Higher pay for educators will attract more top students to education.

Cindy H. Garrett, Alpine School District

Our teachers are among the lowest paid in the county and our class sizes are among the largest. When you increase teacher pay you attract more quality people to the profession. When you increase funding for public schools, you make an important investment in our children's and our state's future.

Mark Gatto, Alpine School District

We need to address teacher shortage, teacher morale and that teachers should be respected for being professionals.

Patrick Gleaves, Alpine School District

In order to support my family, I do remodeling work on the weekends—laying tile, painting, removing old cabinets, etc. I have a colleague who works at Geneva Rock to support his family, and another who stocks shelves at Smith's. We're a small army of salaried professionals working blue-collar jobs. We need more men in this profession in the classroom showing our under-performing boys what a responsible, professional man looks like. We need positive male role models for kids who don't have a dad at home. Yet those of us who resolve to stay in the classroom instead of advancing into administrative positions are often forced to choose between providing that example for our own children or providing that example for our students. It's a rare week that I don't put in 55-60 hours at school before heading in to my other job on Saturday. I can put in long days and hours; that's what I signed up for. But I didn't expect to have to give up any additional time many professionals reserve for their families in order to just get by. There needs to be a pathway to the sort of success that will allow teachers to contribute to our communities as teachers in the classroom and still have something left over for our own families.

Christopher Green, Alpine School District

Education is the future; with poorly funded education comes ill-prepared citizens.

Kristin Greer, Alpine School District

I have been an educator in Utah for almost 20 years. I have heard again and again from leaders and communities that they consider education to be a top priority in Utah. I understand that we have more students and unique challenges in Utah. However, the reality is that we do not have the funding to attract and retain quality teachers. Why should college students choose education as a career when the hours are long and hard, the "real" expectations for what teachers have to do are way beyond the actual expectations, the pay is mediocre, and they are constantly berated by parents of their students for every perceived problem. Teachers should be protected from being yelled at by parents and respected for what they do day in and day out. Practically, we need a long term solution to fill our teaching positions - especially at the most challenging neighborhood schools. Teachers are professionals and need to be seen and treated as such.

Janelle Griffiths, Alpine School District
Teacher Shortage

Addressing the teacher shortage will require teachers to be treated and paid as professionals. We are a highly educated profession but we don't come close to others who are less experienced and trained. No wonder this profession does not attract young professionals. It is difficult to live on a teacher salary as a single adult, let alone support a family.

Julie Gurr, Alpine School District

I am a special education teacher in Alpine School District and every year my numbers have increased while my budget has decreased. Special educators are supposed to have "small groups," yet because of the number of students I serve, I frequently have groups of 10 or more. In the last few years I have had writing groups that have ballooned up to 20 and 25! I serve students with a variety of disabilities and their accompanying needs. Some are fairly severe for a resource setting. Every year we fight to keep our meager para-educator time, so we have help in the classroom to meet student needs. Last year, The Utah Legislature had an opportunity to pay special education teachers an additional stipend along with math and science teachers. They took special educators OFF of the bill because I guess they thought paying us what we are worth for the difficult job we do wasn't a cost-effective move. Now we are facing a GRAVE shortage of qualified special education teachers because they can go to different states and have smaller case loads with bigger salaries and budgets. This problem will only continue to get worse and worse because of the increasingly oppressive workload of difficult students and massive amounts of paperwork placed on established special educators. The problem is already happening. At the beginning of this school year my case load had ballooned to 65 SCRAM (a full-time SCRAM load in Alpine School District is 32)! Without my principal demanding help for me, I would still be drowning under this ridiculous load of students. And even with money to fund a 1/2 time teacher, it was difficult to find qualified applicants because fewer and fewer students are choosing teacher as a career and even less are choosing special education because why would they considering the workload vs. salary? This problem isn't going away. In fact the "slow-bleed" of special educators has now become a "fast-gush." This does not bode well for our state. Soon parents will discover that their children with disabilities are in groups that rival the general education class sizes at times and that their needs are not being met appropriately. I predict lawsuits will be the norm. So rather than put the ambulance at the bottom of the hill (i.e. paying hundreds of thousands of dollars to lawyers and angry parents for not providing FAPE), let's look at the data and adjust special education teacher pay to attract and retain qualified candidates in the State of Utah. Doing this will ensure that student needs are being met by qualified, experienced teachers instead of "emergency, long-term" subs who have neither the experience nor education to guarantee progress along the general curriculum of students with disabilities in our state.

Kelli Hall, Alpine School District

I took a almost $8,000 pay cut to move to Utah. I would love to see more incentives for senior teachers to want to move to Utah.

Nolan Hansen, Alpine School District

I love my job. I love what I teach, I love my students, I love my colleagues. However, I find that I get burned out, frustrated, and just plain tired of all the responsibilities placed on teachers. The job is ALL consuming. When I'm not at school I'm still working either spending my own time planning, searching for ideas, grading, discussing with others, getting more education for myself, keeping myself current, etc. my life really is not my own, it belongs to my job. I completely understand why young adults are not going into the education field and I don't blame them. I hate to see it happen, but how can I recommend this job to young adults? We're over worked, under paid, under appreciated not only by some of our parents but by our state government as well. Teachers used to have great insurance and great retirement which compensated for the lack of pay. However that is not the case any longer. Both retirement and insurance benefits have been cut (we now have to pay part of our premiums). We are the only profession that gets punished for our experience- change districts and you get a pay cut and younger teachers are cheaper and hired first. We don't really get tax breaks either...last year I sat with $511.00 worth of receipts for items purchased for my classroom and I could deduct only $250.00 worth. We must do something to entice college students to go into education. My opinion is that the whole system needs to be overhauled. However, I only have 10 years until I can retire. I'm in it for the long haul. The system counts on that so the needed changes won't be seen or addressed until
Teacher Shortage

my generation of teachers is gone and we’re destitute for teachers. We need to act now. Forget charter schools versus public schools. What good is either without quality teachers?

Michelle A. Harris, Alpine School District

We are no longer able to load up our classrooms with lots of students when so many of our students have special needs from Language, Speech, Resource, Etc. We need smaller class sizes so that we can give these students the attention they need. We also need to realize that the Arts and Sciences need to be integrated into our curriculum. I have participated in the Opera By Children program for 2 years and my students love this opportunity. Please fund training and opportunities such as this mentoring opportunity that helps a teacher learn how to put the Arts in their classes.

Elizabeth Hart, Alpine School District

It’s time to look at the size of classroom and raising the teachers salaries!!

Darold Henry, Alpine School District

If we could have more planning time, especially with the new Science SEEd Standards and have smaller classes as we find for more and better teachers, then retention of educators and engagement in the classroom would drastically increase is my hypothesis!

Nathalie Hernandez, Alpine School District

In order for students to succeed there needs to be more adults per student. The only way a class of 30 students with one teacher works is if every student has the same needs and that will never be a reality.

Kristen Amber Holladay, Alpine School District

Teachers are hard working professionals with education. We need to be compensated as such. We need to have some incentive to stay and deal with the growing needs of this generation.

Jami Houle, Alpine School District

How often I worry about my students getting what they need from me. Reduced class sizes would help in that pressure to provide for every student.

Sarah Jacobsen, Alpine School District

We have to do something to keep teachers in the field and not looking for other jobs.

Kari Nelson, Alpine School District

On a yearly basis I serve as a mentor teacher b/c we don't have enough FTE so my department has a revolving internship position that puts more strain on the existing teachers.

Rachel Jorgensen, Alpine School District

I love my students, school, and job but there are so many concerns that I literally am trying to do my job from 7am-8pm each school day and I work on most Saturdays. This is my 4th year at my current High School and I taught 4 years at a Junior High. I teach 8 different preps and I'm the FCCLA advisor at our school. I thought it would get easier and take less time but not yet. There is a big difference of time that teachers spend in their job. Is there a way to compensate passionate teachers for their time and efforts? I'm older but I worry that the young passionate teachers will quit because of the load and low pay. Throughout my life, I have made much more money in every other job - per hour than teaching. Help?

Sandy L Kezerian, Alpine School District

I have two professional degrees - I teach because I love children, but the demands that are put on educators - constant evaluations, lack of funding - class size and supplies. Is very discouraging - it's no wonder there is a teacher shortage. I have a daughter that I tried to discourage from going into education, but she felt it was her "calling" where
Teacher Shortage

She could do the most good and now that she is teaching and wanting to purchase a home, town home or condo she can’t qualify because she does not make enough money - so she spent 4 years paying for an education and she is now employed in her field but she doesn't think she’ll be able to stay in the field and make a living for herself. I think that shows such disrespect for educators. I think being a teacher is treated as a great second income but not to live solely on and I think that is very sad and contributes to the lack of qualified teachers.

Traci Latimer, Alpine School District

Last year I had 32 third graders in my classroom. This year I have 25 because the principal was able to hire another teacher. It has been amazing giving my students more one-on-one time to help them excel. I have been able to work more with struggling students as well as challenge other students. They are all making huge strides in their academic understanding. It also has been a less stressful year. With seven fewer students, I also have fewer behavioral challenges.

Laura Laycock, Alpine School District

The demographics in Utah are changing and the lack of funding is now and will continue to cause our students to be under served. We need more funding for instructional coaching and teacher support professionals that can bolster our new teachers and help retain them.

Travis Lemon, Alpine School District

My son is a talented, dedicated teacher. However, after 5 years in the profession, he has decided he can no longer afford to teach. He is looking for another profession. He, his wife, and his 4 children are living in a 3 bedroom apartment because he doesn't make enough to purchase a house. They barely cover their monthly expenses. It is a crime that as hard as he works, he cannot adequately support a family on a teacher's salary. You will never attract the best and brightest to the teaching profession unless you cover the bottom line, a living wage.

Karen Longmore, Alpine School District

You are welcome anytime to come and see what we are doing in our classrooms. Please come and see what Utah students are learning first hand.

Jean Manuela, Alpine School District

If we expect our students to be successful and for the school systems to improve so that each generation can progress, we need better teachers who are more committed. Teachers should have a better salary which would be based off of fitting requirements, such as Bachelor's Degree, to prove dedication to the profession.

Alexa Martin, Alpine School District

Any additional funding education can receive would not be wasted. I see dedicated teachers sacrifice large amounts of their own time and resources only to be made to feel they're not doing enough because an unreliable standardized testing system tells them so. Utah's Education could benefit greatly first from giving teachers a salary that compensates all they sacrifice, and next by funding greater technology and resources for the classroom. Teachers will be more energized to do the best job possible when they have less financial strain to deal with.

Sarah Martins, Alpine School District

This isn't just a job to me. I care about my students and want them succeed in school and their other endeavors. Reducing class sizes and modernizing schools technology will help me be able to reach more of my students in a meaningful way. Increasing pay and benefits to teachers will help me be able to remain a teacher and will help attract good colleges who are committed to students just as I am.

Jared McBride, Alpine School District
Teacher Shortage

Class sizes just continue to increase as our state is growing. Students miss something without the individual interaction with a class and teacher that online classes do not provide. Smaller classes and more teachers are needed to connect the students with a teacher who can help them to learn.

Albert McFerson, Alpine School District

My numbers in my classroom have been climbing steadily. I do not get funding for aides or any help. We should have an additional teacher, but do not have the FTE funding. I cannot get to all of them. Children are suffering. More than 20 students in a first grade classroom where we are trying to teach children how to read is nearly impossible with one teacher. I have close to 30. It is discouraging.

BetteJo McLellalnd, Alpine School District

Step into a teacher's shoes before you make any decision.

Lisa McMullin, Alpine School District

Working within the public school system is becoming harder and harder every year. Expectations are increasing while salaries are not. Teacher benefits have been cut. It's becoming harder and harder to find qualified people to fill regular and special education positions. The answer so far has been to hire people who aren't qualified instead of realizing that we need to raise salaries and restore benefits so that we can attract qualified people. I currently work at a school that does not have a speech therapist because we can't find anyone who is willing to take the job. I was in a meeting yesterday where the speech therapist became overwhelmed with what she was being asked to do and left the room in tears. We are hiring individuals who are not school psychologists and expecting them to do the job of a school psychologist with no training. The number of ARL teachers, who have never taught in a classroom, is increasing. Because of this behavioral issues are skyrocketing as we are asking teachers to manage a classroom with no classroom management experience or instruction. I work in a school where it's reported an individual came in looking to apply for a tech job and was asked if he wanted to be a teacher. We are desperate and it's hurting our students.

Chris Melville, Alpine School District

I am the teacher that is lucky enough to teach a 4th/5th split this year because we don't have the funds for another teacher. While I love my class, it has been a challenge. This is my 12th year teaching and it almost put me under - teaching the split. I do appreciate funds that provide aide time. I wouldn't have been able to do teach this year, but it is still not ideal. Because of the split my team members have had larger classes because of parent concerns about having their child in the split. There is a lot more work for a lot of people.

Chelsea Nelson, Alpine School District

Let us teach, not be governed

Ryan Newman, Alpine School District

I currently have classes with 36 plus students and I'm turning many away. These are students that need credits to graduate and students who simply want to take my classes for the sake of learning. We do not have enough room or enough teachers to teach our students and they are suffering because of it.

Marlayne Nye, Alpine School District

Time is essential to plan effective lessons. There is not enough paid time to do so. Teachers work extra unpaid hours. We need a better salary.

Janeth Paredes, Alpine School District

Public Education needs to be a priority above charter schools and online systems. 90 percent of our students attend public school. Support this. Quit taking away resources to fund personal interest businesses that are dressed in sheep's clothing as educational improvements or online services i.e. Howard Stephenson and his money grab for his
**Teacher Shortage**

technology education business. Class size is too large to provide a nurturing experience while parents are continually too busy to help.

*John Paynter, Alpine School District*

When anyone could become a teacher with a bachelor’s degree, I felt under appreciated. I am in my first few years of being a teacher, but wondered why my education and training was not being valued. Being new in the profession, I think I bring a new excitement, but unfortunately discouraging factors tend to be the topic of discussion and concern. I would like to feel more valued. It bothers me that schools become desperate and higher anyone. Not everyone can be a teacher. Some people who teach now, should not be teaching. Maybe there needs to be higher standard for teachers and be measured?

*Ali Peterson, Alpine School District*

There is a significant shortage of Speech and Language Pathologists (SLPs) and special education teachers statewide. Our universities produce plenty but the pay in this state is not competitive. We need to attract the best people but improving salaries for people with specialized training.

*Jerri Price-Adams, Alpine School District*

I’ve been a happy educator for 37 years and will be retiring this spring. I’m so grateful for my career and the influence I’ve been able to make in young people’s lives. As I see new, wonderful teachers coming into teaching and their significantly reduced retirement plans, I’m sad to think of what they face. I fear that this difficult situation will dissuade other fine teachers from joining the most important career in our community. I hope that those in office and responsible positions will redouble their efforts to help support the future of Utah through education. Thank you.

*Doug Pusey, Alpine School District*

No all children are equally privileged. Get out into the schools and talk to us (teachers)!

*Moani Revoir, Alpine School District*

Charter schools are receiving public funds but not being held to public standards. When a student moves from public to charter, the money doesn't follow the student. If public schools are held to a high standard, anyone receiving public funds should be held to the same standard. Charter schools are stealing funds by taking public students and then handing them back to public after money has been taken. A loop hole has been provided and not fixed. Teachers leave public schools because it has been made harder then charter schools. Rules are being made by people on the hill, when they have never been a teacher. They do what they want and don’t listen to the people who put them in office.

*Clint Sanderson, Alpine School District*

Teaching is an art- Many legislators have multiple children and understand that a standard ‘do XYZ and you'll have the result you want’ approach doesn't work for parenting like it does in manufacturing because children are people. Most people can remember a person or two that was able to give them a little extra attention and it was a game changer for them. As a teacher, I have 274 students this year and I do my best, but my time is so spread out that giving the kids the individual attention that really makes a difference is increasingly difficult. I still make a difference with a 1:274 ratio, but not what I could if it were 1:200 or even 1:150 ratio. We have been out of state to look at other, fantastically performing schools. None of them has ever had a teacher with more than 125 students to care for. If you could help work toward that, or at least give us props for doing what we do with double+ that number, it would go a long way. Thanks!

*Bryce Shelley, Alpine School District*

I have an doctorate in Educational Administration and Leadership. I moved here from CA and 7 years of service credit was transferred with me. I am currently making half of my CA salary - I made more my first year teaching in CA (18 YEARS AGO) than I do now. I also work 1.5 hours more daily here. I am unable to get my Administrative Licensure in Utah without redoing all of the coursework, even though I completed it all through my doctorate program.
Teacher Shortage

In order to go into any type of leadership position, I would have to start over. I think that's ridiculous. In our classrooms, we have awesome kids who are working harder than they ever have before to meet new state standards. Having an opportunity to learn from each other and plan new curriculum is essential. I don't want more to do, I’m already working very long hours. I want compensated time to plan, develop, and research effective, research-based strategies and create meaningful, engaging units. I have no science supplies in my classroom. I have to borrow from the other teachers at the school, if they're not using the materials. We are preparing kids to work in jobs that do not exist yet. For a state that has so many children in its population and a renowned emphasis on family and education, educators are not well compensated and classrooms/schools are undersupplied. Funds must be invested in the quality of the teachers required to meet the rigorous demands of the state; to meet the needs of individual students.

Kristi Smith, Alpine School District

Teachers and students have been waiting for many, many years to have a legislative strategic plan for education including class size reduction, increase in salaries and benefits, money for supplies and a respectful attitude toward teachers. Our students deserve the best education we can give them. And that costs money.

Phyllis Sorensen, Alpine School District

Many of problems with teaching just stem from a lack of funding or lack of personal finances. I know many people who would be great teachers or drop out of teaching simply because they can't make a good living off of it. If you increase the pay to match teacher appreciation, then you will keep or gain good teachers. Also, schools need more money in general to support their programs and students. The current system does not create a good environment that makes teachers feel appreciated on a consistent basis or that they are being paid worth their time.

Jeffrey Sosa, Alpine School District

If you truly want to know what is happening in classrooms/schools each of you need to sub for a week in a classroom to really find out what teaching is like. Then you may have some different opinions and willing to start doing the job you were voted in to do!

Kriss Spencer, Alpine School District

Please take into consideration that public education is educating the future leaders and citizens of our state and country. The children are our future. They are the people who will be taking care of you when you are retired. We need to make education our top priority as it impacts all of society for good or bad! The children are our future!

Stacy Stevens, Alpine School District

Allocate more money to pay teachers so we retain them and reduce class sizes.

Janel Tuckett, Alpine School District

I think teachers also need to be able to talk to parents about disabilities that they see within students.

Alene Weakley, Alpine School District

First of all, I would like to thank our legislators for the important role that they play in our democratic process. Without your service I could not do my job. As a public servant I would like to see teaching become as important as any other public servant's job. I am willing to sacrifice if I know it has merit but sacrifice without merit is useless and drains me as a teacher. When I feel that I am getting the support for my students that I need to teach, i.e. an aide in the classroom, technology, supplies, ect. I can teach much more effectively and feel that I can truly do what I intended to do when I became a teacher, Be a Change Agent! I hope that as this legislative session begins you will take into account that I might only have 28 students but half of those students need some kind of intervention. The other half might suffer if I can't get to them in a timely manner without support staff that I need. When I can have just one more body in the room I could possibly make the change for your student that would not otherwise be possible. Please help me teach the children in this state what they need to learn to carry on our democracy!

Karen Webb, Alpine School District
Teacher Shortage

Teaching is a wonderful profession that changes lives. But those lives can be best affected with personal and individual relationships with teachers. That is much easily accomplished in smaller class sizes. Providing funding to reduce class size and increase compensation for teachers (NOT administrators) is one of the best ways to find and keep great teachers.

Scotten Whaley, Alpine School District

We need to attract more people to pursue a teaching degree, but we need to attach more money to it.

Becky White, Alpine School District

education = economic growth

Kelland Willis, Alpine School District

We must invest in the education of our children. We cannot continue to do so much with so few resources. We need technology to be funded and maintained. We need adequate classroom resources without having to spend our time writing grants to beg for money. Please fund education and invest in the future of our state.

CarolAnn Barton, Box Elder School District

Teachers are expected to do more every year with what appears to be less money and larger class sizes. There is more and more tedious “busy work” work to “prove” they are good teachers, which takes time and energy that should be put into lesson plans and teaching.

Kimberly Bennett, Box Elder School District

Providing teacher merit-pay by increasing the accountability for high end-of-level students scores without being able to control what happens in a child’s life outside of school is like expecting a dentist to get paid only if all of his patients have no cavities, regardless of how well they brush their teeth at home, and how strong their teeth naturally are as a result of their genetics. Most teachers work harder than other professions, but get the bad rap due to things completely out of their control. It is a highly stressful job and continues to become increasingly more stressful because of the demands imposed upon them from the public and legislators.

Sharon Cook, Box Elder School District

Support new teachers financially. Reduce district office money. Greater evaluation to district office done by teachers, retired teachers and district office personnel.

Crystal Deatry, Box Elder School District

I have been teaching for a few years. In this time I have seen many great teachers quit because their needs were not meet. Instead of lowering the standards to become a teacher, the state should focus on keeping the teachers they have. The reasons teachers quit include: too many students, not enough pay, lack of supplies, and too much accountability for student achievement (at some point parents need to be held accountable too).

Tralyn DeBres, Box Elder School District

People think the remedy to the teacher shortage is all pay. However, it is more related to workload and the number of nonsense things teachers are asked to do on top of their teaching jobs. Teachers are overwhelmed.

Danny Esplin, Box Elder School District

I and many of my colleagues feel strained with the increase of class sizes and the low incomes that cause us to look for supplemental incomes.

Clark Funk, Box Elder School District

In the state of Utah I do not know one person who is a teacher that can support a family on their salary. People who have the profession as a teacher either has a spouse that also works to make ends meet or they have two jobs. This is a huge deterrent in the teaching profession and it has had an effect on our quality of teachers. I have been a
Teacher Shortage

teacher for 8 years now and half of those years I have been helping teachers hired who do not have a degree in education. Right now Utah will hire anyone to teach and teaching is already a hard trial by fire job. Not having that background of university training on analyzing data, classroom management, how to grade, etc makes the job even harder on those hired individuals. Hiring people without these skills as teachers is not just hard on them, it's hard on the kids, it's hard on the school trying to support them and get them the training they need. I know it also decreases my morale wondering why I got a degree in the first place and if what I had meant anything. Raising the pay will make the competition better. Schools will have people applying for the job and be able to select better teachers. Teachers will not be taking in second jobs making them better more rested teachers and more time to plan for their students. The bottom line is if you are a parent what kind of teacher would you want your child to have? A teacher without a degree in education? A teacher who has to work two jobs?

Johanna Fyffe, Box Elder School District

After 25 years of teaching I still love my job. I feel students need to have some accountability for their performance not just teacher performance. All are important. Teachers need to be respected to make decisions and be paid as professionals

Pamela J Hawkes, Box Elder School District

We need help with one-on-one technology in our classrooms. I just received my first iPad for my classroom, so we have alone to share with the class. Pay the teachers to keep the teachers. Charter schools need to held to the same standard as all schools. Why do they have so much money to go on all their field trips? Where does this money come from? Does the public pay for the trips to National parks? We need more help with social issues in our schools. We need more help with students with special needs, the students who don't qualify for resource.

Denise Lee, Box Elder School District

That when schools have the funding needed to hire additional teachers so that their is a reasonable amount of students being taught. When they fund for para to help with small group instruction in reading and math. We can accomplish the goals that you have set for us.

Robyn Smith, Box Elder School District

Teachers work VERY hard to meet the needs of our students. We are tired of being disregarded, and having people treat teaching like running a business. We are dealing with variables that we CANNOT control (actual little human, and their lifestyles etc). You cannot run teaching like a regular business. Give us some credit for knowing what we are doing, and being competent to do our jobs. Compensate us fairly for the work we do and help us be able to support a family on our wages. Presently we CANNOT support a family on a teacher's salary!!!

Virginia Spenst, Box Elder School District

Retention of public education teachers during their first five years is terrible. It needs to be fixed!

Mark Taylor, Box Elder School District

Teachers need to be accountable, ADMINISTRATION NEEDS TO BE ACCOUNTABLE TOO. Teachers need to feel supported and listened to not just told what to teach and how to teach it. What we are doing in education today is only failing our students.

Cheryl Thomson, Box Elder School District

People on the hill decide what happens in the classroom without full understanding of what happens. I would like to see more legislators have round table talks with actual classroom teachers.

Nancy Ulsh, Box Elder School District

Cutting health/PE programs is insane. Pay to retain teachers.

Amy Wadsworth, Box Elder School District
Teacher Shortage

Please listen to what we are saying to you. We are in the "trenches" everyday and can see what is needed in our schools for our students to succeed.

*Barbara Warburton, Box Elder School District*

It is difficult to make a difference in a student's life when the class sizes in Elementary are 29-31 students. A few years ago I had a class that had 22 students in it. Every single student was proficient on the math SAGE and almost every student on the language arts SAGE. I even had resource students who were able to be proficient. I was able to spend the time with each student that they needed. Last year I had 31 students. This class has had that many students since 1st grade. They were difficult to reach as well as teach because their whole elementary career they were in huge classes with difficult behavior problems. Class size makes a difference!

*Rebecca Wilding, Box Elder School District*

Why is it always a battle with legislators to fund public education? Utah is a state of family unity, so why not provide what is best for children without always having to prove why we need money to support education. I would love legislators to come spend a week in my classroom and school, so they could see for themselves why public funds are important. Teachers put in so much extra time to planning for their student's learning without compensation and yet, they are still being told it's not enough, plus the message being sent from legislators, we don't value our teachers, you are just expected to meet all the demands, so quit whining about it and just do it. The teacher shortage comes from low pay and demanding expectations, I feel legislators created it to begin with.

*Jacquelyn Austin, Cache County School District*

Extra money for special education, math, science, etc isn't fair. We all work hard. No job in education is easy.

*Amy Bassett, Cache County School District*

Over the 12 years I have taught, I have witnessed many changes and new programs being implemented. It is so hard to keep up with changes in education, by the time we start to become proficient with one system, it changes, let's minimize program changes and focus on what really matters: finding ways to attract and retain good quality teachers in our schools, and then supporting them so that they can do their jobs each day without overburdening them with too many meetings, too much paperwork, or too many extra duties and assignments.

*Rod Buttars, Cache County School District*

I ask for more balance in the system. If we hope to supply Utah with more skilled workers, we need to draw more elementary age students into education by helping them and their families to negotiate the system. Research demonstrates the need for early childhood intervention, and for trauma sensitive schools. Hill Walker demonstrated how these foci can alleviate the tax burden related to putting people in prison 20 years ago.

*Jaynan Chancellor, Cache County School District*

Classrooms that have more than 24 students defeats the purpose of education. One-on-one time is diminished which means those who struggle are getting a majority of a teacher's time. The student who needs to be challenged is missing opportunities because a teacher is interacting with the lower students. How do I give equal time to each student? Small group instruction usually means dividing up time in the day, but most of that time is for those who struggle, which means leaving other groups to work independently. There are students in the middle who much of time will get off task. Classroom reduction is essential for a learning environment. I've had as many as 37 students crammed into a room designed to hold about 24. All my time was spent determining who received most of my attention and at the end of the day I would go home and wonder who I hadn't interacted with.

*Nick Cornwell, Cache County School District*

I have yet to return to my pay from 8 years ago if we factor in the $6,000 deductible insurance and the loss of funds we received for teacher development of about & 3,000! Most of my children, my nieces and nephews make more than I do.

*Alison Griffiths, Cache County School District*
Teacher Shortage

The teachers of Utah are very dedicated. We spend so much of our own time planning lessons and completing extra work, attending meetings etc. It would be so nice to receive a raise and compensation for our extra hours. I know I have mentored teachers and student teachers who are discouraged even at the very beginning of their careers, at how much personal time is required in the teaching profession to be a dedicated teacher. I think there will be a huge teacher shortage in the near future if it is not addressed soon. Our hearts are in the teaching profession, but because of our families and our financial obligations, we may not be able to serve there. Thank you.

Michelle Hamp, Cache County School District

I spend 9ish hours a day at work, oftentimes working through lunch to get paperwork, planning, ieps, and things relating to ieps done. I am burning out.

Melanie Jones, Cache County School District

Don't forget the individual

Cheryl Orme, Cache County School District

If we invest in our education system, especially our grades K-3, it will have a more long term benefit for our state.

Amelia Ostler, Cache County School District

Accountability, technology and PLCs have stepped up the quality of education. However, the additional time requirements for planning, collaborating and follow through is at the same time pinching the quality of teaching that is being demanded and desired to be given by educators. More planning and preparation time is needed for the educational process to reach the levels that are being pushed for.

John Petersen, Cache County School District

I stopped teaching when I stopped getting the support needed from administrators (who were too over-pressured by those above them) to maintain a classroom where students were not held accountable for poor behavior. It was a unique year when we had many transitory students who came from self-destructive homes. Those kinds of students need support before and after school so they can succeed in the high pressure environment of today's schools. We will never succeed with students whose everyday needs are not being met either because of poverty or lack of adequate supervision in the home.

Anita Price, Cache County School District

Being a teacher in public schools since I began my career in 1987 has been an amazing and difficult and wonderful experience. It's an honor to lead youth, to help them grow, and to hopefully be a positive impact in their lives. The challenges today are more difficult because we are required to do so much more, with so much less money, and the support from parents and society in general is just not what it used to be. The respect for the profession has diminished. This is partially due to the level of professionalism displayed by teachers. I don't want to sound like a complainer, but you get what you pay for. A lot of my sharpest students would never consider teaching as a profession. Some of the student teachers I have mentored through the years did not demonstrate passion for teaching or for the youth. Let's make teaching a highly respected and sought after career again! Put a high value on amazing educators! Find a way to attract the best and retain them with fair salaries and fair expectations, lots of support and Utah Schools will continue to be excellent. If not, the only ones you'll get to do this job will be desperate, unmotivated people who are only in it because they think they get their summer off.

Kimberly Sorensen, Cache County School District

In the state of Utah, we have so many children, and we need to make education their first priority. Utah should be leading the nation in producing students who are capable and innovative thinkers. We need to rethink priorities and put all kids first. The "magic bullet" is lower class sizes, support for teachers, both mentoring and professional development as well as high salaries. We should be able to choose from the best of the best teachers, not be scrambling to put bodies in front of students. Please put education first. It will pay off! Thank you.

Theresa Stanton, Cache County School District
Teacher Shortage

The morale of teachers is ever decreasing. Teachers need support from legislators to help them stay successful in teaching!

_Holly Stuart, Cache County School District_

I think the teacher shortage we are seeing in Utah is due to two key components. 1, we are one of the lowest paying states in the US when it comes to teacher salary. 2, we are class sizes that are almost unbearable. I do not think that any teacher should have more than 25 students in their classroom.

Krista White, Cache County School District

I love my job. I think everyone knows there is a teacher shortage. There is no need to belabor the point that classroom sizes are notable. I will love my job whether or not any changes we ask for happen. But it would be nice for kids and adults if some things I've ranked as important such as increased pay or reduced class size come to pass.

_Brenda Jean Anderson, Canyons School District_

Teachers need to be paid more to retain them, also, studies show that class size really does not have a significant effect on students. That may be the case, however, it does significantly impact the teacher, and the teacher is the one teaching the students.

_Jennifer Asay, Canyons School District_

The teachers hired without certificates have not been successful in our school and in most of the schools in our district.

_Marlene Barbano, Canyons School District_

Increase access to endorsement classes for special educators. I am currently working on a math endorsement and cannot find the final two classes to finish the endorsement. This is very frustrating. I am committed to obtaining the endorsement, but feel that there are too many "hoops" that we educators must jump through to get endorsed. It shouldn't be so difficult! I am also concerned with the requirements and who sets them. Perhaps there should be more online options as teachers are self directed learners. How can I get more involved with this process?

_Julie Beane, Canyons School District_

Teachers truly care about their students and their needs. Teachers want to best for their students. Teacher retention needs to be addressed. As a fifth year teacher with a masters degree the amount of time, work, and effort put in everyday is no where near validated through pay, benefits, and value. It is extremely difficult to live off of a teacher’s salary; especially with the amount of education and experience I have which would be much valued in a different field.

_Ashley, Canyons School District_

If the classroom teacher has the biggest impact on student learning, then we need quality teachers with excellent training in every classroom. This cannot be done through lowering licensing standards. We must make a concentrated effort to attract teachers to teacher preparation programs and provide mentoring and support to retain teachers once they are in the classroom. This includes increasing teacher pay, forgiving student loans, and improving retirement benefits among other things.

_Erika Bradshaw, Canyons School District_

There are classes that you are making required that the students and teachers alike do not want to participate in. These classes are meant to "promote" and give "exploratory" experiences to different careers in the CTE department. I am speaking specifically about College & Career Awareness (CCA) and Digital Literacy (DigLit). What it comes down to is that you are taking teachers away from teaching their content to force them to teach CCA. This is making us lose teachers because no one wants to teach CCA full time. I think the class is great because the students get a lot of different experiences, however, making it full time and required is killing the specific content classes our school offers. Digital Literacy does not need to be a full semester, every-day course. The DigLit curriculum could easily be
Teacher Shortage

added as a few weeks to the Exploring Technology class. It is stretching the curriculum ridiculously to make it a full year. By making these classes required, you are taking students away from our specific content classes (i.e. FACS, Exploring Technology, Manufacturing Technology) that they want to take! You are also taking students away from opportunities to take foreign languages, music, drama, and fine arts, thereby eliminating their programs as well. Please rethink the decision to make CCA and DigLit required. It would be better for all, including students, if you do.

Emalee Brown, Canyons School District

High quality teachers provide effective instruction which leads to student success. You can not get around having high quality teachers in every classroom if you want Utah’s students to lead academically. There is no quick fix through technology or alternative route to licensure to improve education opportunities for Utah’s students. Pay a fitting salary to attract those who you would have teach your child.

Madaline Chilcutt, Canyons School District

Veteran teachers are leaving their profession in record numbers. We need to ask why. There has been a turn in education as it becomes a fiscal competition where parents/patrons are more important than the educators. The loss of respect from parents students and administrators is creating weakness. The teacher shortage is more about the treatment of teachers than just the pay. When we hire people without a teaching degree or certificate we marginalize the expertise of our profession. Then the administrations raise the expectations and hoops to jump through to simply keep a job that there are no qualified teachers to re-fill. How is that positive?

Shelly Christensen, Canyons School District

This year our district has struggled with the placement of high risk students. Because the district has been unable to attract teachers to the special education field we have experienced a shortage of qualified teachers to work in special classrooms for these students. Because of the shortage and lack of experience we have actually had adults hospitalized with injuries inflicted by elementary students. It is our job to ensure that all students are educated. I believe that, but we also need to stand up, open our eyes and acknowledge that not all students can benefit with these super violent students in the general population. Please become aware. Please allocate more money into the special education departments throughout the state. The money is needed to entice qualified experienced teachers, to hire more instructional aides in order to give the needed teacher/student ratio for success. This is a crisis situation. Please don’t wait for the lawsuit that will force this to happen. Be proactive with this issue.

Dana W. Crosby, Canyons School District

We must stop putting unqualified educators in front of students. They don’t deserve to have a year of their education wasted with a teacher who doesn’t know what they’re doing.

Elicena Saline, Canyons School District

I work at a highly impacted Title I school. The staff at my school is amazing. We face many challenges throughout the school year, such as homeless students, students from poor backgrounds and bad situation, high behavioral problems, and low academics. Our school has bushed through all of the hardship and we have come out shining in the end. We make a difference in not only these students educations but their lives. We teach them not only math and reading, but also how to be decent successful human beings that can contribute to our society. This year much of our funding was cut and we did not have nearly the supports we need to help us in our classes. We need more interventionists in the school to help teachers target the students that are extremely behind. I currently have fifth graders learning their alphabet for the very first time. We need more money to obtain the services these student need and deserve. I also believe that teachers that work under these difficult situation found at a Title I school should be rewarded by higher pay. We have a very hard time keeping teachers at our school, because of the things we have to deal with and handle everyday of our lives. It is a very emotionally taxing place to be.

Raschell Davis, Canyons School District
Teacher Shortage

High teacher attrition is due to newer teachers feeling that maybe they can do better for themselves and society by doing something else. check out 80000 hrs and why they say not to become a teacher.

Josh Dimick, Canyons School District

I previously taught out-of-state before coming to Utah and I have noticed many differences in the education systems. Teachers in Utah are paid significantly less and the shortage is noticeable! Masters degrees are not common-place here because the salary increases are minimal. In other states, masters degrees are the norm and expected. Unfortunately, I now have student loans that are difficult to pay back due to Utah low salaries. I had an extremely easy time finding a job via skype, but I have noticed that it has been difficult to hire new well-qualified teachers. It is also difficult to retain the great teachers that we have because many teachers do not find the salaries worth the cost of paying for day-care. This is a huge problem and needs to be addressed immediately. Lowering teacher licensure requirements and standards is not the answer to maintaining high-quality education for future generations. I know teachers that have left teaching or Utah completely to find jobs elsewhere that pay more. On the other hand, I do have teacher friends in other states that could be persuaded to move here if the salaries were higher.

Sara Finstad, Canyons School District

Pay teachers better for all of the work that is added to our workload each year and you would retain more teachers. I am a special education teacher who is being required to complete a math certification in order to be “highly qualified “ when I had met the requirements years ago by completing the English (ELA) Praxis. The math certification for secondary special education teachers currently requires 2 classes which you must complete Calculus 2 prior to taking, but Calculus 2 is not a requirement for the certification. Inconsistency and requirements like this are very frustrating and discouraging to desire to continue as an educator.

Angelina Freer, Canyons School District

The teaching shortage in Utah is causing schools to settle on less prepared, less skilled, and less experienced teachers. Legislators need to draw trained professionals to the state by DEMONSTRATING that they truly do value teachers. Right now it seems like educators are largely looked upon as poor public servants in Utah rather than qualified professionals.

Melissa Hansen, Canyons School District

If we are to attract and retain quality teachers, we must pay them a competitive salary.

Lezlie Harper, Canyons School District

Supply & Demand. Return Pension Benefits and increase Teacher pay then the Teacher shortage will go away.

Emmanuel Kepas, Canyons School District

Please find ways to make teacher’s lives less stressful and you will then find more people who will be teachers.

Michele Law, Canyons School District

The class sizes are too large to teach what is expected.

Suzanne Mackey, Canyons School District

Some kids will succeed no matter what. We need to direct resources toward getting kids caught up. I have a student who was “home-schooled” and is now suddenly entering the public school in 10th grade. He cannot write. He forms letters like a third grader. He needs one on one help and he’s in a class of 35 that also includes students who have special needs and English Language Learners. This child is not a waste of money!

Karla Moosman, Canyons School District

It is frustrating that the message sent from the alternate teaching programs is that anyone can be a teacher. I also think sex education should be taught in Utah schools beyond abstinence.

Amy Olsen, Canyons School District
Teacher Shortage

Teacher deserve to be appreciated and recognized for good they do.

Rachel Pont, Canyons School District

Teachers are the ones educating doctors, engineers, business CEOs etc. They are professionals so treat them as such and quit acting like the degrees we get don't mean anything and that you all know better than we do how to do our jobs. Come do it and live it for awhile and then you can maybe begin to think or say something. Just because science and technology are important, doesn't mean that everything else isn't. Most of those degrees and careers are now saying that those classes may not be the most important skills they need, but that the skills they get in Humanities, English, Debate, Theatre and music are more valuable. And if you can't read or write, you can't do any of the other subjects so how are they any less important or valuable to have teachers in yet you pay them more in bonuses, stipends, forgive more in student loans, etc....these are just a few things that are creating your teacher shortage and could easily be addressed.

Tanya Roundy, Canyons School District

The last few years at my school, we have had a revolving door of teachers. They are well-qualified, well-trained, fantastic teachers. They left for salary increase in other districts or they left the profession all together due to stress. It is hard to hold on to the quality teachers. Teacher burn out is a real thing. We need to fix the problems that are causing new teachers to leave the profession or go to Charter schools. We need them in regular public schools. Our students need the best. I know teacher burn out is a real thing. If I wasn't where I am in my career, I would consider moving to another field. Teaching is exhausting on its own, but you throw in everything else we have to do and the pressures we are under, and it is down right horrible, to the point of a mental breakdown.

Tiffany Rudelich, Canyons School District

Too long have legislators denigrated teachers and our role (not everyone can teach). The teacher shortage was created by previous legislatures and now the state is paying for it. You have failed to appreciate us and our contributions. It is time to pay us what we deserve. It is time to show you support teachers. You've also ignored other state employees. It is time to give us all a healthy raise.

Tom Alleman, Carbon School District

We are overloaded with too many programs to learn and apply for demonstrating students learning levels and to show our abilities as a teacher. There is very little time if any for teachers to actually prepare quality lessons and be effective in their teaching when we have to spend more time writing about/explaining it to the powers that be. Yes, there are a lot of programs that do help us in being better teachers, but when it takes more time than a regular working day provides, teachers become very stressed and exhausted.....burned out and want to leave the profession.

Diana Bettino, Carbon School District

I will tell you first that I love my profession, my students, my principal, my colleagues, and living in Utah my entire life, but we have had some issues that need addressing as of late. Salary is a huge issue in Utah education! Every human being has to go through an education for his or her profession, so we should value the teaching profession the most. Many teachers, myself included, have over 20 years experience with Masters Degrees and several other endorsements, which give us extra years of college education. Most of these added courses are to benefit our students in the classroom, yet, sadly, our salaries do not reflect our knowledge or experience. Our state should respect and appreciate those educators who have continued to teach and worked to increase their personal education by giving them increased pay. Many states hold dear their teachers who are highly educated and show appreciation in higher salaries. Consequently, Utah college graduates are turning away from the education field because of low pay, little recognition for their skills, and no respect. In addition, I cannot begin to tell you, how many teachers give much of their salary in supplies to their under-privileged students, without expecting anything in return except a smile and a thank you. Now, I understand that the small supply stipend teachers receive from the state is going to be axed. Utah’s Governor Herbert said in his state address, the Utah sales tax collected from Amazon purchases would go toward education. Where did it go? Currently, our education system feels more like “Life Depressed” than “Life Elevated.” The school attendance is important! Since legislation has changed our laws for
Teacher Shortage

student attendance, we do not have students/parents held accountable for education. In our local schools, we see an increase in absences in several students, and our high school teachers believe there will be a decrease in high school graduates. Teachers and schools should not be held accountable for testing scores when students do not attend school. Students will always miss school if they can because they underestimate the value of education. If our youth fail their complete education, Utah will have a future society of illiterate people, unable to live in a functioning society. This will increase our welfare population, homelessness, and crimes because they will not have any proper job skills or be able to attend college. We must bring back mandatory education. Instead of being “Life Elevated,” Utah will become “Life Deflated.”

Michelle Fidell, Carbon School District

I LOVE teaching. There is evidence to suggest that I am a skilled teacher that makes lasting impacts on students. I prioritize professional development and continually work to improve my craft. But, my love for teaching is NOT enough to ensure that I will stay in the profession. My love for teaching is NOT AND should NOT be justification for long hours with low pay. I am more than qualified to leave the profession and seek work where I will receive higher pay and similar benefits. Please, please, make keeping qualified teachers and attracting new, qualified teachers to the profession the highest priority. Studies show that teachers impact students more than any other factor in the classroom. I know that making the job more appealing will keep great teachers in the field. Utah needs quality teachers for our children, who are our future.

Jacie Pressett, Carbon School District

You need good qualified teachers and they are hard to find and keep!

Kristina Schade, Carbon School District

Special Ed Teachers have the highest turn over. They need a raise more than the general education teacher to retain quality special education teachers.

Jeff Agnello, Davis School District

I spent thousands of dollars on my education and training. I spent hours and hours honing my craft. Because of administrators who are more interested in climbing the slippery pole than treating teachers as colleagues, I am no longer teaching in the subject area of my major. This is one example of many other teachers where we are not being treated as professionals. Yes, money is important. But as long as teachers are being treated without respect, the teacher shortage won't be fixed.

Johnny Aird, Davis School District

My son also went in to teaching, and called to brag about his AP European History scores being the top in his district. "THAT'S my boy!" He is successful, and the students love him, but he's quitting at the end of this year. He lasted five years. He just can't raise a family on a teacher's salary.

Ann Allred, Davis School District

I began my career in education as a detour from a career in the business field. I have never been happier! I joined this field of excellent men and women in the hopes of bettering the future and helping students to reach their full potential. There are times when this is very difficult. When students don't have access to the supplies/tools they need to learn, when my class size is over 30 (out of my 13 years teaching, I have had a class under 30 only once), and when my opinions and needs are not respected as a professional by others. I feel that there are numerous times when a teachers opinion is ignored to save money or to make things easier for state/country leadership. I understand that the needs of those in the field of education are many, but THERE IS NO OTHER AREA THAT IS MORE IMPORTANT. If children are not built up at a young age, you will only see negative consequences as adults. "It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men." –Frederick Douglass

Christine Anderson, Davis School District
Teacher Shortage

I'm having a hard time enticing competent people to choose teaching as a profession. Several alternate-route-to-licensure candidates are about to quit. This is becoming a high-stress job (with increased emphasis on standardized testing) that does not offer the respect of pay commensurate with that kind of stress.

Aimee Anderson, Davis School District

Students are our future and they deserve the best teachers possible. To attract and maintain the best teachers they need to be paid more and have more time to plan.

Donna Anderson, Davis School District

The school system is breaking and almost broken. I have been a teacher is Davis district for 27 years. The decline has been massive!

Kayloa Anderson, Davis School District

If education is as important as people think it is, there should be more money allotted to make class sizes smaller and pay educators more money to keep good teachers around. I spend at least 10 hours each day at my school, then I spend about 2-4 hours more, each night, working on school things. It's exhausting and I'm burnt out! This is my 23rd year of teaching, and it's not getting any easier. Although I put a lot of pressure on myself, it seems like educators are being required to do more and more every year.

Jodi Andre, Davis School District

teacher shortage large class sizes tech in classrooms

Mindi Barnes, Davis School District

Education has to be something you are willing to invest significant money into. Without the profession being something that will pay enough for a family to survive on, there will be a serious teacher shortage. It has to be a viable option for new college graduates to choose.

Corine Barney, Davis School District

Teaching 4 different lab based science classes, makes it very difficult to disaggregate data generated through tests and collaborate effectively with teachers in my school teaching the same subject, much less peers more than 20 feet away from my classroom. Attempting to prepare lessons, lab activities and stay caught up with grading is impossible without devoting 5 hours a day out side of class every day including weekends.

Jana Barrow, Davis School District

Please support our teachers and children through the necessary measures of financial funding and meaningful supports. We need more qualified teachers to support the growing population and class size epidemic teachers are facing and we need to support current teachers so that they stay in this amazing profession and do some of the most important work.

Karly Bates, Davis School District

This is about our community and funding education funds the future. The us vs. them idea needs to end.

Alyn Bone, Davis School District

Our classes are overloaded! I spend $2500 or more each year to buy supplies and technology to help my students. I am getting out of this profession and do not advise any one to enter it. We are micromanaged to the point that apathy has set in among the majority of teachers.

Sharlene Bremer, Davis School District

Dear Legislators, As a veteran teacher, I have watched our profession dramatically suffer in the past ten years. Not only do we have teachers that do not want to stay in our profession, they are running from it. Young people are discouraged from seeking this career path—not without reason. Teaching is arguably the hardest career and one of
Teacher Shortage

the most disrespected. If I were to average out my salary over the true number of hours that I work, I would be making much less than the minimum wage. I knew that teaching wouldn’t be lucrative when I came into the profession. Money wasn’t the reason I chose to work in education. What I did not know was the true lack of support and respect teachers receive. I currently teach in a classroom with 32 third grade students. There is not space in my classroom to accommodate them. My classroom budget was made for a class size of twenty-six students. That means that all of the supplies for six more students come out of my pocket. That’s on top of what I already spend to enhance my curriculum. My school email inbox currently has 53 unread emails, most of which are complaints about one thing or another, that I have not had time to read due to my other responsibilities. I arrive at school no later than 7:00, and rarely leave earlier than 6:00. I still take work home every night. I take grading with me on vacation and feel guilty if I don’t work on it after my family has gone to sleep. I am asked to create trackers for multiple students. I try to stay on top of everything that I am asked to do, and if I drop one of the forty balls that I am juggling, I am belittled. The “fun” has been sucked out of my classroom. I am moving through curriculum at a break neck pace, attempting to prepare my students for “The Test” at the end of the year. There is little to no time for slowing down to make snowflakes or, more importantly, teach about character, citizenship, and friendship. There is a disconnect between administration and the classroom. We are constantly being asked to do “little things.” However, when you have a list of twenty little things that each take a few minutes, it adds up. I’ve always known that I was meant to be a teacher. I know that I make a difference in the lives of others every day. I’ve seen positive differences happen in amazing ways. However, it’s getting harder to see that silver lining amongst all of the dark clouds. We need your help and support. Our profession, our students, and the future of our state depend on it.

Katie Brown, Davis School District

I believe providing up to date technology in school is important. The problem comes in that technology needs to be replaced. If it is used how we should use it, then we are going to need replacement within 5 years. This is never written into budgets and is very frustrating to many of us when we go to use the technology and it doesn’t work. There are days when the only thing that works in my room is my white board. That is right, not my smart board but my white board. I just ask that while getting technology into the classroom is important, it is just as important to update it periodically.

Lori Burnett, Davis School District

This world we live in is a difficult one. Students come to school less prepared, with less support from home, and many behavior issues. Instead of helping teachers confront these issues, or provide incentive to feel valued, teachers are constantly asked to jump through hoops, fix things that are not really broken, and implement gee whiz programs at the whim of people who are out of touch with the classroom. The sooner teachers are looked upon as professionals equivalent to those with equal education, the sooner the public will stand behind teachers and education as well. Set the example, actions speak louder than words!

Cori Burns, Davis School District

I am a 2nd grade teacher in Davis district. This year I have 32 students in my class. Our 3rd grade has 36, 5th grade has 35. There are huge problems associated with such large classes. Increasing behavior issues, less time to work with high need students, less time to enrich student learning. It isn't fair to the students or the teacher in this situation.

Vonnie Buttars, Davis School District

I am a single teacher, supporting only myself. I live with four roommates, and I can barely survive on this salary. I can't imagine how hard it is to survive on this salary with a family. Please consider funding to help increase teacher salaries to help retain quality teachers.

Amy Carsten, Davis School District

Special education teachers are overworked and underpaid.

Tanielle Carter, Davis School District

Please give teachers the needed tools to do their jobs well. Karen Cheney, Davis School District
Teacher Shortage

All students can learn! Teaching is an important! We need to provide teachers with additional preparation time and exposure to quality PD so that they can improve their craft and thus outcomes for students. Are special education teachers are dealing with more difficult student behavior and more challenging parents. On top of paperwork, their workloads are mounting with no relief in sight.

Kathy Chisholm, Davis School District

Teaching is a huge job that few realize how involved and draining it can be. We have to figure out a way to make teachers want to stick it out and stay with it!

Maureen Clark, Davis School District

Salaries need to be increased so people will want to go into education. There will always be a teacher shortage unless this issues is addressed. I know teachers that have left Utah to teach in other states. They now double what I make!

Shaunna Clayton, Davis School District

That I fully support and back the “Our Schools Now” initiative. This initiative would not be needed if you took education funding more seriously. I would hope that you, as a legislature will support and stand behind this measure and not try to stop or derail it in any way. Let the people of Utah make the choice on whether or not properly funding education is important to them.

John Combe, Davis School District

I am moving my fifth grade class into blended learning. We are fortunate to have 1 to 1 technology, which is fabulous. I believe that blending will bring us higher growth. The planning and collaboration required, however, is incredibly time intensive. The number of meetings and trainings we are required to attend increases almost daily, and the result is that the time I put in on my job at home is getting seriously overwhelming. I'm excited about what I'm doing in my job. I think my class is going places. But nobody can take this workload long term without damaging their health or losing mental stability. Teachers are human. Human needs must be met. There are less stressful jobs for much higher pay. We should be shocked if there wasn't a teacher shortage.

Amy Coray, Davis School District

That early intervention is critical in helping students progress and get to an age appropriate level.

Carey Cornejo, Davis School District

Legislators need to be in the schools and in the classrooms of their constituents! Policies are being made by people who have NO IDEA what the day to day is like in Utah schools. Problems won't be solved until there are conversations with people in the trenches of education. We have many ideas for you from how to address the teacher shortage, to class sizes, to testing concerns.

Ellen Cox, Davis School District

As an educator and sole breadwinner of my household I am reconsidering education since the salary is not enough to live on for a family of three. I'm an incredible teacher who has been teaching for ten years.

Kristi Curtis, Davis School District

District oversight is top heavy, money does not reach the classroom

Kristen Davidson, Davis School District

Education isn't cheaper by the dozen.

Eileen Dempsey, Davis School District
Teacher Shortage

Teaching children is one of society’s greatest duties. Remember that today’s children will affect the quality of life today’s adults will have in the future. Unprepared, unsuccessful people effect everyone negatively and burden society. We must do all we can to give every child the opportunity for a positive life by preparing them to function successfully.

Mike Dennis, Davis School District

Teachers are critical to our students and their futures. However, teachers are not treated with respect or like the professionals they are. They have to spend so much time “proving” they can teach and jump through so many hoops that it is not worth the compensations. Teachers no longer have a lot of control in their classroom. Often we are expected to teach everything without support from home. Teachers have become the only ones responsible for a student’s education (students and parents are not held accountable for their students’ learning). The teacher shortage will not improve until teachers are treated with more respect and are compensated fairly. No one wants to work in an environment where they are treated negatively when they can work in many other fields, receive better compensation, and have a more positive work environment.

Sara Doty, Davis School District

Grading schools for test scores is not OK!

Allison Downs, Davis School District

I feel that teacher salaries are not commensurate with the work teachers do and the background education they have. Teacher salaries need to be increased so we can attract qualified, high quality individuals to be teaching our children.

Janette Duffin, Davis School District

That teachers need more respect and support. Not just more hoops to jump through.

Corinne Eliason, Davis School District

Technology is great but nothing will replace a qualified, committed teacher, interacting personally with students!!

Jean Ernstrom, Davis School District

For far too long the legislature has focused on what parents and students want in education, not what is actually needed to make it work properly in the state of Utah. Now we find ourselves in a situation where test scores are dropping, charter schools are not fixing the problem, students are leaving high school unprepared, and the legislature continues to ignore the voices of those who know the solution because it is politically convenient.

Dan Evans, Davis School District

To whom it may concern, Please take education seriously. Utah is losing many good teachers because they aren't getting paid enough. It is too hard to be an effective educator and have part time jobs to cover the bills. This is the most pressing matter. If there aren't good teachers in the classroom, it will mean a lot of work/money for schools and districts to train and guide teachers who are not licensed educators. An increase in salary would mean more retention. It would mean more time with families. It would relieve much of the stress and pressure of being a teacher. Thank you for your hard work. Sincerely, A Good Teacher

Shon Feller, Davis School District

The need to find and retain good teachers.

Christy Fong, Davis School District

Small class size in the younger grades makes teaching more effective

Kelly Foster, Davis School District
Teacher Shortage

How hard it is to teach without feeling valued.

Erin Fuller, Davis School District

Linking student performance to teacher pay, much more complicated than that!

Wendy Gladden, Davis School District

I have 40 students with IEP’s. Each has been diagnosed with either a learning disability, autism, other health impairment (medical or psychological). That means I alone must plan curriculum for 40 IEP’s, teach my 40 students, progress monitor in math, reading, writing, social skills, use trackers for behavior monitoring, plan, develop, schedule and attend 40 IEP meetings and parent/teacher conferences, evaluate and collaborate with sp ed team for students who move in with IEP’s, I love what I do, but 40 students at one time is too many students, especially those who qualify for special ed services. There needs to be a limit of the amount of students each mild-to-moderate (resource teacher) special ed teacher should have. I want to do my best find it hard to do so with so many students.

Jan Green, Davis School District

Giving timely and detailed feedback to students is one of the best ways for students to receive correction and improve. Getting to know each and every child to help them learn is also very important. However, doing this with student loads of over 238 students is unrealistic without spending nights and time on the weekends to make this happen. If we don’t reduce class sizes in our schools, we are just cheating our youth out of their deserved education.

Cassie Grether, Davis School District

I have been teaching for ten year and each year my class size has gone up. I am up to 28 kindergartners per class. TWENTY EIGHT! I know that other kindergartner teachers have more than me. This is a problem all across elementary and secondary levels. Who wants to come into the teaching profession where you get paid very little (can’t be a one income family) and have extremely large class sizes! Things need to change.

Kristine Guest, Davis School District

I would like my legislators to know that SPED teachers are extremely underpaid compared to the rest of the country, we are losing them because of this.

Laura Guillaume, Davis School District

I’ve been teaching almost 30 years. I’m an excellent practitioner, have written several books for teachers, and travel the US presenting to teachers, all while working full-time in a Title I school here in Utah. Sadly, if I could retire, I absolutely would. The pressure that is put upon teachers and students with all of the SAGE testing is turning our schools into anxiety-ridden institutions. Principals, teachers, and students are almost constantly on edge. The money spent on these test is outrageous. And, to what end? Better accountability? For whom? I have a 4th grade son who is in an advanced academic program. I am an involved parent. I know where he is academically and I know how hard his teacher works. Scores on the SAGE do not better inform me, in fact, since the tests are mere snapshots of my child’s performance on any given day, I mostly discount the testing results. I realize not all parents are as heavily informed or involved, but the legislature should listen to people in the field when they say, “We are completely stressing our students and teachers out. There will be and already is massive burnout.” All of this contributes to an increase in the anxiety in our society as a whole (look at the current national rate of teens with depression and anxiety), and will cost the state of Utah more teachers. Make teaching about teaching. Learn from countries who don’t over-test their students, yet have amazing learning outcomes. Please do all you can to change the climates of our schools by getting rid of the majority of the tests you’ve put in place.

Janiel Wagstaff, Davis School District

Lack of quality teachers/class sizes is impacting the future of our students.

Anita Hallows, Davis School District
Teacher Shortage

One issue that has not been addressed is the lack of funding to repair older schools. We work in cold buildings without adequate insulation. In addition, student behavior is increasingly difficult to manage and we lack resources to place children in more appropriate settings so all children can learn. There is an increase in the lack of respect from parents towards teachers. We will continue to have teacher shortages if these things are not addressed.

Jeni Halversen, Davis School District

It doesn't matter we get lip service and you do what you want to do.

Alan Hansen, Davis School District

Lowering the bar on the qualifications of teachers does not improve education for students anymore than lowering the qualifications for doctors would improve health care. I believe that our state legislators understand this concept, but believe that the push to lower the qualification standards for teachers, in an effort to address the teacher shortage, is driven by primarily by economics and politics, which should not be the basis for making decisions in education. If you want to increase the teacher pool, while at the same time improving the quality of education, make the job more appealing. Many teachers love what they do, but are driven out due to financial reasons and a lack of support from some legislators who view teachers as adversaries instead of partners.

Zachary Hansen, Davis School District

If I could share one message with legislators it would be to put your feelings and biases towards public education to the side and focus on the wonderful children/students of our state. Be more supportive and less critical of teachers. Many times, our hands are tied and we are doing the best that we can. Our voices often go unheard, but as some of the people who have entrusted our vote to you, it is your job to represent our voices instead of special interest groups. There are no perfect teachers or parents or legislators for that matter, so let's work together instead of against each other in doing what's best for the children of our state. Also, I would like to thank those legislators that support teachers. They are those legislators who know that teachers didn't go into teaching for the money. We are here to provide our students with the best quality education that we can give. We have no ulterior motives other than to see our students' smiling faces each and every day. When we feel valued as professionals in education, it encourages us to do our very best. And when I say professionals, we have earned that right by earning a degree in education which should be a fundamental requirement in any society. So, thank you for your monetary and emotional support. ??

Kammy Hanson, Davis School District

I have taught at the same at-risk school for 26 years. I am passionate about teaching my students that they can be successful. It seems that my passion for teaching is often at odds with your desired outcome. I love the Core. I believe it teaches thinking and problem solving. I am not loving that I now do more non-teaching activities during my prep and home time. There are too many hoops that need to be jumped. This is a trickle down process that starts at the legislature. I am a professional who knows her stuff. I know how to get kids to see success and be successful. I resent being told by those who do not teach, how to teach and what success is. I resent being told that my time is not valuable. I resent being told that any person on the street can be a teacher without training. This devalues the time and effort I have given to this profession. I had planned on teaching for forty years. I am not sure I will be able to handle the lack of respect and consideration for another fourteen years.

Kimberly Harmon, Davis School District

In my experience, teachers work very hard, and are very dedicated and give many hours beyond what is expected. It would be nice to be appreciated more.

Robin Harris, Davis School District

Now is the time to stop messing around with teachers: let them do their jobs, pay them as professionals, back off with needless testing, stop treating educators as over-educated peasants.

Richard Heath, Davis School District
Teacher Shortage

We work hard everyday to ensure a great education for our students. Legislators need to step up and support (including their financial duty) public education.

Vonzaa Hewitt, Davis School District

We are doing our best! Please support us. We are not the problem.

John Hill, Davis School District

I work as a special education resource teacher. The added paperwork involved is already a known, challenging factor. However, my greatest concern is the shortage of teachers we have to provide “specialized teaching”. We have 2 full time teachers and 1 aide to spread over 52+ students with learning disabilities and/or behavior concerns. I would like the legislators to imagine meeting with a group of 6-7 peers and having the following occur during the first 30 minutes: 1- peer comes in defiant and unwilling to participate in group except for calling out off topic remarks, 2- peer begins crying that another peer is looking at him, 3- peer does not understand topic and is unwilling to listen long enough for the speaker to explain it, 4- peer makes silly remarks trying to disrupt group...and etc. The only way to address this is to have more support/aides to squelch the tiny issue before it becomes full blown and the learning stops. My point is smaller classes allow teachers to address individual needs more appropriately and quicker.

Janet Hilton, Davis School District

Teachers are paid poorly in Utah That is why there is a shortage of good teachers and retention is very low.

Jessica Holtry, Davis School District

I love teaching, I love working with students. But, I wish it was that easy. I work very hard to plan and make sure all their needs are met. I put in two extra hours of my own, unpaid time, everyday. Plus, I take work home over the weekend and I still feel like I can't get it all done. I have used a lot of my own money and resources on my classroom and students. I have a lot of behavior problems with students stemming from home or parental problems. I spend so much time disciplining and parenting students, that I can't get any instruction time in. I have 4 students that have already had over 14 absences and it's just the second term. It gets really depressing when I see other professions (same amount of education) put in less time and less stress and get paid a lot more. It's no wonder teachers are leaving the profession. Our brains tell us it is not worth it, but our hearts tell us the students are worth it. It's an internal battle that each teacher has to face and make decisions. It's a slap in the face when they hire people without teaching degrees, and I'm expected to teach and help them without any extra pay. I have been observed during snack time when I taught Kindergarten, and got marked down for not using technology. I have been marked down for not having my daily objectives listed, when in reality they were on the white board behind my principal giving the observation. I have been observed during a Valentine's party and got marked down for not assessing and explicitly teaching. I got marked down for having garbage on the floor on another observation, and the students were cutting out word sorts. There is no place for the educator to write their thoughts or opinions, or defend what was really going on. We just get marked down and it makes our averages drop. There are a lot of things they can do differently on the observations to make them more valid and fair.

Susan Horning, Davis School District

Teachers need to be payed more. There is so much that is required of us and we don't get payed enough that is why teachers leave the profession.

Suelen Housley, Davis School District

I went to school to help students to be better. Not just academically, but socially and behaviorally. It has been hard. With all the high stake testing, data collecting so that others outside of the profession can check up on me, and disrespect for teachers everywhere. Teachers are often thought up as baby sitters for their children and hopefully the student learns something. This is wrong. We have 4 year degrees and are dictated to continue our education. We are paid minimally and treated as to our pay. Parents and government do not treat us as professionals who went to school to learn how to teach. They think they know best. Behavior in the classroom has decreased over the year partly because of this disrespect. Why should the students listen, when lawmakers and parents are putting down the
Teacher Shortage

teacher? Skilled teachers are leaving the profession because they cannot support their own families on the pay that is offered them. I once heard in one of my college classes "I might as well try teaching, I failed my other classes". Is this the attitude we want our teachers in your child's school?

Linda Hunzeker, Davis School District

Teachers are leaving the profession. We need to stop great teachers leaving the profession. We need to make it a profession people fight to be in .. not get out.

Tonya Hyatt, Davis School District

not enough resources

Evlyn Jackson, Davis School District

Listen to the teachers who are in the classroom, they are the ones that know where improvements can be made. Have the legislators come and spend 3 weeks in a classroom and really see what it is like

Sybil Jemmett, Davis School District

My students are the future and they will be taking care of us one day, lets make sure they are getting a good education and support.

Margaret Jensen, Davis School District

I would like them to know how much our special education student count has increased over the last few years. These students are coming with more and more deficits and more and more intense behaviors. We have rooms the sizes of closets with an average of 11 to 14 students per group. Our small group instruction is a thing of the past. We have been very creative in making sure that all student needs are met but feel that we still fall short. We are told that there is not funding for additional support in our classrooms, we are told that the norm for special education student case load is 40 to 50 students per one teacher. We are the last group thought about when it comes to new technology. Between two full time special education teachers we share 11 ipads for 55 students. The technology we do have is usually the oldest in the school but we are grateful to have any! We constantly take on student teachers just to have additional bodies in the rooms for support. We have little to no prep time due to the amount of students needing to be seen and the services that need to be provided. The motto is do more with less and we magically make it work but only to the best of our abilities. Support public education but in doing so also support special education and realize that those students count too!

Samantha Johnson, Davis School District

Please fund education at an appropriate level! Our students deserve excellent teachers, and the best way to get them is to pay them what they're worth. Please please increase funding for teacher salaries so that our best and brightest are drawn to the profession. Our children deserve that.

Sarah Jones, Davis School District

Teachers are leaving the profession due to crappy pay. We absolutely need to pay teachers more. This alone could solve the teacher shortage. And please, please make sure teachers are required to be licensed. Lowering standards will only get us more bad teachers.

Lori Kalt, Davis School District

you're not listening to the people who voted you in. You come in with your own agendas. Our state's growth in family sizes that affect schools and quality education can be the last thing funded. You can't squeeze anymore blood out of the turnip you've squeezed over the past decade. Wake up and make a significant difference in the lives of people.

C. Kirkham, Davis School District

Special Education has been on the back burner long enough

Kathleen Lamborn, Davis School District
Teacher Shortage

I have had 30 students in my 1st grade classroom for at least 5 years now. More and more expectations are placed upon our shoulders as teachers and with that the tools necessary are not provided. We are exhausted and need advocates who will help and assist and not just tell us what to do! There is a big piece missing in all of the questions and items on the agenda and that is of the human side. We are working with children who need to feel safe, loved, listened to and not assigned as a number and put on a machine to learn.

Brenda Lanham, Davis School District

I have taught for 8 years and almost all of those years were in the elementary grades of 1st through 3rd. My first 7 years of teaching, the classes have been upwards of 25 to 28 students. Those days were long and hard as I tried to provide for every student the best that I could. This year my school's principal took into account our numbers and worked to provided our grade level with another teacher. I now teach 21 second graders and what a difference it has made for me and my students. I am able to provide more of my time to each of them in a one on one fashion during practice time or in small groups or even one on one. This number is still not as perfect as it could be and you may think that lowering a class by 3 or 4 students would make that much of an impact but it does, I can testify to it. My students are able to learn deeper within the content, they are also less stressed out than prior years and I have even less students acting out than in prior years. I am providing more individualized help to more students during their practice time. I, as a teacher, am less stressed and more confident in teaching this group then I had been with the larger groups in previous years. I think that the ideal size would be more around 18-20 students maximum in classrooms at the k-3 grade levels. In those grades are the ages most critical in developing the child cognitively, educationally, and socially. It is the best time to catch and correct learning behaviors, reading interventions and mathematical concepts. These class sizes would entice licensed professional teachers to stay within the profession. These class sizes would reduce stress, increase productivity and provide more data on each student as we are able to follow through with each student on a more regular basis instead of every once in a long while. It will reduce the behavior problems we deal with as we will be able to work with more students to provide for their needs. The larger class sizes do not give teachers this kind of ability in their classrooms. Legislators, I plead with you to increase the WPU and provide for a more manageable number of students within classrooms so teachers can properly manage students needs. I plead with you to ask us, those who work directly with students and their education, about the issues we are facing in our schools, but also how your legislation will impact our students and us as professionals. Each of you are welcome in my classroom anytime and I would be happy to take the time to talk with you and answer questions you have. Please consider the future and provide for the best education our students should receive.

Anna Larsen, Davis School District

You make decisions thinking you know what’s best for all the schools, students and teachers and you never even set foot in an actual classroom. You're looking at raw, often times incomplete data. Would you for one second think like educators instead of businessmen? Come and observe classes, think about everything you put on the shoulders of teachers and try to teach something rather than making laws and rules based on what you think is best?

Maria Lee, Davis School District

The public school system is so broken. So much expected of teachers and we are expected to work for free so much it is no wonder we have a shortage of teachers!

Jennifer Louder, Davis School District

Come to my classroom. See what I do.

Carol Madsen, Davis School District

Qualified teachers are an asset to education. It's unfortunate for educators to rely on unqualified teachers (or substitutes) when they have conferences or any type of leave at school. I absolutely love what I do. I teach my students everyday and look at them and wonder what career choice they will have. I see doctors, teachers, engineers, and many more. It does get harder to teach when we have 30+ students: Getting their attention, correcting, conferencing, one-on-one interventions or even small group.

Estephanie Maiava, Davis School District
Teacher Shortage

I am a special education teacher with 14 years of experience multiple awards including the CARE Award and the Special Education Teacher for Davis School District. Two years ago I completely burned out - anxious, exhausted, sick. My caseload was too high and the students I work with are very difficult. I contacted the superintendent and my special education bosses and fortunately was able to get the extra help I needed, so I am still teaching. We cannot afford to burn out teachers, because we can no longer replace them. Even though I love teaching, I warned each of my 8 children not to pursue teaching, because it is too little money to deal with exploding class sizes. I hope the legislators can do something to entice people to teach.

Jill Major, Davis School District

In many parts of the world, teaching is a valued and respected position--from the way it is viewed by students, parents, the community, and the community leaders who make decisions that impact education. Unfortunately, I feel like this is not always the case in our country and especially in Utah. Educators should be drawn here. If we want our students to be able to compete with students across the country and the world, then we need to keep quality teachers in Utah classrooms who have classroom education experience, who have succeeded in a college education program, who have done what was necessary to become knowledgeable in their content areas, who have high morale, and who feel valued. Currently, as a fourth year teacher, I have watched many of my coworkers leave teaching for other professions because of salary, because of the way teaching is viewed in our state, because of the overwhelming workload, and because of the lack of support they are receiving from parents, community members, and community leaders. Others of my coworkers are quickly trying to move away from teaching, but stay in the field of education (by pursuing counseling, administration, district employment), not because they have a desire to work in these areas, but for these same reasons. They feel obligated to move. Why can I not feel valued as a teaching professional in a Utah classroom? Why do I feel like I might need to go elsewhere one day because of the direction we are headed in this state? I am qualified, and I love my job. Unfortunately, if we continue to try to fill classrooms with unqualified teachers and push qualified teachers out with a lack of salary, with a lack of classroom supplies/technology, with a lack of how we value them as professionals--instead of supporting and helping qualified teachers stay in the classroom--then what is going to keep teachers, like me, from leaving? Our students are not going to be receiving the type of quality instruction that they need. Our students are not going to be able to compete with other students across the country and around the world. Teachers make all other professions possible, including yours as a legislator. Please help keep qualified teaching professionals in the classroom. We need your desperately need your help!

Carly Maloney, Davis School District

I am the only Kindergarten teacher at my school, and I have 55 students. I don't have the time, materials, and energy to help all of my students master the skills for Kindergarten. There needs to be a limit with how many students can be in a classroom to ensure each student to be successful.

Jennifer McIlrath, Davis School District

We need to look at the teacher shortage in a serious way, no longer is it just a problem..it is an epidemic. I believe we can have an extremely high quality of education in Utah if we took the time and money to invest in it.

Alissa McManus, Davis School District

Class size does matter!

Anjanette McNeely, Davis School District

If education is really a priority, put money there. Money speaks. Let us use End of Level Testing as part of the final Grade. Motivation. Standards based grading.

Carleen McNees, Davis School District
Teacher Shortage

Depression and anxiety is on the rise among our students. We have too many students in our classes to be able to really know them, let alone notice who among them is struggling and contemplating suicide. They just get lost in the shuffle. I am teaching 38 students in AP BC Calculus, this class should be capped at 30 so that I can provide the help and support that they really need.

Tracey Meade, Davis School District

Reduced class sizes would reduce many problems in public education such as academic progress and teacher retention.

Kirsten Mele, Davis School District

Teacher shortage is effecting student learning.

Lisa Menlove, Davis School District

Education needs more money so people will value teachers and learning.

Marilyn Merkley, Davis School District

The more we prioritize standardized testing, the more we will facilitate a generation of great standardized test-takers who accomplish little else. It's not a coincidence that many great leaders were not stellar on their standardized test scores. We ought to get the idea: there are other things that are much, MUCH more important. But as long as we act like the test is most important, the harder it is for teachers to prioritize what really matters. We also need to take a look at Google and other companies: technology skills are not nearly as important as so called "soft" skills that are harder to quantify: communication, teamwork, persistence, grit, creativity, enthusiasm. THESE are what matters. And yet the money keeps going to standardized testing (and the parts of subjects that happen to be easy to create data from) and technology. It is so frustrating to be told to do things that are not in my students' best interests. It is so frustrating to see the money go to what doesn't matter.

Jon Midget, Davis School District

My students enjoy that I do not have them do their assignments using laptops or computers. They would rather do worksheets, assignments from the book, or hands-on activities. I am telling you this because the big push is for one-to-one technology in the classroom and the kids do not really like learning that way.

Troy Murray, Davis School District

We need high quality, licensed teachers in our schools teaching, not just someone off the streets.

Brandi Nickerson, Davis School District

Come see what it's really like in a Title One school.

Krista Nielsen, Davis School District

Remember that teachers are teaching our future. You get what you pay for!

Cindy Nottingham, Davis School District

We have some amazing teachers in our schools that we are losing to other fields because they are simply not paid enough for all of the work they do. You cannot support a family just on a teachers salary. So in turn we are losing some fabulous teachers to other professions, or teachers are having to work several jobs.

Jessica Olsen, Davis School District

Special education teachers can't teach the students because there is to much paper work. Most special education teachers , don't have time to teach.

Curtis Page, Davis School District
Teacher Shortage

Hiring a retired teacher is just smart. The districts would be getting a seasoned teacher at a lower rate! It doesn't make sense to have a waiting period.

_Laura Perry, Davis School District_

Education should be a priority. This is the future that we are taking care of and teaching. These are the people who will grow up and take our places in life. We need good people in education who are valued, trained, and supported so that the impact that they have on these kids will make a difference. This world is changing at such a rapid pace and the educational system we have in place is not keeping up. The salaries, training, and support are not there, the educational community is not valued and many of the best teachers are leaving.

_Suzy Price, Davis School District_

As an elementary school counselor and a former classroom teacher, I have found that over the years both children and teachers have lost some of the joy or education. Standards are needed and help to create goals but when there is no time to savor the moment and create "joy in the journey", as well as reinforcing social-emotional skills, because of the academic pressures it is not as healthy an experience as it should be.

_Kristine Pritchett, Davis School District_

It is time for you to start treating educators as professionals and to stop creating mandates and programs for us to follow. Get out of our classrooms and allow us to do what we have trained and qualified to do -- teach! We appreciate financial support, but the constant meddling in our profession has destroyed any incentive we have to creatively solve the problems that we face. You do not over-regulate any other profession and you do not have the training and experience to micromanage us. We invite you to actually sit in classrooms and try to manage them, rather than attend the dog and pony shows that you typically see in the schools. We love our students and we are deeply invested in their success. Please allow us to do the jobs for which we were hired.

_Debbie Quigley, Davis School District_

Classrooms have changed significantly. Teachers are expected to meet all student needs and constantly raise what students need to be taught without additional help. When we have students with additional challenges such as behavioral issues, mental health issues, home issues and no additional help it is extremely difficult to reach all student needs. Decreased class sized and/or additional teacher aid times would make all the difference in reaching individual students.

_Kallie Read, Davis School District_

Education is vital part of a better society, if we care so much about families and children here in Utah you can show it by supporting education legislation that betters schools and helps keep professional and qualified employees in our state.

_Lauren Rich, Davis School District_

I am a teacher and I love my job. I love the students and want the best for them. My parents and both my brothers have been or are currently educators. So I come from a long line of educators. However, Raising kids on a teacher salary has its challenges and when I was a single mom, there were times we could barely make ends meet. I was offered another job and would have made more money although it was a job that didn't require a degree. After talking to my children, they knew I wouldn't be happy doing anything but teaching. They were willing to sacrifice so I could continue in the profession I love. As a kid, I always knew I wanted to be a teacher. I am so glad I am still a teacher and wish more good people would join the profession but I hear all the time I wouldn't make enough money. Just for instance I have two grown sons who now make more then I do without a degree and I have a masters degree. This gives children the idea education isn't important. I would love to see teachers paid more so we can get more people interested in being a teacher.

_Natalie Roach, Davis School District_
Teacher Shortage

We need strong new teachers who are qualified and supported for the future of our kids in Utah.

Edie Rostal, Davis School District

We need our elected officials to respect our knowledge and expertise. We are the experts. Please allow us to practice our craft as you would any other highly educated professional. We are teaching little human beings how to function in our society, not just curriculum. What we do cannot be reduced to a standardized test!

Kay Lynn Schick, Davis School District

Teachers leave this District and State because they get paid better elsewhere. If we took care of this one issue, it would resolve a lot of the other issues.

Sherese Seeds, Davis School District

I have been teaching Junior High and High school for 17 years, all in Utah. Teacher moral is a steadily decreasing from the added responsibilities and decreasing focus on a positive work environment. Classes sizes are too large for effective teaching, and the demands for performance are increasing. Any business would say this is a bad model to follow for success. Teaching is a very rewarding experience, but I have a hard time recommending this profession to others as work environment and incentives to teach are being eroded.

Bradley Shafer, Davis School District

A reduction in class size is the KEY! Whatever it takes. Outcomes for students will improve AND incentives to teach will increase!

Jayne Shaum, Davis School District

Teachers need to be treated with respect if young people are to be attracted to the profession. Please provide teachers with the tools to do their jobs effectively.

Valerie Shekarforoosh, Davis School District

It is scary to be an experienced teacher and see what is happening to our profession! We are not attracting the quality educators that we need to for the future! A large amount of seasoned teachers are retiring and we don't have pay or benefits to interest people to enter this critical field! This is a CRITICAL time to invest in the efforts of attracting quality educators for the future of our Utah children! Best student outcomes or technology or class sizes won't be our biggest concerns if we can't first find high quality educators for teachers. More and more demands are placed on teachers every day and parents and students are becoming more and more challenging and time consuming. Burn out rate is high!! We need more support and more $ dedicated to adequate address increasing student needs. Teacher respect seems to be declining by some. More of our own time and money is being asked of us (not being funded for classroom supplies, more meetings, more documentation required, more individualizing for more students, etc). We feel like we are being taken for granted. Our family time is being sacrificed with our increasing expectations. It is becoming humanly impossible to balance work and home life with this extremely demanding job! No wonder the burn out rate is high, no wonder we're not attracting enough high quality people to enter the field! Please invest so that we may continue to have excellent teachers to lead all that lies ahead for our students!

Natalyn Shepherd, Davis School District

Teachers could do more if class size was smaller.

Vicky Smith, Davis School District

We are in this profession because of our love of children and teaching. Over the last 10 years our workload has increased significantly, while support has not. Please consider that the policies you make regarding teachers also affects the education of the children of Utah.

Gloria Smith, Davis School District
Teacher Shortage

Teaching is hard and stressful, but so important. It is a professional position that needs to be funded as such.

*Kathryn Sorte, Davis School District*

Something needs to be done with education. Too much is being put on teachers and the expectations keep getting higher. It's almost impossible to do what we need to do. I think we need more support for each student. We need more teachers. The students are getting harder and it's getting harder to reach each individual student. What if there were two teachers per classroom?

*Fran Stoker, Davis School District*

I'm concerned about some of the things the district is doing to increase teachers. There are people with little or NO experience in the classroom, and are being pulled into classes completely unprepared. I realize there is a need, but good grief! It's not even the APL people I'm talking about, it's the people with 5 district classes and NO student teaching. This demeans other teachers, and makes it seem easy to be a licensed teacher. It demeans those that are going through the alternative path, and especially those district employees that have been working to become licensed for the past 18 months.

*Terri Strawn, Davis School District*

Please come sit in our classrooms and see how much time we spend on student behavior, parent communication, and monitoring asthma and allergy issues. See how spending time to catch students up who have been absent takes time away from other students. See how much of a difference could be made in EACH child's education (accelerating or remediating) if there were fewer students in each class.

*Kathy Sutherland, Davis School District*

Please increase teacher salaries! This alone will draw more capable people to consider this amazing occupation.

*Karen Sutherland, Davis School District*

How changes in community values and priorities have impacted expectations placed on educators.

*Brett L. Taylor, Davis School District*

I teach Kindergarten. Full day Kindergarten would be incredibly useful for our students in poverty. The title one schools have full day, but the schools on the border of title one need to have at least one full day classroom.

*Christine Taylor, Davis School District*

I am really concerned with the continuing teacher shortage, and especially the fact that it is getting worse, not better. I don't claim to know the answer, but putting undertrained teachers in the classroom is NOT the answer. This does a disservice to the children who need an education. I believe that raising teacher pay and reducing class sizes and providing consistent, quality mentoring for new teachers are probably some of the best ways to attract and retain teachers. I am close to the end of my career, and I am concerned about who will teach my cute little neighbors and my grandchildren.

*Marcia Thompson, Davis School District*

I teach Resource and have mostly Applied Skills classes where we work with kids to reteach skills and make sure they are passing classes. I always have at least 14 kids in a Skills class with 2-4 who need specific individual help. It is difficult to focus on them one at a time and still manage and encourage the rest of the class. It is a sad situation and very frustrating as I know I could provide help to increase skills if I could just have a class the size that the feds mandate.

*C. Tingey, Davis School District*
Teacher Shortage

I have a co-worker who was starting his young family on a teacher's salary, and did so for 4 years - eventually he started doing research about what a bigger family would cost (they had 2 kids, but knew they'd eventually want 5), and he found that HIS kids would end up getting FREE MEALS at school because of how little he would make! He made the difficult decision to leave education, and now works for Hill Air Force Base. We lost another good teacher to lack of funds within the education system...

Sara Turner, Davis School District

Teachers are being asked to do more and more without training and with additional behavior schools. So instead of addressing the problem of why teachers are leaving, our state decides to make it easier to be a teacher. This will not fix the problem. The teachers will still keep leaving because of the high stress and low pay.

Dawn Webb, Davis School District

The needs of my students continue to increase while class sizes are large. I currently have 27 second graders and meeting all their needs is impossible. It would be helpful if there was a class size cap at 20-22 in K-2. This is a time when individual attention is imperative so that children are learning to read and learning foundation skills. Please look for ways to reward teachers that are currently doing amazing things in classrooms. Retention of teachers is a vital solution to the teacher shortage. Allowing individuals with little or no training to enter classroom is a disservice to those individuals because they are ill prepared. The burden actually lies on current teachers and is a disservice to the students.

Denise Willmore, Davis School District

The primary reason we have a teacher shortage in Utah is due to the high demands -not enough prep time (which leads to planning after hours), high class sizes, finding our own curriculum for some subjects, continuously adding new paperwork and requirements to our daily schedule- coupled with low pay. If teachers were paid for the amount of work they do, there wouldn't be a shortage.

Sara Wilson, Davis School District

We need to attract and retain quality teachers. Salary and being thought of as true professionals is the best place to start.

Kim Yoho, Davis School District

We spend so much time testing we don't have time to teach. A lot of that is Davis School district requirements.

Kristy Young, Davis School District

standard based grading not working; higher salaries; more teacher funds so we don't have to pay out of pocket;
moral in our districts

Carlina Corun, Duchesne County School District

We have dedicated our life to these children. Please respect our profession.

Karen Erickson, Duchesne County School District

It's frustrating to have gone through all the proper education to have become a qualified teacher, and yet probably close to half the teachers at my school are on ARL. It's even more frustrating that those doing an ARL have a seriously low retention rate in education. As a qualified teacher I lose respect, because teachers can almost come from anywhere and just be able to get a job teaching Utah's students. I lose even more respect when unqualified teachers are not getting the job done, and it brings down the whole level of respect upon the educator community.

Gordon Garrett, Duchesne County School District

The biggest drawback to teaching right now for me is not the pay. I feel that it is the lack of trust. My district does not trust me to make academic decisions and instead prefers to micromanage every aspect of my job as much as they can. Most of the new teachers hired last year were under qualified (about 90%, or 27 out of 30). Teaching standards
Teacher Shortage

need to remain high and the state needs to pay according to the high standards to attract and retain good teachers. In the end, we will get what we pay for.

*Ed Goodrich, Duchesne County School District*

Teachers are overworked, under paid and under appreciated. Expectations for teachers are too much, and if things don't change, teachers will quit. Teachers should have a life outside of school, but we don't. Teachers' own kids need to be their priority, but as it stands, teachers' families are sacrificing more than they should have to.

*Heather Jacobson, Duchesne County School District*

I am concerned about the teacher shortage. I work in a rural district that pays teachers less than many other districts. I see new teachers getting hired just to move on after a few years. More and more often, people are being hired with no teaching degree. I work in a school that just hired someone right out of high school to teach. Then, it seems like we are inundated with training to help us be effective educators. I believe this is to help those who are not qualified to teach. These ARL’s make what teachers make, and I am still paying on my student loans from when I went back to school to get my teaching degree. So, not only are unqualified people are being hired to teach, but I feel penalized for getting the education necessary to do my job effectively. Additionally, because of the teacher shortage, these unqualified people being hired require help from other teachers (because that is what we do), increasing our work load so that we give the students all that we can.

*Jennifer Jenkins, Duchesne County School District*

I would like to feel valued as an educator.

*Elizabeth Sampson, Duchesne County School District*

Our rural district is so impacted by low teacher salaries that my newest colleague is a 20 year old with only a high school education. She has no teaching experience. I suggest that the legislature work to reduce teaching pressure and increase teacher rewards, including pay. Utah students deserve a quality education.

*Kathryn Thomas, Duchesne County School District*

I know many highly educated professionals who would be amazing teachers and have expressed their desire to teach, but are choosing other opportunities based solely on the fact that teachers don't earn a competitive salary. One of the major indicators for success of students in the classroom is a quality teacher! The proposed plans to reduce the education needed to become a teacher, and therefore reducing the number of highly qualified teachers is a poor idea and will decrease the outcome in learning of students. I think its sad that students are missing the opportunity to learn from the best of the best.

*Sheena White, Duchesne County School District*

The role of an educator has been overwhelmingly modified in the past several years. Today's teacher in the public schools must prepare several lessons for the same classroom of students. My daughter is a high school teacher. She is often very overwhelmed preparing her lessons for an AP history class. Her classrooms have close to, or over, 30 students each. The students in each class include: IEP, 504, Foreign Exchange, ELL, along with a few high achieving. She has to prepare four lessons, in order to reach each students needs, for each class period. She also has to deal with lazy students, unreasonable parents, and members of the faculty who are so burned out they no longer participate in extracurricular clubs and coaching. She could have pursued many careers but she wanted to teach secondary public education. She had some wonderful teachers who inspired her and she longs to do the same for others. She is single and has no social life because so much time is spent writing lessons, helping students individually, and coaching. She is a GREAT teacher exhibited by the number of students who want HER as a teacher! But she is honestly questioning if she made the right career choice. She loves her students and hopes she is inspiring them through her lessons. She is a real teacher! But she is wondering about exploring other options.

*Darline DeBry, Emery County School District*
Teacher Shortage

Our district used to have 50 qualified people apply for every teaching position. Last year they had to hire 6 people who don't even have the needed education and get them to teach while they get qualified. (this is in a very small district -- only 150 teachers total)

Kim Player, Emery County School District

We don't have enough educators for a reason.

Troy Norris, Garfield County School District

Having prep. time is highly important. It will definitely benefit the students when teachers are prepared.

Gerlit Buffington, Grand County School District

I would like the share how important CTE classes are to introduce students to the trades. There are many high paying jobs that are not filled because students don't think they can make a good income in the trades. Through introduction and training, high school students may start there career right out of high school, many may go on to further their education with an associates degree or a Bachelors in that trade.

John Lindsay, Grand County School District

Teachers have a passion to help others, but this passion cannot be met if we don't have quality educators in the classroom. The stress it puts on the quality teachers to help those less qualified is significant and unnecessary if we didn't allow under qualified staff into the classroom. More money needs to be put into education, not taken from it. Too many schools are running on too little and the time is now to step up and reclaim the money from legislators. Give each child the same opportunity you had in your schooling, because these students will someday be in your shoes.

Jill Tatton, Grand County School District

I have been teaching over 18 years and finally feel appreciated with our pay raise. It does help a little. I love my job and the colleagues I work with. This job, however, takes a lot out of a person, especially when you have 30 or more students in your classroom. It should be mandated teachers should only have 25 students in their classroom. There is a difference when you have 5 -7 more students. It is difficult to reach all students! Also, you need to keep teachers in the field by funding a merit pay bonus system. Keep good teachers!!!!

Kimberlee Affleck, Granite School District

We had one applicant for our science position last, and were only able to hire 1 math teacher for two positions last spring. And, the extra money given to math and science teachers applies to very few people, and to none of the people who might switch careers unless they already have a math or science degree. What about people with strong math or science skills who complete ARL programs? Are they not worth giving incentives to? Surely we need more new math and science teachers than can be created just from ARL teachers with existing math and science degrees.

David Albertsen, Granite School District

This is an honorable and necessary profession that many people are leaving because the work load is too great and because many feel like they are not treated as professionals.

Sarah Allan, Granite School District

How the American Dream lives most strongly in our refugee population, but they need our increasing support.

Mary Alsop, Granite School District

Our state needs more students who are prepared for college or the workplace, and our educational system needs quality teachers coupled with the right technology to inspire and train those students. Our legislators who choose to not fully fund our education system are choosing to fail to invest in our future and the futures of the children we have promised to our care.

Nicholas Angell, Granite School District
Teacher Shortage

My class size keeps growing, I do not have enough supplies for all of the children and need to use my own money to purchase them. My students have very diverse needs and I feel like there is no way to meet all of their learning needs, let alone the social and emotional needs that must be met. Many of my students suffer from food insecurity, have parents working many jobs to survive, and struggle to stay on task and complete work. Growth of students is being emphasized in my District, but that is based solely on test scores, not on whether or not they can get along with others and be kind. I feel as if I were just starting out as a teacher I would leave the profession. The demands put on me to fix everything are ridiculous and take me away from my own family. I feel like I am failing at work and home.

Barbara Antonetti, Granite School District

I have been a special education teacher for 5 years and I feel so lucky to work at a school that is so supportive and "student driven." Our school focuses on the outcomes of our students to ensure all students are learning the essential standards, showing growth, and developing into people who will be positive contributors to society. With that, I know how hard each of my colleagues works in order to progress our students forward. As educators, we need to be treated like all other professionals and have a pay scale that represents our college experience and correlates with similar degrees in various fields. I know there are multiple educators who feel undervalued because the amount of work and effort they put into their job doesn't reflect their salary. Providing educators with a comparable wage system as other professional is a step in the right direction to getting and keeping quality teachers.

Lacia Ashton, Granite School District

As a technology teacher who supports the entire staff and teaches all grade level classes I see the many needs of the students and teachers. We need to lower class sizes for teachers. Having a class of 37 fifth grades is unacceptable and detrimental to student learning. We also need to increase teacher salary to recruit the most talented and committed educators to provide the rigorous and high quality education that our students deserve.

Rebecca Baggett, Granite School District
Teacher Shortage

THE INCREASE IN SALARY LAST YEAR WAS APPRECIATED. WE NEED TO CONTINUE TO TAKE STEPS TO ATTRACT AND KEEP NEW TEACHERS IN ORDER TO ADDRESS THE TEACHER SHORTAGE. RULES LIMITING RETIRING TEACHERS FROM RETURNING SHOULD BE CHANGED TO HELP ADDRESS THIS PROBLEM

Ray Barton, Granite School District

I am in an elementary school in the Granite School District that is a Turn Around school. This program has got to be the worst thought out legislation I have ever seen. We have struggled for three years with this monster. We have instituted so many different programs that it is hard to keep track. As they are instituted the teachers autonomy has diminished to nothing. We have meeting after meeting (so many that it is impossible to see the benefits of over half of them) We have had a large teacher turnover each year which doesn’t help student learning or staff cohesiveness at all. We have people continually coming in to observe our classes. All of these things raise the stress level of the teacher and the entire school. We were already headed in a great direction with our new principal before this crap hit the fan. It has become a behemoth of confusion and stress. Use this money to support teachers. Right now it is being used to stress teachers out, which in turn causes turnover. Turnover with a shortage of teachers is the last thing we need!!!!

Charles Bell, Granite School District

We are doing the entire school system a great disservice and cheating students of a quality education when we do not give them well paid, qualified teachers and do not hold charter schools accountable for test results.

Tracy Bell, Granite School District

Teachers work hard, and aren't treated as most professionals. We are struggling with keeping qualified teachers because the pay isn't great, and the load too much. The testing also is way too much throughout the entire school year.

Jennifer Bodell, Granite School District

Class sizes are too large, we need more instructors. I can work with, give more attention to and achieve better learning outcomes for a class of 25 versus a class of 40. If not more instructors, at least aides. I come from a family of teachers, out of state. In their contracts (out of state) aides are required once the number of students in a class exceeds a particular number.

Ben Boeve, Granite School District

Teachers are the solution to education not the problem

Diann Bowles, Granite School District

Teachers are professionals who, for the most part, really do know what they are doing and are trained for their profession. Don't believe that an untrained and inexperienced person can step in and teach a class flawlessly. It takes more skill than most of our legislators realize.

Emily Box, Granite School District

Classrooms with 30-40 kids cannot have differentiation. I think that if you want to improve education lower class sizes and increase the number of teachers.

Cameron Brewer, Granite School District

I am very concerned about the number of teachers I am seeing leave the teaching profession. Especially over the past 5 yrs. I have been teaching for 28 years and more and more has been added to our plate as educators. So much so that other professions look much more appealing as the work load isn't as demanding and the pay is much higher. We are also dealing with a lot more issues in regards to student behavior. Many feel they can't devote the time that is expected to be an effective teacher. There isn't much planning time for the elementary grades. There are
Teacher Shortage

a lot of PLC's and PD meetings, but not much time to plan, prepare, grade, and keep up with how to use technology to help our students learn.

Sherrie Brown, Granite School District

I volunteer 2 hours of my time at school planning, meetings, etc. and numerous hours at home doing school related activities. I'm under valued and over-worked! I appreciate the salary increase, but when will the extra hours be addressed?

Trinda Carlson, Granite School District

This is a hard job, and a big responsibility, to educate our future leaders and community members. In order for teachers to be able to handle the stress and commitment and time it takes to do this job well, we need a more professional career salary. Right now we are being undervalued and pushed aside.

Beth Christophersen, Granite School District

If I was to ever leave teaching it would be because of the ridiculous expectations I am held to and the lack of support from legislators dealing with difficult parents and students. I should not be the enemy.

Alexia Crandall, Granite School District

We would greatly appreciate being viewed as professionals and trusted to do the job that we have been trained to do.

Brooke Deardorff, Granite School District

I believe teachers want to be successful at their jobs. They care for their students and work incredibly hard, but it is becoming increasingly impossible to meet the demands of teaching. In addition, to district and state mandates, there are more and more students with extreme behavioral issues. It is often beneficial for these students to be in a neighborhood school but we have not changed the way we do business. Schools are severely understaffed in the area of psychologists and social workers so general education teachers and special education teachers are expected to take care of behavior problems often at the expense of other students. Add to this constantly changing curriculum and programs, too much information to teach and test, too large of class size, and inadequate planning and paperwork time and you can see the reason for teachers leaving the profession.

Shanan DeVries, Granite School District

First, I feel there is a definite need for more full time professionals to be positioned at one home school, which are trained to deal with mental health and wellness. In addition, Special Educators are being inundated with so many referrals it takes months of tracking data and testing and then those special education teachers are not full time at one school because they are so far and few between. This, in my personal opinion, creates a lack of consistency. Camaraderie between general education and special education teachers plays a key role in student gains when collaboration and consistency are prevalent. Full time teachers are not equipped or trained to deal with the rising amount of children experiencing adverse childhood experiences. It is extremely difficult to teach and learn with so many outside obstacles and emotional barriers. In many cases, the heightened demand on teachers and school communities to help students rise to academic achievement becomes an unattainable accomplishment for not only students but all stakeholders. i.e. teachers, parents, administrators, districts because of these influences. In turn, both students and teachers taste the bitterness of defeat and failure. We are trying everything to overcome so many of the hardships students face but it is a daunting task - but done with love and trust. However, it is exhausting! Often, as an educational cohort, we look at the academic aspect of children, but it seems as though we forget to ascertain whether or not our students are in a healthy socioemotionally stable frame of mind to learn what we as educators are trying to teach them. Sure we can do clubs, and have an open door/open teacher-parent dialogue, have food pantries, wash clothes, give children gloves, talk to them when they have a rough day, and deal with the overwhelming effects of poverty on their brains and physical toll of their body, but then am I educating them academically or mentally and emotionally? Why isn't there an assessment that asks about the whole child, not just the academic child. This MAY or may not have an impact on their successes in other areas of instruction and curriculum. Secondly, teachers should be treated with respect as professionals and many in society forget the life-
Teacher Shortage

long impact of fabulous teachers. I still have not come to any sure conclusions as to why such a huge shift has happened ultimately giving teachers a bad reputation, but even as a first year teacher I feel the affects of this from districts, administration, parents, legislative decisions made on our behalf, and all of these people's views trickle down through student points of view. How do we change this?

Kim Dillingham, Granite School District

Education needs to be the number one priority on every citizen's mind. We can't afford to put it anywhere but first.

Aubrey Dillman, Granite School District

Not all schools have the same supplies or opportunities and the legislators need to make sure all schools are on equal footing

Sonya Dollins-Colton, Granite School District

Our classrooms have too many students. Many of the behavior problems and challenges with teachers not staying in education could be eliminated by having smaller class sizes.

LuJean Eldredge, Granite School District

As a first year teacher, I feel overwhelmed with the variety of requirements for maintaining my teaching license. The same is true of testing and curriculum for the classroom. I don't see how any 1 person can possibly have the time to address all these requirements properly. It is no wonder that most teachers quit within the first 3 years. It requires about 10-20 hours a week more than the allotted contract time. A reduction in class sizes would help a lot, or part-time assistant teachers to help with things like differentiation. The process of "educating" a student has become overly complicated, and it shows in teacher retention rates, student performance, career readiness. More and more it seems like public education has become a bloated institution whose hidden purpose is to funnel more tax dollars and community donations to private corporations who "support" and supply our schools with an increasing number of throwaway products.

Charles Christopher Elrod, Granite School District

There have been recent incidents that a teacher position went unfilled for half of a school year. The first (Math), was filled at the semester. The second (English) has not been filled. It is now the end of the first semester. Current English teachers are taking the extra classes so that those students will be able to have a full-time teacher. Problem: 1. Education is no longer a desired career. 2. The policy of not hiring full-time subs able to teach five days a week destroys the continuity of education for classes who need the subs.

Traci England, Granite School District

Thank you for trying to support us in our classrooms as we support Utah's students. Every day our students have amazing accomplishments that may sound small but my students and I know about the countless hours of practice and failure before we could finally celebrate our success. Celebrate our success with us! We hear from every corner about all the failings of the education system (mostly from people who haven't entered a classroom for decades) but we don't hear enough about the successes. It starts with you. Instead of teaching your constituents that something is wrong that you are going to fix, show them all that is right. Our teachers are incredible and our students are smart. Our parents care about their children and our legislators want to see them succeed. Let's get that message out there.

Shantelle Ford, Granite School District

I'm not a classroom teacher so not commenting. I do think the shortage is a big issue and using less qualified teachers is not good.

Kathy Furse, Granite School District

I think the legislators need to talk with educators before passing legislation. Educators have first hand experience with working with students. Our experiences and knowledge need to be valued more.

Tammy Giles, Granite School District
Teacher Shortage

I have worked in the same school for 5 years and have had varying class sizes. I can personally attest to the learning and growth that takes place for all students when class size is low. This year I am overloaded with 32 students and feel extremely overwhelmed and guilty that I am not meeting all of their needs.

*Mikelle Gordon, Granite School District*

The number of mandates elementary is receiving is becoming a huge over load.

*Jay Graft, Granite School District*

Effective education can't happen in crowded classrooms. Our fourth grade classes have 34 in them. I have only 25 students--but am teaching both first and second grades (what's known as a split). If you want to increase student learning and success--put fewer students in a classroom.

*Jackie Granger, Granite School District*

The public education system is dying. We have neglected it so long that that we as citizens are lucky that it is still intact. We are losing teachers at such an alarming rate and if we are not careful the education system will crumble right before our eyes. Please invest in education, by decreasing the work of teachers and giving them implement time, giving us other school staff a live-able wage. Please look at how you are compensating teachers. I work in a low income area with students with severe Autism. My students make progress much differently than others and I fear that merit based pay will only stack high quality teachers in more affluent areas with students without exceptional needs. Please look at laws that protect special education teachers. I have had multiple head injuries and a broken bone from school and that's not to include the daily bumps and bruising. Provide money for protective equipment. I shouldn't have to fight for my right to work in a safe place. Before you make another law in education, spend some time in the schools. I am frustrated that those making the judgement calls have never walked a day in our shoes. Please treat us as respected citizens of society and not a fall back career. If you want the state of Utah to succeed in the future then you must invest in it, by decreasing class sizes, giving us implementation time, and letting us decide what is important to teach. Stop standardized testing, it is so very harmful to our education system in so many ways. Take a good look at Finland's education system and find ways to go in that direction.

*Camille Gregory, Granite School District*

There is too much testing. Ideally, we test only every few years at the elementary level. Our student populations are challenging and a class size over 22-25 in elementary, with those challenges affects student learning and teacher retention.

*Karen Grim, Granite School District*

I teach Kindergarten. Every day I come to work I feed my students two meals per day, check for properly clothed bodies, dry tears, watch for bruises of the body and the soul and address them appropriately...then teach. There is so much more to teaching a child than test results. Please remember that.

*Charmaine Grimm, Granite School District*

As a teacher I aspire to educate, condition, and prepare my students to take lead, protect, and preserve our communities, economy and planet for future generations to come. I do this with a passion that drives from being a citizen, mother, and educator of this country. I would only ask that as an educator I am recieved with trust, proper support, and a sense of being valued for what I give to our community.

*April Guardado, Granite School District*

I would like to see those who vote on educational issues substitute in three different educational settings. Then I feel they would see how much more support teachers need today in classrooms. As a teacher, when I get the support I need, I have more confidence in myself and the energy to do my best.

*Susan Gunn, Granite School District*
Teacher Shortage

Story #1--Before our recent pay raise, I was living from check to check. Now, I am able to put money into a savings and am able to buy a home. Story #2--There must be a way teachers can have smaller class sizes. There needs to be a way teachers are not teaching 20 students in one class then 39 in another class.

LaDonna Gustafson, Granite School District

The biggest challenge I think that students and teachers face is the overcrowding of classrooms. I have had the great opportunity to have a 3rd grade classroom with only 22 students in it. My students made a lot of progress and it showed on their end of year tests. The next year I had 30 students. I did not have as much time to address learning difficulties with students because there were just too many of them. I noticed that as a whole my class did not progress as much and it showed on their end of year tests. It was so frustrating to know there were holes of understanding in some students and simply not have enough time to fill them all. Likewise this year when I first started teaching half day kindergarten I had 32 in my class. This was so difficult! It was harder to maintain order and it was hard to teach routines to so many and trying to assess and do groups was just insane. When we were fortunate enough to add another class and my class was reduced to 19, the difference was amazing. Things were calmer and more productive. I felt that I could cover twice as much material. I also can keep small group sizes low enough to actually have them be more effective and I can meet with my groups more often because there are not as many of them. In my personal opinion, reducing class size would be the number one action that would really increase student growth and learning. A teacher cannot be expected to give personalized education to such large class sizes. It is also very taxing to do the amount of grading required by a large class. Class sizes have been increased, but the money and time given to teachers to do all the grading, planning, preparation and paperwork associated with those extra students has not been increased. It is time to start to invest in and trust teachers.

Katy Halliday, Granite School District

I think that the biggest threat to education is a lack of skilled and motivated educators. In order to attract motivated and skilled people to the profession there needs to competitive salary to professions in other fields that require the same level of education. I don't support merit based pay, but I do support earned incentives for teachers.

Heather Handy, Granite School District

We have committed teachers working hard every day. We need to find ways to support them and help make the job easier instead of harder. We are chasing people away from teaching with high stakes testing, large class sizes, increased responsibilities, and lack of a livable wage.

Tracy Hansen, Granite School District

In my half day Kindergarten classes, I am expected to teach a full day of curriculum, while doing a great deal on one-on-one testing. I need more time to work with struggling and advanced students. Look at giving us full-time aides, decreasing testing, or making our day an hour longer!

Karen Haslam, Granite School District

I am a 5th year teacher approaching the "burnout" phase. I teach at a Title I school and resources and support have continued to dwindle year after year. Our school has many students with behavioral issues and we are completely lacking support. We have no money for paraeducators to help and the district requires months of paperwork before intervening. We are drowning. I have a class of 24 students but I spend 80% of my time managing the behavior of 3 students. The students with behavioral issues needs are not being met in our school system. They are not getting the support and interventions they need because we lack resources. These students are also taking away learning time from other students. I love teaching but I don't even get to teach anymore. I spend all my time managing behavior. I can't stick around for 2 more hours to catch up on grading and copying unpaid. Schools need copy room aides, paraeducators, behavioral health assistants. We can't do this on our own. Mandatory testing also brings extreme stress to teachers and students. One standardized test does not show the worth of students or teachers. Utah has to reduce the amount of testing, it wastes instructional time and does not accurately show student knowledge.

Laura Heffernan, Granite School District
Teacher Shortage

There are a lot of talented special education teachers. The students in special education classrooms might not score the highest on testing, but there is a lot of amazing progress that takes place in self contained special education classrooms. These teachers and students work very hard and should not be forgotten, set aside or told to work harder to get the students up to grade level. It is our intent to work with our students to their own unique abilities and to celebrate their successes no matter how small.

*Heidi Henderson, Granite School District*

There is a huge disparity of resources, teacher training, and needs amongst the schools in Utah. Rather than focusing on test scores and school grades that label minorities and economically disadvantaged students, and therefore the teachers of these students, as “failing”, use the data that you have collected to provide resources to teach life skills and sociable behaviors to students in need. Stop building the school to prison pipeline. Start caring about the people in need, they are part of your community no matter how high on the hill you build your house.

*Nichole Hillburn, Granite School District*

Most teachers in my school work tirelessly for their students. We work for them both on and off contact time. However, we are constantly under fire for not doing enough.

*Brittnee Hinton, Granite School District*

Coming from out of state, I took a huge pay cut to teach here. When bargaining my salary, my district did not acknowledge that I have completed not only my SPED credential and master's credential, but also completed 65+ units for my multiple subject credential (to teach k-8 general education). They said that because this coursework was completed before my master's degree was conferred it does not count. I tried to explain that in California, they offer the option to complete a SPED credential as well as a multiple subject and then add your master's. So, my credential was conferred first in August and my master's was conferred in November. I tried to explain this to them that the credentials are independent units of each other and therefore should be counted. This is very frustrating since my district in California honored the amount of units I completed and Utah will not.

*Tori Hoffman, Granite School District*

Homeless youth prevention. Teacher Salary vs. Administrative Salary. A voice for teachers

*Patricia Honey, Granite School District*

I need smaller class sizes. 20 kids per class would be perfect!...or I need more funding for more aids in my class. I am a 5th year teacher and I am exhausted. I can't keep up with all the small groups, differentiation, language support, resource referrals, and interventions I am expected to do. I am worn out and ready to quit.

*Michele Hortin, Granite School District*

I love my job. I love being with the students at the high school level. Lately, I don't feel like I'm trusted to my job. We are losing many good professionals to other high paying fields that are less stressful.

*Shirley Izaguirre, Granite School District*

The urgent need to invest long term in a progressive and comprehensive education program to secure the future of our state

*Richard Jenkel, Granite School District*

As dedicated as the teachers are at a school like mine (high poverty, refugees, violence/trauma/PTSD, not a neighborhood school, high stress/demands on teachers, etc), we are losing teachers every year because the work environment is not emotionally, mentally, and sometimes physically safe for teachers or students. We do not have the resources to help these students; we are teachers, not licensed social workers or psychologists. The climate of this type of school, should be trauma sensitive, however, what ends up happening is that teachers are experiencing tertiary, or second-hand trauma themselves. Effects of the trauma is absent-mindedness, being late, forgetfulness, depression and anxiety, stress-related illness, weight gain, losing interest and not motivated in personal life activities,
Teacher Shortage

mental health care and medications. We don't have the power or resources to support the teachers, or the students. With larger class sizes, the situation has worsened 10-fold. This is one reason we are not able to keep teachers, or attract new teachers.

Heidi Jensen, Granite School District

The frustration of testing. All students shouldn't be tested only on paper, but through observations and real life situations. Preparing for the real world requires time, patience, consistency and a knowledge of their needs individually. Allow teachers to all be paid equally from K-12. We should only be required to specialize in 1 to 2 areas to be proficient at what we teach and not make Elementary specialize is 6 + areas while Jr. High and High school teachers need one area of expertise. There are many areas of relevant that are indicators of what makes a successful student successful through the support of their teachers. Teachers in elementary are require to be experts in more areas of studies than most people who work in other fields. That is not reasonable to ask. Our pay and hours we put in are not indicators that the future leaders of our country are important, when not enough funds are put into pay or funding needs of public schools. It's frustrating to keep loving and sharing your passion for education when teachers are force to work more with less everyday.

Sandy Thuy Jensen, Granite School District

Class sizes are way too large. Anything above 28 becomes crowd control, not teaching.

EllenMae Johnson, Granite School District

Teacher morale is at an all-time low. More is expected every year without additional support. In fact, most years we have lost support or funding that we had previously had. Students with serious issues are not getting help because schools “over qualify” students. I don't feel that it is ethical to base student support on a bell curve. If a student needs help, they should be able to receive services regardless of how many other students at that school are also receiving services. Class sizes are too large for the amount of behavior problems prevalent, making it impossible to effectively teach the content required. This is leading teachers to leave the profession altogether. It is not a matter of east side/west side schools, it is a problem everywhere. Too much emphasis is placed on testing at the end of the year. Tests are only one measure for student achievement, yet everything counts on it. It affects students and teachers alike. This is the only thing that isn't being changed about the school system, but it needs to be changed the most. There is no reason to base the accountability of an entire year on a single test.

Elaine Johnson, Granite School District

Your votes regarding education speak directly to their priorities, and while there are certainly exceptions to this rule, by and large the Utah legislature has been far too slow to react to desperate needs in Utah's education system for far too long, oftentimes implementing "solutions" that are woefully weak and ineffective. What this conveys to teachers with whom I work is that the Utah legislature only cares about solving issues within education when they are faced with no other option than to act, and the consequent "action" taken by legislators is done only to put a faux-feather in their political cap so that they can say they've accomplished something substantive without actually having done so. We are facing a teacher shortage and yet there are people trying to make it harder for educated, experienced people that could be amazing educators to get certified? Utah crams more children into the average classroom than almost anyone and yet spends among the least per pupil annually: aren't they worth more than that? There are a long list of oft-discussed issues in education, both within Utah exclusively as well as nationally, but the bottom line is this: as teachers, we are aware that an inherent responsibility of our career is doing more with less, and if the message that the Utah legislature is sending us as educators continues to be that we need to continue to do even more with far less than anyone else, not only will Utah see a sharp decline in their impressive quality of education, but we as educators will send you the same hollow, ostensible support on the voting ballot.

Macord Johnson, Granite School District

It is time to fund education. Education powers our economy, helps children climb out of poverty, and enriches our cultural environment. Please, let now be the time to fund education in Utah.

Susan Jones, Granite School District
Teacher Shortage

Teachers are not being supported in the classroom.  

Mackenzie Kemp, Granite School District

Pay increase for all school staff, not just teachers and principals. In special education it is difficult to hire and retain staff.

Richard Kerr, Granite School District

Utah Education needs more funding to lower class size, increase mental health services for students, and increase teacher pay to be more competitive and retain good teachers. PLEASE do not rely on ARL programs to fix the teacher shortage. ARL teachers are NOT prepared to teach a classroom full of students!

Milicent Larsen-Fogarty, Granite School District

I would like to share the message of how much we need to focus on the whole child. I have only worked in schools that are ravished with poverty, English language learners, and unmet basic needs. Each year I have taught, at least one student has had a primary caretaker die or face long term incarceration. This year, I have already had two students with parents die. Let me tell you, that when a kid comes in and can only talk about how dad overdosed last night, it changes your lesson plan. I'm tired of saying how "heartbreaking" these stories are. I'm tired of placating emotions that do nothing to change the situation. Fund a full time social worker and psychologist in every building. Encourage the creation of social emotional core standards so we can recognize schools aren't just reading writing and arithmetic. Childhood trauma is real, and has significant effect on the brain. Give these kids the support they need so they can make a better life for themselves.

Taylor Layton, Granite School District

As a speech/language pathologist working in the schools, I see a lot of wasted time for testing. The results on some of the testing is not timely enough to provide needed feedback and many tests are taking precious instruction/reinstruction time away from students. Many of my scheduled times for meeting with students are interrupted during these mandatory tests that come from the state school board. They are irrelevant to many special education students and cause undue anxiety. And now that these tests are online, if there is a "glitch" in the system, even more time is wasted. Testing needs to be back in the hands of the teachers and schools that work most directly with their community of students and are most familiar with their needs. A "cookie cutter" approach is not working.

Noel Lee, Granite School District

The difficulties teachers address in the classroom in title 1.

Kerry Lee, Granite School District

I've been teaching for 10 years. I don't make enough to pay for a master's degree, but I need a masters to get paid more. I REALLY need to be able to make enough money to support my family and further my own education. Either teachers need to be paid more, or we need to be given scholarships to be able to further our education. I'm almost being forced to find a new profession because I can't support my family.

Hilary Linton, Granite School District

The teacher shortage is real and getting worse. We need to make teaching a respected and well paid profession if we are going to attract and retain high quality teachers. I have had two student teachers recently that quit education after they were finished student teaching because the pay wasn't worth the about of work and emotion they put in.

Denice Long, Granite School District

Although salaries have increased a lot in the past year in individual districts, there needs to be an increase state wide with a small tax increase.

Betsy Lopez, Granite School District
Teacher Shortage

I am a Special Educator. My school is allocated 1.5 FTE for Special Education. We started the school year hiring someone for the .5 position. Because of surplus procedures, she was moved to another school a month into the school year. Then we were assigned another .5 teacher. She was incredible, but the transition made her home situation difficult because of distance. She decided to resign. So we now are on our third teacher and it is only January. Think of the disruption to students and loss of instruction time. We have spent countless hours creating schedules and recreating. Now think of the Special Education legal paperwork that has not had the appropriate attention. We are still trying to fix all of the files out of compliance from last year's alternative route to license “teacher”. The students are not making progress when they are not being taught. We need to ensure that certified teachers are hired and retained for the benefit of all of our students.

Kaylin Lythall, Granite School District

Emphasis on testing, CFAs, and benchmarks is hurting the performance and creative mastery of teachers, turning them into assembly-line employees.

Mark Marsing, Granite School District

Teachers need a professional salary and lower class sizes

Lisa McAfee, Granite School District

I recently read an article about the best high school in every state in the United States. Each one had very small class sizes. Class size does make a difference in teaching ability. You can't have your class sizes unless you have more teachers. You can't have more teachers unless you offer a better salary and benefits than other places.

Paul McClatchy, Granite School District

We can't adequately meet the needs of our diverse learners with so many students in our classroom. Raise teacher pay, if you wish to increase teacher retention rates.

Nicole McCrea, Granite School District

We have kids with high needs (regular ed and special ed) who are sharing their teacher with 34 other kids, and we can't fill the aide positions. We need smaller class sizes, and better pay and benefits for teachers' aides.

Michael McDonough, Granite School District

We have a math teacher shortage. There is a teacher at our school who is certified in another subject. He taught math in another state, and could easily pass the praxis test here. He does not have the time or money to take the classes that Utah wants him to take, but he has the subject knowledge, which would be evidenced by passing the praxis, and has the teaching skills since he is licensed to teach another subject. It would help if he could be certified without the expense and time to take a lot more math classes that he really doesn't need to do the job. With the teacher shortage, even more critical in this subject, he should be allowed to certify by proving he knows the subject.

Sundee McIntosh, Granite School District

I came to Utah from a state where all teachers are required to have a Master's degree to teach. I notice a significant difference in the respect and general teacher morale here in Utah, which I believe is partly due to the idea that teaching in Utah can be seen as a second class career or one that is just temporary until an individual finds a better position or quits working outside the home to support her or his family. I worked ten years in Utah before earning the salary I left in my previous state, yet I think the problem of morale and respect goes deeper than teacher compensation.

Rachel McKeen, Granite School District

With class sizes so large the quality of teaching is lessened per student

Dirk W. Menzel, Granite School District
Teacher Shortage

As teachers, we work diligently every day. Teachers in the high-risk schools work even harder and deal with stress on a high level. It would be nice to be appreciated instead of criticized when growth is small. It's not because we don't believe in our students or don't try. That's why I have always opposed Merit pay. We already put in the time and then some. I like how Granite actually pays a bit more twice a year in Title I schools because it makes the struggle of seeing little growth more bearable. From personal experience, I went from a B/C student in 7th grade to a straight A student. The difference--my parents were going through a divorce at the time. I can still remember the day that it felt literally like I was walking out of a cloud. I know that many of my students are experiencing the same thing. It does affect their learning ability. Be mindful that we celebrate even the smallest of achievement in a troubled demographics. Sadly, the tests are a constant reminder for struggling students that they are failures. How many times do we have to test and beat them down?

Phyllis Miller, Granite School District

I have always wanted to teach but because of family constraints I was unable to finish my education until later in life. I amassed a great deal of student loans to get my teaching certification and was so excited to begin my career. For the first few years of teaching I was enthusiastic and happy, however, slowly year by year my satisfaction with my job has declined. Every year we come back to school to new requirements, new rules and regulations that are redundant and unnecessary. I feel very micromanaged by the District and the Legislature. I feel disrespected and devalued more and more each year. Teaching is incredibly difficult and it seems as if those in the Legislature think we are just babysitting. I would really love to teach. I spend so much time in meetings, duties, and trainings that are completely redundant, that by the time I am in front of the class or are planning for class I am overwhelmed and exhausted. Teaching is not babysitting. it is one of the hardest and most challenging thing I have ever done in my life, but it is also very rewarding. I want to continue to teach in Utah, but it is getting harder and harder to deal with the disrespect and disdain those outside of education have for teachers. I wish that every legislator that anything to do with creating laws for education would go into an elementary classroom and teach for two weeks without the teachers help, and sit in while the students take their standardized tests. If they did, I guarantee they would walk away with a different understanding of what we do for the children of our state every day.

Leslie Morley, Granite School District

Feeling supported and safe should be the right of every teacher in the classroom. It is sadly getting to the point that every teacher I know is planning their exit, whether leaving the profession or counting down to retirement. It is becoming a burden that we don't know if we can bear any longer.

Jenny Morris, Granite School District

It's time to put of children first. They are our future. We need quality teachers, smaller classrooms, more support from our legislators. Testing has taken over teaching.

Cindy Moyle, Granite School District

Most of us have had to work 2 or 3 jobs while teaching to support our families. That decreases the time that we can spend planning, but it is the only way to pay bills for children. You took away the pension when times were rough, but we still make much less than others with Bachelor's degrees or Master's. Gangs are increasing again and the behavior makes it harder to teach.

Jane Myers, Granite School District

Students deserve to have veteran teachers instruct them in a smaller class size, up-to-date materials and technology. I have 39 students in a class, no new textbooks, and not enough time in the day to grade papers, build my curriculum, consult with teachers from my department, mentor new teachers, and write emails, or make phone calls home. I have been teaching for over two decades and have worked with about 25 new teachers in my field. This revolving door in our profession only harms students and puts such burdens on the teachers that continue year after year. Please consider lowering our class sizes, give us up-to-date materials, pay teachers or give bonus money to those outstanding in our field. Thank you.

Susie Myers, Granite School District
Teacher Shortage

My school has large class sizes and not enough para educators to help in these classes and in the Behavior Unit. I have 6 students out of 29 in my class who are on behavior contracts (general education classroom). We need help both in our school with more aides/para educators and PARENTS need help learning how to parent.

Karen Oliver, Granite School District

Teachers, like firefighters and police officers, need to be valued to keep quality people in the profession. Legislators and the public need to be made aware that a school grade doesn't mean everything. Testing results are over-emphasized.

Rachel Pehrson, Granite School District

Help our teachers

Sharon Poulsen, Granite School District

Class sizes are problematic, especially with the younger children. Grade schools needs smaller class sizes, and educated teachers with twenty first century skills. Education should be a high priority, and our world is dependent on our children.

Kelly Price, Granite School District

Teachers are incredibly devalued in Utah. We need people who will actually take the time to understand what it means to be an educator and what it takes to educate, to represent us. Legislators should not be making decisions without getting input from most teachers. There isn't near enough done in our state for education. The reason why no one wants to be a teacher is because you get treated so horribly for such little pay. We get more and more demanded of us with less and less support and resources.

Deborah Pryor, Granite School District

I spend roughly around $2500 a year out of my own pocket to get the supplies my students need to succeed. I can't continue to afford to do this. My first graders need hands on teaching tools to cement their learning. They're not the best with technology even though I try to use it as much as possible. I think teachers in younger grades spend far more of their money on their class then any other teacher. From the inviting learning atmosphere to all the hands on activities. We need either a pay raise to compensate or a bigger spending allowance.

Christal Raehl, Granite School District

Education of our children should be one of the top priorities, not something that is taken care of among the last priorities.

Karen Reynolds, Granite School District

Every child in Utah should have a safe, public school in his neighborhood he can walk to. Parents should send their children to the child's neighborhood school, a public school, which has a solid basic educational curriculum - even though they feel the school is not good enough for their child. If improvements are needed they should work together with other parents in their neighborhood, at the school level, to insist the school to become "good enough" and thereby help their community and all children. The legislature can work toward the goal of a safe, appropriate neighborhood school for all children. (This can also have the added bonus of reducing car emissions to clean the air around us.)

Kathleen Rice, Granite School District

I teach kindergarten and I had very large classes last year, 28 in the morning and 29 in the afternoon. This year I have 24 students in the morning and 25 in the afternoon. Even just having 4-5 fewer kids in the class has made a huge difference and I feel like I can better serve my students this year. I am more aware of their individual needs, I can work with students in smaller groups and give them more of the attention they need, and I have more time for planning because I have less grading, copying, etc. I think I would be able to do an even better job if my class sizes continued to decrease in the future. I would love to see more teachers hired to reduce class sizes and that is the
Teacher Shortage

most important issue for me. I also would love to have more funding for classroom aides to help with the workload and student support and have them be more fairly compensated (I have had a couple really great aides who have had to quit because they didn't make enough money), more money for classroom supplies, and increased salary/compensation for classroom teachers.

Rebecca Riley, Granite School District

Teacher will need to be paid similar salaries as other professionals if you want to keep quality teachers or encourage college students to major in education.

Katherine Robinson, Granite School District

If given the resources schools and teachers would be able to meet the needs of the students we serve. Reduction in class size would enable teachers to personalize the help for the students in their classroom. This would help the overall budget spent on education in the long run because we wouldn't need to remediate as many students.

Tracy Rose, Granite School District

Education is significant to the future of our society! We need to respect the field and keep up, make changes when needed to correspond to the needs and demands of society.

Amy Ross, Granite School District

Quality public education, including preschool, needs to be a number one priority alongside basic health care for all citizens.

Virginia Rothstein, Granite School District

Please listen to the suggestions that educators give. We know what we need better than anyone else.

Shaina Runolfson, Granite School District

Something needs to be done to help increase teacher morale. Teachers are very highly educated, yet are treated like we are uneducated. Society cannot function without teachers, and they need to be treated that way. This would do a lot to help with the teacher shortage that we are dealing with. Privatizing education or giving more money towards charter schools is not the answer. The education budget needs to be spent on finding the most qualified teachers who have a passion for education and who are willing to stay in the profession. Public school teachers are teaching the future leaders of this state and country. Supports are needed in classrooms, not just in increased funding and decreased class sizes, but also with increased funding for classroom aides.

Emily Saltas, Granite School District

Teachers work hard and long to assure their students succeed. When there are more than 25 students in an elementary classroom a teacher spends most of the time disciplining and managing the class. Everything is not within a teacher's control, parents should be held accountable. I see and hear stories of parents blaming teachers for their child's poor grades or behavior. Many things begin at home. Misbehaving students in elementary schools is a real problem and must be addressed. Teacher burn out with these students is overwhelmingly high.

Becky Schaap, Granite School District

Please spend a day in the title one schools of your district.

Janet Sharp, Granite School District

Please stop causing the problems in education! Please show that you value education and children by funding our schools, paying the professionals who instruct them like professionals, and insisting that the adults in the classroom are qualified (i.e., licensed) to teach them.

Dayna Jones Shoell, Granite School District
Teacher Shortage

It is amazing the progress that my students make when their class size is smaller. I can focus on areas of needs, greater challenge activities, and truly build the whole student instead of just feeling like I'm surviving. I have seen teacher moral as well as student success improve when class sizes are smaller!

Audrey Sill, Granite School District

Teachers are poor, overworked and given little respect as professionals. Address those issues and you will attract and retain quality teachers.

Denice Smith, Granite School District

Quit marginalizing education and thinking one-size-fits-all packaging works when kids don't come in those packages. A business model is not best for education. Public funding is critical for education or decisions about your age related needs will be made by those not prepared.

Jill Sparks, Granite School District

I would like to share the challenge of my Special Needs unit being so grossly underfunded that we are unable to fully staff our classroom or keep consistent staffing. I have seen a staffing turnover of 100% every year since I have been teaching. I have several aggressive students and every time a staff member is changed their behavior gets worse. It also takes time for me to train my staff to be consistent on Behavior Intervention Plans, which is critical to student success and safety. Having sufficient aide support is what keeps talented Special Educators in the position more than anything else. This job is stressful, and feeling as though you are left without the help you need is extremely discouraging.

Elizabeth A. Spencer, Granite School District

Increasing access to technology equipment without support in training teachers and students to integrate the equipment is futile.

Debra Springer, Granite School District

One year a teacher at my school had a smaller class than she had ever had. She said that she couldn't believe how well the kids did that year with her being able to spend more time with each student. I told her she should tell the legislature about it, but she said she was afraid if she did our school would lose a teacher because the enrollment was too small. Isn't that messed up? Shouldn't we be able to give examples of things that work without being punished for it?

Shauna Tanner, Granite School District

Before any legislator is allowed a vote - 10 hours in an average school's average classroom

Julie D. Tarbet, Granite School District

Last year my class of Kindergarten was 29. I had two classes of 29 students. It was the hardest year of my life. I felt that most of my efforts were spent managing the class, instead of actually instructing and learning and discovering. This year one of my classes is 23. The decreased class size has made a world of difference. My test scores are already SIGNIFICANTLY higher than the previous year. It may not be right for all class sizes to be smaller, but in the younger grades where we are learning more than just reading, the class sizes NEED to be smaller. We are learning how to move in a group, how to sit, how to hold scissors and a pencil, how to follow rules, how to listen to an adult and to a peer, etc. There are so many "soft" skills that we tackle in the lower grades.

Kara Telford, Granite School District

As it currently stands, teaching is a very demoralizing profession. We are here because we want to be a force for good in our communities, but are being treated poorly by governmental officials, parents, students and occasionally administrators. It has an effect on how effective we can be as teachers.

Caitlin Thomas, Granite School District
Teacher Shortage

The demands on teachers today are outrageous! No one can possibly do all that teachers are asked to do. It is not humanly possible. No wonder teachers are getting burned out and are leaving the profession. Make fewer demands, and allow us to simply teach.

Joan Thompson-Harris, Granite School District

Fund public schools properly by reducing classroom size and providing a quality educated teacher for every classroom.

Valerie Turner, Granite School District

I dare you to do my job for a day!!!!!!!

Keetette Turner, Granite School District

One of the major issues that needs to be addressed to solve the teacher shortage program is the constant negative treatment of teachers by the legislature. If you truly value us and the work we do, increase our funding to try to catch up with the per pupil funding enjoyed by so many of our colleagues throughout the nation. If you want to attract people to our profession, treat us like professionals.

Kurt Twining, Granite School District

I was a thirty-four year career educator. Although I received supply money (about $250), it was definitely not enough to provide supplies for each of my students. It amounted to less than $1 per year per student. I taught every 8th grade student in the school, had about 450 kids per year, and class sizes sometimes as high as 40 kids. We had a student body of 1400 at Hunter Jr. High. Although my supply money was never enough, that amount definitely was not enough for teachers who were in their first years of teaching. I spent upwards of $1200 dollars per year. New teachers don't even have enough money to pay their bills, let alone spend that kind of money in order to do their job. That's definitely a reason for new teachers to leave the profession.

Penney Tyree, Granite School District

Teachers have more demands placed on them then ever before. The teacher shortage will only increase if we don't start addressing class size, teacher salary, and if we don't start finding ways to boost teacher morale. This all starts with funding, but also coming straight to the source -- THE TEACHERS, before making new laws and decisions that will directly affect students and teachers.

Rebecca Vala, Granite School District

Support the teaching profession by making teaching less demanding and place more responsibility on students rather than teachers.

Mike Valdez, Granite School District

I taught at a Utah charter school for four years and now I am at a traditional high school in Granite. The biggest reason why the Charter school was successful (mixed success) was the size of the school and the size of the classes. In a smaller school we got to know all the kids and we got to know the parents and that was immensely effective. At my high school now the teachers and students are the same but now I teach 250 kids instead of 150 and the result is that I simply don't have enough time to provide quality feedback on assignments or to forge deeper relationships with the students that are vital for their success.

David Veenstra, Granite School District

Teachers deserve MORE. We work with some of the toughest issues for very little pay. We are bursting at the seams with class sizes of 36. We have both parents and students screaming in our faces and treating us with disrespect and we can't do anything about it. Soon, no one is going to want to do this job. Changes must be made. Every day I hear quality educators talking about leaving the profession because there are too many problems and they just can't take any more. It is a real shame to see some of the best teachers out there wanting to leave their jobs.

Ashley Vierig, Granite School District
I am a Dual Language Immersion Chinese teacher who grew up in China and have been to graduate school in the US. I have taught both in Hong Kong and the US at tertiary, secondary and elementary level. Three biggest structural impediment to improving student learning are: 1. Multiple preps. Currently, I have four preps (beyond contract stipulation), two of which are brand new curriculum and two are a couple years old. Having these many preps make it impossible for me to fine tune my courses. I also have many great ideas that I do not have time to implement. If I spend too much time on one class, my other classes suffer. Consequently, no classes become as better as I'd like. 2. Lack of unstructured planning time. Growing up as a student in China, I got feedback from teacher on my assignment the same day I handed them in. That loop of practice and feedback is important for both the educators and the students to monitor learning. Lack of planning time makes individual feedback impossible. Also, having to teach 6 out of 7 periods in a day makes collaboration a luxury. 3. Students need recess. Students need unstructured free time to socialize, relax and go to the restroom. Few adults can function effectively having to go through 7 periods a day with only 4 min in transition and a 30-min lunch break. Many students, afraid of being tardy, simply do not go to the restroom in that 4-min transition time. Instead, they miss part of the class to go to bathroom. Giving students regular break will significantly help with classroom management and engagement.

Mengqi Wang, Granite School District

The story is simply too complicated...Everyone wants to blame the teachers when the test scores are low, when the failing rates are high, when attendance is bad. Everyone blames the teacher because it is the only person in the equation that can be controlled. It's to dangerous and political to hold parents accountable. It's not "fair" to hold the students accountable. It's never a problem with the curriculum or the class size...How many meetings I have been in where I am told a good teacher can teach any size class. So, the teacher gets blamed. We have communities in this state that are at risk. Schools in which 70% of the teenagers are reading at a 4th grade level. Entire buildings of students who are so depressed and anxious that learning is virtually impossible. But, it is the teacher that is blamed. We are told to collect more data. We are told to put our lessons into templates. We are told to only teach that which can be tested. And, therefore, teachers burn out and leave the profession. Teaching is a hard job on the best of days, but when you are constantly blamed for every single failure in the system, the job is unbearable. The real solution to these problems is for everyone to take a step back and look at the whole forest. The trees are dying.

Mary Ward, Granite School District

So far all the paid time that has been added for teacher preparation has been programmed. We don't have enough time to thoughtfully plan lessons that meet the state's objectives or to provide one-to-one feedback to students in over-crowded classrooms. For improved education of students teachers need UNSTRUCTURED time to do what we already know we should be doing to reach students who are struggling in overcrowded classrooms with over-worked teachers.

Milton Watts, Granite School District

I would like to challenge all of the legislators to go to a school and sub for a day. It would be the administrators choice which classroom they subbed in. They should work with the teacher to see what goes into planning for a day and then stay and teach for all that day. It would be even better if they went for 3 days. I know that they have other jobs, but let them take the subs salary for that day or days. Let them work with some of our challenging students, or students who have left for Mexico for three weeks, or who come to school ill, etc, etc. I think that this should be a requirement to be a legislator that they sub at least one day a year.

Janet Wellman, Granite School District

I love my job and I love teaching the kids. Even with the low income, I am willing to be a teacher. Saying that, for how much we work, and plan outside of our contract hours so we can find the best ways to teach our kids, we're not getting paid enough. I also think the other faculty members such as the lunch ladies and janitors should earn more as well. They work hard and are a big part of our team at school. Also having a smaller class size would be amazing. That would give us teachers more time to focus more on the kids one on one. I think tests scores would go up much higher. With test scores as well, you need to think about each school and the environment. The school I'm working at is a title 1 school with over 30 different languages. You can't possibly think that these kids who can't speak English very well or at all can meet the state standard scores?! Now that doesn't mean they don't learn anything. If you
Teacher Shortage

Actually looked more at growth, you can see how much these students have learned which I think is a lot more important than seeing if they met the scores that should have been reached. How would you feel if you took a test in a language you don't understand too well and expect to get a high score. You will feel pretty lousy. Another huge problem I don't agree with is that anyone who has a bachelor degree can become teachers. I think teachers should have a degree in education. First, it's not fair to those who worked hard in school to get their teaching degree. Second, the state shouldn't be so desperate for teachers that they will hire anyone that has any degree. If you want good quality teachers, hire teachers that went to school in that field. If you need more teachers, maybe think about actually paying us better and that would probably be a huge help on not having a shortage on teachers. We already went to school for at least 4 years, why do we need to take a stupid praxis test that we don't actually need because we don't really teach that to the kids. These tests are college level tests that the kids don't ever learn. I would think having a degree in education would be good enough. I know for me, I have major testing anxiety and science and social studies are subjects I have a hard time learning. The praxis content tests almost made me not be a teacher. I had to retake those tests several times in order for me to finally pass them, plus pay so much money! If you need good quality teachers, pay us more, have smaller classrooms, and don't require us to do more testing to have our license when we have our degree in education. Believe we can do our jobs without having to take these tests.

Tarikua Whatcott, Granite School District

It takes time to become an effective teacher and to learn how to successfully manage a classroom and teach students. There should be an incentive system in place that rewards or gives bonuses to teachers who hit milestones like every 5 years.

Jackson White, Granite School District

Preschool and Full Day Kindergarten need to have more attention. A computer program can not fully meet the needs of children who need social interaction.

Colleen Willardson, Granite School District

Visit schools and talk with teachers -- actually listen and base decisions on teacher feedback. This is currently not happening. Respect and compensation is not valued by our legislators toward our educators. Nothing is ever done until there is a crisis - like the teacher shortage. The teachers can give the best feedback for standards, budget and needs for educations.

Stephanie A Wood, Granite School District

This year, our school lost $500,000. As a result, we lost 3 teachers. Our class sizes in 4,5,6 grades averaged 32 students at the beginning of the year. There have been no other changes in positive programming. As a result, our behavior has TRIPPLED!!! Kiddos who fight to be noticed at home struggle when they have to fight to be noticed at school as well.

Amber Woodward, Granite School District

We are so grateful for the increase made last session to improve teacher salaries. This is a huge step in the right direction for drawing quality educators to the profession and keeping them here. I am concerned about the lowering of required qualifications for those newly hired teachers and the overall morale of teachers in general. When qualification requirements are lowered, it sends a clear message to those of us with Masters degrees and endorsements. It tells us none of that matters. "Anyone” can teach! We know this is absolutely NOT true. Just ask someone who has made the attempt and left. It is the most difficult job. A job we do every day with little to no support, no accolades, and mounting class sizes. The demands on teachers is growing every day. Teachers are asked to handle special education students that are not well served in the regular education classroom. This leads to very big issues. The message that teachers don't matter and don't do their jobs is loud and clear. We have to change this! Smaller class sizes, more pay at the starting levels, greater support and more training (not OFF contract time) is vital. Please help us change the perception of this profession. We are desperate and our students' futures depend on these changes. Thank you.

Jaime Woolley, Granite School District
Teacher Shortage

Teaching is not easy. Consider supporting what we need in the classroom (supplies and staff support) and you might not have such a teacher shortage because burnout would be less frequent.

_Heidi Wright, Granite School District_

Students need to be the focus of all concerned and involved with education. Politics and test scores are driving everything and kids are being forgotten. Assessment and instruction needs to be driven by student needs and be developmentally appropriate. Standardized testing, constant data meetings and testing, and a lack of the "basics" are taking away from what elementary students truly need to be successful...a firm and solid foundation. We don't teach a grade level such as 2nd or 5th. Instead, we teach an age group that has all levels crammed into it: from beginning readers all the way up to high-school level readers because there is no accountability on students and parents to make education a priority. High stakes testing has created a host of issues for parents, students, and teachers such as anxiety, stress, cheating, etc.

_Tricia Adams, Iron County School District_

Students are being taught by unqualified teachers, this makes a huge difference in student learning. We need to do more to attract and retain qualified teachers. This is the rule of supply and demand. We have a limited supply of qualified educators, there is a demand for them. We need to treat educators like they are important and they matter.

_Robyn Brown, Iron County School District_

This last year I have done 4 all-nighters in addition to my normal work hours AND staying late at the school just to keep caught up on paperwork required by IEPs. I am getting paid the exact same amount as any other teacher, yet my efforts to comply with regulations and support my students are ignored or taken for granted. The shortage of teachers is a huge issue, and the shortage of special education teachers is even greater. I want to continue to support my students, but I don't see how I can sustain this amount of effort at substandard pay. I am working a part-time job just to make ends meet. My wife is also working a full-time and part-time job. In short, if you want to solve the teacher shortage, and especially the special education teacher shortage, stop taking us for granted. Yes, have high standards, but stop making us jump through stupid hoops just so we can do our jobs. When I have a choice of doing some stupid paperwork or help my students, I WILL ALWAYS HELP MY STUDENTS FIRST. Why? Because I got into this job because I believe in what I do. It's about time that legislature realizes that their well-meaning regulations have unintended consequences. Consequences like taking support away from students for paperwork that does nothing to help said students AND drives teachers out of the profession. Something that I wonder about every time I sit in front of my computer I bought with my money because the district was not able to buy a computer capable of handling the IEP program we have without it lagging and making the paperwork take even longer... And don't even get me started on how much of a waste of time summative testing is, or how it makes it harder for students to succeed. From the bottom of my sarcastic teacher's heart, thank you for saddling us with SAGE. A test that isn't a good test of knowledge and is instead a behavior test since we can't even remind our students to take their time or stop them from clicking through. We teachers have to make data-driven decisions. Something I love, by the way. Why is it that legislature don't bother to read the research on the negative impacts of summative testing on student success and graduation rates. This isn't football people. Schools should not be in competition with each other. They should be driven instead to improve the success rates of students. To UEA, please feel free to share my comments. Although I would prefer to remain anonymous since I am very candid about my feelings.

_Brian Middleton, Iron County School District_

I love teaching in Iron County and have been blessed to do so for the past 27 years. During this time, I've seen many changes in the educational paradigms, practices, procedures, and approaches to funding and licensing. The current approaches to to finding and keeping great teachers are a huge concern for me. I want the best for our amazing students and having interns and too many inexperienced (APT) or other pathways to licensing cheat students from those that are highly qualified. These short term fixes should not be the rule for the long run. Please work towards permanent funding for highly trained educators that will last for a long haul. Last year helped with getting us a little caught up with the rest of the US, but lets keep it going. It saddens me and hurts the pride that I have in Utah doing so many things right educationally and then still be last in the nation to fund education (the per pupil$). Please help...
Teacher Shortage

us fully fund growth every year, enable our districts through the WPU to keep us insured and grant cost of living increases, let us be passionate professionals that don't need to come begging every Spring.

*Megan Nelson, Iron County School District*

Give me a reason to stay in this profession. Please. Granted, I made the wrong choice and choose elementary education. I should have chosen Math, Science, or some other STEM subject in a secondary setting. Had I done so I could have loans forgiven. To add insult to injury I finished my degree to be 'highly qualified' and I have the student loans that go along with the process. Now someone can walk in and teach in a classroom without being 'highly qualified'. Could I please be reimbursed for the money I spent at university to fulfill the old standard? Also, the only way to increase your salary is by putting in time (years and lanes) or getting out of the classroom. Isn't it ironic that you are dealing with a teacher shortage and the structure encourages good teachers to get out of the classroom. You want more STEM in education. Why pursue a higher degree in education when, according to the very same argument we give students for pursuing STEM education, a teacher could retool themselves for a new career that has all of the benefits of a 'real job'?

*Ray Sahagun, Iron County School District*

My 26 year old son told me recently, "Mom, seeing how hard you work and what you go through, I don't see why anyone would want to become a teacher for the amount of compensation and problems you experience." My answer, "No one would do it for any other reason except that they love kids and want to help them." I think this is true of A LOT of Utah educators.

*Rachelle Spencer, Iron County School District*

Every year the classrooms get more crowded. Every year teachers burnout because of the load and lack of mentoring. Our new teachers don't get what they need and then don't get their contracts renewed because they aren't up to standard. No wonder we have a teacher shortage.

*Connie Wallace, Iron County School District*

UEA is not a liberal organization. It exists only to fight for the rights and benefits of teachers, and for practices that are best for students in Utah

*Fred Ash, Jordan School District*

As an educator I could not afford to buy a house. I went to a government program called the good neighbor program to be able to make it possible to afford a house. In order to afford a house I had to be willing to live in a rough rough neighborhood where drug deals happen in front of my house, where fights happen in the street, and where people pull out guns as a solution to their problems. I have had to have the police search my house once for and intruder. I have had to hide in my basement while guns and a fight were going on outside, while we had guests at our home. Is this the kind of places and situation you want you teachers who have 4+ year degrees to have to live. The first 5-10 years of a teachers career are the most low paid and most vulnerable to leave the profession. This is more likely to happen when they are not paid well and they are overworked. With the rising cost of our medical coverage and little increase in pay it has become harder and harder for new teachers to have the desire to stay with the profession.

*Pam Bryson, Jordan School District*

I have worked hard to further my education, earning my Master Degree in Ed. and endorsements in ESL, Early Childhood, and Gifted and Talented. I have taken every opportunity to sharpen my skills and improve my teaching abilities. I consider myself a master teacher after 25 years of dedication to the profession. I have received wonderful feedback from students and parents and many benefits from my profession. What I have not received is the satisfaction that my salary is one I could raise my children on solo. If I were not a dual income family, I would be just short of qualifying for public assistance. I have also been frozen on the lane system for over 11 years, without any meaningful salary increase. I find this extremely disheartening. I see this as a direct correlation to the teacher shortage.

*Carolyn Dailey, Jordan School District*
Teacher Shortage

What I think benefits my students the most is the extra time I spend after my contract time planning and preparing lessons. I find that my students are more excited to learn, and do better on tests when I have taken the time well after my contract time to prepare. I think it would be beneficial for both students and teachers if teachers were compensated for this time or schools given extra money for aids and support staff to help teachers spend less time after contract time. I think this would also help retain teachers. Many teachers leave because of the long Unpaid hours.

Melinda Eastman, Jordan School District

Seasoned, high quality educators are undervalued and underpaid. New teachers without training and licensure come into education for 2-3 years and leave because they lack pedagogy skills. High quality educators leave because the lack of respect as evidenced by low or no pay increases.

Lucia Evans, Jordan School District

When I went into teaching, I went into it knowing I would not make a lot of money. However, I was allowed autonomy to design curriculum for my individual students. Now, I am spending hours preparing students for a lot of standardized tests (SAGE, SLO, District reading and writing benchmarks). I am also spending hours preparing portfolios to prove I am a qualified teacher. All this time not spent on my students is drawing my attention more to my low salary and huge class sizes. Teachers are getting burned out and that is what is causing the huge shortage.

Tami Ewell, Jordan School District

Utah is getting RIDICULOUS...... Do not let people teach the children without a CORRECT Teaching degree... NO RLI or Other degrees in to teach... Also, Get a raise out there for teachers NOT District people. 34 6th graders in ONE tiny room is HORRIBLE.... Don't go and add or subtract teachers or classrooms during a year do it in the summer breaks... all decisions FINAL

Halceyn Fobert, Jordan School District

more money=better education

Brett Freeman, Jordan School District

In a state with a severe teacher shortage, I find it interesting that we are trying to change the criteria used to higher new teachers, rather than fix what is wrong with the system and support the teachers we already have.

Tamra Fulmer, Jordan School District

As a 20 year veteran, I have seen this job change significantly the past 7 - 10 years. We are losing teachers like crazy. We are hiring ill-equipped teachers and expecting our veterans to train them on their own time and dime. This is not good for the students or the teachers (new & veteran). Retired teachers are coming back less - and who can blame them? We need to pay our teachers enough to make it worth them staying in this profession. If you don't do something soon, I am truly afraid of what our education in Utah will look like when all us 20-somethings are gone....

Kelly Giffen, Jordan School District

I shared with Lisa: Teacher salaries Teacher expectations Problems of Alternative License Route Science curriculum expectations without textbooks or supplies Mentor/student teacher expectations

Patricia Gotberg, Jordan School District

Some of our public schools are getting many monolingual students and English is NOT that language. We need more assistance in working with these students.

Bev Griffith, Jordan School District

Education is one of the most important things you are addressing this year. Please take time to look at this fact: teacher shortage. People are not wanting to enter into the teaching profession due to government micro management vs autonomy. Professionalism should be valued and encouraged. Why are we not giving trust to a
Teacher Shortage

teacher to reach her/his students needs with an educated accountability and not just a check off sheet that we need to account to an administrator who is accounting a check off sheet to a district ... etc. with so many requirements and restrictions that it takes more time doing that than it does teaching our students ... not to mention the stress and worry if we are doing it exactly the way it is required by our administrators (and it seems to change a bit every year just to cause more stress)? Money is not the biggest issue for most teachers ... please take the outside testing "stress" away, all the testing accountability that we have to "report" and let us teach not just account. Teachers need support. We have parent support... we need legislator support! Please... keep class size small, support full-day kindergarten (as it is really first grade as compared to when you were in school), give compensation to teachers who are willing to do extras, reduce testing accountability, and give us our autonomy to do what we know how to do, namely, TEACH.

Vivian Gubler, Jordan School District

Stop requiring teachers to do more with less! Also, quit requiring so many tests (probably more from the district) to where we feel like we are always testing.

Liz Halloran, Jordan School District

I began my teaching career in a Title I school in Granite District as a classroom aide, then became a certified preschool teacher, and finally became a certified elementary teacher. I am in my 21st year of service in a classroom, and my 13th year as a certified kindergarten teacher. I currently teach in Jordan School District. I am a teacher because I absolutely love working with, and teaching children. During the past 20 years I have seen many changes in education. One of the things that impacts my ability to teach the most is class size. My classes are usually smaller because I teach in kindergarten, but many of my colleagues do not have room for all the children’s desks, and their class sizes continue to grow. Teachers in our school are told that we need to be creative and figure out ways to deal with the ever growing class sizes. My classes are usually 5 or 6 children over the optimum student to teacher ratio for kindergarten, but I feel lucky as many other kindergarten teachers have over 7 to 9 children more than is best in an early childhood classroom. I feel my love for children and teaching is used against me. I will do my job for less pay, little to no recognition for a job well done, less than desirable classroom supplies and conditions, and constant pressure to do more with less. Over the past twenty years the testing requirements have become outrageous and I am now spending so much time assessing my kindergarten students, I hardly have time to teach the required curriculum. I am a good teacher, I am always learning and perfecting my teaching skills, I have received awards for my teaching, I have taught and mentored other teachers. I will never quit my job or let my students down, they receive my best every day. The people making decisions about my students and my classroom have no idea how things work in a classroom and all the things I do each day. We need the people making the decisions to be more involved in education. Come into my classroom and my colleagues classrooms, see how we make a difference in our student's lives each day, and see the things we do with so little. Please make decisions based on actual knowledge of the issues, get involved and listen those of us who are in the trenches each day trying to make a difference in our corner of the world!

Kerry Hoffmann, Jordan School District

I am a retired educator. It is sad to see that the education needs in Utah are still the same needs that were there in 1979.

Ann Hollowell, Jordan School District

Get out in the schools and sub in a class. See what is happening before you make any decision.

Kim Howard, Jordan School District

Fund education.

Terry Huff, Jordan School District

Stop with the testing and really look into the impact teachers are having

Robyn Kabwere, Jordan School District
Teacher Shortage

Teaching is more difficult than the average person understands. We are met with so many challenges, but are expected to meet very rigorous testing and expectations. We need to be valued by our legislators and we need to be valued by society so that we can be giving our students the best education. Investing in teachers means investing in our future!

Christar Krans, Jordan School District

A first year teacher in Park City makes more than I make now after 7 years of teaching. While I think it's great they can afford that it feel it's time for the state to step in and make sure that all districts have the money for that kind of a salary schedule. I feel this would settle the district hopping down.

Brandon Larsen, Jordan School District

I teach middle school reading and have also worked as a literacy specialist in an elementary school. I feel as though more and more students are getting to middle school without the basic reading skills necessary to be successful in secondary schools. I feel this is due to underprepared teachers as well as budget cuts over the past several years. Once students reach middle school, it is much more difficult to remedy these reading deficits.

Toni Lasater, Jordan School District

I work with special education students. I know I make a difference and help the students improve their skills. many students that I have worked with have returned to regular ed placement because of the hard work of the student, teacher, parent and myself. I have been in the classroom for over 30 years and am too young to retire (age 52). I am overwhelmed with the responsibilities that seem to be added to my plate each year. My contract time ends at 3:30 but I do not leave the school until 5:00 and often have work to do at home. I love my job and the contact I have with colleagues, parents and students. I can't keep giving more. I know what my students need but do not have the time to meet their needs because of the number of students I services (45, while the recommendation is 35). We need to be compensated for the time we are spending preparing for our classes. I don't need technology, I need man power. I need additional aide support or additional teachers to help with the demands. The regular ed teachers would be able to do more in the classrooms if there were fewer kids in there classes. That could cut down on the number of students qualifying for special education services. I need your help. I don't believe money is the answer to everything. But money is needed for more resources (people). I love technology and use it in my classroom. But that can not take the place of the student reading directly to an adult. Or the time needed to teach a student a math skill. I have 12 students in a 5th grade math group. I spend 20 minutes reteaching core 5th grade concepts and 25 minutes working on individual skills that they are deficit in. If they miss a problem they have to fix it with me. As you can well imagine, 1:12 ratio makes this difficult. I have been fortunate and have had 2 high school students volunteering in my class for the last 4 weeks (an assignment from their language arts class). Today as they were asking who needed help I did not have any corrections that needed to be done. For the first time this year I was caught up! One of the students will complete his volunteer hours in two days. The other student will continue to come for the remainder of January. Then I am on my own again. I cannot express enough how much they have helped the students and me. Imagine what kind of progress could be made with another adult in the class. That is what man power can do. The data shows that the students have made progress in these few weeks. Please consider the needs of each individual student. They need you to do your job so that we can do ours.

Rochelle Manglinong, Jordan School District

Utah cannot afford to continue to be last in education funding in the country if you hope to attract big tech firms to locate in Utah.

Megan Mccormick, Jordan School District

Teaching is rough. Teachers teach because they want to and not because they aren't educated enough to do something else with their education. Whenever you vote on anything that impacts education, think about if it will make life easier or more harder on teachers. If it will make it harder, then you will lose good teachers, bottom line. Don't use education as a way to get people to vote on more taxes. Look at programs you have going and say "is this
Teacher Shortage

more important than the nurse I have in 4 years knowing what they're doing?" or "would the state benefit more from this or from adults who know how to problem solve on their own?"

Jenna Meeks, Jordan School District

I wish so badly that I had a TA or smaller class sizes. I teach English and I spend HOURS upon HOURS giving individual feedback on student writing. My students make significant improvement the more individualized feedback they receive and the sooner they get it. It just isn't possible to do with 35-40 students in each class. Imagine 240 essays that are 5-6 pages long on top of lesson planning, meetings, differentiated teaching, etc. NOT POSSIBLE.

Megan Murdock, Jordan School District

Older schools need to be updated with technology and are just as important as new schools!

Belynda Paxton, Jordan School District

I feel like teachers and legislators are on the same team. We both want what's best for the students in the state of Utah. We want to see our students achieve as high as they can. Sometimes, it feels like well meaning legislation undermines that team goal. We have an end of year test that is intended to help assess students and inform teachers of their teaching. By law, those same tests cannot be included in student grades and students can opt out of them for no reason whatsoever, yet teacher effectiveness is graded on those test results. We both want to see every student succeed in school, but parents can pull students out of school at any point of the year (for family vacations that could be scheduled during calendared breaks in the school year) and it is up to the teacher to get those students back up to speed again or we are the ones who have failed. We want to allow parents to have more of a choice in their student's education, but not all charter schools are held to the same standards with each other, let alone public schools. We want the best teachers in every classroom in the state. We want people who will go to whatever lengths necessary to reach every student in every chair in every classroom in every school (I'm not going to talk about compensation at this point, that is already a well know problem). We then allow people in the classroom with no knowledge of how to manage a class of 30-35 students (or more) because they demonstrated content knowledge on a test and they have taught Sunday School for years. Meanwhile we have seasoned teachers who spent years in college programs learning not only the same content, but how to engage learners of all levels and from different cultures. This seems to undermine that same vision of hiring and retaining highly qualified educators. Again, I firmly believe we are on the same team. I know that every legislator wants to see Utah schools and students lead the country in every aspect. It feels like there are unintended consequences with some legislation that has been passed in recent years that we, as a team, could address to better help Utah students live up to their potential and become the future leaders this state needs. We all want a better future for our children. I think that our team can do that. I know we can.

James Eric Perkins, Jordan School District

We need higher salaries to retain qualified teachers

Kim Peterson, Jordan School District

The last two years have been difficult in as a special education teacher because my entire team is constantly changing. We are having a difficult time finding teachers and keeping them. It is also hard to keep aides in the classrooms because the pay is low and they often have to pay $75 dollars to take the para pro test before they can even begin working. It is hard to constantly train new staff when I could be using that time to help develop more lessons for my students.

Megan Ruff, Jordan School District

Too many good teachers are leaving the profession or are retiring too soon due to economic pressures. Good teachers need to be valued and appreciated and they need to be able to raise their families without having to worry about being able to pay the bills.

Matthew Runyon, Jordan School District
Teacher Shortage

I think something needs to be done now in order for our children to be successful. Quality teachers needs to be a number one priority for our state. We won't be able to attract business without having an educated work force.

Sheri Sample, Jordan School District

It is a great day to be a Mustang!!! You are invited to Herriman High to talk to our students, sit in our classrooms and see how much is being done to ensure that our kids are going out into the world prepared for whatever comes next!

Kim Searle, Jordan School District

I am an ARL candidate. This is my third year teaching. I'm learning to teach, planning lessons, teaching AND taking classes all at the same time. This is overwhelming, and the classes that I'm required to take do not directly apply to the CTE class that I am teaching, which is a frustrating waste of time and money. It is costing me approximately $3500 to get my ARL, why? There is a teacher shortage, and I fulfill the requirements for my endorsements to teach the classes that I teach, I think there should be either free education for new teachers, and it should not be during the school year... this is really hard to balance with an active family, too. I understand why so many do not finish this process and leave the profession.

Rebecca Stone, Jordan School District

Students today have higher anxiety about school, including high stakes testing, than ever before. The measures legislators pass for teacher accountability and student performance are negatively impacting students and preventing them from being successful.

Sara Susov, Jordan School District

The two major things that will help us hire and retain teachers are being paid what we are worth and being valued - not overworked (like data crunching - we are not professional data analysts) and micromanaged. I think this has been evidenced in the recent reactions to the teacher shortage.

Marc Taylor, Jordan School District

We need higher salaries to keep and attract good educators.

Chandra Walker, Jordan School District

Before I went into education, without a degree, I was taking home, after taxes, 100K per year. I have four degrees and went into education, not to make money but to help kids, so they might have a brighter and better future. However, it took me 30 years to go from a beginning salary of 28K to 50K. We live in a very sad and disrespectful state of how our legislators treat our teachers..... those on the front line, in the trenches.

Max Weiss, Jordan School District

We work hard, and do our very best. Please don't portray us as not trying to do our best.

Donna Allred, Juab School District

Before you make more rules and regulations regarding education, do you best to actually go into schools and talk to teachers. If you want to improve the quality of education in Utah, you must invest in it. You need to invest in the quality and quantity of good teachers, you need to make sure they have the supplies and technology they need to teach and you need to fund education. We cannot expect to be able to compete with other states or internationally if we rank dead-last in student spending.

Kiera Beddes, Juab School District

Thank you for your efforts to fight for public education! The fight, however slow, is making a difference.

Betty Chamberlain, Kane County School District

I have great students and I believe all students can learn, but I have students that don't attend or when they do they have their hoodies on and earphones in. When we as teachers try to address the behavior or address any school
Teacher Shortage

challenge, we get bullied to keep our opinions to our self's. It never use to be that way it started when school grades were implemented.

Dave Anderson, Logan City School District

The Public Education System in Utah is in crisis. This is not a political issue to be thrown around as a campaigning pawn. Public Education must be addressed by all leaders, citizens, and businesses. We all have to be committed, be on the same page and act in the best interest of our community; society.

Alma Taylor Brown, Logan City School District

Teachers don't feel that they are respected. Teachers have the summer off and they get alot of vacation time in between. They don't relize what it is like being in the classroom.

George Duersch, Logan City School District

I feel like I am constantly being held to a higher standard as a teacher, but my students move on to the next grade regardless of their performance. Students are apathetic about their grades and progress. It is hard work to keep 25-35 students interested in anything. Some are very advanced. Some need lots of extra attention. As a teacher, I am supposed to be able to find ways to differentiate, but it is difficult. There are not many people skilled enough to be effective. We are losing teachers and there are not new ones coming because they realize how difficult it is and for little pay.

Michelle Hatch, Logan City School District

Look at all schools and not just Salt Lake area.

Jolene Herzog, Logan City School District

Again focus on teachers and their concerns. We should and do focus on the students, but teachers and pay seem to not be addressed. Lots of talk but no action.

Derek Hoskins, Logan City School District

I have been teaching for 17 years, but this year I was asked to make a change of assignment. Because of the teacher shortage, our administration was unable to find someone with the necessary credentials in the hiring pool. While I am okay with the change, it's probably not one I would have asked for. I was teaching 6th grade ELA and now I am an ESL teacher.

Jeanie Papiernik, Logan City School District

We have fewer student teachers than ever before, and the ranks of pre-service teachers at our local university has shrunk dramatically the past few years. We are going to be in a world of hurt as current teachers retire and there is no one to replace them.

Joyce Smart, Logan City School District

Teachers in Utah are some of the best and they put forth a great effort to provide students with what they need. They put in a great deal of time and effort to do this, a lot of that time is on their own time and late into the night. Having time to collaborate with others is important.

Rhonda Harrison, Millard School District

You cannot keep adding requirements in our teaching without supporting us in them. We are lacking pay, people, and parent support.

Canisha Harrison, Millard School District

Teachers are the life blood of of our nation's future. Second to only the family.

Kirtt Myers, Millard School District
Teacher Shortage

I have a son who wanted to do what his dad does. I told him not only no but hell no. He has a bachelors degree in engineering, he has been working for 5 years and makes much more money than his father who has a masters degree and 35 years in education. Who would ever encourage a son to go into education. That being said I think it is a good profession for women who want to work and raise a family, therefoer we now have a profession of women.

Jim Wiscombe, Morgan School District

The accountability teachers are having to do through all the assessments is wasting valuable instructional time for students. In addition it is putting extra stress on the profession by having teachers have to teach to the test so that they can get the portion of their salary that says they are proficient educators.

Linda Auwerda, Murray City School District

As a veteran teacher I am very concerned about retaining and attracting new teachers. I want my replacement to be a good one!!!! However, many of the quality young educators are losing interest in teaching. Also many of the new teachers we interview are far below the quality of those retiring. Something needs to be done!!!!

Mark Durfey, Murray City School District

Unlike other districts, Murray chose to increase salaries of ALL teachers, instead of just new teachers. I am extremely grateful for this increase--we just had a new baby and we are able to better afford those expenses. We need to help all teachers, not just new teachers, have these new wages. We need to increase teachers and staff's quality of life so they can better serve our students. We need to make the wages large enough so people can support a family on our wages. That's how we're going to get and keep quality teachers.

Shelly Gearheart, Murray City School District

You get what you pay for and more with teachers.

Keeko Georgelas, Murray City School District

There is such a disconnect between how they perceive the school and the reality of it. I want legislators to spend at least a week in schools with different SES, get to know students on individual basis, talk with teachers about their concerns and take them in considerations during the legislative sessions. They need to be realistic when it comes to the achievement expected outcomes of students with disabilities. They all make progress but it depends greatly on their cognitive issues, which need to be taking in consideration. One major benefit that decreases the gap between abled and disable students are the accommodations the IEP team decides the students need in the Gen Ed classroom. For example, if a student has difficulty with short term memory and recall of information, a calculator will help the student with math computation. If they understand specific math concepts, but never get the answer correct because they can't recall multiplication facts, they should be allowed to use the calculator during assessments. We are in the technology era, with any restrictions. Why can't these students use them? Why can't we do all we can to help them experience success? They spend so many hours practicing math facts, when they could participate in the learning process with their peers and feel successful. Great special education teachers and teachers in general leave the profession due to the pressure and high expectation mandated by our legislature, with minimal support coming from them.

Kathy Hanks, Murray City School District

Our daily demands. All the moving parts that go into teaching students, people, on a daily basis. The demands are increasing, but also the demands for mental health and emotional intelligence. Our students come hungry, stressed, abused more and more every year. We need smaller class sizes to support these students as well as intervention systems. Basically money for new programs and more teachers. We are here for students. We are not whining entitled people. We just want to do our jobs well.

Jennie LaFortune, Murray City School District

I've been teaching elementary school for 23 years. In that time, I've spent an average of 3-4 extra hours a day outside of contract time in order to be an effective teacher. For some, it may sound like I'm not organized. To others
Teacher Shortage

I'm an award winning, effective teacher whose students love to come to school and who feel they have learned while spending time in my classroom. Let me use today as an example. The last bell rang at 3:10. It is now past contract time at 3:55pm. I've spent this time with a parent, answering e-mails from other parents, reading an article sent to the entire faculty by our administrator, answered a survey from the district concerning our language arts program, and am now writing to you. I still have 5 journals to read, several assignments and one assessment to record into the computerized grading record and finishing touches on tomorrow's lesson plans to put into place. I could come early in the morning, but I already have to be here early for a faculty meeting. There's just never enough time. It's so easy to get burned out. I'm old, from a generation of hard working, get the job done people. This new generation of young teachers is not willing to give the time, blood, sweat and tears to only be given more and more things to do with few materials, directions, and paid time to do them in. No wonder young people no longer aspire to be teachers! It's exhausting and many of our young teachers cannot qualify for a mortgage for a suitable house for their families! I appreciate the pay raise of the last year. It was a great start. It's time to look at other ways to assist teachers, to fill their buckets so they can fill the buckets of future citizens and community leaders.

Tina Nilsson, Murray City School District

Class size does make a huge difference

Amy Patterson, Murray City School District

Student success starts with supporting our teachers.

Charli Quinonez, Murray City School District

I would like my legislators to know that I love my job. But I can't stay in my job when they don't support it. I'm good at my job. We are consistently losing good teachers in Utah because our legislators value big business and money more than they do our students, our teachers and education. Its sad. Stack 'em deep and sell 'em cheap.

Amy Roberds, Murray City School District

I currently have 40 students in each English 11 class. I have a total of 210 students in MHS with many individual needs: SPED, 504s, and ESL/ELL needs. I am trying to prepare these students to take the ACT and do well. It is an impossible task.

Crystal Spackman, Murray City School District

Class size really matters. I've had smaller classes the past two years due to enrollment lowering - its amazing what I can do with less students. Having para professionals in the classroom to help is a huge help - we can give the students more one-on-one help they need with smaller numbers and extra helping hands.

Darle Taylor, Murray City School District

We need to be trusted to do the work we have committed to do. As with all professions, there are few who make it hard for the rest. Teachers do not need legislation passed to remind or tell us how to do our job. We are tired of trying every whim or educational philosophy that comes around and is then legislated to us to follow. Stop moving the goal-post and allow us to be the professionals we are. Please pay us as if we were truly professionals. My daughter in-law started her career making more (by almost double) than I do after working 10 years in the teaching profession. We both have a bachelor's degree. To help address the teacher shortage, pay and compensate us what we are worth. Please remember that we do not "have summer off". We work during the summer perfecting our craft, attending conferences, and attending classes to better ourselves in the profession we love.

Auralee Brooks, North Sanpete School District

We need to see how we can help people be teachers, they get to the end and all those Praxis test seem to be the stopping point when they can't pass. Some say its not worth it to them to throw all of that money away when the test is so hard.

Des Dyches, North Sanpete School District
Teacher Shortage

The #1 way to reduce the teacher shortage and increase retention is to increase the income. The more financially viable the career becomes, the more people who will consider it. People keep dancing around this because nobody wants to fork out the dough. The fact is, people are going to go where the pay is. Better pay = more applications. Everybody knows that teachers get paid s###, so who can be surprised when a high schooler sits down with their counselor and declines the idea because, they "want to make more than that." You know it's what happens. Everybody knows. It's so obvious. Where the pay is, there too will the people go. Stop ignoring it. Stop pretending it's this, that, or the other thing. It's the pay. I LOVE my job. LOVE IT! But if another job were to open for me that I would also enjoy and pay me more, I'll quit teaching and go do that, because I have a family to provide for and a retirement to save for. The teacher's world pivots on the hinge of the paycheck. Everybody acts like being a teacher is some great moral calling; it's not. It's a job, like any other, and we do it to get paid. The entire world expects us to be these high moral giants, but then they pay us barely more than the janitors. This discrepancy is not how you win new converts to the educator pool. The rule goes: "You get paid what you're worth." Well, that tells me that the district, state, and union don't think I'm worth much, and perspective teachers see that. You don't think these college kids look at the pay scales and think, "Huh, they must not want me that bad." They do. I thought that. Lucky for them, it was the path I choose anyway. Pave the path with gold and watch students stampede down it.

Sterling Whipple, North Sanpete School District

That with the shortage of teachers we should be better supporting them. No new bills to make it tougher on new teachers. Ann Millners new law is a joke. Also the state school board needs to back off and start supporting teachers for a change.

Chad Staley, North Summit School District

I would like to let them know that teachers work very hard, and most teachers take their work home with them and work for hours every night. Many teachers get burned out within the first few years of teaching. My school has lost many teachers due to this, and I feel like higher salaries would help.

Nicollette Anderson, Nebo School District

I am a mentor and instructional coach who supports Special Ed teachers who are just starting out or dealing with difficult situations. It's hard for me to see how much is expected of them, especially how much time is required outside of contract time, for the amount of compensation they receive. Many of our new teachers are not fully licensed, which adds an extra burden on their mentors and schools to get them up to speed while they work on their licensure. In order to help our most vulnerable students, additional funding is needed.

Julie Beckham, Nebo School District

Students need to be in class to learn. We need more support for attendance policies that still allow parent autonomy but also communicate the importance of quality education for youth. We need our legislators to prioritize it and speak positively about it to help the culture of learning together as a community.

Becky Beckstead, Nebo School District

When will we value educators? We are professionals and need to be duly compensated and given support at the school to meet the continuing list of tasks taking us away from our focus on student instruction and outcomes. We need skilled people.

Bryce Bird, Nebo School District

There is very little incentive for teachers to stay in the career for the long haul. Things are in place to attract teachers to the profession and monies are spent for Level I teachers to be mentored or coached. Teachers with many years of experience need learning opportunities and incentives, too!

Deana Coates, Nebo School District

Too many men are not going into the field of education because they can't support a family on a teacher's salary.

Carolyn Creer, Nebo School District
Teacher Shortage

Unfair teacher pay in Washington school district compared to other high cost of living areas in Utah

*Phil Ekker, Nebo School District*

Need to pay enough money to attract quality teachers and have them remain in the profession.

*LaDell Gillman, Nebo School District*

The students are coming harder and harder to teach. For what teachers are asked to do and what they get paid to do it, teaching is becoming a less and less desirable job.

*Heidi Hall, Nebo School District*

We need quality educators. I work as a mentor working with teachers in their first 3 years of teaching. Alternate route to license is not the same as going through a college training program where teachers learn classroom management skills and public relations skills. It's very difficult for these new teachers to learn how to teach by being thrown into a classroom, even if they are experts in the field they are teaching. We need to do everything we can to make teaching a desired career. Our future depends on it.

*Pam Haney, Nebo School District*

We need to supply students with a very high quality of education that will help the students in their field of employment and ability to function in society. We are not in the business of replacing parental responsibility and individual accountability.

*Thomas Hawks, Nebo School District*

I love teaching and I am a natural. I teach elementary school and know I make a big, positive impact on the lives of my students. I love them and they feel it. How do I know? I am invited to mission farewells, homecomings and weddings and am frequently greeted in public places with big hugs from former students. I become friends with many of their parents who seek out advice many years after I have taught their child. My test scores are good, I am beloved and I love teaching. I am also counting down the years (five first days left) until I retire. I always imagined age-related health issues would force me to retire, but I am in great health. I plan to leave teaching because the stress, needs & demands of teachers and students are too many. The expectations of a child have become too much for many of them to bear. My eight and nine year old students cry during testing because they do not understand what is expected or are unable to figure out how to use the mouse to accomplish the assigned task (click on, drag and drop dots and lines to demonstrate they understand perimeter or area.) Their little hands struggle to type essays, often about topics they do not fully comprehend like arboretums, culture museums or NASA careers. They have completed the 3rd grade Keyboarding curriculum and even spent many extra hours practicing, but they still have a hard time remembering how to capitalize letters or the difference between the available punctuation marks. They hunt for the letters asking, "Why aren't they in order?" They struggle to write using evidence from the articles provided without actually using the exact words. That is a lot to expect of an eight year old. Testing is too intense, too confusing and too overwhelming for too many of my students. I feel like I spend the entire year building relationships of trust and then end the year by subjecting them to hours of torture. Third grade students need paper and pencil tests. The questions need to be more direct and age appropriate. We must reduce the hours spent on testing. Our current method of testing is killing their joy for learning and many teachers joy for teaching. Maybe with small classes and adequate support for the ever-increasing numbers of special needs students, the job would be “do-able.” Right now, it is not. I am doing all that I can to make it possible for my students to succeed, but cannot keep up. The hours and expectations never fail to increase or intensify. I am one of your best teachers and am so worn out, I no longer WANT to teach. Who will replace me? The pay and benefits have never drawn people to teaching, but good retirement and health insurance benefits and “mom-friendly” hours helped compensate. Teachers could be home soon after their children returned from school, a draw for many women. Not anymore. Teaching is a full-time job with impossible demands and inadequate compensation. Multi-generational teacher families are telling their children not to teach. The decreased number of students entering education programs should tell you that society also views teaching as an undesirable profession. What are we going to do when the demands are so high, no one qualified will do it?

*Michael-Ann McAfee, Nebo School District*
Teacher Shortage

"SALT LAKE CITY — Qualifying special educators could earn stipends starting at $4,000 annually under a legislative proposal that is similar to bonuses now paid to teachers of mathematics, some science disciplines and computer science. The proposal by Rep. Val Potter, R-North Logan, and Sen. Howard Stephenson, R-Draper, would cap the stipends at $10,000 a year. Potter, addressing the Utah Legislature's Public Education Appropriations Subcommittee on Wednesday, said the stipend is needed to address a shortage of special education teachers." (Marjorie Cortez November 8, 2017)

I am a Special Education teacher. I have been teaching for 26 years. As I look over those years the amount of paperwork associated with my job is astounding. I teach math classes. My students are doing the same work as the regular education students but at a slower pace. I help team teach in Inclusive Math classes as well, yet I am not eligible for the stipend that math teachers are receiving. I am usually the last car in the parking lot to leave and that is due to the many IEP’s I am thoughtfully writing for my students. My hours by far exceed those of regular education teachers. Many nights after I take my own children to their events, make dinner and run errands, I cozy up to my computer to write the rest of the IEP I couldn't finish while at school. I am not complaining but stating the facts of my job. I chose it and as you can see after 26 years I am still going strong. Being compensated for my extra hours would be a wonderful way to say thank you and we recognize the extra hours you spend being a Special Educator! There are coaches of all sports that spend many additional hours at the school. They receive stipends. Since we are in a teacher shortage, this stipend would also be an incentive to encourage more individuals to pursue the career of a Special Education Teacher!

Kristie McMurdie, Nebo School District

Please come spend a week in any classroom. Please come see the day-to-day intricacies of our day and then see how it compares to what you felt before. See how many of our students depend on school for a hot meal, for TLC, and for so many other critical survival components on top of the educational ones we also provide. Please spend more than an hour or even a day. Then go back and decide how best to serve our student populations and our future caretakers.

Sarai T Memmott, Nebo School District

Increase pay, or good luck finding teachers. Many of the teachers today are eligible for retirement within a couple of years

Scot Moldenhauer, Nebo School District

We are losing good teacher because of low pay and lack of support. Teacher can not live on their salary alone!!

Callie Naccarato, Nebo School District

We have amazing students who are achieving incredible things. They need mentors who are quality and interested in helping students succeed. Teachers need to be paid more so that they want to stay in education. It's very hard to stay motivated to be in the classroom when you know your salary could double if you took a corporate job. The state should not continue to rely on people who do this job out of the kindness of their hearts. The state needs to make teaching a valued profession. The more they can do to support teachers, the better.

Angela Nederhand, Nebo School District

Support Senator Stephensen's bill for equity funding and additional pay for Special Education teachers.

Camille Neilson, Nebo School District

Teachers are leaving the profession from being overburdened. Smaller classes and time to prepare would help keep more teachers in the field.

Melissa Page, Nebo School District

I have 21 years worth of stories...I would love to share with an INTERESTED Legislator

Mike Parker, Nebo School District
Teacher Shortage

We have made good strides but there is still much to be done in order to secure the future of public education in Utah.

Stan Peck, Nebo School District

Teacher burnout is our current reality. Kids are coming with big issues that are not education related. We have to address these issues, as well as their education. It is draining to teach all the subjects, and do therapy on the student whose mom is in jail, who is living in a camp trailer, who has Obsessive defiant disorder, who thinks she is a boy and wants to transition to a male PLUS manage 30 kids in a classroom. Then spend 15 hours of overtime a week without pay, and want to stay in the profession. I have been teaching for 11 years. I spend much more of my time jumping through the hoops the state requires than planning for my lessons. Every teacher i know says, "When can I just be in my classroom and just teach!" More support needs to be given to teachers for dealing with behaviors and emotional issues. We can't spend our whole day doing therapy. It's not fair to teachers, nor the kids that are happy and ready to learn. Something has to change.

Lisa Peterson, Nebo School District

What do you think the kids of Utah are worth? Do you really think the majority of teachers aren't doing the best they can?

David Rencher, Nebo School District

Teachers are over worked, have too large of classes, underpaid, and have horrible benefits. I am also very frustrated with the low quality of teacher that is coming into the field. I worked hard to earn my qualifications as a teacher, so it is really hard to watch others being hired with no teaching experience or qualifications.

Josie Reynaud, Nebo School District

Better pay will enable us to keep and gain better educators. Our students are those that will become the doctors, business men, and lawyers in the future and we need to have the same reputation among those professions.

Arielle Soto, Nebo School District


Cindy Sumsion, Nebo School District

They need to personally visit classrooms...specifically elementary classrooms. (I am not an elementary teacher...)

NataLei Terry, Nebo School District

You need to address accountability for district administrators and principals: They cannot be given carte blanche to make "progressive" changes to school systems, holding teachers in check with punitive evaluation measures. Sop worrying about teacher accountability and start focusing on too many administrators (who themselves can't teach) spending money on new methods that don't work. We know what works: caring, committed teachersand small classes. No more tests. No more progressive programs. Back to basics. Kids need to read and write, speak and listen, learn and communicate. Let good teachers do their jobs!

Michael Thompson, Nebo School District

What's more important, student education or your special interest friends?

Chris Vest, Nebo School District

Last year I had a class with 29 1st graders. That's too many!

Rachel Wigginton, Nebo School District
Teacher Shortage

I feel that teachers are overworked, with unreasonable expectations. There are many expectations with very few monetary rewards.

Shea Wimmer, Nebo School District

Teachers and other educators (I am a Speech Language Pathologist) in Utah are expected to work for free. Without donated time and money from us, the education system here would collapse. It is appalling.

Betina Workman, Nebo School District

Teachers want to be excellent. We work extra hours to create interesting lessons, grade the rigorous assignments we assign, and find new materials. We love our content and we enjoy working with students and helping them learn and grow. But we have many factors working against us. 1) Class sizes are so large, it is hard to meet the needs of individual learners. 2) Teacher pay does not adequately compensate teachers for all the extra hours that are spent, and teachers quickly realize it is VERY DIFFICULT to support a family on the amount they earn. (Have you seen home prices?) 3) Legislation is passed without teacher input that adds to a teacher's responsibilities but doesn't help student learning. For example: sage testing was required, but students opt out or race through it just to be done, and then schools/teachers receive a poor “school grade.”

Lori Zaremba, Nebo School District

That quality teachers deserve decent, professional wage.

Betty Jo Anderson, Ogden School District

Teachers are not the enemy.

Melissa Brock, Ogden School District

As a teacher, there are some things that scare me about our current education system and the direction that we are headed. These concerns include 1. Teacher Shortage 2. Class sizes 3. High stakes testing requirements from the federal and state government 4. Teacher morale I watch my colleagues go home every night overworked, and underpaid. If we do not address our teachers and their support system I do not believe we can maintain a high standard of learning in Utah.

Ashley Davis, Ogden School District

In the community I teach in...(inner city schools) we are the life line for their total education...You can hardly put a price on that...but good teachers are leaving because they can't meet their own financial obligations. So much pressure is put on them with no financial reward...it has to be a given.

Suzanne Williams Dennison, Ogden School District

Everyday I make a difference in the classroom. My students are excited to see me and I love them. I would love to feel that teachers have that same respect from the state of Utah. We have a teacher shortage because teachers do not feel respected for the differences we make each and everyday. We need to find a way to attract and keep teachers...emphasis on the keep.

Amy Dunn, Ogden School District

While working in a turnaround school in Ogden School District, I was expected to spend @ 3 or 4 hours outside of the contract time to visit parents or study teaching techniques. This was expected of all the teachers in the school, regardless of their levels of expertise. It made a poorly paid, professional job unattractive and took too much time away from my family life. Worst of all, it took time I needed to spend diagnosing my students' needs and planning for their academic activities and success. The practice was in contrast to what I had learned to be beneficial to my students' learning. It was extremely frustrating and made me feel less effective as a classroom teacher and very unimportant as a professional.

Linda Edwards, Ogden School District
Teacher Shortage

There is a country wide teacher shortage epidemic occurring and something needs to change. Having just graduated, I was absolutely amazed at how small my cohort was, comprising of only 5 students. Asking young people what they are going to school for and if they have ever considered pursuing education, most state that they would become a teacher but it is not realistic to live off of a teachers salary. If society stopped funding prisons and started funding schools, there would be an increase in school attendance and a decrease in prison population.

Brigid Giles, Ogden School District

In my smaller classes my students usually score 2-4% higher than my other classes. Class size has been shown to improve quality of instruction, and can also reduce the stress of educators. It is easier to focus on individual students when you don't have 40 per class.

Heidi Schlegel, Ogden School District

Every year I spend more and more money on my students to ensure they have the materials and newest innovations they need to become successful not just in school, but in their lives. I love what I do, but I am losing money year after year with little to no compensation. My students are excelling and I believe in them wholeheartedly, but I may have to find a higher paying position so that I can take care of my family.

Deanna Shiverdecker, Ogden School District

My classes average 38 students.

John Lynn Taylor, Ogden School District

Treating teachers as professionals with a professional salary will attract more qualified people into the profession.

Cindy Wilcox, Ogden School District

As a special education teacher in Utah for 16 years, and a public education employee for 20 years, we need to better fund education, especially teacher salaries to ensure that we keep and entice quality educators to meet the needs of Utah students. I do not know of a teacher who doesn't work above their "contract time" to meet the current expectations they have on them. It has been too long that teachers have done it because they love the students, without compensation for what they are doing. Even though we are at the bottom of funding for education, our students are not at the bottom of the nation in performance. Show teachers, parents, and students that they matter more than they ever have before.

Wendy Wilson, Ogden School District

Attract and RETAIN quality teachers.

David Bettinson, Other

Placing ELL students in already-overcrowded mainstream classrooms has been very counterproductive. Bring back LEP sheltered classes for ELL students.

Warren Brodhead, Other

The present state of funding of education in Utah is appalling! It demeans teachers and also students, setting a standard for low expectations and low self esteem. This affects students all their lives.

Heather Dorrell, Other

I retired from the classroom four years ago after devoting more than forty years to the profession. I experienced many changes and shifts in the educational system during those years. But one thing has never changed. Every student deserves a well trained, qualified, caring teacher.

Trudy Henderson, Other

talk with teachers not just "representatives"

Tom Matlock, Other
Teacher Shortage

Most of my mediocre paycheck goes to pay for the majority of lessons and units that I do to help the students become engaged in learning with hands-on and interactive lessons. But also having to pay for all relicensing and assessments to become a highly qualified teacher takes a big chunk too. Then you have those people who decide they want to teach and they have fewer mandates put on them and fewer fees. But if I want to change to a different subject matter which should require less time then those off the street with no experience I'm being told it requires 8 classes that will take approx two years.

Drew Wright, Other

We need qualified teachers in Our classrooms! And we need to raise teacher pay to be able to retain new teachers so they stay in the profession.

Kathleen Anderson, Park City School District

How they are making TEACHING even more difficult than it already is by not understanding OR even acknowledging the efforts the majority of teachers make on behalf of their students.

Brenda Bensch, Park City School District

Teachers and quality schools are vital to the success of our community as a whole. Please provide us with the support we need to best do our jobs.

Joanna Hammel, Park City School District

No everyone can teach or lead teachers -- it is a highly skilled profession. Teachers impact all future careers through the work we do. Treat teachers like the professionals we are and support our work and efforts as we care about children and their futures.

Jenn King, Park City School District

Growth in funding for public education in Utah began falling behind the rest of the Country decades ago but the resulting decay of services was largely kept hidden from the public for two reasons. Utah possessed some of the most dedicated hard working teachers and Utah students were largely from stable supportive homes. Those teachers are now retiring and the current work conditions are so poor that few college graduates view a career in Utah public education as a viable option. Schools are now forced to serve ever expanding social roles with students because fewer and fewer of Utah children have the stable supportive home life. Utah can no longer hide its failure to adequately fund public education. The crisis is no longer in the future. The future is now.

Charlie Matthews, Park City School District

Utah has the opportunity to become one of the top states for education in the country. We do an amazing job on a limited budget, just imagine what we could accomplish if we were anywhere close to other states in funding.

Melanie Rice Moffat, Park City School District

Every student deserves to have a highly qualified academic counselor and a crisis interventionist available when they need a trained professional to talk to. We must invest in our children. It is time to adequately fund public education to give our kids the kind of support they need to help them navigate through divorce, a death in the family, terminal illness, depression, abuse, drug use, and all mental health issues. Provide the funding necessary to help our kids. Keeping our kids healthy and safe or lowering taxes? It's not really a choice. Do the right thing.

Renee Pinkney, Park City School District

We need to stop bragging about how much we get out of our education system given that we spend so little money on it (compared to other states). Good enough is the enemy of great.

Edward Potts, Park City School District

Make education--our students and teachers-- a priority in Utah!!!

Lara Rude, Park City School District
Teacher Shortage

I have taught over 25 years and my pay has not increased in the past 8 due to increases in insurance and little increases in pay. What are you going to do to RETAIN veteran teachers who contribute so much?

Rebecca Anderton, Provo City School District

Teachers have one of the most important jobs in the country, yet we are treated like dirt by the legislatures on a national, state, and local scale. Funding continues to be cut, student achievement drops, and more and more teachers are leaving the profession because we cannot offer them anything more than a life of stress and politics. We have test scores shoved down our throats and are told we are not successful based on those scores, but then are told that we need to do what our students need. We are threatened with our job security if our students don't perform on high-stakes tests yet we are told not to teach to it. The only good thing about education is the kids, and that is putting it in the most positive terms that I can. I am sick and tired of having nothing but bad news from my administration, and told that I am a bad teacher because my students can't pass a test that was created for high-income, achieving students, and doesn't take into account the majority of the students who actually come through our public school system. When I have children, I will not put them through the disaster that is the public school system in America. That is the impact this profession has had on me as a teacher.

Grace Blair, Provo City School District

1. There's a lot of good teachers out here that are trying their best and deserve public support. 2. Legislators hardly ever seem to know what is actually best for kids, it's all based on partisan politics. 3. There are a lot of talented people who opt out of teaching because the salary and benefits are not worth the commitment it takes to do the job the way it needs to be done.

Melanie Bliss, Provo City School District

I invite each member of the legislature to come substitute in any classroom for one week, including planning lessons. (You only need a high-school diploma to apply as a substitute.) When you have walked in our shoes for a week, go back and write the laws you wish you had in place. It will change your whole world. We need legislators who understand what teaching really means. We need legislators who understand what it is like to manage a class of 27 ten year olds or 44 high-schoolers. We need legislators who care that Utah spends the LEAST of any state on their students, and whose teachers are paid less than most other states. We need legislators who care as much as the students in the desks what will happen to them. We need you.

Mariel Boone, Provo City School District

I am more concerned about the respect teachers receive than the money they receive. While teacher pay may affect whether or not people go into teaching, it is the lack of respect that causes them to leave teaching. I am not sure why this issue is not addressed. When teachers give their all to their job, it is very disheartening to have achievement in testing be the only criteria for good teaching. Some of us are dealing with students with extremely challenging lives and if we can help them grow in any way, we are grateful. Why do we not have a growth mindset as opposed to an absolute achievement mindset? Students are not cookies to be cut out of dough to come out the perfect shape. They are human beings who are struggling to make their lives work, some under very difficult circumstances. The reasons I tell people not to go into teaching have nothing to do with money and everything to do with respect.

Teresa Dickson, Provo City School District

Special Education teachers need more paraprofessional support. The education standard for hiring paraprofessionals is too high which is causing a shortage in special education help. The education standard for hiring paraprofessionals need to be lowered so more individuals are able to apply for the position. There are 25 openings for special education paraprofessionals in our district. The students in the program are suffering due to the lack of additional help.

Christina Donnelly, Provo City School District
Teacher Shortage

Fear is gripping education to the point that no one can express differences without being branded with the term “negative” and this branding passes through the association of superintendents where there is extreme commitment to protect each others reputations without regard to open perspectives and improve from anonymous evaluations. The toxicity in education is causing tremendous teacher turnover

Anonymous, Provo City School District

Utah has gotten away with underpaying teachers for too long. I work 60-80 hours a week, have over a decade of experience, hold a Master’s degree plus over 30 additional graduate credits. I have invested thousands and thousands of dollars into my students. (Last year I spent over $2500 out of pocket.) I am passionate, innovative, and exactly the type of teacher that Utah needs to attract. However, I make $50,000 a year. I took a $20,000 pay cut to come to Utah and work more hours than I ever have in the past. I have zero intention of teaching in Utah beyond a couple more years. They can’t compete. This year, I know of 3 quality colleagues leaving because of the pay. I witness first hand the lack of quality in candidates because of the shortage. Some of the hires are appalling and I would never stand for my child to be in such a class. Nobody should stand for it. However, if we want quality, we have to pay for quality. Then we can afford to be picky and get and retain the best.

Nicole Guzman, Provo City School District

We need to pay teachers according to the consequence of poorly prepared young people- non employment or worse, incarceration. There is a direct correlation. Bet on education, but hedge your bets- expect a lot from them, but be willing to back it up with competitive salaries. Maybe bring back a fair pension, allow for teacher tax exemption, create a pathway to success for both educators and students.

Mary James, Provo City School District

I am a 29 year veteran teacher of secondary mathematics. I am a teacher leader in my school and district. My students score well on any state mandated tests, and overall, my students show progress each year. By all measures, I am effective. But I am burning out. Increasingly, I am having to make up for the lack of quality in hiring for new teachers, and I am being told more and more paperwork is the answer to show that I am an effective educator. Do I have room to improve? Yes. Do I want to collaborate? Of course. But for me to have to train teachers with little or no educational background on the pedagogy of how to run a classroom year after year is not fair to me or my students—or the students in the class where the new teacher tries to learn as they go. Why is it not important to hold every educator to a high standard of pedagogy knowledge? And more often than not, these are also people who do not know the math well enough to teach it to high school students. They struggle from the first day of class, and students try to bail on them as soon as they figure that out. That makes class loads for competent teachers skyrocket, making the division of labor so skewed it becomes almost comical. This past year, we lost 3 highly qualified candidates for an open position to other districts because of the lower pay in our district. Our district could not compete with others close to us in the amount of raises that were offered. The state base is so low, teachers must consider those kinds of things. So now we have an under-qualified teacher who struggles every day, but was available and cheap a week before school started. And I have to try to make up for that through collaboration, mentoring and an increased student load. It is burning me out. I am hoping that the state will recognize that funding for teachers has not increased in so long that they will take action this session--both in actual salary and class sizes. I am hoping that we can attract and retain a higher quality of person into the profession. If that happens, I will be able to learn from others and improve my own practice, instead of always being the one asked to train under-qualified hires to just make it through the year.

Carla Johnson, Provo City School District

I really enjoy teaching. I am getting married this summer and my fiance is from another state. As I look at the salary schedules for other states it makes more financial sense to move away from friends and family to be a teacher elsewhere. I have worked as a teacher for about ten years. If I were to move to this state I would start over on their pay scale and make 17k more as a brand new teacher in that state. That is a new convertible every two years for the same fulfilling job.

Lydia L Knudsen, Provo City School District
Teacher Shortage

Over the past 10 years since I've become a teacher, I have seen the expectations placed upon teachers increase significantly to the point that each year, I see many of my colleagues in the profession leave the teaching profession to pursue other career paths. They have no choice but to do so after being pushed to teacher burnout trying to keep up with daily responsibilities as a teacher and attend more meetings serving on at least one school committee or being asked to create curriculum notebooks with no more pay. I, myself contemplate this action on a daily basis due to the added expectations teachers are asked to complete each year with meager salaries that can barely support ourselves and/or our families especially if we own our homes or cars. In addition, class sizes in public schools are way too big to effectively teach our students. For example, in classes that require a lot of writing from our students, it is almost impossible to give immediate, quality feedback to our students if we want to also meet the demands of our personal lives. It feels like the golden age of teaching has passed where we were trusted to do our jobs, catering to the various learning styles of students is completely ignored by being required to give them more and more standardized tests that reflect badly on the teachers if they do not do well. For many teachers, their love and passion of teaching is getting outweighed by the increased burdens placed on teaching each year. Please do something to ease our burdens as soon as possible. We are losing wonderful teachers each year for these reasons and more.

Nathalie LeBras, Provo City School District

I teach a behavior support class for the most at risk children in Provo City School District. These children have experienced severe trauma in their homes, including physical, emotional, and sexual abuse. As a result these students have mental illnesses. My co-teacher and I act as a social worker, therapist, mother, and teacher. We both have been attacked numerous times, as well as have had our room destroyed. One of our students would defecate in his pants daily and become violent and/or run away when confronted about it. All of this, and I only make a little over $31,000. I'm exhausted, I feel burned out, and to be honest, may not come back next year because of the physical and emotional exhaustion.

Jackie Martin Cooper, Provo City School District

I am a department chair in a high school for special education and my last several hires are on an ARL. We can't get and retain good special education teachers. We need to pay better so we can retain these teachers who teach the most highly impacted students in our society. We will pay in a big way in the future if we fail to educate these students well.

Wendy Nichol, Provo City School District

Teachers are doing their best under trying conditions. I'm a veteran teacher concerned with teacher turnover. Younger teachers aren't making it too long and teacher turnover is hurting our schools and children. Retired teachers might want to come back if some restrictions on pensions and "sitting out a year" were changed. Teachers care about their students.

Brian Preece, Provo City School District

I'm a special ed teacher 11 years, ranging from elementary resource, elementary self-contained, and high school resource. This year I am an instructional coach for special ed ARLs and interns. As I take a new The burnout rate of special ed teachers is quite high, thus districts are having to rely on hiring an training people who are willing to do an ARL. This is an alarming trend that should be addressed somehow. It is really difficult to teach everything a special ed teacher is expected to do with people who have no pre-service prep! And quite frankly, I think special ed teachers are asked to do more than is possible considering a traditional work day. It is a highly stressful job that is not worth the pay they get.

Ingrid Shurtleff, Provo City School District

The lack of pre-service teachers signing up for undergraduate elementary education courses at our local universities is MIND BLOWING! We are suffering! How do we get exceptional people to be the teachers our next generation so desperately needs? I am a sixth generation educator of Utah children. Ten of my siblings or their spouses are current teachers. Our teaching family is struggling to get even one child of our next generation to even look at teaching! Our children are exceptional students (having been educated and tutored by some very outstanding teachers), and are
Teacher Shortage

not even interested in the education field. All of them are looking elsewhere for their college degrees. They have seen first-hand how hard we have worked, and what we have to show for our extensive efforts, and are not interested! In fact, in the case of both my father and grandfather, a family farm is the only thing that kept the family with food on the table, and modest clothing on our backs. Excellent health insurance, that was extremely cost effective during the late 60's and throughout the 70's was the drawing factor toward education for my father. In my case, I have lived below the poverty line (this includes with advanced schooling beyond a Bachelor's Degree) for most of my married life. Even with careful budgeting, there have not been enough funds for braces, if we also wanted our four children to play an instrument and participate in school sports programs. Please support “Our Schools Now” and do everything in your power to make being an educator “WORTH IT” again!

Teresa Toluta’u, Provo City School District

I find it very concerning that over 50% of the teachers in my district (Provo) are in their first 5 years. Teachers don't have time to become experts if they leave the profession before they have time to get good at what they do.

Heather Williams, Provo City School District

It is an insult to the nearly 30 years of teaching and 7+ years of learning, testing, and endorsements I have worked so hard to achieve to be considered a professional to have charter schools hire anybody they want to teach whether they are qualified or not. And then to lower the standards as a way to stop the teacher shortage is another slap in the face. If you you want teachers to be professionals, then treat them as such! If there were a doctor shortage you wouldn’t pick just anyone off the streets. Why would teaching be different. If you want to attract good teachers, then they need to be paid well. Too many new teachers are leaving because they realize they can't make it on a teacher's salary. There are too many requirements piled up on teachers for the amount of money they make.

Angela Williams, Provo City School District

I believe in elementary schools one-to-one devices are not the answer to higher test results, etc. Elementary students need paper and pencil practice to learn the basics that will help them to understand apps and programs as they move on to higher grades. If devices are available to elementary students, they should be taught coding rather than just using them for app practice. The state of Utah also needs to pass an education budget that will attract and keep quality teachers in the field. Not only do salaries need to be increased, but other compensations to make teaching more inviting should be addressed: smaller class size, better insurance options, and respect for the teaching profession. The teacher shortage needs our attention now for long-term solutions which should not include allowing under qualified applicants to teach in the classrooms. Another issue I believe is a great concern is the general lack of respect for educators which directly affects teacher morale and longevity in the profession.

Sharron Bird, South Sanpete School District

PLEASE show respect/validation for the teaching as a profession. I work very hard at my job and my student's test scores validate this. However, I also spend an inordinate amount of time helping a new third grade teacher at my school (who has a degree in Animal Husbandry- so it made perfect sense for you to decide she could now teach third graders effectively?). She is a darling girl who I like very much. But the responsibility to teach her how to be a teacher has now fallen to me and the rest of my already over-worked team. We didn't sign up to teach teachers- our job is to teach students. Now on top of teaching students, we are also expected to carry the load of teaching new teachers??? NOT OK!!!!!!!! Require a teaching degree, please!!

Elise Brown, South Sanpete School District

Listen to your educators. We really do know what is going on in education.

Sharee Jensen, South Sanpete School District

Focus on the key issues that teachers support, rather than political agendas that sound good to the public.

Darren Mecham, South Sanpete School District
Teacher Shortage

As an assistant principal, we had to hire an ARL teacher due to the teacher shortage and we had to spend a ridiculous amount of energy and resources to help this teacher. The students aren't receiving quality teaching that they deserve. Start respecting educators through your words and actions! Increase teacher pay, speak positively of how much we do in Utah with so little, which will both help alleviate some of the teacher shortage.

Dan Aragon, Salt Lake City School District

There is a huge teacher shortage in Utah right now that needs to be addressed not by lowering standards and expectations for teachers, but by making teacher education more accessible and affordable, and by making the position more attractive to potential candidates.

Brittany Armstrong, Salt Lake City School District

Listen to our educators needs for their students.

Harriett Arreola, Salt Lake City School District

If the government is going to treat education as a business, they need to start investing in it and training those policy makers in the art of running a successful company.

Mercedes Barica, Salt Lake City School District

Teachers work hard against so many outside influences and situations to help their students make a better life for themselves. We are not respected or cared for and the attitude towards education shows it. I have taught in both a public school and a charter school in this state and have to say the charter school was terrible.

Heather Blakley, Salt Lake City School District

Lack of paid planning time negatively impacts students. Teachers spend many hours everyday without pay to planning. Teacher morale is low and the younger generation of college students are not choosing teaching as a profession.

Alison T Brown, Salt Lake City School District

How the legislative funding for school libraries helps.

Sheryl Burton, Salt Lake City School District

The lack of para support in the resource setting due to low wages and needing too high of qualifications for the position.

Lonny Burton, Salt Lake City School District

Quality pay will increase demand for excellent teachers who won't turn over every three years. I have mentored 6-7 student teachers and it apparent that the more you can make the teaching profession attractive to motivated candidates the better everyone will fair.

Matt Dimick, Salt Lake City School District

If you want this to be a thriving destination for business and culture, you need to stop being the last in the nation in terms of school investment.

Mary Angela Elegante, Salt Lake City School District

The legislator should be ashamed of themselves. knowing that the teachers in Utah are the lowest paid in the nation and we have a rainy day fund. That could pay off the national debt!!!!!!!!! And what happened to the day that teachers taught. learning was fun and everyone got along. This consent use of testing is useless What a joke..

Federica Gallegos, Salt Lake City School District

Teachers deserve a livable salary and students deserve more one on one time

Elyse Garrison, Salt Lake City School District
Teacher Shortage

I do not think that teacher pay is the root of the educator shortage. I work with a variety of teachers as an instructional coach. I believe the reasons for the shortage include the following: Educators are not respected as professionals. The responsibilities of a teacher increase every year, but support and resources do not.

Tammy Gibbons, Salt Lake City School District

We need to look at the teacher training programs currently in place at our higher education institutions. I would like to see more collaboration between k12 and universities on the issue of teacher training and retention in the profession.

Nicola Hack, Salt Lake City School District

Newcomer English language learner students need more support and more time to learn English and the school system before they are required to meet standards expected for proficiency on standard tests.

Margo Harpster, Salt Lake City School District

I am concerned about the fact that so few people are going into education because the low pay will not provide a reasonable pay to support a family. Educating our youth is key to our state and counties future but salaries don't show the necessary respect the teachers deserve.

Hatch Judy, Salt Lake City School District

As someone in the education system it feels like the people making decisions don't really understand what it is like to be at a title-1 institution or what teachers actually do. And I feel like they make uneducated decisions that don't directly affect them, and so they aren't changing or fixing the issues. They need to go visit a school and educate themselves.

Lauren Avelar, Salt Lake City School District

Invest in educators retirement, put ALL teachers in Utah back at 2%! This will help encourage more to enter the field.

Lisa Sten, Salt Lake City School District

Teaching is a profession with wonderful intellectual challenges and the opportunity to make a difference. Innovation and taking learning forward can happen through teacher leadership. However, the approach to licensure, position descriptions and access to innovative PD that models the future of learning is limiting potential. STEM learning and the new SEED standards need to be funded and teachers supported with curriculum, PD, materials budgets and coaching.

Wendi Laurence, Salt Lake City School District

Teachers salaries in Utah are far below the national average. This will NEVER attract college students into the profession!!!!

Megan McGinley, Salt Lake City School District

It is important for us to attract and retain good teachers. I have friends who have quit teaching because, though they love the profession, they feel that they can no longer afford the luxury of serving our students. Not only is it a matter of salary, but of health care benefits also need to be improved. Too much of my salary is simply handed over to my health care providers -- I have less "available" money now than I did five years ago due to my increased health care and prescription costs. One co-pay for a life-saving medication that I have to take is over $400.00 on my current health care plan, which is the best plan available in my district. Last year the co-pay for this same medication was $150.00 under the same plan, while the previous year, it was $75.00. The pharmacists actually apologize to me when I get the prescription for this medication filled, explaining that my school district's health care plan has the highest co-pay for this particular medication that they have ever seen. Something has to change!

Victoria Muehlberger, Salt Lake City School District
Teacher Shortage

The lack of qualified teachers is distressing. I believe that teaching is profession and a hard profession. You wouldn't want a doctor that was learning the job as he/she goes and hope that the other doctors in the office are there to support them. It is important to get qualified, skilled teachers- our students are too important to hand over to just anyone off the street. If you believe that teaching isn't a profession or that anyone off the street can do it then I put a challenge to the legislators. Come to any school: 1. agree to spend a week in a classroom as the teacher 2. make the lesson plans, prepare everything, etc 3. pick a subject area to really focus on and teach a unit 4. test the students at the end of the week and be judged on your teaching ability. This small experience would be eye opening into a difficult but rewarding profession.

Amy Nelson, Salt Lake City School District

Unfortunately, teachers responsibilities currently include parenting students. Because parents are often unable or unskilled at assisting students at home, teachers have assumed the responsibility for not only the academic success of their students, but teachers also must include ethics and behavior training. Additionally, students level of engagement has decreased due to their generations addiction to social media and technology. We must find methods and pedagogy to counter the lack of parental support and student interest in academics and future success.

Anonymous, Salt Lake City School District

Students are being put into the classroom with significant issues and problems with no help.

Patricia Sargent, Salt Lake City School District

I don't think any legislator should make any changes to education until they have spent months in a school seeing what is really going on, and have had to teach a class in a public school.

Deborah Schmock, Salt Lake City School District

The students are being tested to death! Let us get back to teaching!

Mary Beth Sheppard, Salt Lake City School District

I am a highly qualifies level 4 math teacher. I am in my third year teaching and I am struggling to justify staying in this profession because of the pay. I love teaching and I love my students but my family is struggling. Myself, my husband and our two children are having to live with my husbands parents because our teaching salaries won't allow us to move out. I want to go back to school for my masters degree, but I can't justify spending $35,000 on a program when my take home pay is equal to that amount in an entire year. I just recently had to take several weeks off to have emergency back surgery. During that time, I lost 2 entire paychecks because we are not given any paid leave leave other than our sick days (2 weeks of school), I feel like districts should be required to provide eas access to short term disability program to help with these situations and help maternity leave teachers as well. The bottom line is that if you want good teachers, such as myself, to not leave teaching we need an increase in pay. I don't want anyone telling me that I will make enough after 10 more years of teaching, my family needs this money now.

Lia Smith, Salt Lake City School District

I take students on trips and they learn so much more on those trips. Part of the reason is the size. I will have a 10 to 1 student teacher ratio or less and students get time to connect with the teacher and ask questions. Smaller class sizes result in more effective learning.

Jacob Taber, Salt Lake City School District

Teachers have a challenging job, and no matter how dedicated they are to their students, can easily be pushed out of the classroom due to lack of reasonable salary, support, and unrealistic job responsibility. Please consider how your decisions impacts our society in the future as students learn from you how to respect or disrespect an invaluable profession.

Caryn Willardsen, Salt Lake City School District
Teacher Shortage

We have gone many years with funding that does not meet the needs of our students, especially ESL populations. We have also gone along time with inadequate compensations for teachers who teach in Title 1 schools with so many more expectations and accountability on their heads.

Sonceria Zuckerman, Salt Lake City School District

I don't understand why individuals outside of the teaching profession can take a praxis test and start teaching with no other teaching experience, but an individual who has been in the teaching profession for years cannot take a praxis to switch teaching positions but stay in the profession? As a special education teacher, the burn out rate is high for us, but I feel like more of us would stay in the profession if we had the opportunity to switch to a different position without having to go back to school for multiple years. With the experience of already knowing how to teach and being familiar with the school system, switching to a regular classroom teacher would not be a problem. however, it is not allowed as of right now.

Stefnee Turk, San Juan School District

As the only social science teacher in our high school, I worry about what will happen to my students when I am gone. My classes are large and I have nobody to train to replace me. In the last twelve years at the school, I have had five regional Sterling Scholars. My pass rate for Business Law and Economics classes on the CTE exams is over 90%. I have helped hundreds of students with letters and scholarships. Where do we find teachers to replace my generation when I am gone?

Rodney Hurd, Sevier School District

If they need questions answered about education, ask the experts that are in the trenches everyday. If not, they should have to spend a week doing the complete job of a teacher before they run for office so that they can understand the complexities of being an educator and the changes laws that have an affect on education without understanding the impact that they have on teachers and students.

George O. Judd, Sevier School District

Nobody wants to be a teacher anymore. Each year I ask my sophomores what they want to do when they graduate. The percentage who say they would like to be a teacher and is much lower than it used to be. This year I was surprised to have 3/92. That is higher than the last two years. I know that all my students who said they wanted to become a teacher didn't always follow through with it, but they at least looked at the profession and found it attractive in some way. Now almost every news story about teachers is negative. When I was young I looked forward to going back to school in the fall. I missed all of my friends that I hadn't seen or talked to in three months. And I did like learning even though there were some classes I found more interesting than others. My students don't look forward to coming back to school. They don't miss the social interaction because they are in constant contact. If they want to know something they can easily look it up or watch a video. When they come to school they deal with overstressed adults who are under pressure to make sure their students perform well on standardized tests, including the ACT. The ACT only matters for students who are college bound. So why would a kid seeking a tech certificate spend a significant part of his/her education preparing for the ACT? I feel like all the fun has been taken away for both teachers and students. There is no freedom to ask a question and then spend time exploring possible solutions. Some teachers may be willing to spend a day on an interesting question, but most are too worried that they won't finish the mandated curriculum if they take even one day to explore. The student gets very little choice in learning about things that interest him/her especially in a small school where electives are extremely limited. School is too rigid. We must conform to the bus schedule, state standards, testing schedule, traditions, etc, etc. Our students have evolved but school has not. I still love my job and I admire the students who are willing to conform and dig in but I do believe there is a better way and I don't think it involves one set of standards for everyone. Everyone works harder, performs better, and is happier when they feel like they have some say in the path they take. I wish high school students were allowed to choose a path and work towards a goal. Everyone would be allowed to change their mind, but it may take extra time to go back and complete the requirements for that path. So what? If you are college bound their should be certain requirements that you must meet before getting accepted. If you can't meet the requirements you work harder until you can or you choose a new path. I still believe in a well-rounded education but I don't think it
Teacher Shortage

has to be age-based. I don't think that all of the sophomores should have to take math together. If a student is motivated and ready to graduate at 16 why not? If another is slower, less motivated, or has changed his/her path several times and doesn't graduate until 20, so what? I think we are doing our students a huge disservice in middle school/junior high to move them along no matter what. The middle school teachers can see the holes in their learning but they have no recourse. You can't force people to do things. If nothing happens to the student then they walk in to high school completely unprepared and they're forced to take math and language with people that are prepared. And eventually they believe they can never catch up so they either act out or drop out. Trying to do interventions with these students is by far the hardest part of my job. People are willing to send their child to kindergarten twice when they can see the child is clearly not ready to move on. So, why are they so willing to move their child on to high school completely unready? If the threat of staying in middle school one more year was enough to wake up 20 students, it would be worth it.

Lexa Larsen, Sevier School District

Public Education is more and more demanding on teachers. Pressure from administrators, right up to superintendents is ever more stressful. There is a lack of help with problem students from administrators. Parents are often given more respect than the classroom teacher. Sage testing, in a big way, is as much about manipulating the computer and writing equations than about asking questions and having students show their knowledge. The i-Ready Computer Program used at our school could easily replace the Sage Testing. We get the needed data to help students progress and we wouldn't have to spend the money on SAGE and take time out of our schedule to do all the testing. Also, with i-Ready, parents would have a better idea of what the testing is about and how to help their student progress. In our school, we test SAGE three times a year. That is a lot of time taken away from classroom teaching. It is disheartening to listen to teachers and feel their frustrations, knowing that things could be much better. So, besides the lower salaries of teaching, we seem to be asking people to enter a profession in which they will not be receiving a very high salary, but also, a profession in which you will have frustration after frustration thrown at you. Why work so hard in education when it would be easier to earn more money and have an easier work load in another profession?

Kraig Nilsson, Sevier School District

Will you please recognize that your decisions have long term consequences. Listen to the UEA as they represent the teacher voice in Utah. Teachers have solutions that will fulfill the needs of public education.

Kelly Peterson, Sevier School District

Put children first.

Peggy L Twitchell, Sevier School District

Thanks for all you do in helping education and teachers. Our goal is to help is to help all students learn, which needs support from parents, students, and communities. Please listen to our concerns and do what is best for all of us. I think the only way to solve the teacher shortage is to increase the pay and to have it be a more respected position.

Melissa Whatcott, Sevier School District

The value of pension to keep good teachers. The teaching profession is hard and sometimes the only thing that keeps a person going is knowing that at the end of a career, there will be a pension in retirement. It's important to maintain that benefit and not let it get eroded.

Tom Nedreberg, Tintic School District

I have been in the profession for nine years and the last two years have been the hardest and most stressful. We are getting unqualified teachers into our classrooms because of the shortages and this is putting more work and stress on those of us who are highly qualified good teachers. This year I have seriously considered quitting. I have been told that I am an amazing teacher and that the parents in our area don't want to lose me but with all the extra work of training unqualified teachers who are using alternative routes to get their degrees I am getting burned out. I come in early every day and stay late most afternoons trying to help these unqualified teachers and then struggle to have
Teacher Shortage

everything done for my own students. This causes unneeded stress and makes me seriously consider other job options. I am receiving no added benefit in training these teachers and they are making about as much as me because of pay increases to attract more people into the profession. There needs to be more compensation and benefits to retain those of us who are trained and have experience.

Andrea Reynolds, Tooele County School District

If you want better teachers, increase their pay. If you want students to learn more easily, decrease the class size.

William Sullivan, Tooele County School District

I would like to share the realities of the work load including the emotional burnout

Aaryn Birchell, Uintah School District

I hear of money getting to the districts but because it doesn't have specific earmarks it goes where the district sees fit, without any accountability. I disagree to all the trips to out of state place and single hotel accommodations and wasted expense.

Jennifer Chandler, Uintah School District

We need to attract and retain quality teachers. Look at holding schools accountable for learning, but more importantly, make teaching a respectable profession again. Look at increasing funding and reducing ridiculous demands on teachers in order to attract and keep the best and brightest.

Rachelle Durrant, Uintah School District

I am a professional in education because I want to live in a better world. I am training that "better" world. Many of the rules and policies you create make it hard for me to be successful. Filling my classroom and tying my hands when it comes to discipline turns me into a inexpensive babysitter. Please value me and my time by providing the money to purchase supplies instead of having to create them myself. When a profession is valued, there aren't shortages in that area.

Angela T. Hansen, Uintah School District

Please visit schools be in the schools see what we are doing before you decide what is best for us.

Shanalee Madsen, Uintah School District

Teachers are professionals - the lowest paid professionals. Utah teachers are amazing! They impact lives inspite of little funding, large class sizes, and so many mandates,

KaLynn Sheffer, Uintah School District

Most teachers are well educated, professional individuals who feel called to the profession of teaching. They should be treated as professionals in their field and compensated accordingly, both financially as well as with public recognition of the importance of the job that is done in the classroom. This would help with both the problems of teacher shortage and teacher retention.

Chalynn Thomas, Uintah School District

I have 27 first-graders in my class and an autistic boy!! Too many very young students per teacher ratio!! Please, lower classroom

Tanna White, Uintah School District

Help me, help you, to help them, so they can help us

Lori Ruth, Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind

More funding is needed.

Kimberly Niday, Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind
Teacher Shortage

The need to drastically improve salaries and realize the rise in duties and expectations has increased. Class sizes are rising. I love what I do but it gets harder and harder to do. I would also like to see funding to support suicide awareness and teach coping skills for anxiety and depression at each and every classroom in the state. We must be cutting edge on this. We are losing too many of our precious children.

Sheila Johnston, Wasatch County School District

How ridiculous the evaluation tools they are using to evaluate educators. Also that the Sage test is not an accurate way to assess school performance.

Steve Marsing, Wasatch County School District

Education is the key to a productive citizen. Make it a priority.

Joseph Mellen, Wasatch County School District

I am concerned about so much testing for the students. It takes a lot of time away from teaching. Also, I work with all the special ed teachers and they are buried in paperwork. One great teacher quit and went back into private practice because she missed spending time with the students. I am worried that many parents aren't teaching their children respect for education and teachers...which effects the classroom and society greatly.

Valerie K Thurnell, Wasatch County School District

I have personally visited with Representative Quinn and he has visited my US Government classes at Wasatch HS. Accountability. Put back into law that there is RESPONSIBILITY for students to actually attend school. Parents should have more support from our state legislature to encourage students to actually attend class for some civic dialogue and learning with peers! Students need to be more accountable for their actions, especially those in high school, in regards to daily attendance. Put some teach back in to the hands of local school districts.

Dawain Mills Wheatley, Wasatch County School District

Working as a professional teacher for over 25 years, I can see that threatening tactics are non-productive such as merit pay of testing outcomes. To help students and teachers, make sure the salaries are adequate and the money is used for the schools students, not programs, or new promises. Get the money to the students.

Kimala Bosh, Washington County School District

If a teacher shortage is a concern, improving the teaching conditions will be the best way to combat it

Russell Lebaron, Washington County School District

Same thing I say each year. Watching you guys. Smaller class sizes is must. When caseloads/classes are too big, teachers are overworked, and students don't receive the needed attention and support. Putting more educators in schools to share the load will better help retain educators. Don't burn out educators.

Bret Morley, Washington County School District

It really bothers me that an educators wages aren't enough to support a family. What happened to the time when an individual could go to work and know that their family would be taken care of with the wages they earned. Now I am at the time of life where retirement is around the corner. I have saved my entire adult life so I can retire some day and now I am worried that I haven't done enough. It has put a strain on my finances over the years to prepare for the time I can retire.

Kathryn Parry, Washington County School District

I am a high school teacher in Utah. I am almost finished with my master's degree. Even with a graduate level of education, I will be making less than the average Utah worker. And I am ANYTHING but average. I do extraordinary work with extraordinary students every day. I am unsure of the future for myself and my students. I love my job, but I am not sure how long I will be able to afford being a teacher in Utah.

Dana Raine, Washington County School District
**Teacher Shortage**

Class sizes are way too big; I have 230 students. It's really hard to provide individualized help with over 40+ students in a class. Not to mention grading all their work, prep and planning. I've been teaching for 15 years, but I'm really wondering there is a better career out there for me because I feel so overworked, underpaid, and underappreciated. I would discourage a young person from going into teaching.

_Sara Sisam, Washington County School District_

Utah has good public schools and teachers. Compare the data in an objective way, with same comparisons to charter, public school before making decisions. Use data, rather than articulate lobbyists

_Lorene A Sorensen, Washington County School District_

Please put students and teachers first in everything you do. Out students deserve more!

_Karyn Wilson, Washington County School District_

Teachers are the professionals, yet legislators, administrators and parents (who believe the quick-fix ideas of legislators), are often the ones who determine how and what we teach. This is counterproductive. I believe that students would benefit if teachers were given much more discretion in the classroom, standardized testing was drastically reduced or eliminated, and pay throughout educators (including administration) was much more equitably distributed.

_Kerrie Anderson, Weber School District_

I think the legislators need to adequately and equitable fund education, because at some point in time the wheels will come off. Most educators understand the cut in education spending or the lack of education spending when the Great Recession hit. However, now that the economy is more robust how about funding the public education to pre-Recession levels. The lack of adequate and equitable public education funding has made Utah dead last in per pupil spending, to include D.C. I think this is against our values, as we purport to value our children as our greatest treasure, yet spend our treasure some place else. Moreover, the younger teachers coming into the workforce have choices and in a lot of places in Utah, unless the demand placed on public schools can be met with adequate and equitable funding, then there will be a lack of qualified teachers to teach an educated citizenry. Why would young people enter into an underfunded and overworked profession?

_Brandon Baca, Weber School District_

I moved from Ogden SD this year to Weber SD due to a lack of teacher support. Ogden provided some amazing training for my first 3 years, but they were not kind or fair to me or the other teachers. SUPPORT does not necessarily mean more training- it means listening to sides, sharing feedback and ideas, training when necessary to make the necessary changes, etc. It does not seem as though Weber has as much training (perhaps because I am not a “new” teacher) but they do seem to have the SUPPORT so often lacking. My administration is approachable and fair. The expectations for teachers are obtainable. The focus is on student learning- not just on testing. I am happy where I am, and hope that Weber does not slide down the unhappy slope that Ogden was going. Education is a job we take out of love... I nearly lost that and am happy to have found it again.

_Tracy Beck, Weber School District_

While teacher shortage is a problem, tenured teachers are being encouraged by administrators to retire early. This is counter-productive and adds to the problem. If sign-on bonuses and increased salaries are being offered to teachers just entering the profession, why aren't stay-on bonuses and increased salaries being offered to teachers who stay? Changing school districts as a teacher is a huge decrease in pay, unless one changes districts in which they teach within the first 2 years of teaching. This should not be the case. A teacher who has been teaching for 10 years at X amount of dollars should be able to hire on with another district at the same salary as they left their previous district.

_Joy Bement, Weber School District_

I would love for any legislator to come walk in our shoes for a day. Melissa Beyer (1st Grade) 801-698-2721

_Melissa Beyer, Weber School District_
Teacher Shortage

Providing a quality education is important to the future work force in the state of Utah. In order to provide a quality education, you need qualified teachers. In order to get and keep qualified teachers, you need to make it worth their while to stay. That could be in the form of increased pay, increased benefits, increased planning time, etc. If you water down the qualifications for being a teacher, you water down the quality of the education provided. If you don’t hold charter schools accountable in the same you do regular public schools, who are both receiving the money from the same place, then you water down the quality of education.

Randy Bird, Weber School District

Too many good teachers are leaving the profession because the means of accountability have taken the joy out of teaching. I believe in accountability but the way we have gone about making teachers accountable has become punitive and punishes creativity. Combine that with the low salaries and teachers often decide that their talents will be better used in another profession.

Sherry Carolan, Weber School District

Make students a priority! Make Education a priority. There’s a reason we can’t keep teachers and they go to other states to teach. We are burning out. Wake up!

Marie Christensen, Weber School District

Teacher and substitute teacher shortage will not go away until the legislature makes these jobs beneficial both monetarily and emotionally to perspective teachers.

Laurel Cloward, Weber School District

I am now looking at the end of my career with 28 years in and contemplating how much longer to go. I have watched the pendulum of educational reform swing in so many different politically motivated directions at the expense of student learning. I am not sure anyone knows if anything that has been done really helped our students learn. What I can say is that I hope my students know that I cared about them. In the end this is what a good teacher is. I hope that they LEARNED along the way of course, BUT truly I want them to know that they can do great things if they believe and TRY. They are not alone. Learning can be difficult and not everyone learns lessons at the same rate. Just keep trying. I do love teaching. That is why I stayed in this profession for so long. BUT I do wonder if our politicians understand the wealth of talent they have in the field of education? If they honestly and truly know our worth? We are the ones our children see everyday. Day in and day out. Good, happy days and bad, sad, unhappy days. We see them for 6 to 8 hours plus a day for 180 days a year. We often become their surrogate parents, big brothers, sisters when there is no one at home. We walk a very fine line to help teach them to be upstanding moral citizens, teaching right & wrong, and in some cases we are the only ones in their lives that care enough to do so. I have seen so much change in the world and education but one thing that really hasn’t is respect. Educators are still under the stigma of “those who can DO and those who can’t TEACH” This simply is NOT true. Those who CHOOSE to teach, do so because they are special enough to realize that teachers prepare the future. They care about the youth that are in their care and a desire to help them reach for their dreams & goals. They teach them that the world is what they make it. Nothing worth having is just given to them. They work for it. They help them learn how to be the best version of themselves. That they can design what the future looks like. I know these all sound like idealistic platitudes, but they are what has kept me coming to school every day. So what is my point. -- I am worth more than I am earning. I work harder than most CEO’s. My value is defined in the love and care I give my students. Money doesn't solve all problems but it does help to show respect for what we do. Question-- why would a bright, talented educated young person want to make a career choice when the world (Our political decision makers) does not value the profession. The compensations are better in the business world. --That students are more than a number scored on a random test. That life isn't some pen & paper test, it is doing. Yes Life is a test of sorts and how we live it is what demonstrates what we have learned. What we value. So what do you value?

Karen Draper, Weber School District

Our students are our future. If we short change them, we are only short changing ourselves in the end.

Karen Eyre, Weber School District
Teacher Shortage

I have been teaching for 16 years. I love my profession. However, I can see why we are having the lack of teachers coming into and staying in our profession. The lack of pay and the amount of requirements we are required to do isn't worth it to many. I am all about raising expectations and giving students a quality education, but expectations and requirements need to be realistic. If you want to attract and keep quality teachers...make the profession more attractive. Society has changed, therefore, changing some of the student behaviors we experience in classrooms. That alone makes teaching more difficult than it used to be 10 years ago. Teaching has shifted to data driven based on assessing. I have no problem assessing and analyzing the data, but there is a point when it starts to effect the amount of time you actually have to give instruction. It sometimes feels like assessing is the only thing you doing. It's getting to the point that it's taking out the enjoyment of learning and teaching.

Emily Farr, Weber School District

I believe that teachers salaries and benefits need to be improved to hold and retain quality teachers. Make sure that all administrators are education experienced and qualified to be in an education management position.

Paul Fawson Jr., Weber School District

I work hard every day trying to make a difference in student's lives. I would appreciate it if some of the legislators would acknowledge that we do hard things every day under tough circumstances. We need more help with difficult kids. We need more help in the classroom with either more aide time or smaller class sizes.

Lynne Graves, Weber School District

Teaching is a not a profession that a person simply "tries out." Every time a teacher comes and goes it hurts students. Students deserve committed teachers who have invested in this profession for the long haul, teachers who are trained and educated, teachers who understand pedagogy as well as their content areas, and teachers who understand the brains and minds and hearts of the students they are teaching. Invest in teachers, and, in turn, teachers will invest in our most precious resource: our students.

Jennifer Graviet, Weber School District

The lack of support for teachers and working conditions make teaching not worth it anymore. No amount of money is worth the stress of teaching.

Gaylene Greenwood, Weber School District

The most important feature of society is equality, and that extends to equal opportunities for excellent education for all students.

Jenny Hartnett, Weber School District

As a special educator for over twenty years and having seen a slow and steady increase in the amount of regulation. This year we've had an overwhelming increase in regulations that will take even more time away from my students, but will also cause an increase in work and huge increase in the size of student files. None of it will increase the quality of education for those students. In fact, it has reduced the amount of time I can put into helping students. One other thing.......what is the deal with allowing parents to keep their kids home and have no responsibility to get them to school? Schools are held accountable for increasing the skills of kids who are not here. Our hands are tied because we can't do a darn thing about kids who aren't even here. Example: A parent wants the district to provide private speech therapy for a student whose child only attends 55% of the time. I can tell you that if anyone asked me if they should pursue a career in education and particularly in special education I'd say and emphatic, "NO!" I love the kids and I love teaching them. I love all of the people who work in my building and those in my district that I work with. However, over the 25 years I've been teaching the kids and parents keep getting harder and harder to work with. I spend well over $1000 of my own money every year just trying to provide what they need. I bought my own Ipads to the tune of $2500 a couple of years ago because I had students who needed access to some technology to allow them to convey their ideas in writing. If it weren't for how much I love my students I wouldn't do this. In addition, the amount of time we spend testing kids is absurd.

Marian Hellstrom, Weber School District
Teacher Shortage

Many teachers are quitting because of students with severe behavior challenges. There is little to no support
Rachel Hughes, Weber School District

Children are more than test scores or backpacks. Children are more than test scores or backpacks. Children are
more than test scores or backpacks. Children are more than test scores or backpacks. Children are more than test
scores or backpacks.
Maria Inglefield, Weber School District

I am currently in my third year of teaching ELA in a junior high along the Wasatch Front. Many of my fellow friend
teachers have left the profession to seek employment in other places outside of education. The underlining reason
and common thread for their decision is the disrespect the feel from students and parents. Second to that is the
increased demand of responsibility for teachers in and outside the classroom with little to no compensation and
sometimes a lack of support. Myself, I could be a teacher for a long time. I'm a good teacher and if I keep going I
know I'll be great. It is a rewarding profession. However, the thing that I foresee and one of my biggest struggles that
ultimately is pushing me out the door is the disrespect of students and the lack of support from administrators being
willing to listen to all sides of problems that arise in the classroom. Is there legislation for that? I'm not sure. With the
teacher shortage happening, I question whether people are really looking at the reasons why teachers are leaving.
Amy Kendell, Weber School District

When you value education by paying teachers as professionals, seeking teacher input on education matters and
funding for student growth you will be able to attract and keep quality teachers.
Terie Maxfield, Weber School District

I love teaching, but I'm getting tired of legislators, parents, and the community not treating my like a professional. I
have a masters degree in my subject. I spend countless hours keeping up to date and to improve myself. I wish
people trusted me to make decisions about my class. I wish I was fairly compensated for the work I do. I am
considering a move to another state or a different career all together. Utah needs to make changes if they want to
keep the good teachers they have.
David Mидlon, Weber School District

Teachers put in so much time and effort to be the best that they can be. They put in time to prep for lessons, correct
student work, enter grades, read about current research and best practices, and think about what will help students
achieve in all areas. Much of this time is outside of the contract hours. This is outside of contract hours because
during the day, teachers are already running a marathon, so to speak, to make the most of the time that is with
students. Teachers try to maximize all learning/ teaching time with the students. It would be nice to see that teachers
are compensated for their time and efforts. I can see that in the time that I have put in through the past year and a
half that I have been teaching, that there is so much work to be done from the moment I get to the school building to
the moment that I leave. I am here before and after contract hours. I work these long hours alongside my colleagues.
We all want the best for our students because we care. It would just be nice to be compensated for what we do for
our students, who will be contributing members of society and future. We also want future educators that could be
amazing in this career field to not be steered away just because they are not recognized or compensated for the work
that is done in a school.
Lexus Monroe, Weber School District

1. I am a millennial teacher who loves her job. My passion effects students lives in a positive way every day. This
passion is decimated by a culture that blames the teacher and school first. In fact, it makes me want to take my
talents and passions somewhere else. Families and communities are are breaking down. Schools are not the only
solution, and they need more support if we expect them to address these global issues. 2. Please continue trustland
and teacher supply money funds. They make a huge difference in my school and classroom.
Jenna Augustin, Weber School District
Teacher Shortage

My legislators in North Ogden, Senator Christensen and Rep. Fawson, are continually on the wrong side of history by voting against educational funding and voting for red tape like SB 220 last year- to just name one bill among many. Utah is dead last in WPU funding-no excuse for that! They always quote the same argument "That Utah puts more money from budget towards education than any other state." That's like saying I have a really small apple pie...but I'm giving you a big piece! Its the smallest piece (WPU) in the nation, it's not enough, and I see the results first hand of Utah grossly under funding education for all these years. How they treat me as a teacher is a clear reflection of how they treat students. Not very good.

Paul Pontius, Weber School District

The teacher shortage is a direct result of the legislature’s unwillingness to increase teacher pay and decrease class size. The deceptive accounting for the WPU makes it so that the average class size on paper is far smaller than the actual average class size. If they want to do something about the teacher shortage, they need have reasonable class size to promote learning and salaries to make it worth while for teachers to stay in the profession and attract new teachers.

Keith Quigley, Weber School District

This is the third year that I have had to deal with a kindergarten child who has serious mental issues that impact my entire class. We need more in the building help to deal with troubled students. When the principal is out who gets to tend these students? I know I can teach but I am considering if I want to keep doing this job.

Betty Rabe, Weber School District

Working at a Title 1 school is really difficult. We have had a lot of teacher turn over. The class sizes are so big and the behaviors are extreme. Most of the behavior is out of our hands, daily we have to evacuate classrooms and disrupt student learning because of the 1, this is not right. We need more parent accountability.

Stephanie Smith, Weber School District

I love my job as an Educator and hope that the legislature will do their part to ensure that people who love to teach will want to become teachers in the future.

Tracy Stokes, Weber School District

They need to spend more time in public schools before they make the "rules" for student testing and success measurement.

Tina Thompson, Weber School District

Less testing and more teaching time

Sandra C. Toone, Weber School District

I believe in the power and responsibility that teachers have to influence students for good. However, we need support, compensation, and respect from our legislators and the public to best help these students succeed. Teachers work far more hours than many realize and our wages are not competitive in comparison to others with the same amount of education and training in other industries. In order to attract and retain quality teachers, increasing teacher salaries and benefits must be a priority. In addition, in order to prevent burnout, teachers need more paid time to plan and prepare for high-quality instruction. With the amount of growth we are experiencing in many parts of Utah and in order to reduce class sizes, we'll need more teachers. Increasing salary and giving teachers more paid time to do what they need to do are two essential things for our students' futures. Also, teachers should be able to focus less on end-of-level testing proficiency percentages and more on growth of the WHOLE student--academic and otherwise. I think sometimes we feel pressured to cram the core into the kids' heads when really what they need is to learn life skills (diligence, kindness, organization, respecting for self and others, working as a team, etc.) first, and then they will be able to succeed academically. In order to be able to focus on the whole child, less pressure must be put on educators' test scores. Yes, there needs to be accountability for teachers, students, and schools, but testing is not the only way to do that—student surveys, parent surveys, administrator evaluations, student growth, self-
Teacher Shortage

evaluations, etc. could all be helpful ways of showing accountability. Finally, at my school (and many others) we have many students whose problems are beyond what we, as regular education teachers, have the training to sufficiently support. We need more resources available to help those students who need more mental and emotional support than we are able to give. Thank you for your time.

Abbie Twingstrom, Weber School District

Maintaining quality teachers will REQUIRE the state to seriously increase the salary of all teachers, within all districts equally. Allowing districts to allocate the funds tends to allow them to reallocate it elsewhere. Many teachers leave the state or leave the profession entirely because of the lack of importance to be compensated or even trusted at times to be able to manage their own time when given time to plan meaningful and engaging experiences in the classroom. Much time is wasted in just filling the need to have committees and going through the motions of unnecessary programs felt beneficial by those who have never taught or haven't been in a classroom setting for many years. Also, in my experience, the best administrators are those who have taught a minimum of 10 years in a classroom, and just by obtaining a degree online shouldn't be the sole reason for advancing any individual. Much is learned after many years in a classroom that can't be taught by only reading a book or attending a class. Public opinion needs to change as well, that teachers are solely responsible for a child's education. True parent involvement is needed. We are educators, yes... we are caregivers as well, but much of what happens at school is first taught in the home. Public awareness may transmit to a higher respect of teachers. I know this is a difficult task, and I know most all teachers rather give up personal time and personal funds to help a child succeed, but this needs to stop. Stop relying on the individuals that entered this profession as a personal call to help others by continuing to have them make the only sacrifices.

David Van Eerden, Weber School District

With the human development needing different attentions in different areas at different times with each individual, expecting the same outcome for all is unrealistic. Until class sizes are reduced and non-educator legislators research the effects their mandates and decisions have on human development, we are not going to advance well as humans or a state. The overload of work to teach so many students with a lack of resources and support staff continues to burn out educators, hence a teacher shortage. If we, as a state, don't show that we value education by putting forth the necessary funding, see what happens when you lower the tax rate, and value teaching as a profession, we all will lose.

Marjean Wayment, Weber School District

You have to address the cause of teacher shortages. Band-aids can only do so much.

Arron Wheeler, Weber School District

I really am doing the best I can. I am not sure why you are telling me how to do my job or how I am doing it. Please come visit my class and see what we are doing instead of just giving a grade.

Michael Yamashita, Weber School District
Compensation

We appreciate any effort to aide in helping us teach our children. They will be our future leaders and should be prepared. Pour the funds and resources into having great teachers to be the guides for our students. You have to make education an attractive career choice for college students.

Lisa Aase, Alpine School District

It's time to take educating our children seriously and it's time to realize that teaching is a profession. Having teachers take more tests to prove they are professional has not improved the quality of teachers nor has it improved the pay for teachers as people thought it would if we took tests like nurses, lawyers, and doctors. We work the same number of hours, deal with similar if not more stressors, and still our pay is not equal to many professions that require the same degree of education or less. Legislators have got to realize that not everyone can teach because right now, not enough people are choosing to teach, because we don't value those who can.

Melissa Allmon, Alpine School District

I get tired of hearing how bad our education system is compared to testing of other countries when we test everyone, even student with accommodations where other countries filter out students before high school who have challenges and test the rest.

Kevin Aston, Alpine School District

I am an educator with both regular education certification and Special Ed certification. I currently have a caseload of 47 students. My group sizes are NOT small group. I am not taking a lunch so that the students have smaller group sizes and I still have 12-14 in a group. It is not as effective as having a smaller caseload and more individualized services for these students who need the extra help. I have a great supporting staff and they are hesitant to refer students who need help because of my caseload. We need to do what is the best interest of the children we are serving.

Melvina Austin, Alpine School District

Teachers work very hard and are not compensated for the hours that they are putting in beyond contract time to do their jobs well. I don't know very many other jobs where once the work day is over, work is taken home with them. It's set aside until the next day. Large class sizes (some over 42 in high schools) make it VERY difficult to give students one on one attention that they deserve. There are more requirements of us as teachers with evaluations etc. that take us away from designing and implementing fun, informative lesson plans. Burnout is high when you aren't appreciated or provided with resources.

Becky Bailey, Alpine School District

I am a special education teacher. I love my students but it is getting harder and harder every year to give them what they need in order to be successful. The amount of paperwork is overwhelming and my group sizes just keep growing because there is not a cap on how large a resource class can be. When my class gets larger I do get more aide time, but that doesn't help with the amount of paperwork and prep time required to give adequate services to my growing number of students.

Mickelle Bowling, Alpine School District

When we had a teaching opening at my school 8 years ago we had over 200 applicants. Now we get about 30. It's getting harder and harder to find good teachers and unless something is done soon, public education in Utah will be in crisis -- and the 700,000 kids in public schools will suffer.

Robin Brunner, Alpine School District

I have worked for over 21 years in the public school serving children/students with various disabilities. There have been years where my caseload has been upwards of 90 students. Somedays, to say this job is difficult would be an understatement. I receive legislative funding, which I am grateful for, but my district does not give any additional funding. In order to "qualify" for an aide, I have to prove how overwhelmed I am, which makes me feel incompetent. I am currently working in a special needs preschool setting where four classrooms range from 12-17 children with only
Compensation

one or two "model" children. The rest of them have an IEP, which requires specialized services. In one classroom there is a student with Downs Syndrome, five with Autism, and two others with lesser known diagnoses, and most are non-verbal. Few of these children are potty trained, almost all have mild to severe behaviors that have to be handled, and the manpower and salary is not near enough for the job that is required of me, the teacher, and of her aides. We love the children, and that's why we power through and come to work everyday. However, your consideration regarding salary, teacher shortages, and funding would be greatly appreciated. Thank you for your time.

Kimberly Budge, Alpine School District

Stop decreasing teacher pay and benefits while pretending to give increases to teacher pay and benefits. If you want to recruit and retain teachers, you need to compensate them with pay and an environment conducive to teaching and learning.

Mark Burton, Alpine School District

In our school our kindergarten class size is 26 children, which is 52 children with two sessions to progress monitor. The expectations for the teachers are to teach a 3 hour block of literacy that doesn't include time for recess, computers or math. It also doesn't allow for time to help connect with students, especially ones that have very little time with parents.

Lorri Case, Alpine School District

I feel that testing is overdone and that teachers have to "teach to the test" in order to keep their jobs and keep their schools with a positive rating. Teaching should be driven by their desire to enlighten young minds and inspire their students to love learning, to empower them with the information and skills they will need to achieve their life goals and to make their lives better. In essence, to become lifelong learners.

Paula Cloward, Alpine School District

If merit pay is funded, focus should be on student achievement that is not solely based on standardized testing. Teachers in special education settings often have children who do not do well on standardized tests, and this should not be the only way to gauge the effectiveness or qualifications of teachers. In addition, recent budget cuts to classroom supply funds has made it difficult to provide/replace materials needed for child success in classrooms. Hiring teachers without a teaching degree and expecting seasoned teachers to "mentor" them in vital strategies such as classroom management is unreasonable. Teachers are not compensated for the number of hours they work outside of contract time in order to help the children be successful and complete other required assignments. Mentoring unqualified teachers is yet another responsibility on which experienced teachers are expected to undertake in already strenuous circumstances, without additional compensation. In order to keep qualified teachers, districts/state should offer incentives such as helping with student loan repayment and increasing salaries of licensed teachers, instead of trying to fill positions with persons unexperienced or uneducated in the field of teaching. Hiring persons who have not graduated from an accredited college with a degree in teaching is like a "slap in the face" to those teachers who have worked for such an achievement and indicates to them that their hard work is unrecognized and unnecessary. Not everyone can be a teacher and it is high time that they are recognized for what they have achieved and not given the indication that they can be replaced with anyone off the street. Teachers are what makes all other professions and without them other careers would cease to exist.

Tina Cole, Alpine School District

Teachers work hard and truly care about the success of students. We do all we can with large classroom sizes, limited resources, and low pay. Students deserve to have more quality time to learn in a smaller group setting. They deserve to have all of the supplies needed for academic success. Teachers deserve to be paid for their hard, heartfelt work, and this would put an end to the teacher shortage as well. Many people can't afford to teach, and that is tragic.

Tiffany Coles, Alpine School District
Compensation

My school maintains six full time science teachers. Last year two science teaching positions needed to be filled. They posted and each received two applicants. Only two each. Of the four applicants only one had a provisional teaching license and another had an inactive license from many years ago. It is becoming very hard to find trained teachers to fill vacancies. In the five years I have taught at this school we have gone through 8 science teachers that were hired taught a short time and have since moved on to other professions. That is serious turnover. My school is not a Title 1 school, the building is less than 15 years old, our students largely come from well-to-do families who are very supportive and involved. I can not imagine what teacher turn over must be like in schools with more challenging demographics. Please Help!

Danny Cooper, Alpine School District

Spend time in schools to see what is really happening.

Michael Corbett, Alpine School District

If you want retain/recruit good teachers you need to reward them ($$$). Test scores are not the only way to measure teacher's success. I know several good teachers that teach the less motivated students and do a great job. If we only look at test scores, no one will want to teach those classes. Second, we need students in class in order to educate them. Teachers have no control what happens outside of their class. We need student/parents to be accountable for their own/students attendance.

Brad Crowther, Alpine School District

The teaching profession is not treated with respect. We are licensed professionals, yet we are micromanaged by the public and asked to do more and more with less time, less money, and increased class sizes. The problems in the educational system are being placed squarely on the shoulders of the over-worked, unappreciated, and disrespected educators who are doing all they can to help kids succeed. However, no one can compensate fully for the lack of parental/home support and a student who is willing and actively participating in his/her learning.

Kristie Curtis, Alpine School District

I think we need to stop saying we will just need to do more for less.

George Durfee, Alpine School District

Speech Language Pathologists fulfill a vital roll in the education system, but as with math/science/tech teachers, there is an serious shortages partly due to a shortage of SLPs in general, but also that salaries for SLPs are much higher in other settings. This shortage may need to be addressed specifically at the state level.

Arlene Erickson, Alpine School District

I am an adapted physical educator. The high school I teach at has a Unified Sports program (peers and student athletes with disabilities learning, practicing and competing in tournaments together). This program is very successful as all of our students become so involved in activities both during school and after school hours. Cooperation, friendship and teamwork as well as sportsmanship during competition are emphasized. All students grow personally as well as physically.

Julie Hines, Alpine School District

Increased teacher pay = more and better teachers

James Finley, Alpine School District

the teacher shortage is caused because of lack of pay first and then because of lack of respect given to educators. Educators are on the bottom of the pyramid of respect. It starts with parents and then students and then administrators and teacher are left to the demands of the above three factors. Give teachers the ability to follow through with classroom policies and procedures without being overridden by threats from parents and students of being sued. Return respect and control to teachers.

Karen Finley, Alpine School District
Compensation

Resources matter when trying to help students on an individual basis. As we have been mandated to help every student be successful, the difference between 25 and 35 students in a classroom becomes quite clear. It is impossible to effectively help every student in the way that they deserve when there is not enough time to talk to them. Make class sizes smaller by increasing the number of teachers. Increase the number of teachers by making this a profession that is respected and fairly compensated. Show the citizens of this wonderful state that you care enough about them to invest in their future.

Devin Fisher, Alpine School District

When I first got into teaching, I thought having holidays off at the same time as my kids would be awesome. I didn't realize at the time that teaching requires so much more than that. We don't get overtime, 'cause if we did our school would run out of funding before we were even half way done with the year! The amount we are paid is minuscule when compared to how many hours we spend to prepare our lessons. Add on top of that the high volume of students in each class, the lack of funding for science materials (I have to purchase what I do mostly out of my own pocket, which means I can't do as much as I would like), and the lack of classroom aids when they are really needed. I spend a lot of my "vacation time" either preparing for or finishing up things for my students. I've even had my family in helping, which, I can assure you, they weren't keen on doing for their vacation. And that doesn't even begin to address the teacher shortage (I totally understand how some could burn out!), the lack of respect we get from "choice" people (dare I put some partners in that mix?), and certain students, and you've got a recipe for a high-stress job with low pay and low morale. I'm not saying it isn't rewarding or that there is nothing but negative in this profession. I just wanted to get you in touch with our teacherly realities. Please don't forget us when the big guns roll in with their powerful allies and gung-ho ideas to use your influence for. We may not hold as much clout as they do, but we hold the hope of the future in our hands. Thank you.

Sharee Garcia, Alpine School District

Our teachers are among the lowest paid in the county and our class sizes are among the largest. When you increase teacher pay you attract more quality people to the profession. When you increase funding for public schools, you make an important investment in our children’s and our state's future.

Mark Gatto, Alpine School District

We need to address teacher shortage, teacher morale and that teachers should be respected for being professionals.

Patrick Gleaves, Alpine School District

In order to support my family, I do remodeling work on the weekends--laying tile, painting, removing old cabinets, etc. I have a colleague who works at Geneva Rock to support his family, and another who stocks shelves at Smith's. We're a small army of salaried professionals working blue-collar jobs. We need more men in this profession in the classroom showing our under-performing boys what a responsible, professional man looks like. We need positive male role models for kids who don't have a dad at home. Yet those of us who resolve to stay in the classroom instead of advancing into administrative positions are often forced to choose between providing that example for our own children or providing that example for our students. It's a rare week that I don't put in 55-60 hours at school before heading in to my other job on Saturday. I can put in long days and hours; that's what I signed up for. But I didn't expect to have to give up any additional time many professionals reserve for their families in order to just get by. There needs to be a pathway to the sort of success that will allow teachers to contribute to our communities as teachers in the classroom and still have something left over for our own families.

Christopher Green, Alpine School District

Education is the future; with poorly funded education comes ill-prepared citizens.

Kristin Greer, Alpine School District

I have been an educator in Utah for almost 20 years. I have heard again and again from leaders and communities that they consider education to be a top priority in Utah. I understand that we have more students and unique challenges in Utah. However, the reality is that we do not have the funding to attract and retain quality teachers. Why
Compensation

should college students choose education as a career when the hours are long and hard, the "real" expectations for what teachers have to do are way beyond the actual expectations, the pay is mediocre, and they are constantly berated by parents of their students for every perceived problem. Teachers should be protected from being yelled at by parents and respected for what they do day in and day out. Practically, we need a long term solution to fill our teaching positions - especially at the most challenging neighborhood schools. Teachers are professionals and need to be seen and treated as such.

Janelle Griffiths, Alpine School District

Addressing the teacher shortage will require teachers to be treated and paid as professionals. We are a highly educated profession but we don’t come close to others who are less experienced and trained. No wonder this profession does not attract young professionals. It is difficult to live on a teacher salary as a single adult, let alone support a family.

Julie Gurr, Alpine School District

I am a special education teacher in Alpine School District and every year my numbers have increased while my budget has decreased. Special educators are supposed to have "small groups," yet because of the number of students I serve, I frequently have groups of 10 or more. In the last few years I have had writing groups that have ballooned up to 20 and 25! I serve students with a variety of disabilities and their accompanying needs. Some are fairly severe for a resource setting. Every year we fight to keep our meager para-educator time, so we have help in the classroom to meet student needs. Last year, The Utah Legislature had an opportunity to pay special education teachers an additional stipend along with math and science teachers. They took special educators OFF of the bill because I guess they thought paying us what we are worth for the difficult job we do wasn’t a cost-effective move. Now we are facing a GRAVE shortage of qualified special education teachers because they can go to different states and have smaller case loads with bigger salaries and budgets. This problem will only continue to get worse and worse because of the increasingly oppressive workload of difficult students and massive amounts of paperwork placed on established special educators. The problem is already happening. At the beginning of this school year my case load had ballooned to 65 SCRAM (a full-time SCRAM load in Alpine School District is 32)! Without my principal demanding help for me, I would still be drowning under this ridiculous load of students. And even with money to fund a 1/2 time teacher, it was difficult to find qualified applicants because fewer and fewer students are choosing teacher as a career and even less are choosing special education because why would they considering the workload vs. salary? This problem isn’t going away. In fact the "slow-bleed" of special educators has now become a “fast-gush.”

This does not bode well for our state. Soon parents will discover that their children with disabilities are in groups that rival the general education class sizes at times and that their needs are not being met appropriately. I predict lawsuits will be the norm. So rather than put the ambulance at the bottom of the hill (i.e. paying hundreds of thousands of dollars to lawyers and angry parents for not providing FAPE), let’s look at the data and adjust special education teacher pay to attract and retain qualified candidates in the State of Utah. Doing this will ensure that student needs are being met by qualified, experienced teachers instead of “emergency, long-term” subs who have neither the experience nor education to guarantee progress along the general curriculum of students with disabilities in our state.

Kelli Hall, Alpine School District

I took a almost $8,000 pay cut to move to Utah. I would love to see more incentives for senior teachers to want to move to Utah.

Nolan Hansen, Alpine School District

I love my job. I love what I teach, I love my students, I love my colleagues. However, I find that I get burned out, frustrated, and just plain tired of all the responsibilities placed on teachers. The job is ALL consuming. When I’m not at school I’m still working either spending my own time planning, searching for ideas, grading, discussing with others, getting more education for myself, keeping myself current, etc. my life really is not my own, it belongs to my job. I completely understand why young adults are not going into the education field and I don’t blame them. I hate to see it happen, but how can I recommend this job to young adults? We’re over worked, under paid, under appreciated not only by some of our parents but by our state government as well. Teachers used to have great insurance and great
Compensation

retirement which compensated for the lack of pay. However that is not the case any longer. Both retirement and insurance benefits have been cut (we now have to pay part of our premiums). We are the only profession that gets punished for our experience- change districts and you get a pay cut and younger teachers are cheaper and hired first. We don’t really get tax breaks either...last year I sat with $511.00 worth of receipts for items purchased for my classroom and I could deduct only $250.00 worth. We must do something to entice college students to go into education. My opinion is that the whole system needs to be overhauled. However, I only have 10 years until I can retire. I’m in it for the long haul. The system counts on that so the needed changes won’t be seen or addressed until my generation of teachers is gone and we’re destitute for teachers. We need to act now. Forget charter schools versus public schools. What good is either without quality teachers?

Michelle A. Harris, Alpine School District

It’s time to look at the size of classroom and raising the teachers salaries!!

Darold Henry, Alpine School District

If we could have more planning time, especially with the new Science SEEd Standards and have smaller classes as we find for more and better teachers, then retention of educators and engagement in the classroom would drastically increase is my hypothesis!

Nathalie Hernandez, Alpine School District

In order for students to succeed there needs to be more adults per student. The only way a class of 30 students with one teacher works is if every student has the same needs and that will never be a reality.

Kristen Amber Holladay, Alpine School District

Teachers are hard working professionals with education. We need to be compensated as such. We need to have some incentive to stay and deal with the growing needs of this generation.

Jami Houle, Alpine School District

We have to do something to keep teachers in the field and not looking for other jobs.

Kari Nelson, Alpine School District

I love my students, school, and job but there are so many concerns that I literally am trying to do my job from 7am-8pm each school day and I work on most Saturdays. This is my 4th year at my current High School and I taught 4 years at a Junior High. I teach 8 different preps and I'm the FCCLA advisor at our school. I thought it would get easier and take less time but not yet. There is a big difference of time that teachers spend in their job. Is there a way to compensate passionate teachers for their time and efforts? I'm older but I worry that the young passionate teachers will quit because of the load and low pay. Throughout my life, I have made much more money in every other job - per hour than teaching. Help?

Sandy L Kezerian, Alpine School District

I have two professional degrees - I teach because I love children, but the demands that are put on educators - constant evaluations, lack of funding - class size and supplies. Is very discouraging - it's no wonder there is a teacher shortage. I have a daughter that I tried to discourage from going into education, but she felt it was her "calling" where she could do the most good and now that she is teaching and wanting to purchase a home, town home or condo she can't qualify because she does not make enough money - so she spent 4 years paying for an education and she is now employed in her field but she doesn't think she'll be able to stay in the field and make a living for herself. I think that shows such disrespect for educators. I think being a teacher is treated as a great second income but not to live solely on and I think that is very sad and contributes to the lack of qualified teachers.

Traci Latimer, Alpine School District
Compensation

The demographics in Utah are changing and the lack of funding is now and will continue to cause our students to be under served. We need more funding for instructional coaching and teacher support professionals that can bolster our new teachers and help retain them.

Travis Lemon, Alpine School District

My son is a talented, dedicated teacher. However, after 5 years in the profession, he has decided he can no longer afford to teach. He is looking for another profession. He, he wife, and his 4 children are living in a 3 bedroom apartment because he doesn't make enough to purchase a house. They barely cover their monthly expenses. It is a crime that as hard as he works, he cannot adequately support a family on a teacher's salary. You will never attract the best and brightest to the teaching profession unless you cover the bottom line, a living wage.

Karen Longmore, Alpine School District

If we expect our students to be successful and for the school systems to improve so that each generation can progress, we need better teachers who are more committed. Teachers should have a better salary which would be based off of fitting requirments, such as Bachelor's Degree, to prove dedication to the profession.

Alexa Martin, Alpine School District

Any additional funding education can receive would not be wasted. I see dedicated teachers sacrifice large amounts of their own time and resources only to be made to feel they're not doing enough because an unreliable standardized testing system tells them so. Utah's Education could benefit greatly first from giving teachers a salary that compensates all they sacrifice, and next by funding greater technology and resources for the classroom. Teachers will be more energized to do the best job possible when they have less financial strain to deal with.

Sarah Martins, Alpine School District

This isn't just a job to me. I care about my students and want them succeed in school and their other endeavors. Reducing class sizes and modernizing schools technology will help me be able to reach more of my students in a meaningful way. Increasing pay and benefits to teachers will help me be able to remain a teacher and will help attract good colleges who are committed to students just as I am.

Jared McBride, Alpine School District

Class sizes just continue to increase as our state is growing. Students miss something without the individual interaction with a class and teacher that online classes do not provide. Smaller classes and more teachers are needed to connect the students with a teacher who can help them to learn.

Albert McFerson, Alpine School District

Working within the public school system is becoming harder and harder every year. Expectations are increasing while salaries are not. Teacher benefits have been cut. It's becoming harder and harder to find qualified people to fill regular and special education positions. The answer so far has been to hire people who aren't qualified instead of realizing that we need to raise salaries and restore benefits so that we can attract qualified people. I currently work at a school that does not have a speech therapist because we can't find anyone who is willing to take the job. I was in a meeting yesterday where the speech therapist became overwhelmed with what she was being asked to do and left the room in tears. We are hiring individuals who are not school psychologists and expecting them to do the job of a school psychologist with no training. The number of ARL teachers, who have never taught in a classroom, is increasing. Because of this behavioral issues are skyrocketing as we are asking teachers to manage a classroom with no classroom management experience or instruction. I work in a school where it's reported an individual came in looking to apply for a tech job and was asked if he wanted to be a teacher. We are desperate and it's hurting our students.

Chris Melville, Alpine School District

Let us teach, not be governed.

Ryan Newman, Alpine School District
Compensation

Time is essential to plan effective lessons. There is not enough paid time to do so. Teachers work extra unpaid hours. We need a better salary.

Janeth Paredes, Alpine School District

When anyone could become a teacher with a bachelor's degree, I felt under appreciated. I am in my first few years of being a teacher, but wondered why my education and training was not being valued. Being new in the profession, I think I bring a new excitement, but unfortunately discouraging factors tend to be the topic of discussion and concern. I would like to feel more valued. It bothers me that schools become desperate and higher anyone. Not everyone can be a teacher. Some people who teach now, should not be teaching. Maybe there needs to be higher standard for teachers and be measured?

Ali Peterson, Alpine School District

I have had horrible experience working with someone on ARL / LOA programs at the elementary level in a resource classroom with no education background and no special education background. This person can not manage or engage the students and meet their IEP needs. We are having to teach her everything multiple times and she still doesn't get the hang of it because she doesn't have the foundation for why teaching the skill is important. I have spent half of the year doing 90% of her job. I will have to continue helping her write and hold IEPs for the rest of the year. My special ed teacher leader / supervisor has also spent an exorbitant amount of time working with her also, modeling lessons, doing evaluations, and conferencing over feedback and teaching new programs and skills. We have had to do all of this with no compensation for the extra time we are having to put in to help her be successful.

Rochelle Pinnock, Alpine School District

There is a significant shortage of Speech and Language Pathologists (SLPs) and special education teachers statewide. Our universities produce plenty but the pay in this state is not competitive. We need to attract the best people but improving salaries for people with specialized training.

Jerri Price-Adams, Alpine School District

I have an doctorate in Educational Administration and Leadership. I moved here from CA and 7 years of service credit was transferred with me. I am currently making half of my CA salary - I made more my first year teaching in CA (18 YEARS AGO) than I do now. I also work 1.5 hours more daily here. I am unable to get my Administrative Licensure in Utah without redoing all of the coursework, even though I completed it all through my doctorate program. In order to go into any type of leadership position, I would have to start over. I think that's ridiculous. In our classrooms, we have awesome kids who are working harder than they ever have before to meet new state standards. Having an opportunity to learn from each other and plan new curriculum is essential. I don't want more to do, I'm already working very long hours. I want compensated time to plan, develop, and research effective, research-based strategies and create meaningful, engaging units. I have no science supplies in my classroom. I have to borrow from the other teachers at the school, if they're not using the materials. We are preparing kids to work in jobs that do not exist yet. For a state that has so many children in its population and a renowned emphasis on family and education, educators are not well compensated and classrooms/schools are undersupplied. Funds must be invested in the quality of the teachers required to meet the rigorous demands of the state; to meet the needs of individual students.

Kristi Smith, Alpine School District

Teachers and students have been waiting for many, many years to have a legislative strategic plan for education including class size reduction, increase in salaries and benefits, money for supplies and a respectful attitude toward teachers. Our students deserve the best education we can give them. And that costs money.

Phyllis Sorensen, Alpine School District

Many of problems with teaching just stem from a lack of funding or lack of personal finances. I know many people who would be great teachers or drop out of teaching simply because they can't make a good living off of it. If you increase the pay to match teacher appreciation, then you will keep or gain good teachers. Also, schools need more
Compensation

money in general to support their programs and students. The current system does not create a good environment that makes teachers feel appreciated on a consistent basis or that they are being paid worth their time.

Jeffrey Sosa, Alpine School District

If you truly want to know what is happening in classrooms/schools each of you need to sub for a week in a classroom to really find out what teaching is like. Then you may have some different opinions and willing to start doing the job you were voted in to do!

Kriss Spencer, Alpine School District

Allocate more money to pay teachers so we retain them and reduce class sizes.

Janel Tuckett, Alpine School District

I think teachers also need to be able to talk to parents about disabilities that they see within students.

Alene Weakley, Alpine School District

First of all, I would like to thank our legislators for the important role that they play in our democratic process. Without your service I could not do my job. As a public servant I would like to see teaching become as important as any other public servant's job. I am willing to sacrifice if I know it has merit but sacrifice without merit is useless and drains me as a teacher. When I feel that I am getting the support for my students that I need to teach, i.e. an aide in the classroom, technology, supplies, etc. I can teach much more effectively and feel that I can truly do what I intended to do when I became a teacher, Be a Change Agent! I hope that as this legislative session begins you will take into account that I might only have 28 students but half of those students need some kind of intervention. The other half might suffer if I can't get to them in a timely manner without support staff that I need. When I can have just one more body in the room I could possibly make the change for your student that would not otherwise be possible. Please help me teach the children in this state what they need to learn to carry on our democracy!

Karen Webb, Alpine School District

Teaching is a wonderful profession that changes lives. But those lives can be best affected with personal and individual relationships with teachers. That is much easily accomplished in smaller class sizes. Providing funding to reduce class size and increase compensation for teachers (NOT administrators) is one of the best ways to find and keep great teachers.

Scotten Whaley, Alpine School District

We need to attract more people to pursue a teaching degree, but we need to attach more money to it.

Becky White, Alpine School District

education = economic growth

Kelland Willis, Alpine School District

We must invest in the education of our children. We cannot continue to do so much with so few resources. We need technology to be funded and maintained. We need adequate classroom resources without having to spend our time writing grants to beg for money. Please fund education and invest in the future of our state.

CarolAnn Barton, Box Elder School District

Providing teacher merit-pay by increasing the accountability for high end-of-level students scores without being able to control what happens in a child's life outside of school is like expecting a dentist to get paid only if all of his patients have no cavities, regardless of how well they brush their teeth at home, and how strong their teeth naturally are as a result of their genetics. Most teachers work harder than other professions, but get the bad rap due to things completely out of their control. It is a highly stressful job and continues to become increasingly more stressful because of the demands imposed upon them from the public and legislators.

Sharon Cook, Box Elder School District
Compensation

I have been teaching for a few years. In this time I have seen many great teachers quit because their needs were not met. Instead of lowering the standards to become a teacher, the state should focus on keeping the teachers they have. The reasons teachers quit include: too many students, not enough pay, lack of supplies, and too much accountability for student achievement (at some point parents need to be held accountable too).

Tralyn DeBres, Box Elder School District

People think the remedy to the teacher shortage is all pay. However, it is more related to workload and the number of nonsense things teachers are asked to do on top of their teaching jobs. Teachers are overwhelmed.

Danny Esplin, Box Elder School District

I and many of my colleagues feel strained with the increase of class sizes and the low incomes that cause us to look for supplemental incomes.

Clark Funk, Box Elder School District

In the state of Utah I do not know one person who is a teacher that can support a family on their salary. People who have the profession as a teacher either has a spouse that also works to make ends meet or they have two jobs. This is a huge deterrent in the teaching profession and it has had an effect on our quality of teachers. I have been a teacher for 8 years now and half of those years I have been helping teachers hired who do not have a degree in education. Right now Utah will hire anyone to teach and teaching is already a hard trial by fire job. Not having that background of university training on analyzing data, classroom management, how to grade, etc makes the job even harder on those hired individuals. Hiring people without these skills as teachers is not just hard on them, it's hard on the kids, it's hard on the school trying to support them and get them the training they need. I know it also decreases my morale wondering why I got a degree in the first place and if what I had meant anything. Raising the pay will make the competition better. Schools will have people applying for the job and be able to select better teachers. Teachers will not be taking in second jobs making them better more rested teachers and more time to plan for their students. The bottom line is if you are a parent what kind of teacher would you want your child to have? A teacher without a degree in education? A teacher who has to work two jobs?

Johanna Fyffe, Box Elder School District

We need help with one-on-one technology in our classrooms. I just received my first iPad for my classroom, so we have one to share with the class. Pay the teachers to keep the teachers. Charter schools need to held to the same standard as all schools. Why do they have so much money to go on all their field trips? Where does this money come from? Does the public pay for the trips to National parks? We need more help with social issues in our schools. We need more help with students with special needs, the students who don't qualify for resource.

Denise Lee, Box Elder School District

That when schools have the funding needed to hire additional teachers so that their is a reasonable amount of students being taught. When they fund for para to help with small group instruction in reading and math. We can accomplish the goals that you have set for us.

Robyn Smith, Box Elder School District

Teachers work VERY hard to meet the needs of our students. We are tired of being disregarded, and having people treat teaching like running a business. We are dealing with variables that we CANNOT control (actual little human, and their lifestyles etc). You cannot run teaching like a regular business. Give us some credit for knowing what we are doing, and being competent to do our jobs. Compensate us fairly for the work we do and help us be able to support a family on our wages. Presently we CANNOT support a family on a teacher's salary!!!

Virginia Spenst, Box Elder School District

People on the hill decide what happens in the classroom without full understanding of what happens. I would like to see more legislators have round table talks with actual classroom teachers.

Nancy Ulsh, Box Elder School District
Compensation

Cutting health/PE programs is insane. Pay to retain teachers.  

Amy Wadsworth, Box Elder School District

Please listen to what we are saying to you. We are in the "trenches" everyday and can see what is needed in our schools for our students to succeed.  

Barbara Warburton, Box Elder School District

Why is it always a battle with legislators to fund public education? Utah is a state of family unity, so why not provide what is best for children without always having to prove why we need money to support education. I would love legislators to come spend a week in my classroom and school, so they could see for themselves why public funds are important. Teachers put in so much extra time to planning for their student's learning without compensation and yet, they are still being told it's not enough, plus the message being sent from legislators, we don't value our teachers, you are just expected to meet all the demands, so quit whining about it and just do it. The teacher shortage comes from low pay and demanding expectations, I feel legislators created it to begin with.  

Jacquelyn Austin, Cache County School District

Extra money for special education, math, science, etc isn't fair. We all work hard. No job in education is easy.  

Amy Bassett, Cache County School District

I have yet to return to my pay from 8 years ago if we factor in the $6,000 deductible insurance and the loss of funds we received for teacher development of about & 3,000! Most of my children, my nieces and nephews make more than I do.  

Alison Griffiths, Cache County School District

The teachers of Utah are very dedicated. We spend so much of our own time planning lessons and completing extra work, attending meetings etc. It would be so nice to receive a raise and compensation for our extra hours. I know I have mentored teachers and student teachers who are discouraged even at the very beginning of their careers, at how much personal time is required in the teaching profession to be a dedicated teacher. I think there will be a huge teacher shortage in the near future if it is not addressed soon. Our hearts are in the teaching profession, but because of our families and our financial obligations, we may not be able to serve there. Thank you.  

Michelle Hamp, Cache County School District

I spend 9ish hours a day at work, oftentimes working through lunch to get paperwork, planning, ieps, and things relating to ieps done. I am burning out.  

Melanie Jones, Cache County School District

Stop funding vendor bills  

Sara Krebs, Cache County School District

Don't forget the individual  

Cheryl Orme, Cache County School District

If we invest in our education system, especially our grades K-3, it will have a more long term benefit for our state.  

Amelia Ostler, Cache County School District

Accountability, technology and PLCs have stepped up the quality of education. However, the additional time requirements for planning, collaborating and follow through is at the same time pinching the quality of teaching that is being demanded and desired to be given by educators. More planning and preparation time is needed for the educational process to reach the levels that are being pushed for.  

John Petersen, Cache County School District
Compensation

I stopped teaching when I stopped getting the support needed from administrators (who were too over-pressured by those above them) to maintain a classroom where students were not held accountable for poor behavior. It was a unique year when we had many transitory students who came from self-destructive homes. Those kinds of students need support before and after school so they can succeed in the high pressure environment of today’s schools. We will never succeed with students whose everyday needs are not being met either because of poverty or lack of adequate supervision in the home.

Anita Price, Cache County School District

Being a teacher in public schools since I began my career in 1987 has been an amazing and difficult and wonderful experience. It’s an honor to lead youth, to help them grow, and to hopefully be a positive impact in their lives. The challenges today are more difficult because we are required to do so much more, with so much less money, and the support from parents and society in general is just not what it used to be. The respect for the profession has diminished. This is partially due to the level of professionalism displayed by teachers. I don’t want to sound like a complainer, but you get what you pay for. A lot of my sharpest students would never consider teaching as a profession. Some of the student teachers I have mentored through the years did not demonstrate passion for teaching or for the youth. Let’s make teaching a highly respected and sought after career again! Put a high value on amazing educators! Find a way to attract the best and retain them with fair salaries and fair expectations, lots of support and Utah Schools will continue to be excellent. If not, the only ones you’ll get to do this job will be desperate, unmotivated people who are only in it because they think they get their summer off.

Kimberly Sorensen, Cache County School District

In the state of Utah, we have so many children, and we need to make education their first priority. Utah should be leading the nation in producing students who are capable and innovative thinkers. We need to rethink priorities and put all kids first. The “magic bullet” is lower class sizes, support for teachers, both mentoring and professional development as well as high salaries. We should be able to choose from the best of the best teachers, not be scrambling to put bodies in front of students. Please put education first. It will pay off! Thank you.

Theresa Stanton, Cache County School District

The morale of teachers is ever decreasing. Teachers need support from legislators to help them stay successful in teaching!

Holly Stuart, Cache County School District

I love my job. I think everyone knows there is a teacher shortage. There is no need to belabor the point that classroom sizes are notable. I will love my job whether or not any changes we ask for happen. But it would be nice for kids and adults if some things I’ve ranked as important such as increased pay or reduced class size come to pass.

Brenda Jean Anderson, Canyons School District

Teachers need to be paid more to retain them, also, studies show that class size really does not have a significant effect on students. That may be the case, however, it does significantly impact the teacher, and the teacher is the one teaching the students.

Jennifer Asay, Canyons School District

Increase access to endorsement classes for special educators. I am currently working on a math endorsement and cannot find the final two classes to finish the endorsement. This is very frustrating. I am committed to obtaining the endorsement, but feel that there are too many “hoops” that we educators must jump through to get endorsed. It shouldn’t be so difficult! I am also concerned with the requirements and who sets them. Perhaps there should be more online options as teachers are self directed learners. How can I get more involved with this process?

Julie Beane, Canyons School District
Compensation

Teachers truly care about their students and their needs. Teachers want to best for their students. Teacher retention needs to be addressed. As a fifth year teacher with a masters degree the amount of time, work, and effort put in everyday is no where near validated through pay, benefits, and value. It is extremely difficult to live off of a teacher’s salary; especially with the amount of education and experience I have which would be much valued in a different field.

Ashley, Canyons School District

If the classroom teacher has the biggest impact on student learning, then we need quality teachers with excellent training in every classroom. This cannot be done through lowering licensing standards. We must make a concentrated effort to attract teachers to teacher preparation programs and provide mentoring and support to retain teachers once they are in the classroom. This includes increasing teacher pay, forgiving student loans, and improving retirement benefits among other things.

Erika Bradshaw, Canyons School District

High quality teachers provide effective instruction which leads to student success. You can not get around having high quality teachers in every classroom if you want Utah’s students to lead academically. There is no quick fix through technology or alternative route to licensure to improve education opportunities for Utah’s students. Pay a fitting salary to attract those who you would have teach your child.

Madaline Chilcutt, Canyons School District

Veteran teachers are leaving their profession in record numbers. We need to ask why. There has been a turn in education as it becomes a fiscal competition where parents/patrons are more important than the educators. The loss of respect from parents students and administrators is creating weakness. The teacher shortage is more about the treatment of teachers than just the pay. When we hire people without a teaching degree or certificate we marginalize the expertise of our profession. Then the administrations raise the expectations and hoops to jump through to simply keep a job that there are no qualified teachers to re-fill. How is that positive?

Shelly Christensen, Canyons School District

I work at a highly impacted Title I school. The staff at my school is amazing. We face many challenges throughout the school year, such as homeless students, students from poor backgrounds and bad situation, high behavioral problems, and low academics. Our school has bushed through all of the hardship and we have come out shining in the end. We make a difference in not only these students educations but their lives. We teach them not only math and reading, but also how to be decent successful human beings that can contribute to our society. This year much of our funding was cut and we did not have nearly the supports we need to help us in our classes. We need more interventionists in the school to help teachers target the students that are extremely behind. I currently have fifth graders learning their alphabet for the very first time. We need more money to obtain the services these student need and deserve. I also believe that teachers that work under these difficult situation found at a Title I school should be rewarded by higher pay. We have a very hard time keeping teachers at our school, because of the things we have to deal with and handle everyday of our lives. It is a very emotionally taxing place to be.

Raschell Davis, Canyons School District

High teacher attrition is due to newer teachers feeling that maybe they can do better for themselves and society by doing something else. check out 80000 hrs and why they say not to become a teacher.

Josh Dimick, Canyons School District

I previously taught out-of-state before coming to Utah and I have noticed many differences in the education systems. Teachers in Utah are paid significantly less and the shortage is noticeable! Masters degrees are not common-place here because the salary increases are minimal. In other states, masters degrees are the norm and expected. Unfortunately, I now have student loans that are difficult to pay back due to Utah low salaries. I had an extremely easy time finding a job via skype, but I have noticed that it has been difficult to hire new well-qualified teachers. It is also difficult to retain the great teachers that we have because many teachers do not find the salaries worth the cost of paying for day-care. This is a huge problem and needs to be addressed immediately. Lowering teacher licensure
Compensation

requirements and standards is not the answer to maintaining high-quality education for future generations. I know teachers that have left teaching or Utah completely to find jobs elsewhere that pay more. On the other hand, I do have teacher friends in other states that could be persuaded to move here if the salaries were higher.

Sara Finstad, Canyons School District

Pay teachers better for all of the work that is added to our workload each year and you would retain more teachers. I am a special education teacher who is being required to complete a math certification in order to be “highly qualified“ when I had met the requirements years ago by completing the English (ELA) Praxis. The math certification for secondary special education teachers currently requires 2 classes which you must complete Calculus 2 prior to taking, but Calculus 2 is not a requirement for the certification. Inconsistency and requirements like this are very frustrating and discouraging to desire to continue as an educator.

Angelina Freer, Canyons School District

The teaching shortage in Utah is causing schools to settle on less prepared, less skilled, and less experienced teachers. Legislators need to draw trained professionals to the state by DEMONSTRATING that they truly do value teachers. Right now it seems like educators are largely looked upon as poor public servants in Utah rather than qualified professionals.

Melissa Hansen, Canyons School District

If we are to attract and retain quality teachers, we must pay them a competitive salary.

Lezlie Harper, Canyons School District

Supply & Demand. Return Pension Benefits and increase Teacher pay then the Teacher shortage will go away.

Emmanuel Kepas, Canyons School District

The class sizes are too large to teach what is expected.

Suzanne Mackey, Canyons School District

It is frustrating that the message sent from the alternate teaching programs is that anyone can be a teacher. I also think sex education should be taught in Utah schools beyond abstinence.

Amy Olsen, Canyons School District

Too long have legislators denigrated teachers and our role (not everyone can teach). The teacher shortage was created by previous legislatures and now the state is paying for it. You have failed to appreciate us and our contributions. It is time to pay us what we deserve. It is time to show you support teachers. You've also ignored other state employees. It is time to give us all a healthy raise.

Tom Alleman, Carbon School District

We are overloaded with too many programs to learn and apply for demonstrating students learning levels and to show our abilities as a teacher. There is very little time if any for teachers to actually prepare quality lessons and be effective in their teaching when we have to spend more time writing about/explaining it to the powers that be. Yes, there are a lot of programs that do help us in being better teachers, but when it takes more time than a regular working day provides, teachers become very stressed and exhausted....burned out and want to leave the profession.

Diana Bettino, Carbon School District

I will tell you first that I love my profession, my students, my principal, my colleagues, and living in Utah my entire life, but we have had some issues that need addressing as of late. Salary is a huge issue in Utah education! Every human being has to go through an education for his or her profession, so we should value the teaching profession the most. Many teachers, myself included, have over 20 years’ experience with Masters Degrees and several other endorsements, which give us extra years of college education. Most of these added courses are to benefit our students in the classroom, yet, sadly, our salaries do not reflect our knowledge or experience. Our state should
Compensation

respect and appreciate those educators who have continued to teach and worked to increase their personal education by giving them increased pay. Many states hold dear their teachers who are highly educated and show appreciation in higher salaries. Consequently, Utah college graduates are turning away from the education field because of low pay, little recognition for their skills, and no respect. In addition, I cannot begin to tell you, how many teachers give much of their salary in supplies to their under-privileged students, without expecting anything in return except a smile and a thank you. Now, I understand that the small supply stipend teachers receive from the state is going to be axed. Utah’s Governor Herbert said in his state address, the Utah sales tax collected from Amazon purchases would go toward education. Where did it go? Currently, our education system feels more like “Life Depressed” than “Life Elevated.” The school attendance is important! Since legislation has changed our laws for student attendance, we do not have students/parents held accountable for education. In our local schools, we see an increase in absences in several students, and our high school teachers believe there will be a decrease in high school graduates. Teachers and schools should not be held accountable for testing scores when students do not attend school. Students will always miss school if they can because they underestimate the value of education. If our youth fail their complete education, Utah will have a future society of illiterate people, unable to live in a functioning society. This will increase our welfare population, homelessness, and crimes because they will not have any proper job skills or be able to attend college. We must bring back mandatory education. Instead of being “Life Elevated,” Utah will become “Life Deflated.”

Michelle Fidell, Carbon School District

I love teaching. There is evidence to suggest that I am a skilled teacher that makes lasting impacts on students. I prioritize professional development and continually work to improve my craft. But, my love for teaching is not enough to ensure that I will stay in the profession. My love for teaching is NOT and should NOT be justification for long hours with low pay. I am more than qualified to leave the profession and seek work where I will receive higher pay and similar benefits. Please, please, make keeping qualified teachers and attracting new, qualified teachers to the profession the highest priority. Studies show that teachers impact students more than any other factor in the classroom. I know that making the job more appealing will keep great teachers in the field. Utah needs quality teachers for our children, who are our future.

Jacie Pressett, Carbon School District

You need good qualified teachers and they are hard to find and keep!

Kristina Schade, Carbon School District

Special Ed Teachers have the highest turn over. They need a raise more than the general education teacher to retain quality special education teachers.

Jeff Agnello, Davis School District

My son also went in to teaching, and called to brag about his AP European History scores being the top in his district. “THAT’S my boy!” He is successful, and the students love him, but he’s quitting at the end of this year. He lasted five years. He just can’t raise a family on a teacher’s salary.

Ann Allred, Davis School District

I’m having a hard time enticing competent people to choose teaching as a profession. Several alternate-route-to-licensure candidates are about to quit. This is becoming a high-stress job (with increased emphasis on standardized testing) that does not offer the respect of pay commensurate with that kind of stress.

Aimee Anderson, Davis School District

Students are our future and they deserve the best teachers possible. To attract and maintain the best teachers they need to be paid more and have more time to plan.

Donna Anderson, Davis School District
Compensation

If education is as important as people think it is, there should be more money allotted to make class sizes smaller and pay educators more money to keep good teachers around. I spend at least 10 hours each day at my school, then I spend about 2-4 hours more, each night, working on school things. It's exhausting and I'm burnt out! This is my 23rd year of teaching, and it's not getting any easier. Although I put a lot of pressure on myself, it seems like educators are being required to do more and more every year.

   Jodi Andre, Davis School District

Education has to be something you are willing to invest significant money into. Without the profession being something that will pay enough for a family to survive on, there will be a serious teacher shortage. It has to be a viable option for new college graduates to choose.

   Corine Barney, Davis School District

Please support our teachers and children through the necessary measures of financial funding and meaningful supports. We need more qualified teachers to support the growing population and class size epidemic teachers are facing and we need to support current teachers so that they stay in this amazing profession and do some of the most important work.

   Karly Bates, Davis School District

This is about our community and funding education funds the future. The us vs. them idea needs to end.

   Alyn Bone, Davis School District

Our classes are overloaded! I spend $2500 or more each year to buy supplies and technology to help my students. I am getting out of this profession and do not advise any one to enter it. We are micromanaged to the point that apathy has set in among the majority of teachers.

   Sharlene Bremer, Davis School District

Dear Legislators, As a veteran teacher, I have watched our profession dramatically suffer in the past ten years. Not only do we have teachers that do not want to stay in our profession, they are running from it. Young people are discouraged from seeking this career path--not without reason. Teaching is arguably the hardest career and one of the most disrespected. If I were to average out my salary over the true number of hours that I work, I would be making much less than the minimum wage. I knew that teaching wouldn't be lucrative when I came into the profession. Money wasn't the reason I chose to work in education. What I did not know was the true lack of support and respect teachers receive. I currently teach in a classroom with 32 third grade students. There is not space in my classroom to accommodate them. My classroom budget was made for a class size of twenty-six students. That means that all of the supplies for six more students come out of my pocket. That's on top of what I already spend to enhance my curriculum. My school email inbox currently has 53 unread emails, most of which are complaints about one thing or another, that I have not had time to read due to my other responsibilities. I arrive at school no later than 7:00, and rarely leave earlier than 6:00. I still take work home every night. I take grading with me on vacation and feel guilty if I don’t work on it after my family has gone to sleep. I am asked to create trackers for multiple students. I try to stay on top of everything that I am asked to do, and if I drop one of the forty balls that I am juggling, I am belittled. The “fun” has been sucked out of my classroom. I am moving through curriculum at a break neck pace, attempting to prepare my students for “The Test” at the end of the year. There is little to no time for slowing down to make snowflakes or, more importantly, teach about character, citizenship, and friendship. There is a disconnect between administration and the classroom. We are constantly being asked to do “little things.” However, when you have a list of twenty little things that each take a few minutes, it adds up. I’ve always known that I was meant to be a teacher. I know that I make a difference in the lives of others every day. I’ve seen positive differences happen in amazing ways. However, it's getting harder to see that silver lining amongst all of the dark clouds. We need your help and support. Our profession, our students, and the future of our state depend on it.

   Katie Brown, Davis School District
Compensation

I believe providing up to date technology in school is important. The problem comes in that technology needs to be replaced. If it is used how we should use it, then we are going to need replacement within 5 years. This is never written into budgets and is very frustrating to many of us when we go to use the technology and it doesn't work. There are days when the only thing that works in my room is my white board. That is right, not my smart board but my white board. I just ask that while getting technology into the classroom is important, it is just as important to update it periodically.

Lori Burnett, Davis School District

This world we live in is a difficult one. Students come to school less prepared, with less support from home, and many behavior issues. Instead of helping teachers confront these issues, or provide incentive to feel valued, teachers are constantly asked to jump through hoops, fix things that are not really broken, and implement gee whiz programs at the whim of people who are out of touch with the classroom. The sooner teachers are looked upon as professionals equivalent to those with equal education, the sooner the public will stand behind teachers and education as well. Set the example, actions speak louder than words!

Cori Burns, Davis School District

I am a single teacher, supporting only myself. I live with four roommates, and I can barely survive on this salary. I can't imagine how hard it is to survive on this salary with a family. Please consider funding to help increase teacher salaries to help retain quality teachers.

Amy Carsten, Davis School District

Special education teachers are overworked and underpaid.

Tanielle Carter, Davis School District

Please give teachers the needed tools to do their jobs well.

Karen Cheney, Davis School District

All students can learn! Teaching is an important! We need to provide teachers with additional preparation time and exposure to quality PD so that they can improve their craft and thus outcomes for students. Are special education teachers are dealing with more difficult student behavior and more challenging parents. On top of paperwork, their workloads are mounting with no relief in sight.

Kathy Chisholm, Davis School District

Teaching is a huge job that few realize how involved and draining it can be. We have to figure out a way to make teachers want to stick it out and stay with it!

Maureen Clark, Davis School District

Salaries need to be increased so people will want to go into education. There will always be a teacher shortage unless this issues is addressed. I know teachers that have left Utah to teach in other states. They now double what I make!

Shaunna Clayton, Davis School District

I am moving my fifth grade class into blended learning. We are fortunate to have 1 to 1 technology, which is fabulous. I believe that blending will bring us higher growth. The planning and collaboration required, however, is incredibly time intensive. The number of meetings and trainings we are required to attend increases almost daily, and the result is that the time I put in on my job at home is getting seriously overwhelming. I'm excited about what I'm doing in my job. I think my class is going places. But nobody can take this workload long term without damaging their health or losing mental stability. Teachers are human. Human needs must be met. There are less stressful jobs for much higher pay. We should be shocked if there wasn't a teacher shortage.

Amy Coray, Davis School District
Compensation

That early intervention is critical in helping students progress and get to an age appropriate level.

Carey Cornejo, Davis School District

District oversight is top heavy, money does not reach the classroom

Kristen Davidson, Davis School District

Education isn't cheaper by the dozen.

Eileen Dempsey, Davis School District

Teachers are critical to our students and their futures. However, teachers are not treated with respect or like the professionals they are. They have to spend so much time “proving” they can teach and jump through so many hoops that it is not worth the compensations. Teachers no longer have a lot of control in their classroom. Often we are expected to teach everything without support from home. Teachers have become the only ones responsible for a student's education (students and parents are not held accountable for their students' learning). The teacher shortage will not improve until teachers are treated with more respect and are compensated fairly. No one wants to work in an environment where they are treated negatively when they can work in many other fields, receive better compensation, and have a more positive work environment.

Sara Doty, Davis School District

Grading schools for test scores is not OK!

Allison Downs, Davis School District

I feel that teacher salaries are not commensurate with the work teachers do and the background education they have. Teacher salaries need to be increased so we can attract qualified, high quality individuals to be teaching our children.

Janette Duffin, Davis School District

That teachers need more respect and support. Not just more hoops to jump through.

Corinne Eliason, Davis School District

To whom it may concern, Please take education seriously. Utah is losing many good teachers because they aren't getting paid enough. It is too hard to be an effective educator and have part time jobs to cover the bills. This is the most pressing matter. If there aren't good teachers in the classroom, it will mean a lot of work/money for schools and districts to train and guide teachers who are not licensed educators. An increase in salary would mean more retention. It would mean more time with families. It would relieve much of the stress and pressure of being a teacher. Thank you for your hard work. Sincerely, A Good Teacher

Shon Feller, Davis School District

How hard it is to teach without feeling valued.

Erin Fuller, Davis School District

Linking student performance to teacher pay, much more complicated than that!

Wendy Gladden, Davis School District

I have been teaching for ten year and each year my class size has gone up. I am up to 28 kindergartners per class. TWENTY EIGHT! I know that other kindergartner teachers have more than me. This is a problem all across elementary and secondary levels. Who wants to come into the teaching profession where you get paid very little (can't be a one income family) and have extremely large class sizes! Things need to change.

Kristine Guest, Davis School District
Compensation

I would like my legislators to know that SPED teachers are extremely underpaid compared to the rest of the country, we are losing them because of this.

Laura Guillaume, Davis School District

It doesn't matter we get lip service and you do what you want to do.

Alan Hansen, Davis School District

Lowering the bar on the qualifications of teachers does not improve education for students anymore than lowering the qualifications for doctors would improve health care. I believe that our state legislators understand this concept, but believe that the push to lower the qualification standards for teachers, in an effort to address the teacher shortage, is driven by primarily by economics and politics, which should not be the basis for making decisions in education. If you want to increase the teacher pool, while at the same time improving the quality of education, make the job more appealing. Many teachers love what they do, but are driven out due to financial reasons and a lack of support from some legislators who view teachers as adversaries instead of partners.

Zachary Hansen, Davis School District

If I could share one message with legislators it would be to put your feelings and biases towards public education to the side and focus on the wonderful children/students of our state. Be more supportive and less critical of teachers. Many times, our hands are tied and we are doing the best that we can. Our voices often go unheard, but as some of the people who have entrusted our vote to you, it is your job to represent our voices instead of special interest groups. There are no perfect teachers or parents or legislators for that matter, so let's work together instead of against each other in doing what's best for the children of our state. Also, I would like to thank those legislators that support teachers. They are those legislators who know that teachers didn't go into teaching for the money. We are here to provide our students with the best quality education that we can give. We have no ulterior motives other than to see our students' smiling faces each and every day. When we feel valued as professionals in education, it encourages us to do our very best. And when I say professionals, we have earned that right by earning a degree in education which should be a fundamental requirement in any society. So, thank you for your monetary and emotional support. ??

Kammy Hanson, Davis School District

I have taught at the same at-risk school for 26 years. I am passionate about teaching my students that they can be successful. It seems that my passion for teaching is often at odds with your desired outcome. I love the Core. I believe it teaches thinking and problem solving. I am not loving that I now do more non-teaching activities during my prep and home time. There are too many hoops that need to be jumped. This is a trickle down process that starts at the legislature. I am a professional who knows her stuff. I know how to get kids to see success and be successful. I resent being told by those who do not teach, how to teach and what success is. I resent being told that my time is not valuable. I resent being told that any person on the street can be a teacher without training. This devalues the time and effort I have given to this profession. I had planned on teaching for forty years. I am not sure I will be able to handle the lack of respect and consideration for another fourteen years.

Kimberly Harmon, Davis School District

In my experience, teachers work very hard, and are very dedicated and give many hours beyond what is expected. It would be nice to be appreciated more.

Robin Harris, Davis School District

Now is the time to stop messing around with teachers: let them do their jobs, pay them as professionals, back off with needless testing, stop treating educators as over-educated peasants.

Richard Heath, Davis School District

We are doing our best! Please support us. We are not the problem.

John Hill, Davis School District
Teachers are paid poorly in Utah. That is why there is a shortage of good teachers and retention is very low.

*Jessica Holtry, Davis School District*

I love teaching, I love working with students. But, I wish it was that easy. I work very hard to plan and make sure all their needs are met. I put in two extra hours of my own, unpaid time, everyday. Plus, I take work home over the weekend and I still feel like I can't get it all done. I have used a lot of my own money and resources on my classroom and students. I have a lot of behavior problems with students stemming from home or parental problems. I spend so much time disciplining and parenting students, that I can't get any instruction time in. I have 4 students that have already had over 14 absences and it's just the second term. It gets really depressing when I see other professions (same amount of education) put in less time and less stress and get paid a lot more. It's no wonder teachers are leaving the profession. Our brains tell us it is not worth it, but our hearts tell us the students are worth it. It's an internal battle that each teacher has to face and make decisions. It's a slap in the face when they hire people without teaching degrees, and I'm expected to teach and help them without any extra pay. I have been observed during snack time when I taught Kindergarten, and got marked down for not using technology. I have been marked down for not having my daily objectives listed, when in reality they were on the white board behind my principal giving the observation. I have been observed during a Valentine's party and got marked down for not assessing and explicitly teaching. I got marked down for having garbage on the floor on another observation, and the students were cutting out word sorts. There is no place for the educator to write their thoughts or opinions, or defend what was really going on. We just get marked down and it makes our averages drop. There are a lot of things they can do differently on the observations to make them more valid and fair.

*Susan Horning, Davis School District*

Teachers need to be paid more. There is so much that is required of us and we don't get paid enough that is why teachers leave the profession.

*Suelen Housley, Davis School District*

I went to school to help students to be better. Not just academically, but socially and behaviorally. It has been hard. With all the high stake testing, data collecting so that others outside of the profession can check up on me, and disrespect for teachers everywhere. Teachers are often thought up as baby sitters for their children and hopefully the student learns something. This is wrong. We have 4 year degrees and are dictated to continue our education. We are paid minimally and treated as to our pay. Parents and government do not treat us as professionals who went to school to learn how to teach. They think they know best. Behavior in the classroom has decreased over the year partly because of this disrespect. Why should the students listen, when lawmakers and parents are putting down the teacher? Skilled teachers are leaving the profession because they cannot support their own families on the pay that is offered them. I once heard in one of my college classes "I might as well try teaching, I failed my other classes". Is this the attitude we want our teachers in your child's school?

*Linda Hunzeker, Davis School District*

Teachers are leaving the profession. We need to stop great teachers leaving the profession. We need to make it a profession people fight to be in .. not get out.

*Tonya Hyatt, Davis School District*

My students are the future and they will be taking care of us one day, lets make sure they are getting a good education and support.

*Margaret Jensen, Davis School District*

Please fund education at an appropriate level! Our students deserve excellent teachers, and the best way to get them is to pay them what they're worth. Please please increase funding for teacher salaries so that our best and brightest are drawn to the profession. Our children deserve that.

*Sarah Jones, Davis School District*
Compensation

Teachers are leaving the profession due to crappy pay. We absolutely need to pay teachers more. This alone could solve the teacher shortage. And please, please make sure teachers are required to be licensed. Lowering standards will only get us more bad teachers.

Lori Kalt, Davis School District

You're not listening to the people who voted you in. You come in with your own agendas. Our state's growth in family sizes that affect schools and quality education can be the last thing funded. You can't squeeze anymore blood out of the turnip you've squeezed over the past decade. Wake up and make a significant difference in the lives of people.

C. Kirkham, Davis School District

Special Education has been on the back burner long enough

Kathleen Lamborn, Davis School District

You make decisions thinking you know what's best for all the schools, students and teachers and you never even set foot in an actual classroom. You're looking at raw, often times incomplete data. Would you for one second think like educators instead of businessmen? Come and observe classes, think about everything you put on the shoulders of teachers and try to teach something rather than making laws and rules based on what you think is best?

Maria Lee, Davis School District

The public school system is so broken. So much expected of teachers and we are expected to work for free so much it is no wonder we have a shortage of teachers!

Jennifer Louder, Davis School District

Come to my classroom. See what I do.

Carol Madsen, Davis School District

Qualified teachers are an asset to education. It's unfortunate for educators to rely on unqualified teachers (or substitutes) when they have conferences or any type of leave at school. I absolutely love what I do. I teach my students everyday and look at them and wonder what career choice they will have. I see doctors, teachers, engineers, and many more. It does get harder to teach when we have 30+ students: Getting their attention, correcting, conferencing, one-on-one interventions or even small group.

Estephanie Maiava, Davis School District

I am a special education teacher with 14 years of experience multiple awards including the CARE Award and the Special Education Teacher for Davis School District. Two years ago I completely burned out - anxious, exhausted, sick. My caseload was too high and the students I work with are very difficult. I contacted the superintendent and my special education bosses and fortunately was able to get the extra help I needed, so I am still teaching. We cannot afford to burn out teachers, because we can no longer replace them. Even though I love teaching, I warned each of my 8 children not to pursue teaching, because it is too little money to deal with exploding class sizes. I hope the legislators can do something to entice people to teach.

Jill Major, Davis School District

In many parts of the world, teaching is a valued and respected position--from the way it is viewed by students, parents, the community, and the community leaders who make decisions that impact education. Unfortunately, I feel like this is not always the case in our country and especially in Utah. Educators should be drawn here. If we want our students to be able to compete with students across the country and the world, then we need to keep quality teachers in Utah classrooms who have classroom education experience, who have succeeded in a college education program, who have done what was necessary to become knowledgeable in their content areas, who have high morale, and who feel valued. Currently, as a fourth year teacher, I have watched many of my coworkers leave teaching for other professions because of salary, because of the way teaching is viewed in our state, because of the
Compensation

overwhelming workload, and because of the lack of support they are receiving from parents, community members, and community leaders. Others of my coworkers are quickly trying to move away from teaching, but stay in the field of education (by pursuing counseling, administration, district employment), not because they have a desire to work in these areas, but for these same reasons. They feel obligated to move. Why can I not feel valued as a teaching professional in a Utah classroom? Why do I feel like I might need to go elsewhere one day because of the direction we are headed in this state? I am qualified, and I love my job. Unfortunately, if we continue to try to fill classrooms with unqualified teachers and push qualified teachers out with a lack of salary, with a lack of classroom supplies/technology, with a lack of how we value them as professionals--instead of supporting and helping qualified teachers stay in the classroom--then what is going to keep teachers, like me, from leaving? Our students are not going to be receiving the type of quality instruction that they need. Our students are not going to be able to compete with other students across the country and around the world. Teachers make all other professions possible, including yours as a legislator. Please help keep qualified teaching professionals in the classroom. We need your desperately need your help!

Carly Maloney, Davis School District

I am the only Kindergarten teacher at my school, and I have 55 students. I don't have the time, materials, and energy to help all of my students master the skills for Kindergarten. There needs to be a limit with how many students can be in a classroom to ensure each student to be successful.

Jennifer McIlrath, Davis School District

Class size does matter!

Anjanette McNeely, Davis School District

If education is really a priority, put money there. Money speaks. Let us use End of Level Testing as part of the final Grade. Motivation. Standards based grading.

Carleen McNees, Davis School District

Depression and anxiety is on the rise among our students. We have too many students in our classes to be able to really know them, let alone notice who among them is struggling and contemplating suicide. They just get lost in the shuffle. I am teaching 38 students in AP BC Calculus, this class should be capped at 30 so that I can provide the help and support that they really need.

Tracey Meade, Davis School District

Teacher shortage is effecting student learning.

Lisa Menlove, Davis School District

Education needs more money so people will value teachers and learning.

Marilyn Merkley, Davis School District

The more we prioritize standardized testing, the more we will facilitate a generation of great standardized test-takers who accomplish little else. It's not a coincidence that many great leaders were not stellar on their standardized test scores. We ought to get the idea: there are other things that are much, MUCH more important. But as long as we act like the test is most important, the harder it is for teachers to prioritize what really matters. We also need to take a look at Google and other companies: technology skills are not nearly as important as so called "soft" skills that are harder to quantify: communication, teamwork, persistence, grit, creativity, enthusiasm. THESE are what matters. And yet the money keeps going to standardized testing (and the parts of subjects that happen to be easy to create data from) and technology. It is so frustrating to be told to do things that are not in my students' best interests. It is so frustrating to see the money go to what doesn't matter.

Jon Midget, Davis School District
Compensation

My students enjoy that I do not have them do their assignments using laptops or computers. They would rather do worksheets, assignments from the book, or hands-on activities. I am telling you this because the big push is for one-to-one technology in the classroom and the kids do not really like learning that way.

Troy Murray, Davis School District

We have some amazing teachers in our schools that we are losing to other fields because they are simply not paid enough for all of the work they do. You cannot support a family just on a teachers salary. So in turn we are losing some fabulous teachers to other professions, or teachers are having to work several jobs.

Jessica Olsen, Davis School District

Special education teachers can’t teach the students because there is to much paper work. Most special education teachers, don’t have time to teach.

Curtis Page, Davis School District

We need to show how much being an educator is valued by respecting teacher demands.

Megan Porer, Davis School District

Education should be a priority. This is the future that we are taking care of and teaching. These are the people who will grow up and take our places in life. We need good people in education who are valued, trained, and supported so that the impact that they have on these kids will make a difference. This world is changing at such a rapid pace and the educational system we have in place is not keeping up. The salaries, training, and support are not there, the educational community is not valued and many of the best teachers are leaving.

Suzy Price, Davis School District

It is time for you to start treating educators as professionals and to stop creating mandates and programs for us to follow. Get out of our classrooms and allow us to do what we have trained and qualified to do -- teach! We appreciate financial support, but the constant meddling in our profession has destroyed any incentive we have to creatively solve the problems that we face. You do not over-regulate any other profession and you do not have the training and experience to micromanage us. We invite you to actually sit in classrooms and try to manage them, rather than attend the dog and pony shows that you typically see in the schools. We love our students and we are deeply invested in their success. Please allow us to do the jobs for which we were hired.

Debbie Quigley, Davis School District

Education is vital part of a better society, if we care so much about families and children here in Utah you can show it by supporting education legislation that betters schools and helps keep professional and qualified employees in our state.

Lauren Rich, Davis School District

I am a teacher and I love my job. I love the students and want the best for them. My parents and both my brothers have been or are currently educators. So I come from a long line of educators. However, Raising kids on a teacher salary has its challenges and when I was a single mom, there were times we could barely make ends meet. I was offered another job and would have made more money although it was a job that didn't require a degree. After talking to my children, they knew I wouldn't be happy doing anything but teaching. They were willing to sacrifice so I could continue in the profession I love. As a kid, I always knew I wanted to be a teacher. I am so glad I am still a teacher and wish more good people would join the profession but I hear all the time I wouldn't make enough money. Just for instance I have two grown sons who now make more then I do without a degree and I have a masters degree. This gives children the idea education isn't important. I would love to see teachers paid more so we can get more people interested in being a teacher.

Natalie Roach, Davis School District
Compensation

We need strong new teachers who are qualified and supported for the future of our kids in Utah.

*Edie Rostal, Davis School District*

Teachers leave this District and State because they get paid better elsewhere. If we took care of this one issue, it would resolve a lot of the other issues.

*Sherese Seeds, Davis School District*

I have been teaching Junior High and High school for 17 years, all in Utah. Teacher moral is a steadily decreasing from the added responsibilities and decreasing focus on a positive work environment. Classes sizes are too large for effective teaching, and the demands for performance are increasing. Any business would say this is a bad model to follow for success. Teaching is a very rewarding experience, but I have a hard time recommending this profession to others as work environment and incentives to teach are being eroded.

*Bradley Shafer, Davis School District*

It is scary to be an experienced teacher and see what is happening to our profession! We are not attracting the quality educators that we need to for the future! A large amount of seasoned teachers are retiring and we don't have pay or benefits to interest people to enter this critical field! This is a CRITICAL time to invest in the efforts of attracting quality educators for the future of our Utah children! Best student outcomes or technology or class sizes won't be our biggest concerns if we can't first find high quality educators for teachers. More and more demands are placed on teachers every day and parents and students are becoming more and more challenging and time consuming. Burn out rate is high!! We need more support and more $ dedicated to adequate address increasing student needs. Teacher respect seems to be declining by some. More of our own time and money is being asked of us (not being funded for classroom supplies, more meetings, more documentation required, more individualizing for more students, etc). We feel like we are being taken for granted. Our family time is being sacrificed with our increasing expectations. It is becoming humanly impossible to balance work and home life with this extremely demanding job! No wonder the burn out rate is high, no wonder we're not attracting enough high quality people to enter the field! Please invest so that we may continue to have excellent teachers to lead all that lies ahead for our students!

*Natalyn Shepherd, Davis School District*

We are in this profession because of our love of children and teaching. Over the last 10 years our workload has increased significantly, while support has not. Please consider that the policies you make regarding teachers also affects the education of the children of Utah.

*Gloria Smith, Davis School District*

Teaching is hard and stressful, but so important. It is a professional position that needs to be funded as such.

*Kathryn Sorte, Davis School District*

Please come sit in our classrooms and see how much time we spend on student behavior, parent communication, and monitoring asthma and allergy issues. See how spending time to catch students up who have been absent takes time away from other students. See how much of a difference could be made in EACH child's education (accelerating or remediating) if there were fewer students in each class.

*Kathy Sutherland, Davis School District*

Please increase teacher salaries! This alone will draw more capable people to consider this amazing occupation.

*Karen Sutherland, Davis School District*

I am really concerned with the continuing teacher shortage, and especially the fact that it is getting worse, not better. I don't claim to know the answer, but putting undertrained teachers in the classroom is NOT the answer. This does a disservice to the children who need an education. I believe that raising teacher pay and reducing class sizes and providing consistent, quality mentoring for new teachers are probably some of the best ways to attract and retain
Compensation

teachers. I am close to the end of my career, and I am concerned about who will teach my cute little neighbors and my grandchildren.

Marcia Thompson, Davis School District

Why I teach and why I feel it is not possible to do so at this time. Too many demands with large classes and no time

Donna L. Trease, Davis School District

I have a co-worker who was starting his young family on a teacher's salary, and did so for 4 years - eventually he started doing research about what a bigger family would cost (they had 2 kids, but knew they'd eventually want 5), and he found that HIS kids would end up getting FREE MEALS at school because of how little he would make! He made the difficult decision to leave education, and now works for Hill Air Force Base. We lost another good teacher to lack of funds within the education system...

Sara Turner, Davis School District

Teachers are being asked to do more and more without training and with additional behavior schools. So instead of addressing the problem of why teachers are leaving, our state decides to make it easier to be a teacher. This will not fix the problem. The teachers will still keep leaving because of the high stress and low pay.

Dawn Webb, Davis School District

The primary reason we have a teacher shortage in Utah is due to the high demands - not enough prep time (which leads to planning after hours), high class sizes, finding our own curriculum for some subjects, continuously adding new paperwork and requirements to our daily schedule - coupled with low pay. If teachers were paid for the amount of work they do, there wouldn't be a shortage.

Sara Wilson, Davis School District

We need to attract and retain quality teachers. Salary and being thought of as true professionals is the best place to start.

Kim Yoho, Davis School District

We spend so much time testing we don't have time to teach. A lot of that is Davis School district requirements.

Kristy Young, Davis School District

standard based grading not working; higher salaries; more teacher funds so we don't have to pay out of pocket; moral in our districts

Carlina Corun, Duchesne County School District

We have dedicated our life to these children. Please respect our profession.

Karen Erickson, Duchesne County School District

The biggest drawback to teaching right now for me is not the pay. I feel that it is the lack of trust. My district does not trust me to make academic decisions and instead prefers to micromanage every aspect of my job as much as they can. Most of the new teachers hired last year were under qualified (about 90%, or 27 out of 30). Teaching standards need to remain high and the state needs to pay according to the high standards to attract and retain good teachers. In the end, we will get what we pay for.

Ed Goodrich, Duchesne County School District

Teachers are overworked, under paid and under appreciated. Expectations for teachers are too much, and if things don't change, teachers will quit. Teachers should have a life outside of school, but we don't. Teachers' own kids need to be their priority, but as it stands, teachers' families are sacrificing more than they should have to.

Heather Jacobson, Duchesne County School District
Compensation

I am concerned about the teacher shortage. I work in a rural district that pays teachers less than many other districts. I see new teachers getting hired just to move on after a few years. More and more often, people are being hired with no teaching degree. I work in a school that just hired someone right out of high school to teach. Then, it seems like we are inundated with training to help us be effective educators. I believe this is to help those who are not qualified to teach. These ARL’s make what teachers make, and I am still paying on my student loans from when I went back to school to get my teaching degree. So, not only are unqualified people are being hired to teach, but I feel penalized for getting the education necessary to do my job effectively. Additionally, because of the teacher shortage, these unqualified people being hired require help from other teachers (because that is what we do), increasing our work load so that we give the students all that we can.

Jennifer Jenkins, Duchesne County School District

I would like to feel valued as an educator.

Elizabeth Sampson, Duchesne County School District

Our rural district is so impacted by low teacher salaries that my newest colleague is a 20 year old with only a high school education. She has no teaching experience. I suggest that the legislature work to reduce teaching pressure and increase teacher rewards, including pay. Utah students deserve a quality education.

Kathryn Thomas, Duchesne County School District

I know many highly educated professionals who would be amazing teachers and have expressed their desire to teach, but are choosing other opportunities based solely on the fact that teachers don't earn a competitive salary. One of the major indicators for success of students in the classroom is a quality teacher! The proposed plans to reduce the education needed to become a teacher, and therefore reducing the number of highly qualified teachers is a poor idea and will decrease the outcome in learning of students. I think its sad that students are missing the opportunity to learn from the best of the best.

Sheena White, Duchesne County School District

The role of an educator has been overwhelmingly modified in the past several years. Today's teacher in the public schools must prepare several lessons for the same classroom of students. My daughter is a high school teacher. She is often very overwhelmed preparing her lessons for an AP history class. Her classrooms have close to, or over, 30 students each. The students in each class include: IEP, 504, Foreign Exchange, ELL, along with a few high achieving. She has to prepare four lessons, in order to reach each students needs, for each class period. She also has to deal with lazy students, unreasonable parents, and members of the faculty who are so burned out they no longer participate in extracurricular clubs and coaching. She could have pursued many careers but she wanted to teach secondary public education. She had some wonderful teachers who inspired her and she longs to do the same for others. She is single and has no social life because so much time is spent writing lessons, helping students individually, and coaching. She is a GREAT teacher exhibited by the number of students who want HER as a teacher! But she is honestly questioning if she made the right career choice. She loves her students and hopes she is inspiring them through her lessons. She is a real teacher! But she is wondering about exploring other options.

Darline DeBry, Emery County School District

Teachers have a passion to help others, but this passion cannot be met if we don't have quality educators in the classroom. The stress it puts on the quality teachers to help those less qualified is significant and unnecessary if we didn't allow under qualified staff into the classroom. More money needs to be put into education, not taken from it. Too many schools are running on too little and the time is now to step up and reclaim the money from legislators. Give each child the same opportunity you had in your schooling, because these students will someday be in your shoes.

Jill Tatton, Grand County School District
Compensation

I have been teaching over 18 years and finally feel appreciated with our pay raise. It does help a little. I love my job and the colleagues I work with. This job, however, takes a lot out of a person, especially when you have 30 or more students in your classroom. It should be mandated teachers should only have 25 students in their classroom. There is a difference when you have 5 -7 more students. It is difficult to reach all students! Also, you need to keep teachers in the field by funding a merit pay bonus system. Keep good teachers!!!!

Kimberlee Affleck, Granite School District

How the American Dream lives most strongly in our refugee population, but they need our increasing support.

Mary Alsop, Granite School District

I have been a special education teacher for 5 years and I feel so lucky to work at a school that is so supportive and "student driven." Our school focuses on the outcomes of our students to ensure all students are learning the essential standards, showing growth, and developing into people who will be positive contributors to society. With that, I know how hard each of my colleagues works in order to progress our students forward. As educators, we need to be treated like all other professionals and have a pay scale that represents our college experience and correlates with similar degrees in various fields. I know there are multiple educators who feel undervalued because the amount of work and effort they put into their job doesn't reflect their salary. Providing educators with a comparable wage system as other professionals is a step in the right direction to getting and keeping quality teachers.

Lacia Ashton, Granite School District

As a technology teacher who supports the entire staff and teaches all grade level classes I see the many needs of the students and teachers. We need to lower class sizes for teachers. Having a class of 37 fifth grades is unacceptable and detrimental to student learning. We also need to increase teacher salary to recruit the most talented and committed educators to provide the rigorous and high quality education that our students deserve.

Rebecca Baggett, Granite School District

THE INCREASE IN SALARY LAST YEAR WAS APPRECIATED. WE NEED TO CONTINUE TO TAKE STEPS TO ATTRACT AND KEEP NEW TEACHERS IN ORDER TO ADDRESS THE TEACHER SHORTAGE. RULES LIMITING RETIRING TEACHERS FROM RETURNING SHOULD BE CHANGED TO HELP ADDRESS THIS PROBLEM

Ray Barton, Granite School District

We are doing the entire school system a great disservice and cheating students of a quality education when we do not give them well paid, qualified teachers and do not hold charter schools accountable for test results.

Tracy Bell, Granite School District

Teachers work hard, and aren't treated as most professionals. We are struggling with keeping qualified teachers because the pay isn't great, and the load too much. The testing also is way too much throughout the entire school year.

Jennifer Bodell, Granite School District

I am very concerned about the number of teachers I am seeing leave the teaching profession. Especially over the past 5 yrs. I have been teaching for 28 years and more and more has been added to our plate as educators. So much so that other professions look much more appealing as the work load isn't as demanding and the pay is much higher. We are also dealing with a lot more issues in regards to student behavior. Many feel they can't devote the time that is expected to be an affective teacher. There isn't much planning time for the elementary grades. There are a lot of PLC's and PD meetings, but not much time to plan, prepare, grade,and keep up with how to use technology to help our students learn.

Sherrie Brown, Granite School District
Compensation

I volunteer 2 hours of my time at school planning, meetings, etc. and numerous hours at home doing school related activities. I'm under valued and over-worked! I appreciate the salary increase, but when will the extra hours be addressed?

Trinda Carlson, Granite School District

This is a hard job, and a big responsibility, to educate our future leaders and community members. In order for teachers to be able to handle the stress and commitment and time it takes to do this job well, we need a more professional career salary. Right now we are being undervalued and pushed aside.

Beth Christophersen, Granite School District

If I was to ever leave teaching it would be because of the ridiculous expectations I am held to and the lack of support from legislators dealing with difficult parents and students. I should not be the enemy.

Alexia Crandall, Granite School District

We would greatly appreciate being viewed as professionals and trusted to do the job that we have been trained to do.

Brooke Deardorff, Granite School District

First, I feel there is a definite need for more full time professionals to be positioned at one home school, which are trained to deal with mental health and wellness. In addition, Special Educators are being inundated with so many referrals it takes months of tracking data and testing and then those special education teachers are not full time at one school because they are so far and few between. This, in my personal opinion, creates a lack of consistency. Camaraderie between general education and special education teachers plays a key role in student gains when collaboration and consistency are prevalent. Full time teachers are not equipped or trained to deal with the rising amount of children experiencing adverse childhood experiences. It is extremely difficult to teach and learn with so many outside obstacles and emotional barriers. In many cases, the heightened demand on teachers and school communities to help students rise to academic achievement becomes an unattainable accomplishment for not only students but all stakeholders. i.e. teachers, parents, administrators, districts because of these influences. In turn, both students and teachers taste the bitterness of defeat and failure. We are trying everything to overcome so many of the hardships students face but it is a daunting task - but done with love and trust. However, it is exhausting! Often, as an educational cohort, we look at the academic aspect of children, but it seems as though we forget to ascertain whether or not our students are in a healthy socio-emotionally stable frame of mind to learn what we as educators are trying to teach them. Sure we can do clubs, and have an open door/open teacher-parent dialogue, have food pantries, wash clothes, give children gloves, talk to them when they have a rough day, and deal with the overwhelming effects of poverty on their brains and physical toll of their body, but then am I educating them academically or mentally and emotionally? Why isn't there an assessment that asks about the whole child, not just the academic child. This MAY or may not have an impact on their successes in other areas of instruction and curriculum. Secondly, teachers should be treated with respect as professionals and many in society forget the lifelong impact of fabulous teachers. I still have not come to any sure conclusions as to why such a huge shift has happened ultimately giving teachers a bad reputation, but even as a first year teacher I feel the affects of this from districts, administration, parents, legislative decisions made on our behalf, and all of these people’s views trickle down through student points of view. How do we change this?

Kim Dillingham, Granite School District

Education needs to be the number one priority on every citizen's mind. We can't afford to put it anywhere but first.

Aubrey Dillman, Granite School District

Not all schools have the same supplies or opportunities and the legislators need to make sure all schools are on equal footing

Sonya Dollins-Colton, Granite School District
Compensation

As a first year teacher, I feel overwhelmed with the variety of requirements for maintaining my teaching license. The same is true of testing and curriculum for the classroom. I don’t see how any 1 person can possibly have the time to address all these requirements properly. It is no wonder that most teachers quit within the first 3 years. It requires about 10-20 hours a week more than the allotted contract time. A reduction in class sizes would help a lot, or part-time assistant teachers to help with things like differentiation. The process of “educating” a student has become overly complicated, and it shows in teacher retention rates, student performance, career readiness. More and more it seems like public education has become a bloated institution whose hidden purpose is to funnel more tax dollars and community donations to private corporations who “support” and supply our schools with an increasing number of throwaway products.

Charles Christopher Elrod, Granite School District

There have been recent incidents that a teacher position went unfilled for half of a school year. The first (Math), was filled at the semester. The second (English) has not been filled. It is now the end of the first semester. Current English teachers are taking the extra classes so that those students will be able to have a full-time teacher. Problem: 1. Education is no longer a desired career. 2. The policy of not hiring full-time subs able to teach five days a week destroys the continuity of education for classes who need the subs.

Traci England, Granite School District

I'm not a classroom teacher so not commenting. I do think the shortage is a big issue and using less qualified teachers is not good.

Kathy Furse, Granite School District

The number of mandates elementary is receiving is becoming a huge over load.

Jay Graft, Granite School District

The public education system is dying. We have neglected it so long that that we as citizens are lucky that it is still intact. We are losing teachers at such an alarming rate and if we are not careful the education system will crumble right before our eyes. Please invest in education, by decreasing the work of teachers and giving them implement time, giving us other school staff a live-able wage. Please look at how you are compensating teachers. I work in a low income area with students with severe Autism. My students make progress much differently than others and I fear that merit based pay will only stack high quality teachers in more affluent areas with students without exceptional needs. Please look at laws that protect special education teachers. I have had multiple head injuries and a broken bone from school and that's not to include the daily bumps and bruising. Provide money for protective equipment. I shouldn't have to fight for my right to work in a safe place. Before you make another law in education, spend some time in the schools. I am frustrated that those making the judgement calls have never walked a day in our shoes. Please treat us as respected citizens of society and not a fall back career. If you want the state of Utah to succeed in the future then you must invest in it, by decreasing class sizes, giving us implementation time, and letting us decide what is important to teach. Stop standardized testing, it is so very harmful to our education system in so many ways. Take a good look at Finland's education system and find ways to go in that direction.

Camille Gregory, Granite School District

I teach Kindergarten. Every day I come to work I feed my students two meals per day, check for properly clothed bodies, dry tears, watch for bruises of the body and the soul and address them appropriately...then teach. There is so much more to teaching a child than test results. Please remember that.

Charmaine Grimm, Granite School District

As a teacher I aspire to educate, condition, and prepare my students to take lead, protect, and preserve our communities, economy and planet for future generations to come. I do this with a passion that drives from being a citizen, mother, and educator of this country. I would only ask that as an educator I am recieved with trust, proper support, and a sense of being valued for what I give to our community.

April Guardado, Granite School District
Compensation

I would like to see those who vote on educational issues substitute in three different educational settings. Then I feel they would see how much more support teachers need today in classrooms. As a teacher, when I get the support I need, I have more confidence in myself and the energy to do my best.

Susan Gunn, Granite School District

Story #1--Before our recent pay raise, I was living from check to check. Now, I am able to put money into a savings and am able to buy a home. Story #2--There must be a way teachers can have smaller class sizes. There needs to be a way teachers are not teaching 20 students in one class then 39 in another class.

LaDonna Gustafson, Granite School District

The biggest challenge I think that students and teachers face is the overcrowding of classrooms. I have had the great opportunity to have a 3rd grade classroom with only 22 students in it. My students made a lot of progress and it showed on their end of year tests. The next year I had 30 students. I did not have as much time to address learning difficulties with students because there were just too many of them. I noticed that as a whole my class did not progress as much and it showed on their end of year tests. It was so frustrating to know there were holes of understanding in some students and simply not have enough time to fill them all. Likewise this year when I first started teaching half day kindergarten I had 32 in my class. This was so difficult! It was harder to maintain order and it was hard to teach routines to so many and trying to assess and do groups was just insane. When we were fortunate enough to have another class and my class was reduced to 19, the difference was amazing. Things were calmer and more productive. I felt that I could cover twice as much material. I also can keep small group sizes low enough to actually have them be more effective and I can meet with my groups more often because there are not as many of them. In my personal opinion, reducing class size would be the number one action that would really increase student growth and learning. A teacher cannot be expected to give personalized education to such large class sizes. It is also very taxing to do the amount of grading required by a large class. Class sizes have been increased, but the money and time given to teachers to do all the grading, planning, preparation and paperwork associated with those extra students has not been increased. It is time to start to invest in and trust teachers.

Katy Halliday, Granite School District

I think that the biggest threat to education is a lack of skilled and motivated educators. In order to attract motivated and skilled people to the profession there needs to be competitive salary to professions in other fields that require the same level of education. I don't support merit based pay, but I do support earned incentives for teachers.

Heather Handy, Granite School District

In my half day Kindergarten classes, I am expected to teach a full day of curriculum, while doing a great deal on one-on-one testing. I need more time to work with struggling and advanced students. Look at giving us full-time aides, decreasing testing, or making our day an hour longer!

Karen Haslam, Granite School District

That Teachers are treated not very fair!

David Head, Granite School District

I am a 5th year teacher approaching the "burnout" phase. I teach at a Title I school and resources and support have continued to dwindle year after year. Our school has many students with behavioral issues and we are completely lacking support. We have no money for paraeducators to help and the district requires months of paperwork before intervening. We are drowning. I have a class of 24 students but I spend 80% of my time managing the behavior of 3 students. The students with behavioral issues needs are not being met in our school system. They are not getting the support and interventions they need because we lack resources. These students are also taking away learning time from other students. This is unfair to everyone. I love teaching but I don't even get to teach anymore. I spend all my time managing behavior. The day ends and I'm exhausted, I can't stick around for 2 more hours to catch up on grading and copying unpaid. Teachers need more support, we need help! Schools need copy room aides, paraeducators, behavioral health assistants. We can't do this on our own. Mandatory testing also brings extreme
Compensation

stress to teachers and students. One standardized test does not show the worth of students or teachers. Utah has to reduce the amount of testing, it wastes instructional time and does not accurately show student knowledge.

Laura Heffernan, Granite School District

Charter schools and public schools must be held to the same educational standards (accountability). Utah education should use ESSA as a guide for better education of our students. Utah is competing NATIONALLY for quality teachers. Utah's quality of life is not as good as it has been in the past because of air quality and higher cost of living. Those cannot be used as recruitment vehicles as in the past. Teacher compensation is becoming MORE of a priority in obtaining quality teachers!

Dennis Heidel, Granite School District

There are a lot of talented special education teachers. The students in special education classrooms might not score the highest on testing, but there is a lot of amazing progress that takes place in self contained special education classrooms. These teachers and students work very hard and should not be forgotten, set aside or told to work harder to get the students up to grade level. It is our intent to work with our students to their own unique abilities and to celebrate their successes no matter how small.

Heidi Henderson, Granite School District

Most teachers in my school work tirelessly for their students. We work for them both on and off contact time. However, we are constantly under fire for not doing enough.

Britnee Hinton, Granite School District

Coming from out of state, I took a huge pay cut to teach here. When bargaining my salary, my district did not acknowledge that I have completed not only my SPED credential and master's credential, but also completed 65+ units for my multiple subject credential (to teach k-8 general education). They said that because this coursework was completed before my master's degree was conferred it does not count. I tried to explain that in California, they offer the option to complete a SPED credential as well as a multiple subject and then add your master's. So, my credential was conferred first in August and my master's was conferred in November. I tried to explain this to them that the credentials are independent units of each other and therefore should be counted. This is very frustrating since my district in California honored the amount of units I completed and Utah will not.

Tori Hoffman, Granite School District

Homeless youth prevention. Teacher Salary vs. Administrative Salary. A voice for teachers

Patricia Honey, Granite School District

I need smaller class sizes. 20 kids per class would be perfect!...or I need more funding for more aids in my class. I am a 5th year teacher and I am exhausted. I can't keep up with all the small groups, differentiation, language support, resource referrals, and interventions I am expected to do. I am worn out and ready to quit.

Michelle Hortin, Granite School District

I love my job. I love being with the students at the high school level. Lately, I don't feel like I'm trusted to my job. We are losing many good professionals to other high paying fields that are less stressful.

Shirley Izaguirre, Granite School District

The urgent need to invest long term in a progressive and comprehensive education program to secure the future of our state

Richard Jenkel, Granite School District

The frustration of testing. All students shouldn't be tested only on paper, but through observations and real life situations. Preparing for the real world requires time, patience, consistency and a knowledge of their needs individually. Allow teachers to all be paid equally from K -12. We should only be required to specialize in 1 to 2 areas
Compensation

to be proficient at what we teach and not make Elementary specialize is 6 + areas while Jr. High and High school teachers need one area of expertise. There are many areas of relevant that are indicators of what makes a successful student successful through the support of their teachers. Teachers in elementary are require to be experts in more areas of studies than most people who work in other fields. That is not reasonable to ask. Our pay and hours we put in are not indicators that the future leaders of our country are important, when not enough funds are put into pay or funding needs of public schools. It's frustrating to keep loving and sharing your passion for education when teachers are force to work more with less everyday.

Sandy Thuy Jensen, Granite School District

Class sizes are way too large. Anything above 28 becomes crowd control, not teaching.

EllenMae Johnson, Granite School District

The message that I would like to share with my legislators is that their votes regarding education speak directly to their priorities, and while there are certainly exceptions to this rule, by and large the Utah legislature has been far too slow to react to desperate needs in Utah's education system for far too long, oftentimes implementing "solutions" that are woefully weak and ineffective. What this conveys to teachers with whom I work is that the Utah legislature only cares about solving issues within education when they are faced with no other option than to act, and the consequent "action" taken by legislators is done only to put a faux-feather in their political cap so that they can say they've accomplished something substantive without actually having done so. We are facing a teacher shortage and yet there are people trying to make it harder for educated, experienced people that could be amazing educators to get certified? Utah crams more children into the average classroom than almost anyone and yet spends among the least per pupil annually: aren't they worth more than that? There are a long list of oft-discussed issues in education, both within Utah exclusively as well as nationally, but the bottom line is this: as teachers, we are aware that an inherent responsibility of our career is doing more with less, and if the message that the Utah legislature is sending us as educators continues to be that we need to continue to do even more with far less than anyone else, not only will Utah see a sharp decline in their impressive quality of education, but we as educators will send you the same hollow, ostensible support on the voting ballot.

Macord Johnson, Granite School District

It is time to fund education. Education powers our economy, helps children climb out of poverty, and enriches our cultural environment. Please, let now be the time to fund education in Utah.

Susan Jones, Granite School District

Teachers are not being supported in the classroom.

Mackenzie Kemp, Granite School District

Pay increase for all school staff, not just teachers and principals. In special education it is difficult to hire and retain staff.

Richard Kerr, Granite School District

As a speech/language pathologist working in the schools, I see a lot of wasted time for testing. The results on some of the testing is not timely enough to provide needed feedback and many tests are taking precious instruction/reinstruction time away from students. Many of my scheduled times for meeting with students are interrupted during these mandatory tests that come from the state school board. They are irrelevant to many special education students and cause undue anxiety. And now that these tests are online, if there is a "glitch" in the system, even more time is wasted. Testing needs to be back in the hands of the teachers and schools that work most directly with their community of students and are most familiar with their needs. A "cookie cutter" approach is not working.

Noel Lee, Granite School District

The difficulties teachers address in the classroom in title 1.

Kerry Lee, Granite School District
Compensation

I've been teaching for 10 years. I don't make enough to pay for a master's degree, but I need a masters to get paid more. I REALLY need to be able to make enough money to support my family and further my own education. Either teachers need to be paid more, or we need to be given scholarships to be able to further our education. I'm almost being forced to find a new profession because I can't support my family.

_Hilary Linton, Granite School District_

The teacher shortage is real and getting worse. We need to make teaching a respected and well paid profession if we are going to attract and retain high quality teachers. I have had two student teachers recently that quit education after they were finished student teaching because the pay wasn't worth the about of work and emotion they put in.

_Denice Long, Granite School District_

Although salaries have increased a lot in the past year in individual districts, there needs to be an increase state wide with a small tax increase.

_Betsy Lopez, Granite School District_

Teachers need a professional salary and lower class sizes

_Lisa McAfee, Granite School District_

I recently read an article about the best high school in every state in the United States. Each one had very small class sizes. Class size does make a difference in teaching ability. You can't have your class sizes unless you have more teachers. You can't have more teachers unless you offer a better salary and benefits than other places.

_Paul McClatchy, Granite School District_

We can't adequately meet the needs of our diverse learners with so many students in our classroom. Raise teacher pay, if you wish to increase teacher retention rates.

_Nicole McCrea, Granite School District_

We have kids with high needs (regular ed and special ed) who are sharing their teacher with 34 other kids, and we can't fill the aide positions. We need smaller class sizes, and better pay and benefits for teachers' aides.

_Michael McDonough, Granite School District_

I have always wanted to teach but because of family constraints I was unable to finish my education until later in life. I amassed a great deal of student loans to get my teaching certification and was so excited to begin my career. For the first few years of teaching I was enthusiastic and happy, however, slowly year by year my satisfaction with my job has declined. Every year we come back to school to new requirements, new rules and regulations that are redundant and unnecessary. I feel very micromanaged by the District and the Legislature. I feel disrespected and devalued more and more each year. Teaching is incredibly difficult and it seems as if those in the Legislature think we are just babysitting. I would really love to teach. I spend so much time in meetings, duties, and trainings that are completely redundant, that by the time I am in front of the class or are planning for class I am overwhelmed and exhausted. Teaching is not babysitting. it is one of the hardest and most challenging thing I have ever done in my life, but it is also very rewarding. I want to continue to teach in Utah, but it is getting harder and harder to deal with the disrespect and disdain those outside of education have for teachers. I wish that every legislator that anything to do with creating laws for education would go into an elementary classroom and teach for two weeks without the teachers help, and sit in while the students take their standardized tests. If they did, I guarantee they would walk away with a different understanding of what we do for the children of our state every day.

_Leslie Morley, Granite School District_

Feeling supported and safe should be the right of every teacher in the classroom. It is sadly getting to the point that every teacher I know is planning their exit, whether leaving the profession or counting down to retirement. It is becoming a burden that we don't know if we can bear any longer.

_Jenny Morris, Granite School District_
Compensation

It's time to put of children first. They are our future. We need quality teachers, smaller classrooms, more support from our legislators. Testing has taken over teaching.

* Cindy Moyle, Granite School District

Most of us have had to work 2 or 3 jobs while teaching to support our families. That decreases the time that we can spend planning, but it is the only way to pay bills for children. You took away the pension when times were rough, but we still make much less than others with Bachelor's degrees or Master's. Gangs are increasing again and the behavior makes it harder to teach.

* Jane Myers, Granite School District

Students deserve to have veteran teachers instruct them in a smaller class size, up-to-date materials and technology. I have 39 students in a class, no new textbooks, and not enough time in the day to grade papers, build my curriculum, consult with teachers from my department, mentor new teachers, and write emails, or make phone calls home. I have been teaching for over two decades and have worked with about 25 new teachers in my field. This revolving door in our profession only harms students and puts such burdens on the teachers that continue year after year. Please consider lowering our class sizes, give us up-to-date materials, pay teachers or give bonus money to those outstanding in our field, and stop giving the Public Education money to Charter Schools that do not have the same strict guidelines to follow. Thank you.

* Susie Myers, Granite School District

Class sizes are problematic, especially with the younger children. Grade schools needs smaller class sizes, and educated teachers with twenty first century skills. Education should be a high priority, and our world is dependent on our children.

* Kelly Price, Granite School District

Education of our children should be one of the top priorities, not something that is taken care of among the last priorities.

* Karen Reynolds, Granite School District

Every child in Utah should have a safe, public school in his neighborhood he can walk to. Parents should send their children to the child's neighborhood school, a public school, which has a solid basic educational curriculum - even though they feel the school is not good enough for their child. If improvements are needed they should work together with other parents in their neighborhood, at the school level, to insist the school to become "good enough" and thereby help their community and all children. The legislature can work toward the goal of a safe, appropriate neighborhood school for all children. (This can also have the added bonus of reducing car emissions to clean the air around us.)

* Kathleen Rice, Granite School District

I teach kindergarten and I had very large classes last year, 28 in the morning and 29 in the afternoon. This year I have 24 students in the morning and 25 in the afternoon. Even just having 4-5 fewer kids in the class has made a huge difference and I feel like I can better serve my students this year. I am more aware of their individual needs, I can work with students in smaller groups and give them more of the attention they need, and I have more time for planning because I have less grading, copying, etc. I think I would be able to do an even better job if my class sizes continued to decrease in the future. I would love to see more teachers hired to reduce class sizes and that is the most important issue for me. I also would love to have more funding for classroom aides to help with the workload and student support and have them be more fairly compensated (I have had a couple really great aides who have had to quit because they didn't make enough money), more money for classroom supplies, and increased salary/compensation for classroom teachers.

* Rebecca Riley, Granite School District
Compensation

Teacher will need to be paid similar salaries as other professionals if you want to keep quality teachers or encourage college students to major in education.

Katherine Robinson, Granite School District

Quality public education, including preschool, needs to be a number one priority alongside basic health care for all citizens.

Virginia Rothstein, Granite School District

Please listen to the suggestions that educators give. We know what we need better than anyone else.

Shaina Runolfson, Granite School District

Something needs to be done to help increase teacher morale. Teachers are very highly educated, yet are treated like we are uneducated. Society cannot function without teachers, and they need to be treated that way. This would do a lot to help with the teacher shortage that we are dealing with. Privatizing education or giving more money towards charter schools is not the answer. The education budget needs to be spent on finding the most qualified teachers who have a passion for education and who are willing to stay in the profession. Public school teachers are teaching the future leaders of this state and country. Supports are needed in classrooms, not just in increased funding and decreased class sizes, but also with increased funding for classroom aides.

Emily Saltas, Granite School District

Teachers work hard and long to assure their students succeed. When there are more than 25 students in an elementary classroom a teacher spends most of the time disciplining and managing the class. Everything is not within a teacher's control, parents should be held accountable. I see and hear stories of parents blaming teachers for their child's poor grades or behavior. Many things begin at home. Misbehaving students in elementary schools is a real problem and must be addressed. Teacher burn out with these students is overwhelmingly high.

Becky Schaap, Granite School District

Please stop causing the problems in education! Please show that you value education and children by funding our schools, paying the professionals who instruct them like professionals, and insisting that the adults in the classroom are qualified (i.e., licensed) to teach them.

Dayna Jones Shoell, Granite School District

Quit marginalizing education and thinking one-size-fits-all packaging works when kids don't come in those packages. A business model is not best for education. Public funding is critical for education or decisions about your age related needs will be made by those not prepared.

Jill Sparks, Granite School District

Increasing access to technology equipment without support in training teachers and students to integrate the equipment is futile.

Debra Springer, Granite School District

As it currently stands, teaching is a very demoralizing profession. We are here because we want to be a force for good in our communities, but are being treated poorly by governmental officials, parents, students and occasionally administrators. It has an effect on how effective we can be as teachers.

Caitlin Thomas, Granite School District

The demands on teachers today are outrageous! No one can possibly do all that teachers are asked to do. It is not humanly possible. No wonder teachers are getting burned out and are leaving the profession. Make fewer demands, and allow us to simply teach.

Joan Thompson-Harris, Granite School District
Compensation

Teachers are passionate about their careers, but without adequate living wages, small class sizes, nor supplies to be successful within the classroom, there isn't an incentive to stay in the field, let alone to encourage others to enter the field.

Joanna Timothy, Granite School District

I dare you to do my job for a day!!!!!!

Keetette Turner, Granite School District

One of the issues that needs to be addressed to solve the teacher shortage program is the constant negative treatment of teachers by the legislature. If you truly value us and the work we do, increase our funding to try to catch up with the per pupil funding enjoyed by so many of our colleagues throughout the nation. If you want to attract people to our profession, treat us like professionals.

Kurt Twining, Granite School District

I was a thirty-four year career educator. Although I received supply money (about $250), it was definitely not enough to provide supplies for each of my students. It amounted to less than $1 per year per student. I taught every 8th grade student in the school, had about 450 kids per year, and class sizes sometimes as high as 40 kids. We had a student body of 1400 at Hunter Jr. High. Although my supply money was never enough, that amount definitely was not enough for teachers who were in their first years of teaching. I spent upwards of $1200 dollars per year. New teachers don't even have enough money to pay their bills, let alone spend that kind of money in order to do their job. That's definitely a reason for new teachers to leave the profession.

Penney Tyree, Granite School District

Teachers have more demands placed on them then ever before. The teacher shortage will only increase if we don't start addressing class size, teacher salary, and if we don't start finding ways to boost teacher morale. This all starts with funding, but also coming straight to the source -- THE TEACHERS, before making new laws and decisions that will directly affect students and teachers.

Rebecca Vala, Granite School District

I am a Dual Language Immersion Chinese teacher who grew up in China and have been to graduate school in the US. I have taught both in Hong Kong and the US at tertiary, secondary and elementary level. Three biggest structural impediment to improving student learning are: 1. Multiple preps. Currently, I have four preps (beyond contract stipulation), two of which are brand new curriculum and two are a couple years old. Having these many preps make it impossible for me to fine tune my courses. I also have many great ideas that I do not have time to implement. If I spend too much time on one class, my other classes suffer. Consequently, no classes become as better as I'd like. 2. Lack of unstructured planning time. Growing up as a student in China, I got feedback from teacher on my assignment the same day I handed them in. That loop of practice and feedback is important for both the educators and the students to monitor learning. Lack of planning time makes individual feedback impossible. Also, having to teach 6 out of 7 periods in a day makes collaboration a luxury. 3. Students need recess. Students need unstructured free time to socialize, relax and go to the restroom. Few adults can function effectively having to go through 7 periods a day with only 4 min in transition and a 30-min lunch break. Many students, afraid of being tardy, simply do not go to the restroom in that 4-min transition time. Instead, they miss part of the class to go to bathroom. Giving students regular break will significantly help with classroom management and engagement.

Mengqi Wang, Granite School District
Compensation

I would like to challenge all of the legislators to go to a school and sub for a day. It would be the administrators choice which classroom they subbed in. They should work with the teacher to see what goes into planning for a day and then stay and teach for all that day. It would be even better if they went for 3 days. I know that they have other jobs, but let them take the subs salary for that day or days. Let them work with some of our challenging students, or students who have left for Mexico for three weeks, or who come to school ill, etc, etc. I think that this should be a requirement to be a legislator that they sub at least one day a year.

Janet Wellman, Granite School District

I love my job and I love teaching the kids. Even with the low income, I am willing to be a teacher. Saying that, for how much we work, and plan outside of our contract hours so we can find the best ways to teach our kids, we're not getting paid enough. I also think the other faculty members such as the lunch ladies and janitors should earn more as well. They work hard and are a big part of our team at school. Also having a smaller class size would be amazing. That would give us teachers more time to focus more on the kids one on one. I think tests scores would go up much higher. With test scores as well, you need to think about each school and the environment. The school I'm working at is a title 1 school with over 30 different languages. You can't possibly think that these kids who can't speak English very well or at all can meet the state standard scores? Now that doesn't mean they don't learn anything. If you actually looked more at growth, you can see how much these students have learned which I think is a lot more important than seeing if they met the scores that should have been reached. How would you feel if you took a test in a language you don't understand to well and expect to get a high score. You will feel pretty lousy. Another huge problem I don't agree with is that anyone who has a bachelor degree can become teachers. I think teachers should have a degree in education. First, it's not fair to those who worked hard in school to get their teaching degree. Second, the state shouldn't be so desperate for teachers that they will hire anyone that has any degree. If you want good quality teachers, hire teachers that went to school in that field. If you need more teachers, maybe think about actually paying us better and that would probably be a huge help on not having a shortage on teachers. Also, I don't think teachers need to take the praxis tests to get their license. We already went to school for at least 4 years, why do we need to take a stupid test that we don't actually need because we don't really teach that to the kids. These tests are college level tests that the kids don't ever learn. I would think having a degree in education would be good enough. I know for me, I have major testing anxiety and science and social studies are subjects I have a hard time learning. The praxis content tests almost made me not be a teacher. I had to retake those tests several times in order for me to finally pass them, plus pay so much money! If you need good quality teachers, pay us more, have smaller classrooms, and don't require us to do more testing to have our license when we have our degree in education. Believe we can do our jobs without having to take these tests.

Tarikua Whatcott, Granite School District

It takes time to become an effective teacher and to learn how to successfully manage a classroom and teach students. There should be an incentive system in place that rewards or gives bonuses to teachers who hit milestones like every 5 years.

Jackson White, Granite School District

Visit schools and talk with teachers -- actually listen and base decisions on teacher feedback. This is currently not happening. Respect and compensation is not valued by our legislators toward our educators. Nothing is ever done until there is a crisis - like the teacher shortage. The teachers can give the best feedback for standards, budget and needs for educations.

Stephanie A Wood, Granite School District

We are so grateful for the increase made last session to improve teacher salaries. This is a huge step in the right direction for drawing quality educators to the profession and keeping them here. I am concerned about the lowering of required qualifications for those newly hired teachers and the overall morale of teachers in general. When qualification requirements are lowered, it sends a clear message to those of us with Masters degrees and endorsements. It tells us none of that matters. “Anyone” can teach! We know this is absolutely NOT true. Just ask someone who has made the attempt and left. It is the most difficult job. A job we do every day with little to no support,
Compensation

no accolades, and mounting class sizes. The demands on teachers is growing every day. Teachers are asked to handle special education students that are not well served in the regular education classroom. This leads to very big issues. The message that teachers don’t matter and don’t do their jobs is loud and clear. We have to change this! Smaller class sizes, more pay at the starting levels, greater support and more training (not OFF contract time) is vital. Please help us change the perception of this profession. We are desperate and our students’ futures depend on these changes. Thank you.

Jaime Woolley, Granite School District

Students are being taught by unqualified teachers, this makes a huge difference in student learning. We need to do more to attract and retain qualified teachers. This is the rule of supply and demand. We have a limited supply of qualified educators, there is a demand for them. We need to treat educators like they are important and they matter.

Robyn Brown, Iron County School District

This last year I have done 4 all-nighters in addition to my normal work hours AND staying late at the school just to keep caught up on paperwork required by IEPs. I am getting paid the exact same amount as any other teacher, yet my efforts to comply with regulations and support my students are ignored or taken for granted. The shortage of teachers is a huge issue, and the shortage of special education teachers is even greater. I want to continue to support my students, but I don’t see how I can sustain this amount of effort at substandard pay. I am working a part-time job just to make ends meet. My wife is also working a full-time and part-time job. In short, if you want to solve the teacher shortage, and especially the special education teacher shortage, stop taking us for granted. Yes, have high standards, but stop making us jump through stupid hoops just so can do our jobs. When I have a choice of doing some stupid paperwork or help my students, I WILL ALWAYS HELP MY STUDENTS FIRST. Why? Because I got into this job because I believe in what I do. It’s about time that legislature realizes that their well-meaning regulations have unintended consequences. Consequences like taking support away from students for paperwork that does nothing to help said students AND drives teachers out of the profession. Something that I wonder about every time I sit in front of my computer I bought with my money because the district was not able to buy a computer capable of handling the IEP program we have without it lagging and making the paperwork take even longer... And don’t even get me started on how much of a waste of time summative testing is, or how it makes it harder for students to succeed. From the bottom of my sarcastic teacher’s heart, thank you for saddling us with SAGE. A test that isn’t a good test of knowledge and is instead a behavior test since we can’t even remind our students to take their time or stop them from clicking through. We teachers have to make data-driven decisions. Something I love, by the way. Why is it that legislature don’t bother to read the research on the negative impacts of summative testing on student success and graduation rates. This isn’t football people. Schools should not be in competition with each other. They should be driven instead to improve the success rates of students. To UEA, please feel free to share my comments. Although I would prefer to remain anonymous since I am very candid about my feelings.

Brian Middleton, Iron County School District

I love teaching in Iron County and have been blessed to do so for the past 27 years. During this time, I’ve seen many changes in the educational paradigms, practices, procedures, and approaches to funding and licensing. The current approaches to finding and keeping great teachers are a huge concern for me. I want the best for our amazing students and having interns and too many inexperienced (APT) or other pathways to licensing cheat students from those that are highly qualified. These short term fixes should not be the rule for the long run. Please work towards permanent funding for highly trained educators that will last for a long haul. Last year helped with getting us a little caught up with the rest of the US, but lets keep it going. It saddens me and hurts the pride that I have in Utah doing so many things right educationally and then still be last in the nation to fund education (the per pupil$). Please help us fully fund growth every year, enable our districts through the WPU to keep us insured and grant cost of living increases, let us be passionate professionals that don’t need to come begging every Spring.

Megan Nelson, Iron County School District
Compensation

Give me a reason to stay in this profession. Please. Granted, I made the wrong choice and choose elementary education. I should have chosen Math, Science, or some other STEM subject in a secondary setting. Had I done so I could have loans forgiven. To add insult to injury I finished my degree to be ‘highly qualified’ and I have the student loans that go along with the process. Now someone can walk in and teach in a classroom without being ‘highly qualified’. Could I please be reimbursed for the money I spent at university to fulfill the old standard? Also, the only way to increase your salary is by putting in time (years and lanes) or getting out of the classroom. Isn’t it ironic that you are dealing with a teacher shortage and the structure encourages good teachers to get out of the classroom. You want more STEM in education. Why pursue a higher degree in education when, according to the very same argument we give students for pursuing STEM education, a teacher could retool themselves for a new career that has all of the benefits of a ‘real job’?

Ray Sahagun, Iron County School District

My 26 year old son told me recently, "Mom, seeing how hard you work and what you go through, I don't see why anyone would want to become a teacher for the amount of compensation and problems you experience." My answer, "No one would do it for any other reason except that they love kids and want to help them." I think this is true of A LOT of Utah educators.

Rachelle Spencer, Iron County School District

UEA is not a liberal organization. It exists only to fight for the rights and benefits of teachers, and for practices that are best for students in Utah

Fred Ash, Jordan School District

As an educator I could not afford to buy a house. I went to a government program called the good neighbor program to be able to make it possible to afford a house. In order to afford a house I had to be willing to live in a rough neighborhood where drug deals happen in front of my house, where fights happen in the street, and where people pull out guns as a solution to their problems. I have had to have the police search my house once for an intruder. I have had to hide in my basement while guns and a fight were going on outside, while we had guests at our home. Is this the kind of places and situation you want you teachers who have 4+ year degrees to have to live. The first 5-10 years of a teachers career are the most low paid and most vulnerable to leave the profession. This is more likely to happen when they are not paid well and they are overworked. With the rising cost of our medical coverage and little increase in pay it has become harder and harder for new teachers to have the desire to stay with the profession.

Pam Bryson, Jordan School District

I have worked hard to further my education, earning my Master Degree in Ed. and endorsements in ESL, Early Childhood, and Gifted and Talented. I have taken every opportunity to sharpen my skills and improve my teaching abilities. I consider myself a master teacher after 25 years of dedication to the profession. I have received wonderful feedback from students and parents and many benefits from my profession. What I have not received is the satisfaction that my salary is one I could raise my children on solo. If I were not a dual income family, I would be just short of qualifying for public assistance. I have also been frozen on the lane system for over 11 years, without any meaningful salary increase. I find this extremely disheartening. I see this as a direct correlation to the teacher shortage.

Carolyn Dailey, Jordan School District

What I think benefits my students the most is the extra time I spend after my contract time planning and preparing lessons. I find that my students are more excited to learn, and do better on tests when I have taken the time well after my contract time to prepare. I think it would be beneficial for both students and teachers if teachers were compensated for this time or schools given extra money for aids and support staff to help teachers spend less time after contract time. I think this would also help retain teachers. Many teachers leave because of the long Unpaid hours.

Melinda Eastman, Jordan School District
Compensation

Seasoned, high quality educators are undervalued and underpaid. New teachers without training and licensure come into education for 2-3 years and leave because they lack pedagogy skills. High quality educators leave because the lack of respect as evidenced by low or no pay increases.

Lucia Evans, Jordan School District

When I went into teaching, I went into it knowing I would not make a lot of money. However, I was allowed autonomy to design curriculum for my individual students. Now, I am spending hours preparing students for a lot of standardized tests (SAGE, SLO, District reading and writing benchmarks). I am also spending hours preparing portfolios to prove I am a qualified teacher. All this time not spent on my students is drawing my attention more to my low salary and huge class sizes. Teachers are getting burned out and that is what is causing the huge shortage.

Tami Ewell, Jordan School District

more money=better education

Brett Freeman, Jordan School District

As a 20 year veteran, I have seen this job change significantly the past 7 - 10 years. We are losing teachers like crazy. We are hiring ill-equipped teachers and expecting our veterans to train them on their own time and dime. This is not good for the students or the teachers (new & veteran). Retired teachers are coming back less - and who can blame them? We need to pay our teachers enough to make it worth them staying in this profession. If you don't do something soon, I am truly afraid of what our education in Utah will look like when all us 20-somethings are gone....

Kelly Giffen, Jordan School District

I shared with Lisa: Teacher salaries Teacher expectations Problems of Alternative License Route Science curriculum expectations without textbooks or supplies Mentor/student teacher expectations

Patricia Gotberg, Jordan School District

Some of our public schools are getting many monolingual students and English is NOT that language. We need more assistance in working with these students.

Bev Griffith, Jordan School District

Education is one of the most important things you are addressing this year. Please take time to look at this fact: teacher shortage. People are not wanting to enter into the teaching profession due to government micro management vs autonomy. Professionalism should be valued and encouraged. Why are we not giving trust to a teacher to reach her/his students needs with an educated accountability and not just a check off sheet that we need to account to an administrator who is accounting a check off sheet to a district ... etc. with so many requirements and restrictions that it takes more time doing that than it does teaching our students ... not to mention the stress and worry if we are doing it exactly the way it is required by our administrators (and it seems to change a bit every year just to cause more stress)? Money is not the biggest issue for most teachers ... please take the outside testing "stress" away, all the testing accountability that we have to "report" and let us teach not just account. Teachers need support. We have parent support... we need legislator support! Please... keep class size small, support full-day kindergarten (as it is really first grade as compared to when you were in school), give compensation to teachers who are willing to do extras, reduce testing accountability, and give us our autonomy to do what we know how to do, namely, TEACH.

Vivian Gubler, Jordan School District

Stop requiring teachers to do more with less! Also, quit requiring so many tests (probably more from the district) to where we feel like we are always testing.

Liz Halloran, Jordan School District

I began my teaching career in a Title I school in Granite District as a classroom aide, then became a certified preschool teacher, and finally became a certified elementary teacher. I am in my 21st year of service in a classroom,
Compensation

and my 13th year as a certified kindergarten teacher. I currently teach in Jordan School District. I am a teacher because I absolutely love working with, and teaching children. During the past 20 years I have seen many changes in education. One of the things that impacts my ability to teach the most is class size. My classes are usually smaller because I teach in kindergarten, but many of my colleagues do not have room for all the children's desks, and their class sizes continue to grow. Teachers in our school are told that we need to be creative and figure out ways to deal with the ever growing class sizes. My classes are usually 5 or 6 children over the optimum student to teacher ratio for kindergarten, but I feel lucky as many other kindergarten teachers have over 7 to 9 children more than is best in an early childhood classroom. I feel my love for children and teaching is used against me. I will do my job for less pay, little to no recognition for a job well done, less than desirable classroom supplies and conditions, and constant pressure to do more with less. Over the past twenty years the testing requirements have become outrageous and I am now spending so much time assessing my kindergarten students, I hardly have time to teach the required curriculum. I am a good teacher, I am always learning and perfecting my teaching skills, I have received awards for my teaching, I have taught and mentored other teachers. I will never quit my job or let my students down, they receive my best every day. The people making decisions about my students and my classroom have no idea how things work in a classroom and all the things I do each day. We need the people making the decisions to be more involved in education. Come into my classroom and my colleagues classrooms, see how we make a difference in our student's lives each day, and see the things we do with so little. Please make decisions based on actual knowledge of the issues, get involved and listen those of us who are in the trenches each day trying to make a difference in our corner of the world!

Kerry Hoffmann, Jordan School District

I am a retired educator. It is sad to see that the education needs in Utah are still the same needs that were there in 1979.

Ann Hollowell, Jordan School District

Get out in the schools and sub in a class. See what is happening before you make any decision.

Kim Howard, Jordan School District

Fund education.

Terry Huff, Jordan School District

Stop with the testing and really look into the impact teachers are having

Robyn Kabwere, Jordan School District

Teaching is more difficult than the average person understands. We are met with so many challenges, but are expected to meet very rigorous testing and expectations. We need to be valued by our legislators and we need to be valued by society so that we can be giving our students the best education. Investing in teachers means investing in our future!

Christar Krans, Jordan School District

A first year teacher in Park City makes more than I make now after 7 years of teaching. While I think it's great they can afford that I feel it's time for the state to step in and make sure that all districts have the money for that kind of a salary schedule. I feel this would settle the district hopping down.

Brandon Larsen, Jordan School District

I teach middle school reading and have also worked as a literacy specialist in an elementary school. I feel as though more and more students are getting to middle school without the basic reading skills necessary to be successful in secondary schools. I feel this is due to underprepared teachers as well as budget cuts over the past several years. Once students reach middle school, it is much more difficult to remedy these reading deficits.

Toni Lasater, Jordan School District
Compensation

I work with special education students. I know I make a difference and help the students improve their skills. Many students that I have worked with have returned to regular ed placement because of the hard work of the student, teacher, parent and myself. I have been in the classroom for over 30 years and am too young to retire (age 52). I am overwhelmed with the responsibilities that seem to be added to my plate each year. My contract time ends at 3:30 but I do not leave the school until 5:00 and often have work to do at home. I love my job and the contact I have with colleagues, parents and students. I can't keep giving more. I know what my students need but do not have the time to meet their needs because of the number of students I services (45, while the recommendation is 35). We need to be compensated for the time we are spending preparing for our classes. I don't need technology, I need man power. I need additional aide support or additional teachers to help with the demands. The regular ed teachers would be able to do more in the classrooms if there were fewer kids in there classes. That could cut down on the number of students qualifying for special education services. I need your help. I don't believe money is the answer to everything. But money is needed for more resources (people). I love technology and use it in my classroom. But that can not take the place of the student reading directly to an adult. Or the time needed to teach a student a math skill. I have 12 students in a 5th grade math group. I spend 20 minutes reteaching core 5th grade concepts and 25 minutes working on individual skills that they are deficit in. If they miss a problem they have to fix it with me. As you can well imagine, 1:12 ratio makes this difficult. I have been fortunate and have had 2 high school students volunteering in my class for the last 4 weeks (an assignment from their language arts class). Today as they were asking who needed help I did not have any corrections that needed to be done. For the first time this year I was caught up! One of the students will complete his volunteer hours in two days. The other student will continue to come for the remainder of January. Then I am on my own again. I cannot express enough how much they have helped the students and me. Imagine what kind of progress could be made with another adult in the class. That is what man power can do. The data shows that the students have made progress in these few weeks. Please consider the needs of each individual student. They need you to do your job so that we can do ours.

Rochelle Manglinong, Jordan School District

Utah cannot afford to continue to be last in education funding in the country if you hope to attract big tech firms to locate in Utah.

Megan McCormick, Jordan School District

I wish so badly that I had a TA or smaller class sizes. I teach English and I spend HOURS upon HOURS giving individual feedback on student writing. My students make significant improvement the more individualized feedback they receive and the sooner they get it. It just isn't possible to do with 35-40 students in each class. Imagine 240 essays that are 5-6 pages long on top of lesson planning, meetings, differentiated teaching, etc. NOT POSSIBLE.

Megan Murdock, Jordan School District

Older schools need to be updated with technology and are just as important as new schools!

Belynda Paxton, Jordan School District

I feel like teachers and legislators are on the same team. We both want what's best for the students in the state of Utah. We want to see our students achieve as high as they can. Sometimes, it feels like well meaning legislation undermines that team goal. We have an end of year test that is intended to help assess students and inform teachers of their teaching. By law, those same tests cannot be included in student grades and students can opt out of them for no reason whatsoever, yet teacher effectiveness is graded on those test results. We both want to see every student succeed in school, but parents can pull students out of school at any point of the year (for family vacations that could be scheduled during calendared breaks in the school year) and it is up to the teacher to get those students back up to speed again or we are the ones who have failed. We want to allow parents to have more of a choice in their student's education, but not all charter schools are held to the same standards with each other, let alone public schools. We want the best teachers in every classroom in the state. We want people who will go to whatever lengths necessary to reach every student in every chair in every classroom in every school (I'm not going to talk about compensation at this point, that is already a well know problem). We then allow people in the classroom with no knowledge of how to manage a class of 30-35 students (or more) because they demonstrated content knowledge on
Compensation

a test and they have taught Sunday School for years. Meanwhile we have seasoned teachers who spent years in college programs learning not only the same content, but how to engage learners of all levels and from different cultures. This seems to undermine that same vision of hiring and retaining highly qualified educators. Again, I firmly believe we are on the same team. I know that every legislator wants to see Utah schools and students lead the country in every aspect. It feels like there are unintended consequences with some legislation that has been passed in recent years that we, as a team, could address to better help Utah students live up to their potential and become the future leaders this state needs. We all want a better future for our children. I think that our team can do that. I know we can.

James Eric Perkins, Jordan School District

We need higher salaries to retain qualified teachers

Kim Peterson, Jordan School District

Too many good teachers are leaving the profession or are retiring too soon due to economic pressures. Good teachers need to be valued and appreciated and they need to be able to raise their families without having to worry about being able to pay the bills.

Matthew Runyon, Jordan School District

Students today have higher anxiety about school, including high stakes testing, than ever before. The measures legislators pass for teacher accountability and student performance are negatively impacting students and preventing them from being successful.

Sara Susov, Jordan School District

The two major things that will help us hire and retain teachers are being paid what we are worth and being valued - not overworked (like data crunching - we are not professional data analysts) and micromanaged. I think this has been evidenced in the recent reactions to the teacher shortage.

Marc Taylor, Jordan School District

Before I went into education, without a degree, I was taking home, after taxes, 100K per year. I have four degrees and went into education, not to make money but to help kids, so they might have a brighter and better future. However, it took me 30 years to go from a beginning salary of 28K to 50K. We live in a very sad and disrespectful state of how our legislators treat our teachers....., those on the front line, in the trenches.

Max Weiss, Jordan School District

We work hard, and do our very best. Please don't portray us as not trying to do our best.

Donna Allred, Juab School District

Thank you for your efforts to fight for public education! The fight, however slow, is making a difference.

Betty Chamberlain, Kane County School District

I have great students and I believe all students can learn, but I have students that don't attend or when they do they have their hoodies on and earphones in. When we as teachers try to address the behavior or address any school challenge, we get bullied to keep our opinions to our self's. It never use to be that way it started when school grades were implemented.

Dave Anderson, Logan City School District

Special Education is under funded and has high burnout. Aides are not paid enough and are not given adequate training. We also lack good curriculum and technology to help students with disabilities.

Pat Black, Logan City School District
Compensation

The Public Education System in Utah is in crisis. This is not a political issue to be thrown around as a campaigning pawn. Public Education must be addressed by all leaders, citizens, and businesses. We all have to be committed, be on the same page and act in the best interest of our community; society.

Alma Taylor Brown, Logan City School District

Teachers don't feel that they are respected. Teachers have the summer off and they get alot of vacation time in between. They don't relize what it is like being in the classroom.

George Duersch, Logan City School District

I feel like I am constantly being held to a higher standard as a teacher, but my students move on to the next grade regardless of their performance. Students are apathetic about their grades and progress. It is hard work to keep 25-35 students interested in anything. Some are very advanced. Some need lots of extra attention. As a teacher, I am supposed to be able to find ways to differentiate, but it is difficult. There are not many people skilled enough to be effective. We are losing teachers and there are not new ones coming because they realize how difficult it is and for little pay.

Michelle Hatch, Logan City School District

Look at all schools and not just Salt Lake area.

Jolene Herzog, Logan City School District

Again focus on teachers and their concerns. We should and do focus on the students, but teachers and pay seem to not be addressed. Lots of talk but no action.

Derek Hoskins, Logan City School District

You cannot keep adding requirements in our teaching without supporting us in them. We are lacking pay, people, and parent support.

Canisha Harrison, Millard School District

Teachers are the life blood of of our nation's future. Second to only the family.

Kirtt Myers, Millard School District

I have a son who wanted to do what his dad does. I told him not only no but hell no. He has a bachelors degree in engineering, he has been working for 5 years and makes much more money than his father who has a masters degree and 35 years in education. Who would ever encourage a son to go into education. That being said I think it is a good profession for women who want to work and raise a family, therefoer we now have a profession of women.

Jim Wiscombe, Morgan School District

As a veteran teacher I am very concerned about retaining and attracting new teachers. I want my replacement to be a good one!!!! However, many of the quality young educators are losing interest in teaching. Also many of the new teachers we interview are far below the quality of those retiring. Something needs to be done!!!!

Mark Durfey, Murray City School District

Unlike other districts, Murray chose to increase salaries of ALL teachers, instead of just new teachers. I am extremely grateful for this increase--we just had a new baby and we are able to better afford those expenses. We need to help all teachers, not just new teachers, have these new wages. We need to increase teachers and staff's quality of life so they can better serve our students. We need to make the wages large enough so people can support a family on our wages. That's how we're going to get and keep quality teachers.

Shelly Gearheart, Murray City School District

You get what you pay for and more with teachers.

Keeko Georgelas, Murray City School District
Compensation

There is such a disconnect between how they perceive the school and the reality of it. I want legislators to spend at least a week in schools with different SES, get to know students on individual basis, talk with teachers about their concerns and take them in considerations during the legislative sessions. They need to be realistic when it comes to the achievement expected outcomes of students with disabilities. They all make progress but it depends greatly on their cognitive issues, which need to be taking in consideration. One major benefit that decreases the gap between able and disable students are the accommodations the IEP team decides the students need in the Gen Ed classroom. For example, if a student has difficulty with short term memory and recall of information, a calculator will help the student with math computation. If they understand specific math concepts, but never get the answer correct because they can’t recall multiplication facts, they should be allowed to use the calculator during assessments. We are in the technology era, with any restrictions. Why can’t these students use them? Why can’t we do all we can to help them experience success? They spend so many hours practicing math facts, when they could participate in the learning process with their peers and feel successful. Great special education teachers and teachers in general leave the profession due to the pressure and high expectation mandated by our legislature, with minimal support coming from them.

Kathy Hanks, Murray City School District

Our daily demands. All the moving parts that go into teaching students, people, on a daily basis. The demands are increasing, but also the demands for mental health and emotional intelligence. Our students come hungry, stressed, abused more and more every year. We need smaller class sizes to support these students as well as intervention systems. Basically money for new programs and more teachers. We are here for students. We are not whining entitled people. We just want to do our jobs well.

Jennie LaFortune, Murray City School District

Student success starts with supporting our teachers.

Charli Quinonez, Murray City School District

I would like my legislators to know that I love my job. But I can't stay in my job when they don't support it. I'm good at my job. We are consistently losing good teachers in Utah because our legislators value big business and money more than they do our students, our teachers and education. Its sad. Stack 'em deep and sell 'em cheap.

Amy Roberds, Murray City School District

I currently have 40 students in each English 11 class. I have a total of 210 students in MHS with many individual needs: SPED, 504s, and ESL/ELL needs. I am trying to prepare these students to take the ACT and do well. It is an impossible task.

Crystal Spackman, Murray City School District

We need to be trusted to do the work we have committed to do. As with all professions, there are few who make it hard for the rest. Teachers do not need legislation passed to remind or tell us how to do our job. We are tired of trying every whim or educational philosophy that comes around and is then legislated to us to follow. Stop moving the goal-post and allow us to be the professionals we are. Please pay us as if we were truly professionals. My daughter in-law started her career making more (by almost double) than I do after working 10 years in the teaching profession. We both have a bachelor's degree. To help address the teacher shortage, pay and compensate us what we are worth. Please remember that we do not "have summer off". We work during the summer perfecting our craft, attending conferences, and attending classes to better ourselves in the profession we love.

Auralee Brooks, North Sanpete School District

The #1 way to reduce the teacher shortage and increase retention is to increase the income. The more financially viable the career becomes, the more people who will consider it. People keep dancing around this because nobody wants to fork out the dough. The fact is, people are going to go where the pay is. Better pay = more applications. Everybody knows that teachers get paid s###, so who can be surprised when a high schooler sits down with their counselor and declines the idea because, they "want to make more than that." You know it's what happens.
Compensation

Everybody knows. It's so obvious. Where the pay is, there too will the people go. Stop ignoring it. Stop pretending it's this, that, or the other thing. It's the pay. I LOVE my job. LOVE IT! But if another job were to open for me that I would also enjoy and pay me more, I'll quit teaching and go do that, because I have a family to provide for and a retirement to save for. The teacher's world pivots on the hinge of the paycheck. Everybody acts like being a teacher is some great moral calling; it's not. It's a job, like any other, and we do it to get paid. The entire world expects us to be these high moral giants, but then they pay us barely more than the janitors. This discrepancy is not how you win new converts to the educator pool. The rule goes: "You get paid what you're worth." Well, that tells me that the district, state, and union don't think I'm worth much, and perspective teachers see that. You don't think these college kids look at the pay scales and think, "Huh, they must not want me that bad." They do. I thought that. Lucky for them, it was the path I choose anyway. Pave the path with gold and watch students stampede down it.

Sterling Whipple, North Sanpete School District

I would like to let them know that teachers work very hard, and most teachers take their work home with them and work for hours every night. Many teachers get burned out within the first few years of teaching. My school has lost many teachers due to this, and I feel like higher salaries would help.

Nicollette Anderson, Nebo School District

I am a mentor and instructional coach who supports Special Ed teachers who are just starting out or dealing with difficult situations. It's hard for me to see how much is expected of them, especially how much time is required outside of contract time, for the amount of compensation they receive. Many of our new teachers are not fully licensed, which adds an extra burden on their mentors and schools to get them up to speed while they work on their licensure. In order to help our most vulnerable students, additional funding is needed.

Julie Beckham, Nebo School District

Students need to be in class to learn. We need more support for attendance policies that still allow parent autonomy but also communicate the importance of quality education for youth. Utah seems to have a negative perception towards public education. We need our legislators to prioritize it and speak positively about it to help the culture of learning together as a community.

Becky Beckstead, Nebo School District

When will we value educators? We are professionals and need to be duly compensated and given support at the school to meet the continuing list of tasks taking us away from our focus on student instruction and outcomes. We need skilled people.

Bryce Bird, Nebo School District

There is very little incentive for teachers to stay in the career for the long haul. Things are in place to attract teachers to the profession and monies are spent for Level I teachers to be mentored or coached. Teachers with many years of experience need learning opportunities and incentives, too!

Deana Coates, Nebo School District

Unfair teacher pay in Washington school district compared to other high cost of living areas in Utah

Phil Ekker, Nebo School District

Need to pay enough money to attract quality teachers and have them remain in the profession.

LaDell Gillman, Nebo School District

The students are coming harder and harder to teach. For what teachers are asked to do and what they get paid to do it, teaching is becoming a less and less desirable job.

Heidi Hall, Nebo School District
Compensation

We need quality educators. I work as a mentor working with teachers in their first 3 years of teaching. Alternate route to license is not the same as going through a college training program where teachers learn classroom management skills and public relations skills. It's very difficult for these new teachers to learn how to teach by being thrown into a classroom, even if they are experts in the field they are teaching. We need to do everything we can to make teaching a desired career. Our future depends on it.

Pam Haney, Nebo School District

I don't know what they haven't heard

Tara Lundell, Nebo School District

I love teaching and I am a natural. I teach elementary school and know I make a big, positive impact on the lives of my students. I love them and they feel it. How do I know? I am invited to mission farewells, homecomings and weddings and am frequently greeted in public places with big hugs from former students. I become friends with many of their parents who seek out advice many years after I have taught their child. My test scores are good, I am beloved and I love teaching. I am also counting down the years (five first days left) until I retire. I always imagined age-related health issues would force me to retire, but I am in great health. I plan to leave teaching because the stress, needs & demands of teachers and students are too many. The expectations of a child have become too much for many of them to bear. My eight and nine year old students cry during testing because they do not understand what is expected or are unable to figure out how to use the mouse to accomplish the assigned task (click on, drag and drop dots and lines to demonstrate they understand perimeter or area.) Their little hands struggle to type essays, often about topics they do not fully comprehend like arboretums, culture museums or NASA careers. They have completed the 3rd grade Keyboarding curriculum and even spent many extra hours practicing, but they still have a hard time remembering how to capitalize letters or the difference between the available punctuation marks. They hunt for the letters asking, "Why aren't they in order?" They struggle to write using evidence from the articles provided without actually using the exact words. That is a lot to expect of an eight year old. Testing is too intense, too confusing and too overwhelming for too many of my students. I feel like I spend the entire year building relationships of trust and then end the year by subjecting them to hours of torture. I have eight-year-olds taking TUMS to survive the stomachache of testing. That is wrong. Third grade students need paper and pencil tests. The questions need to be more direct and age appropriate. We must reduce the hours spent on testing. Our current method of testing is killing their joy for learning and many teachers joy for teaching. Maybe with small classes and adequate support for the ever-increasing numbers of special needs students, the job would be "do-able." Right now, it is not. I am doing all that I can to make it possible for my students to succeed, but cannot keep up. The hours and expectations never fail to increase or intensify. I am one of your best teachers and am so worn out, I no longer WANT to teach. Who will replace me? The pay and benefits have never drawn people to teaching, but good retirement and health insurance benefits and "mom-friendly" hours helped compensate. Teachers could be home soon after their children returned from school, a draw for many women. Not anymore. Teaching is a full-time job with impossible demands and inadequate compensation. Multi-generational teacher families are telling their children not to teach. The decreased number of students entering education programs should tell you that society also views teaching as an undesirable profession. What are we going to do when the demands are so high, no one qualified will do it?

Michael-Ann McAfee, Nebo School District

"SALT LAKE CITY — Qualifying special educators could earn stipends starting at $4,000 annually under a legislative proposal that is similar to bonuses now paid to teachers of mathematics, some science disciplines and computer science. The proposal by Rep. Val Potter, R-North Logan, and Sen. Howard Stephenson, R-Draper, would cap the stipends at $10,000 a year. Potter, addressing the Utah Legislature's Public Education Appropriations Subcommittee on Wednesday, said the stipend is needed to address a shortage of special education teachers." (Marjorie Cortez November 8, 2017) I am a Special Education teacher. I have been teaching for 26 years. As I look over those years the amount of paperwork associated with my job is astounding. I teach math classes. My students are doing the same work as the regular education students but at a slower pace. I help team teach in Inclusive Math classes as well, yet I am not eligible for the stipend that math teachers are receiving. I am usually the last car in the parking lot to leave and that is due to the many IEP's I am thoughtfully writing for my students. My hours by far exceed those of
Compensation

regular education teachers. Many nights after I take my own children to their events, make dinner and run errands, I cozy up to my computer to write the rest of the IEP I couldn't finish while at school. I am not complaining but stating the facts of my job. I chose it and as you can see after 26 years I am still going strong. Being compensated for my extra hours would be a wonderful way to say thank you and we recognize the extra hours you spend being a Special Educator! There are coaches of all sports that spend many additional hours at the school. They receive stipends. Since we are in a teacher shortage, this stipend would also be an incentive to encourage more individuals to pursue the career of a Special Education Teacher!

Kristie McMurdie, Nebo School District

Please come spend a week in any classroom. Please come see the day-to-day intricacies of our day and then see how it compares to what you felt before. See how many of our students depend on school for a hot meal, for TLC, and for so many other critical survival components on top of the educational ones we also provide. Please spend more than an hour or even a day. Then go back and decide how best to serve our student populations and our future caretakers.

Sarai T Memmott, Nebo School District

Increase pay, or good luck finding teachers. Many of the teachers today are eligible for retirement within a couple of years

Scot Moldenhauer, Nebo School District

We are losing good teacher because of low pay and lack of support. Teacher can not live on their salary alone!!!

Callie Naccarato, Nebo School District

We have amazing students who are achieving incredible things. They need mentors who are quality and interested in helping students succeed. Teachers need to be paid more so that they want to stay in education. It's very hard to stay motivated to be in the classroom when you know your salary could double if you took a corporate job. The state should not continue to rely on people who do this job out of the kindness of their hearts. The state needs to make teaching a valued profession. The more they can do to support teachers, the better.

Angela Nederhand, Nebo School District

Support Senator Stephensen's bill for equity funding and additional pay for Special Education teachers.

Camille Neilson, Nebo School District

I have 21 years worth of stories...I would love to share with an INTERESTED Legislator

Mike Parker, Nebo School District

We have made good strides but there is still much to be done in order to secure the future of public education in Utah.

Stan Peck, Nebo School District

Teacher burnout is our current reality. Kids are coming with big issues that are not education related. We have to address these issues, as well as their education. It is draining to teach all the subjects, and do therapy on the student whose mom is in jail, who is living in a camp trailer, who has Obsessive defiant disorder, who thinks she is a boy and wants to transition to a male PLUS manage 30 kids in a classroom. Then spend 15 hours of overtime a week without pay, and want to stay in the profession. I have been teaching for 11 years. I spend much more of my time jumping through the hoops the state requires than planning for my lessons. Every teacher i know says, "When can I just be in my classroom and just teach!" More support needs to be given to teachers for dealing with behaviors and emotional issues. We can't spend our whole day doing therapy. It's not fair to teachers, nor the kids that are happy and ready to learn. Something has to change.

Lisa Peterson, Nebo School District
What do you think the kids of Utah are worth? Do you really think the majority of teachers aren't doing the best they can?

David Rencher, Nebo School District

Teachers are over worked, have too large of classes, underpaid, and have horrible benefits. I am also very frustrated with the low quality of teacher that is coming into the field. I worked hard to earn my qualifications as a teacher, so it is really hard to watch others being hired with no teaching experience or qualifications.

Josie Reynaud, Nebo School District

Better pay will enable us to keep and gain better educators. Our students are those that will become the doctors, business men, and lawyers in the future and we need to have the same reputation among those professions.

Arielle Soto, Nebo School District

My classroom is unbearably cold Nov. -Mar & unbearably hot Aug., Sept & sometimes May. Help! High-stakes yearly testing is ruining education. Kids & teachers are totally stressed oit. It doesn't help guide teacher instruction.

Cindy Sumsion, Nebo School District

You need to address accountability for district administrators and principals: They cannot be given carte blanche to make “progressive” changes to school systems, holding teachers in check with punitive evaluation measures. Sop worrying about teacher accountability and start focusing on too many administrators (who themselves can't teach) spending money on new methods that don't work. We know what works: caring, committed teachersand small classes. No more tests. No more progressive programs. Back to basics. Kids need to read and write, speak and listen, learn and communicate. Let good teachers do their jobs!

Michael Thompson, Nebo School District

What's more important, student education or your special interest friends?

Chris Vest, Nebo School District

Last year I had a class with 29 1st graders. That's too many!

Rachel Wigginton, Nebo School District

I feel that teachers are overworked, with unreasonable expectations. There are many expectations with very few monetary rewards.

Shea Wimmer, Nebo School District

Teachers and other educators (I am a Speech Language Pathologist) in Utah are expected to work for free. Without donated time and money from us, the education system here would collapse. It is appalling.

Betina Workman, Nebo School District

Teachers want to be excellent. We work extra hours to create interesting lessons, grade the rigorous assignments we assign, and find new materials. We love our content and we enjoy working with students and helping them learn and grow. But we have many factors working against us. 1) Class sizes are so large, it is hard to meet the needs of individual learners. 2) Teacher pay does not adequately compensate teachers for all the extra hours that are spent, and teachers quickly realize it is VERY DIFFICULT to support a family on the amount they earn. (Have you seen home prices?) 3) Legislation is passed without teacher input that adds to a teacher's responsibilities but doesn't help student learning. For example: sage testing was required, but students opt out or race through it just to be done, and then schools/teachers receive a poor “school grade.”

Lori Zaremba, Nebo School District

That quality teachers deserve decent, professional wage.

Betty Jo Anderson, Ogden School District


 Compensation

As a teacher, there are some things that scare me about our current education system and the direction that we are headed. These concerns include 1. Teacher Shortage 2. Class sizes 3. High stakes testing requirements from the federal and state government 4. Teacher morale I watch my colleagues go home every night overworked, and underpaid. If we do not address our teachers and their support system I do not believe we can maintain a high standard of learning in Utah.

Ashley Davis, Ogden School District

In the community I teach in...(inner city schools) we are the life line for their total education...You can hardly put a price on that...but good teachers are leaving because they can't meet their own financial obligations. So much pressure is put on them with no financial reward...it has to be a given.

Suzanne Williams Dennison, Ogden School District

Everyday I make a difference in the classroom. My students are excited to see me and I love them. I would love to feel that teachers have that same respect from the state of Utah. We have a teacher shortage because teachers do not feel respected for the differences we make each and everyday. We need to find a way to attract and keep teachers...emphasis on the keep.

Amy Dunn, Ogden School District

While working in a turnaround school in Ogden School District, I was expected to spend @ 3 or 4 hours outside of the contract time to visit parents or study teaching techniques. This was expected of all the teachers in the school, regardless of their levels of expertise. It made a poorly paid, professional job unattractive and took too much time away from my family life. Worst of all, it took time I needed to spend diagnosing my students' needs and planning for their academic activities and success. The practice was in contrast to what I had learned to be beneficial to my students' learning. It was extremely frustrating and made me feel less effective as a classroom teacher and very unimportant as a professional.

Linda Edwards, Ogden School District

There is a country wide teacher shortage epidemic occurring and something needs to change. Having just graduated, I was absolutely amazed at how small my cohort was, comprising of only 5 students. Asking young people what they are going to school for and if they have ever considered pursuing education, most state that they would become a teacher but it is not realistic to live off of a teachers salary. If society stopped funding prisons and started funding schools, there would be an increase in school attendance and a decrease in prison population.

Brigid Giles, Ogden School District

Every year I spend more and more money on my students to ensure they have the materials and newest innovations they need to become successful not just in school, but in their lives. I love what I do, but I am losing money year after year with little to no compensation. My students are excelling and I believe in them wholeheartedly, but I may have to find a higher paying position so that I can take care of my family.

Deanna Shiverdecker, Ogden School District

Treating teachers as professionals with a professional salary will attract more qualified people into the profession.

Cindy Wilcox, Ogden School District

As a special educatiioneacher in Utah for 16 years, and a public education employee for 20 years, we need to better fund education, especially teacher salaries to ensure that we keep and entice quality educators to meet the needs of Utah students. I do not know of a teacher who doesn't work above their "contract time" to meet the current expectations they have on them. It has been too long that teachers have done it because they love the students, without compensation for what they are doing. Even though we are at the bottom of funding for education, our students are not at the bottom of the nation in performance. Show teachers, parents, and students that they matter more than they ever have before.

Wendy Wilson, Ogden School District
Compensation

Attract and RETAIN quality teachers by paying them better.  

David Bettinson, Other

Placing ELL students in already-overcrowded mainstream classrooms has been very counterproductive. Bring back LEP sheltered classes for ELL students.

Warren Brodhead, Other

I retired from the classroom four years ago after devoting more than forty years to the profession. I experienced many changes and shifts in the educational system during those years. But one thing has never changed. Every student deserves a well trained, qualified, caring teacher.

Trudy Henderson, Other

Most of my mediocre paycheck goes to pay for the majority of lessons and units that I do to help the students become engaged in learning with hands-on and interactive lessons. But also having to pay for all relicensing and assessments to become a highly qualified teacher takes a big chunk too. Then you have those people who decide they want to teach and they have fewer mandates put on them and fewer fees. But if I want to change to a different subject matter which should require less time then those off the street with no experience I'm being told it requires 8 classes that will take approx two years.

Drew Wright, Other

We need qualified teachers in Our classrooms! And we need to raise teacher pay to be able to retain new teachers so they stay in the profession.

Kathleen Anderson, Park City School District

How they are making TEACHING even more difficult than it already is by not understanding OR even acknowledging the efforts the majority of teachers make on behalf of their students.

Brenda Bensch, Park City School District

Teachers and quality schools are vital to the success of our community as a whole. Please provide us with the support we need to best do our jobs.

Joanna Hammel, Park City School District

No everyone can teach or lead teachers -- it is a highly skilled profession. Teachers impact all future careers through the work we do. Treat teachers like the professionals we are and support our work and efforts as we care about children and their futures.

Jenn King, Park City School District

Growth in funding for public education in Utah began falling behind the rest of the Country decades ago but the resulting decay of services was largely kept hidden from the public for two reasons. Utah possessed some of the most dedicated hard working teachers and Utah students were largely from stable supportive homes. Those teachers are now retiring and the current work conditions are so poor that few college graduates view a career in Utah public education as a viable option. Schools are now forced to serve ever expanding social roles with students because fewer and fewer of Utah children have the stable supportive home life. Utah can no longer hide its failure to adequately fund public education. The crisis is no longer in the future. The future is now.

Charlie Matthews, Park City School District

Utah has the opportunity to become one of the top states for education in the country. We do an amazing job on a limited budget, just imagine what we could accomplish if we were anywhere close to other states in funding.

Melanie Rice Moffat, Park City School District
Compensation

1. There's a lot of good teachers out here that are trying their best and deserve public support. 2. Legislators hardly ever seem to know what is actually best for kids, it's all based on partisan politics. 3. There are a lot of talented people who opt out of teaching because the salary and benefits are not worth the commitment it takes to do the job the way it needs to be done.

Melanie Bliss, Provo City School District

I invite each member of the legislature to come substitute in any classroom for one week, including planning lessons. (You only need a high-school diploma to apply as a substitute.) When you have walked in our shoes for a week, go back and write the laws you wish you had in place. It will change your whole world. We need legislators who understand what teaching really means. We need legislators who understand what it is like to manage a class of 27 ten year olds or 44 high-schoolers. We need legislators who care that Utah spends the LEAST of any state on their students, and whose teachers are paid less than most other states. We need legislators who care as much as the students in the desks what will happen to them. We need you.

Mariel Boone, Provo City School District

Utah has gotten away with underpaying teachers for too long. I work 60-80 hours a week, have over a decade of experience, hold a Master's degree plus over 30 additional graduate credits. I have invested thousands and thousands of dollars into my students. (Last year I spent over $2500 out of pocket.) I am passionate, innovative, and exactly the type of teacher that Utah needs to attract. However, I make $50,000 a year. I took a $20,000 pay cut to come to Utah and work more hours than I ever have in the past. I have zero intention of teaching in Utah beyond a couple more years. They can't compete. This year, I know of 3 quality colleagues leaving because of the pay. I witness first hand the lack of quality in candidates because of the shortage. Some of the hires are appalling and I would never stand for my child to be in such a class. Nobody should stand for it. However, if we want quality, we have to pay for quality. Then we can afford to be picky and get and retain the best.

Nicole Guzman, Provo City School District

We need to pay teachers according to the consequence of poorly prepared young people- non employment or worse, incarceration. There is a direct correlation. Bet on education, but hedge your bets- expect a lot from them, but be willing to back it up with competitive salaries. Maybe bring back a fair pension, allow for teacher tax exemption, create a pathway to success for both educators and students.

Mary James, Provo City School District

I am a 29 year veteran teacher of secondary mathematics. I am a teacher leader in my school and district. My students score well on any state mandated tests, and overall, my students show progress each year. By all measures, I am effective. But I am burning out. Increasingly, I am having to make up for the lack of quality in hiring for new teachers, and I am being told more and more paperwork is the answer to show that I am an effective educator. Do I have room to improve? Yes. Do I want to collaborate? Of course. But for me to have to train teachers with little or no educational background on the pedagogy of how to run a classroom year after year is not fair to me or my students—or the students in the class where the new teacher tries to learn as they go. I am training these under-qualified hires on things that I learned when I was in school, in essence, giving away the education I had to pay for. Why is it not important to hold every educator to a high standard of pedagogy knowledge? And more often than not, these are also people who do not know the math well enough to teach it to high school students. They struggle from the first day of class, and students try to bail on them as soon as they figure that out. That makes class loads for competent teachers skyrocket, making the division of labor so skewed it becomes almost comical. This past year, we lost 3 highly qualified candidates for an open position to other districts because of the lower pay in our district. Our district could not compete with others close to us in the amount of raises that were offered. The state base is so low, teachers must consider those kinds of things. So now we have an under-qualified teacher who struggles every day, but was available and cheap a week before school started. And I have to try to make up for that through collaboration, mentoring and an increased student load. It is burning me out. I am hoping that the state will recognize that funding for teachers has not increased in so long that they will take action this session—both in actual salary and class sizes. I am hoping that we can attract and retain a higher quality of person into the profession. If that happens, I
Compensation

will be able to learn from others and improve my own practice, instead of always being the one asked to train under-
qualified hires to just make it through the year.

Carla Johnson, Provo City School District

I really enjoy teaching. I am getting married this summer and my fiance is from another state. As I look at the salary
schedules for other states it makes more financial sense to move away from friends and family to be a teacher
elsewhere. I have worked as a teacher for about ten years. If I were to move to this state I would start over on their
pay scale and make 17k more as a brand new teacher in that state. That is a new convertible every two years for the
same fulfilling job.

Lydia L Knudsen, Provo City School District

Over the past 10 years since I've become a teacher, I have seen the expectations placed upon teachers increase
significantly to the point that each year, I see many of my colleagues in the profession leave the teaching profession
to pursue other career paths. They have no choice but to do so after being pushed to teacher burnout trying to keep
up with daily responsibilities as a teacher and attend more meetings serving on at least one school committee or
being asked to create curriculum notebooks with no more pay. I, myself contemplate this action on a daily basis due
to the added expectations teachers are asked to complete each year with meager salaries that can barely support
ourselves and/or our families especially if we own our homes or cars. In addition, class sizes in public schools are
way too big to effectively teach our students. For example, in classes that require a lot of writing from our students, it
is almost impossible to give immediate, quality feedback to our students if we want to also, meet the demands of our
personal lives. It feels like the golden age of teaching has passed where we were trusted to do our jobs, catering to
the various learning styles of students is completely ignored by being required to give them more and more
standardized tests that reflect badly on the teachers if they do not do well. For many teachers, their love and passion
of teaching is getting outweighed by the increased burdens placed on teaching each year. Please do something to
ease our burdens as soon as possible. We are losing wonderful teachers each year for these reasons and more.

Nathalie LeBras, Provo City School District

I teach a behavior support class for the most at risk children in Provo City School District. These children have
experienced severe trauma in their homes, including physical, emotional, and sexual abuse. As a result these
students have mental illnesses. My co-teacher and I act as a social worker, therapist, mother, and teacher. We both
have been attacked numerous times, as well as have had our room destroyed. One of our students would deficate in
his pants daily and become violent and/or run away when confronted about it. All of this, and I only make a little over
$31,000. I'm exhausted, I feel burned out, and to be honest, may not come back next year because of the physical
and emotional exhaustion.

Jackie Martin Cooper, Provo City School District

I am a department chair in a high school for special education and my last several hires are on an ARL. We can't get
and retain good special education teachers. We need to pay better so we can retain these teachers who teach the
most highly impacted students in our society. We will pay in a big way in the future if we fail to educate these
students well.

Wendy Nichol, Provo City School District

Teachers are doing their best under trying conditions. I'm a veteran teacher concerned with teacher turnover.
Younger teachers aren't making it too long and teacher turnover is hurting our schools and children. Retired teachers
might want to come back if some restrictions on pensions and "sitting out a year" were changed. Teachers care
about their students.

Brian Preece, Provo City School District

I'm a special ed teacher 11 years, ranging from elementary resource, elementary self-contained, and high school
resource. This year I am an instructional coach for special ed ARLs and interns. As I take a new The burnout rate of
special ed teachers is quite high, thus districts are having to rely on hiring an training people who are willing to do an
Compensation

ARL. This is an alarming trend that should be addressed somehow. It is really difficult to teach everything a special ed teacher is expected to do with people who have no pre-service prep! And quite frankly, I think special ed teachers are asked to do more than is possible considering a traditional work day. It is a highly stressful job that is not worth the pay they get.

Ingrid Shurtleff, Provo City School District

Teachers need more support in the classroom.

Malia Siufanua, Provo City School District

The lack of pre-service teachers signing up for undergraduate elementary education courses at our local universities is MIND BLOWING! We are suffering! How do we get exceptional people to be the teachers our next generation so desperately needs? I am a sixth generation educator of Utah children. Ten of my siblings or their spouses are current teachers. Our teaching family is struggling to get even one child of our next generation to even look at teaching! Our children are exceptional students (having been educated and tutored by some very outstanding teachers), and are not even interested in the education field. All of them are looking elsewhere for their college degrees. They have seen first-hand how hard we have worked, and what we have to show for our extensive efforts, and are not interested! In fact, in the case of both my father and grandfather, a family farm is the only thing that kept the family with food on the table, and modest clothing on our backs. Excellent health insurance, that was extremely cost effective during the late 60's and throughout the 70's was the drawing factor toward education for my father. In my case, I have lived below the poverty line (this includes with advanced schooling beyond a Bachelor's Degree) for most of my married life. Even with careful budgeting, there have not been enough funds for braces, if we also wanted our four children to play an instrument and participate in school sports programs. Please support "Our Schools Now" and do everything in your power to make being an educator "WORTH IT" again!

Teresa Toluta'u, Provo City School District

It is an insult to the nearly 30 years of teaching and 7+ years of learning, testing, and endorsements I have worked so hard to achieve to be considered a professional to have charter schools hire anybody they want to teach whether they are qualified or not. And then to lower the standards as a way to stop the teacher shortage is another slap in the face. If you want teachers to be professionals, then treat them as such! If there were a doctor shortage you wouldn't pick just anyone off the streets. Why would teaching be different. If you want to attract good teachers, then they need to be paid well. Too many new teachers are leaving because they realize they can't make it on a teacher's salary. There are too many requirements piled up on teachers for the amount of money they make.

Angela Williams, Provo City School District

Focus on the key issues that teachers support, rather than political agendas that sound good to the public.

Darren Mecham, South Sanpete School District

Human social issues

Chelsie Acosta, Salt Lake City School District

As an assistant principal, we had to hire an ARL teacher due to the teacher shortage and we had to spend a ridiculous amount of energy and resources to help this teacher. The students aren't receiving quality teaching that they deserve. Start respecting educators through your words and actions! Increase teacher pay, speak positively of how much we do in Utah with so little, which will both help alleviate some of the teacher shortage.

Dan Aragon, Salt Lake City School District

There is a huge teacher shortage in Utah right now that needs to be addressed not by lowering standards and expectations for teachers, but by making teacher education more accessible and affordable, and by making the position more attractive to potential candidates.

Brittany Armstrong, Salt Lake City School District
Compensation

Listen to our educators needs for their students.  

Harriett Arreola, Salt Lake City School District

If the government is going to treat education as a business, they need to start investing in it and training those policy makers in the art of running a successful company.  

Mercedes Barica, Salt Lake City School District

Teachers work hard against so many outside influences and situations to help their students make a better life for themselves. We are not respected or cared for and the attitude towards education shows it. I have taught in both a public school and a charter school in this state and have to say the charter school was terrible.  

Heather Blakley, Salt Lake City School District

Lack of paid planning time negatively impacts students. Teachers spend many hours everyday without pay to planning. Teacher morale is low and the younger generation of college students are not choosing teaching as a profession.  

Alison T Brown, Salt Lake City School District

How the legislative funding for school libraries helps.  

Sheryl Burton, Salt Lake City School District

The lack of para support in the resource setting due to low wages and needing too high of qualifications for the position.  

Lonny Burton, Salt Lake City School District

Quality pay will increase demand for excellent teachers who won't turn over every three years. I have mentored 6-7 student teachers and it apparent that the more you can make the teaching profession attractive to motivated candidates the better everyone will fair.  

Matt Dimick, Salt Lake City School District

If you want this to be a thriving destination for business and culture, you need to stop being the last in the nation in terms of school investment.  

Mary Angela Elegante, Salt Lake City School District

The legislator should be ashamed of themselves. knowing that the teachers in Utah are the lowest paid in the nation and we have a rainy day fund. That could pay off the national debt!!!!!!!!!! And what happened to the day that teachers taught. learning was fun and everyone got along. This consent use of testing is useless What a joke..  

Federica Gallegos, Salt Lake City School District

Teachers deserve a livable salary and students deserve more one on one time  

Elyse Garrison, Salt Lake City School District

We need to look at the teacher training programs currently in place at our higher education institutions. I would like to see more collaboration between k12 and universities on the issue of teacher training and retention in the profession  

Nicola Hack, Salt Lake City School District

Invest in educators retirement, put ALL teachers in Utah back at 2%! This will help encourage more to enter the field.  

Lisa Sten, Salt Lake City School District

It is important for us to attract and retain good teachers. I have friends who have quit teaching because, though they love the profession, they feel that they can no longer afford the luxury of serving our students. Not only is it a matter of salary, but of health care benefits also need to be improved. Too much of my salary is simply handed over to my
Compensation

health care providers -- I have less "available" money now than I did five years ago due to my increased health care and prescription costs. One co-pay for a life-saving medication that I have to take is over $400.00 on my current health care plan, which is the best plan available in my district. Last year the co-pay for this same medication was $150.00 under the same plan, while the previous year, it was $75.00. The pharmacists actually apologize to me when I get the prescription for this medication filled, explaining that my school district's health care plan has the highest co-pay for this particular medication that they have ever seen. Something has to change!

Victoria Muehlberger, Salt Lake City School District

The lack of qualified teachers is distressing. I believe that teaching is profession and a hard profession. You wouldn't want a doctor that was learning the job as he/she goes and hope that the other doctors in the office are there to support them. It is important to get qualified, skilled teachers- our students are too important to hand over to just anyone off the street. If you believe that teaching isn't a profession or that anyone off the street can do it then I put a challenge to the legislators. Come to any school: 1. agree to spend a week in a classroom as the teacher 2. make the lesson plans, prepare everything, etc 3. pick a subject area to really focus on and teach a unit 4. test the students at the end of the week and be judged on your teaching ability. This small experience would be eye opening into a difficult but rewarding profession.

Amy Nelson, Salt Lake City School District

Unfortunately, teachers responsibilities currently include parenting students. Because parents are often unable or unskilled at assisting students at home, teachers have assumed the responsibility for not only the academic success of their students, but teachers also must include ethics and behavior training. Additionally, students level of engagement has decreased due to their generations addiction to social media and technology. We must find methods and pedagogy to counter the lack of parental support and student interest in academics and future success.

Anonymous, Salt Lake City School District

The students are being tested to death! Let us get back to teaching!

Mary Beth Sheppard, Salt Lake City School District

I am a highly qualifies level 4 math teacher. I am in my third year teaching and I am struggling to justify staying in this profession because of the pay. I love teaching and I love my students but my family is struggling. Myself, my husband and our two children are having to live with my husbands parents because our teaching salaries won't allow us to move out. I want to go back to school for my masters degree, but I can't justify spending $35,000 on a program when my take home pay is equal to that amount in an entire year. I just recently had to take several weeks off to have emergency back surgery. During that time, I lost 2 entire paychecks because we are not given any paid leave leave other than our sick days (2 weeks of school), I feel like districts should be required to provide us access to short term disability program to help with these situations and help maternity leave teachers as well. The bottom line is that if you want good teachers, such as myself, to not leave teaching we need an increase in pay. I don't want anyone telling me that I will make enough after 10 more years of teaching, my family needs this money now.

Lia Smith, Salt Lake City School District

I take students on trips and they learn so much more on those trips. Part of the reason is the size. I will have a 10 to 1 student teacher ratio or less and students get time to connect with the teacher and ask questions. Smaller class sizes result in more effective learning.

Jacob Taber, Salt Lake City School District

Teachers have a challenging job, and no matter how dedicated they are to their students, can easily be pushed out of the classroom due to lack of reasonable salary, support, and unrealistic job responsibility. Please consider how your decisions impacts our society in the future as students learn from you how to respect or disrespect an invaluable profession.

Caryn Willardsen, Salt Lake City School District
Compensation

We have gone many years with funding that does not meet the needs of our students, especially ESL populations. We have also gone along time with inadequate compensations for teachers who teach in Title 1 schools with so many more expectations and accountability on their heads.

Soneria Zuckerman, Salt Lake City School District

If they need questions answered about education, ask the experts that are in the trenches everyday. If not, they should have to spend a week doing the complete job of a teacher before they run for office so that they can understand the complexities of being an educator and the changes laws that have an affect on education without understanding the impact that they have on teachers and students.

George O. Judd, Sevier School District

Public Education is more and more demanding on teachers. Pressure from administrators, right up to superintendents is ever more stressful. There is a lack of help with problem students from administrators. Parents are often given more respect than the classroom teacher. Sage testing, in a big way, is as much about manipulating the computer and writing equations than about asking questions and having students show their knowledge. The i-Ready Computer Program used at our school could easily replace the Sage Testing. We get the needed data to help students progress and we wouldn't have to spend the money on SAGE and take time out of our schedule to do all the testing. Also, with i-Ready, parents would have a better idea of what the testing is about and how to help their student progress. In our school, we test SAGE three times a year. That is a a lot of time taken away from classroom teaching. It is disheartening to listen to teachers and feel their frustrations, knowing that things could be much better. So, besides the lower salaries of teaching, we seem to be asking people to enter a profession in which they will not be receiving a very high salary, but also, a profession in which you will have frustration after frustration thrown at you. Why work so hard in education when it would be easier to earn more money and have an easier work load in another profession?

Kraig Nilsson, Sevier School District

Will you please recognize that your decisions have long term consequences. Listen to the UEA as they represent the teacher voice in Utah. Teachers have solutions that will fulfill the needs of public education.

Kelly Peterson, Sevier School District

The value of pension to keep good teachers. The teaching profession is hard and sometimes the only thing that keeps a person going is knowing that at the end of a career, there will be a pension in retirement. It's important to maintain that benefit and not let it get eroded.

Tom Nedreberg, Tintic School District

I have been in the profession for nine years and the last two years have been the hardest and most stressful. We are getting unqualified teachers into our classrooms because of the shortages and this is putting more work and stress on those of us who are highly qualified good teachers. This year I have seriously considered quitting. I have been told that I am an amazing teacher and that the parents in our area don't want to lose me but with all the extra work of training unqualified teachers who are using alternative routes to get their degrees I am getting burned out. I come in early every day and stay late most afternoons trying to help these unqualified teachers and then struggle to have everything done for my own students. This causes unneeded stress and makes me seriously consider other job options. I am receiving no added benefit in training these teachers and they are making about as much as me because of pay increases to attract more people into the profession. There needs to be more compensation and benefits to retain those of us who are trained and have experience.

Andrea Reynolds, Tooele County School District

If you want better teachers, increase their pay. If you want students to learn more easily, decrease the class size.

William Sullivan, Tooele County School District
Compensation

I would like to share the realities of the work load including the emotional burnout.  
Aaryn Birchell, Uintah School District

We need to attract and retain quality teachers. Look at holding schools accountable for learning, but more importantly, make teaching a respectable profession again. Look at increasing funding and reducing ridiculous demands on teachers in order to attract and keep the best and brightest.

Rachelle Durrant, Uintah School District

I am a professional in education because I want to live in a better world. I am training that “better” world. Many of the rules and policies you create make it hard for me to be successful. Filling my classroom and tying my hands when it comes to discipline turns me into an inexpensive babysitter. Please value me and my time by providing the money to purchase supplies instead of having to create them myself. When a profession is valued, there aren’t shortages in that area.

Angela T. Hansen, Uintah School District

Please visit schools be in the schools see what we are doing before you decide what is best for us.

Shanalee Madsen, Uintah School District

Most teachers are well educated, professional individuals who feel called to the profession of teaching. They should be treated as professionals in their field and compensated accordingly, both financially as well as with public recognition of the importance of the job that is done in the classroom. This would help with both the problems of teacher shortage and teacher retention.

Chalynn Thomas, Uintah School District

I have 27 first-graders in my class and an autistic boy!! Too many very young students per teacher ratio!! Please, lower classroom

Tanna White, Uintah School District

Help me, help you, to help them, so they can help us.

Lori Ruth, Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind

More funding is needed.

Kimberly Niday, Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind

The need to drastically improve salaries and realize the rise in duties and expectations has increased. Class sizes are rising. I love what I do but it gets harder and harder to do. I would also like to see funding to support suicide awareness and teach coping skills for anxiety and depression at each and every classroom in the state. We must be cutting edge on this. We are losing too many of our precious children.

Sheila Johnston, Wasatch County School District

How ridiculous the evaluation tools they are using to evaluate educators. Also that the Sage test is not an accurate way to assess school performance.

Steve Marsing, Wasatch County School District

Education is the key to a productive citizen. Make it a priority.

Joseph Mellen, Wasatch County School District

I have personally visited with Representative Quinn and he has visited my US Government classes at Wasatch HS. Accountability. Put back into law that there is RESPONSIBILITY for students to actually attend school. Parents should have more support from our state legislature to encourage students to actually attend class for some civic
Compensation
dialogue and learning with peers! Students need to be more accountable for their actions, especially those in high school, in regards to daily attendance. Put some teach back in to the hands of local school districts.

Dawain Mills Wheatley, Wasatch County School District

Working as a professional teacher for over 25 years, I can see that threatening tactics are non-productive such as merit pay of testing outcomes. To help students and teachers, make sure the salaries are adequate and the money is used for the schools students, not programs, or new promises. Get the money to the students.

Kimala Bosh, Washington County School District

Same thing I say each year. Watching you guys. Smaller class sizes is must. When caseloads/classes are too big, teachers are overworked, and students don't receive the needed attention and support. Putting more educators in schools to share the load will better help retain educators. Don't burn out educators.

Bret Morley, Washington County School District

It really bothers me that an educators wages aren't enough to support a family. What happened to the time when an individual could go to work and know that their family would be taken care of with the wages they earned. Now I am at the time of life where retirement is around the corner. I have saved my entire adult life so I can retire some day and now I am worried that I haven't done enough. It has put a strain on my finances over the years to prepare for the time I can retire.

Kathryn Parry, Washington County School District

I am a high school teacher in Utah. I am almost finished with my master's degree. Even with a graduate level of education, I will be making less than the average Utah worker. And I am ANYTHING but average. I do extraordinary work with extraordinary students every day. I am unsure of the future for myself and my students. I love my job, but I am not sure how long I will be able to afford being a teacher in Utah.

Dana Raine, Washington County School District

Class sizes are way too big; I have 230 students. It's really hard to provide individualized help with over 40+ students in a class. Not to mention grading all their work, prep and planning. I've been teaching for 15 years, but I'm really wondering there is a better career out there for me because I feel so overworked, underpaid, and underappreciated. I would discourage a young person from going into teaching.

Sara Sisam, Washington County School District

Utah has good public schools and teachers. Compare the data in an objective way, with same comparisons to charter, public school before making decisions. Use data, rather than articulate lobbyists

Lorene A Sorensen, Washington County School District

Please put students and teachers first in everything you do. Out students deserve more!

Karyn Wilson, Washington County School District

Teachers are the professionals, yet legislators, administrators and parents (who believe the quick-fix ideas of legislators), are often the ones who determine how and what we teach. This is counterproductive. I believe that students would benefit if teachers were given much more discretion in the classroom, standardized testing was drastically reduced or eliminated, and pay throughout educators (including administration) was much more equitably distributed.

Kerrie Anderson, Weber School District

I think the legislators need to adequately and equitable fund education, because at some point in time the wheels will come off. Most educators understand the cut in education spending or the lack of education spending when the Great Recession hit. However, now that the economy is more robust how about funding the public education to pre-Recession levels. The lack of adequate and equitable public education funding has made Utah dead last in per pupil
Compensation

spending, to include D.C. I think this is against our values, as we purport to value our children as our greatest
treasure, yet spend our treasure some place else. Moreover, the younger teachers coming into the workforce have
choices and in a lot of places in Utah, unless the demand placed on public schools can be met with adequate and
equitable funding, then there will be a lack of qualified teachers to teach an educated citizenry. Why would young
people enter into an underfunded and overworked profession?

Brandon Baca, Weber School District

While teacher shortage is a problem, tenured teachers are being encouraged by administrators to retire early. This is
counter-productive and adds to the problem. If sign-on bonuses and increased salaries are being offered to teachers
just entering the profession, why aren't stay-on bonuses and increased salaries being offered to teachers who stay?
Changing school districts as a teacher is a huge decrease in pay, unless one changes districts in which they teach
within the first 2 years of teaching. This should not be the case. A teacher who has been teaching for 10 years at X
amount of dollars should be able to hire on with another district at the same salary as they left their previous district.

Joy Bement, Weber School District

I would love for any legislator to come walk in our shoes for a day. Melissa Beyer (1st Grade) 801-698-2721

Melissa Beyer, Weber School District

Providing a quality education is important to the future work force in the state of Utah. In order to provide a quality
education, you need qualified teachers. In order to get and keep qualified teachers, you need to make it worth their
while to stay. That could be in the form of increased pay, increased benefits, increased planning time, etc. If you
water down the qualifications for being a teacher, you water down the quality of the education provided. If you don't
hold charter schools accountable in the same you do regular public schools, who are both receiving the money from
the same place, then you water down the quality of education.

Randy Bird, Weber School District

Too many good teachers are leaving the profession because the means of accountability have taken the joy out of
teaching. I believe in accountability but the way we have gone about making teachers accountable has become
punitive and punishes creativity. Combine that with the low salaries and teachers often decide that their talents will be
better used in another profession.

Sherry Carolan, Weber School District

Make students a priority! Make Education a priority. There’s a reason we can’t keep teachers and they go to other
states to teach. We are burning out. Wake up!

Marie Christensen, Weber School District

I am now looking at the end of my career with 28 years in and contemplating how much longer to go. I have watched
the pendulum of educational reform swing in so many different politically motivated directions at the expense of
student learning, I am not sure anyone knows if anything that has been done really helped our students learn. What I
can say is that I hope my students know that I cared about them. In the end this is what a good teacher is. I hope that
they LEARNED along the way of course, BUT truly I want them to know that they can do great things if they believe
and TRY. They are not alone. Learning can be difficult and not everyone learns lessons at the same rate. Just keep
trying. I do love teaching. That is why I stayed in this profession for so long. BUT I do wonder if our politicians
understand the wealth of talent they have in the field of education? If they honestly and truly know our worth? We are
the ones our children see everyday. Day in and day out. Good, happy days and bad, sad, unhappy days. We see
them for 6 to 8 hours plus a day for 180 days a year. We often become their surrogate parents, big brothers, sisters
when there is no one at home. We walk a very fine line to help teach them to be upstanding moral citizens, teaching
right & wrong, and in some cases we are the only ones in their lives that care enough to do so. I have seen so much
change in the world and education but one thing that really hasn’t is respect. Educators are still under the stigma of
"those who can DO and those who can’t TEACH" This simply is NOT true. Those who CHOOSE to teach, do so
because they are special enough to realize that teachers prepare the future. They care about the youth that are in
Compensation

their care and a desire to help them reach for their dreams & goals. They teach them that the world is what they make it. Nothing worth having is just given to them. They work for it. They help them learn how to be the best version of themselves. That they can design what the future looks like. I know these all sound like idealistic platitudes, but they are what has kept me coming to school every day. So what is my point. -- I am worth more than I am earning. I work harder than most CEO's. My value is defined in the love and care I give my students. Money doesn't solve all problems but it does help to show respect for what we do. Question-- why would a bright, talented educated young person want to make a career choice when the world (Our political decision makers) does not value the profession. The compensations are better in the business world. --That students are more than a number scored on a random test. That life isn't some pen & paper test, it is doing. Yes Life is a test of sorts and how we live it is what demonstrates what we have learned. What we value. So what do you value?

Karen Draper, Weber School District

I have been teaching for 16 years. I love my profession. However, I can see why we are having the lack of teachers coming into and staying in our profession. The lack of pay and the amount of requirements we are required to do isn't worth it to many. I am all about raising expectations and giving students a quality education, but expectations and requirements need to be realistic. If you want to attract and keep quality teachers...make the profession more attractive. Society has changed, therefore, changing some of the student behaviors we experience in classrooms. That alone makes teaching more difficult than it used to be 10 years ago. Teaching has shifted to data driven based on assessing. I have no problem assessing and analyzing the data, but there is a point when it starts to effect the amount of time you actually have to give instruction. It sometimes feels like assessing is the only thing you doing. It's getting to the point that it's taking out the enjoyment of learning and teaching.

Emily Farr, Weber School District

I believe that teachers salaries and benefits need to be improved to hold and retain quality teachers. Make sure that all administrators are education experienced and qualified to be in an education management position.

Paul Fawson Jr., Weber School District

I work hard every day trying to make a difference in student's lives. I would appreciate it if some of the legislators would acknowledge that we do hard things every day under tough circumstances. We need more help with difficult kids. We need more help in the classroom with either more aide time or smaller class sizes.

Lynne Graves, Weber School District

Teaching is a not a profession that a person simply "tries out." Every time a teacher comes and goes it hurts students. Students deserve committed teachers who have invested in this profession for the long haul, teachers who are trained and educated, teachers who understand pedagogy as well as their content areas, and teachers who understand the brains and minds and hearts of the students they are teaching. Invest in teachers, and, in turn, teachers will invest in our most precious resource: our students.

Jennifer Graviet, Weber School District

The most important feature of society is equality, and that extends to equal opportunities for excellent education for all students.

Jenny Hartnett, Weber School District

When you value education by paying teachers as professionals, seeking teacher input on education matters and funding for student growth you will be able to attract and keep quality teachers.

Terie Maxfield, Weber School District

I love teaching, but I'm getting tired of legislators, parents, and the community not treating my like a professional. I have a masters degree in my subject. I spend countless hours keeping up to date and to improve myself. I wish people trusted me to make decisions about my class. I wish I was fairly compensated for the work I do. I am
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considering a move to another state or a different career all together. Utah needs to make changes if they want to keep the good teachers they have.

David Mildon, Weber School District

Teachers put in so much time and effort to be the best that they can be. They put in time to prep for lessons, correct student work, enter grades, read about current research and best practices, and think about what will help students achieve in all areas. Much of this time is outside of the contract hours. This is outside of contract hours because during the day, teachers are already running a marathon, so to speak, to make the most of the time that is with students. Teachers try to maximize all learning/teaching time with the students. It would be nice to see that teachers are compensated for their time and efforts. I can see that in the time that I have put in through the past year and a half that I have been teaching, that there is so much work to be done from the moment I get to the school building to the moment that I leave. I am here before and after contract hours. I work these long hours alongside my colleagues. We all want the best for our students because we care. It would just be nice to be compensated for what we do for our students, who will be contributing members of society and future. We also want future educators that could be amazing in this career field to not be steered away just because they are not recognized or compensated for the work that is done in a school.

Lexus Monroe, Weber School District

The fact that people can be hired as teachers without a degree in education.

Duren Montgomery, Weber School District

My legislators in North Ogden, Senator Christensen and Rep. Fawson, are continually on the wrong side of history by voting against educational funding and voting for red tape like SB 220 last year- to just name one bill among many. Utah is dead last in WPU funding-no excuse for that! They always quote the same argument "That Utah puts more money from budget towards education than any other state." That's like saying I have a really small apple pie...but I'm giving you a big piece! Its the smallest piece (WPU) in the nation, it's not enough, and I see the results first hand of Utah grossly under funding education for all these years. How they treat me as a teacher is a clear reflection of how they treat students. Not very good.

Paul Pontius, Weber School District

The teacher shortage is a direct result of the legislature's unwillingness to increase teacher pay and decrease class size. The deceptive accounting for the WPU makes it so that the average class size on paper is far smaller than the actual average class size. If they want to do something about the teacher shortage, they need have reasonable class size to promote learning and salaries to make it worth while for teachers to stay in the profession and attract new teachers.

Keith Quigley, Weber School District

Less testing and more teaching time

Sandra C. Toone, Weber School District

I believe in the power and responsibility that teachers have to influence students for good. However, we need support, compensation, and respect from our legislators and the public to best help these students succeed. Teachers work far more hours than many realize and our wages are not competitive in comparison to others with the same amount of education and training in other industries. In order to attract and retain quality teachers, increasing teacher salaries and benefits must be a priority. In addition, in order to prevent burnout, teachers need more paid time to plan and prepare for high-quality instruction. With the amount of growth we are experiencing in many parts of Utah and in order to reduce class sizes, we'll need more teachers. Increasing salary and giving teachers more paid time to do what they need to do are two essential things for our students' futures. Also, teachers should be able to focus less on end-of-level testing proficiency percentages and more on growth of the WHOLE student--academic and otherwise. I think sometimes we feel pressured to cram the core into the kids' heads when really what they need is to learn life skills (diligence, kindness, organization, respecting for self and others, working as a team, etc.) first, and
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then they will be able to succeed academically. In order to be able to focus on the whole child, less pressure must be put on educators’ test scores. Yes, there needs to be accountability for teachers, students, and schools, but testing is not the only way to do that—student surveys, parent surveys, administrator evaluations, student growth, self-evaluations, etc. could all be helpful ways of showing accountability. Finally, at my school (and many others) we have many students whose problems are beyond what we, as regular education teachers, have the training to sufficiently support. We need more resources available to help those students who need more mental and emotional support than we are able to give. Thank you for your time.

Abbie Twingstrom, Weber School District

Maintaining quality teachers will REQUIRE the state to seriously increase the salary of all teachers, within all districts equally. Allowing districts to allocate the funds tends to allow them to reallocate it elsewhere. Many teachers leave the state or leave the profession entirely because of the lack of importance to be compensated or even trusted at times to be able to manage their own time when given time to plan meaningful and engaging experiences in the classroom. Much time is wasted in just filling the need to have committees and going through the motions of unnecessary programs felt beneficial by those who have never taught or haven't been in a classroom setting for many years. Also, in my experience, the best administrators are those who have taught a minimum of 10 years in a classroom, and just by obtaining a degree online shouldn't be the sole reason for advancing any individual. Much is learned after many years in a classroom that can't be taught by only reading a book or attending a class. Public opinion needs to change as well, that teachers are solely responsible for a child's education. True parent involvement is needed. We are educators, yes... we are caregivers as well, but much of what happens at school is first taught in the home. Public awareness may transmit to a higher respect of teachers. I know this is a difficult task, and I know most all teachers rather give up personal time and personal funds to help a child succeed, but this needs to stop. Stop relying on the individuals that entered this profession as a personal call to help others by continuing to have them make the only sacrifices.

David Van Eerden, Weber School District

You have to address the cause of teacher shortages. Bandaids can only do so much.

Arron Wheeler, Weber School District

I really am doing the best I can. I am not sure why you are telling me how to do my job or how I am doing it. Please come visit my class and see what we are doing instead of just giving a grade.

Michael Yamashita, Weber School District

I am lucky in my building because as a High School Teacher I only have 184 students this year. Most of my colleagues have over 200. In most of my classes I have 35 students. Sometimes I think about how hard it is for parents to teach 3 or 4 or 5 or even 6 of their own children at a time, yet we are required to give 35 students individual attention during class when we only see them for 1 hour every other day. It is really crazy when you think about it. It is unrealistic to give students the time and energy that they need when we have so many students in a class. We need more funding to reduce class sizes. We need to recognize and compensate teachers for the impossible task we have given them.

Kara Allen, Alpine School District

We care and we are trying so hard! It takes real champions to do this job with so much pressure and responsibility, and so many obstacles to work around.

Chelsea Alley, Alpine School District

We are getting plenty of money from individual tax payers. However, the funds are distributed to a far too large administration. We constantly see teachers on the news asking for smaller classrooms and increased pay, yet every year their is more money from tax payers and yet those of us on the "FRONT LINES" do not see money or smaller classrooms. Please reduce administration size and salary. Push the money through to those of us with the kids every-single-day. We are the group who will make the difference in the outcome of students. This will also cause
more of these amazing teachers to STAY in the classroom rather than move to administrative positions simply because they need more pay and are frustrated with class sizes getting larger and larger every year.

Christine Barger, Alpine School District

Increase teacher salaries, lower class size. I would like our legislators visit a classroom for a week. Every day come in and see what educators do on a day-to-day basis. It has to be all day for at least 5 days in a row.

Apryl A Beck, Alpine School District

There’s a reason we have a teacher shortage: compensation and budgets

Frank Bramall, Alpine School District

I have master degree and teaching more than 10 years, both my husband and I work, I need a part time job also to provide for my family of 6 children, my friend who has work outside school system makes a lot more than I do. If I work outside the school system I do not need to work 2 jobs.

Annie Burr, Alpine School District

Our aides are given no medical insurance, less money than a fast food worker, expected to take a physical risk to their person. This is a reason we have attrition in this field.

Casandra Daugherty, Alpine School District

The number one way to improve education is to retain good educators with pay, benefits, and lowering class size.

Gerald Dibb, Alpine School District

Every year I have to make the decision to stay a teacher. I don't make enough to afford a simple townhome for my family and myself. The cost of living has dramatically risen over the last decade and more recently the last 5 years. And since I've only been teaching for 6 years, it hits me pretty hard.

Cameron Duckworth, Alpine School District

I have been teaching for six years and I have loved what I do. However, this year, I have wanted to quit many times. I have a hard class with 26 students. I don't have sufficient technology and I took a pay cut moving districts. I have to mentor new teachers on my own time and that cuts into my own planning time. I have a Masters Degree and I’m barely paying my rent. I have many other skills where I could be making double what I make as a teacher. We need more money and more respect as teachers.

Aubri Elder, Alpine School District

Pay raises that do not get drained into admin over teachers.

Keith Flood, Alpine School District

I teach special education and over the last several years there as been an increase of students with diagnoses that merit specialized instruction, an increase in class sizes, but there has not been a matching increase in classroom funding. My students require a lot of specialized equipment much of which I have to buy from money that I donate. This last year I was told I was not allowed to ask for parent donations, which have helped us to meet the needs in the past. This is not okay. Teachers need to be able to ask for help from the parents, if the parents can't give it that's fine, but many would and having to wait in the hopes that the parents will ask us what we need is an inefficient process, especially when they are expecting me to simply ask for donations as I've done in the past. Another glaring problem in education lately has been our inability to pay our support staff acceptable and competitive wages, this has cause a huge shortage in our district. For the first time in almost 12 years of teaching I had to start the school year understaffed and it took nearly two months to find someone able and willing to take the job. I cannot run my classroom (I work with special education mild to moderate students in a special class setting) without my staff. Districts need increased funding so as to pay their support staff competitive wages. Legislators need to stop
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reassigning money that is suppose to be allotted to schools. Please stop with the lip service when it comes to education and put your words into practice.

Jennifer Gaskin, Alpine School District

I'm concerned with the push for one-on-one technology for students. I can't get enough support for what little technology I have in my room, let alone have the demand for more tech help with students. I would hope legislators will listen to people in education rather than the hue and cry of others. We are in the trenches. A lot of the fall out educators are dealing with right now is due to "other voices", legislation coming about because of it and later proven to not have been wise!!

Rachel Gonzalez, Alpine School District

5 out of my 7 classes have 40 or more students. I have had to reduce labs, assessments, and student feedback to keep myself from working to much outside of my contract time. I have been considering returning to industry since the pay is better and I could possibly have a bigger impact with less stress.

John Hamilton, Alpine School District

Being a teacher is hard on marriages and family life. In order to be the kind of teacher that you, parents, and I expect of myself, I am ALWAYS working extra time. My husband strongly disapproves of my doing that. You need to please pay teachers more for time worked so that we are not getting pennies on the dollar. Bonus pay may be the answer, but I am not sure yet. A huge help would be smaller class sizes.

Cindy Hansen, Alpine School District

As teachers we work hard and put forth our time and energy and are paid little. Every year I wonder if it is worth it. There is SO much required of me and there are times its too much. Grades, core curriculum, assessments, standards, documentation, effective teaching, supplies (I spent $2500 of my own money last year), taking classes to relicense (my early childhood endorsement from another state is not accepted so I have to pay and retake classes I have already taken), and class sizes are getting larger and larger (29 kids in Kindergarten is way to much and add 2 sessions that's 60 kids I need to teach a full day curriculum in half the day and report cards and parent teacher conferences). The list goes on. Every year I look at other careers to see what options I have as I'm spent. Please see teachers load is great.

Lois Hardy, Alpine School District

I teach at a school that is the most economically challanged in my District. We are the oranges among the many schools of apples. Our school is ranked high among Title 1 schools, but average when compared with the apple (non-Title 1 schools). We (the teachers and staff) work very hard to help each child grow and improve both academically and socially. We work very hard. It is frustrating to have those who make decisions for us (the legislature) not think we are doing our best. We are always learning and growing in our own field to improve, but testing doesn't show the great growth some students actually achieved during that year. Testing doesn't always show the great amount of teacher effort to help each and every student. It would be wonderful to have good faith in teachers to express knowledge and gratitude for working so very hard. Greater compensation would be nice and certainly more help (volunteers) would be welcome. However, our number one concern is helping each child learn.

Stacey Hawkes, Alpine School District

Our students deserve the very best we have to offer. After all, the kids I work with are only 9 and 10 years old. There have been so many things added to our plates, that it's no fun being a teacher anymore. Adults have polluted our schools, and ultimately it's our students who pay the price. I used to love being a teacher. I would wake up every morning looking forward to going to work. I'll continue to do my very best, because that's what my students deserve. However, I look forward to the day I can leave the profession. Hopefully legislatures will make decisions with our students in mind.

Steve Herrman, Alpine School District
Compensation

I love being a teacher! We as teachers can always use more resources to reach every child.

Jacqueline Hull, Alpine School District

I have a 26 year old son on the ASD spectrum. I fought the insurance coverage problem for him 23 years ago for many years. This year, I had to and am continuing to fight it again. I was discouraged to know that this is a problem that many parents in our state are still having to fight. We have made leaps and bounds in the medical world to understanding what helps these children, and yet we still have NOT mandated insurance companies in the state of Utah to cover autism(including the simple process of "classifying" or "diagnosing" someone who is on the spectrum. There are over 30 states in our nation that have mandated insurance companies to cover autism, unfortunately, Utah has not. We need to push this through our system to help our children.

Mary Johnson, Alpine School District

If teaching students is the focus of teachers that should be the thing that is valued not all the extra work teachers have to do. It seem like there is a new requirement every month.

Merissa Jones, Alpine School District

Teachers are not receiving fair monetary compensation for the many hours of time they put into educating children in our state. It is difficult to keep giving away extra hours outside of instruction time to attend trainings and meetings, prepare materials, grade papers, and donate time to extracurricular activities. Teachers don't get to leave their jobs at the office.

Cindy Jovet, Alpine School District

Please listen to the state's teachers. We are the experts in the trenches every day.

Denise Kelley, Alpine School District

Our elementary school does not provide any music or drama for our students. I decided to put on a musical two years in a row and both were hugely successful with the students and the community. I was given a $100 stipend for the more than 100 hours I put into the production (on top of my full-time teaching job). It is crucial that our students have arts opportunities. We need more funding for these kinds of programs and funds available to compensate teachers who are willing to put in extra hours to support these kinds of opportunities.

Courtney Knight, Alpine School District

Increase the pay of those working in special education (i.e. teachers and paraeducators).

Oscar Ledesma, Alpine School District

The "30 kids in a classroom" days are over in my area. It's 40 kids in a class now, and we don't have the supplies or technology to ensure adequate access for all students. We also don't have appropriate planning time because so much time has to be devoted to grading when there is such a high quantity of students.

Jessica Low, Alpine School District

I am a 3rd year teacher who works hard for my students. I am constantly changing lesson plans and ideas to meet their needs and keep their interest. By the end of the school day, I have taught academics, solved social problems, listened to students who are concerned or worried about what is going on at home, comforted. I love the children dearly and I care about them. But by the time they leave each day, I feel exhausted emotionally and physically. Then the planning begins. Each day I plan math, science, history and language arts lessons for 30 6th graders. Recently my husband has become ill and unable to work. We are a two family household, and despite the hours of work and effort I put into my job...I cannot pay the bills...for just two of us. It can be devastating and incredibly depressing to go home knowing I've put in more hours and worked harder than many of my friends in the corporate world, and wondering if I'm going to be able to put food on the table tonight. If we truly want good teachers, we shouldn't expect them to need second income (either from working two jobs or from a spouse) to be able to survive in todays world.
Compensation

We often discuss how difficult it is for students to learn when they come to school hungry. It too is difficult to teach when I come to work, knowing that my very best won't provide financial security for the month.

*Tess McCleskey, Alpine School District*

Have you ever been a teacher in a classroom? The training that we go through and the paperwork and meetings that we are required to do, all the while testing and teaching massive class sizes and expecting the students to show growth, and yet, we are one of the lowest paid professions. This world would not exist without teachers. I think that our salaries should reflect the worth of the work that we do in the walls of our classroom to raise your children and grandchildren. Think about a teacher that impacted your life. Imagine what your life would have been without that teacher. We perform miracles in the classroom with VERY little funds and TONS of students. It is time for everyone to stand behind educators and make it happen!

*Anabis McGill, Alpine School District*

All students deserve a quality education that meets their individual needs.

*Mark Milne, Alpine School District*

I have a masters degree and have completed a portion of my doctoral work. I work three jobs to provide an adequate income for my family (we live in a split entry home built in 82’) With the rising cost of benefits and stalled salaries, I am actually making less money now than I did five years ago.

*Cindy Ness, Alpine School District*

I am all for increasing funding for education but I feel like that money never trickles down to the actual classroom and teachers. I have taught for a long time and I feel like the longer I teach the more I spend out of pocket because budgets are reduced and even administration is cutting back on supplies. I should have access to the supplies I need to do my job and to also be able to earn a livable wage. We spend way more time than people realize out of our contract hours and we do it because we love our students and want to see them succeed. We should be better compensated for that. If increasing the education budget doesn't impact classrooms directly, then I'm not sure it is worth it. I wish legislatures would trust us to do our job. I feel like I have way more paperwork and testing than ever before. While there are some benefits to these, I find that I spend more time testing students than actually teaching. I have been well trained and know how to help students learn. Please let me use my skills to help kids. I feel like I am drowning in paperwork and breaking down tests. I just want to teach and assess my students as I know how to.

*Kacey Oliekan, Alpine School District*

Teachers are overworked and underpaid. Simple as that. Stop putting extra work on top of them and let them teach. Most people who teach love their jobs, but usually because of pay and/or all of the extra political agendas, they leave the profession. Put yourself in their shoes. Go into their classrooms and see what they are doing. When you actually take a minute to see what they do on a daily or weekly basis, you will be surprised at the dedication they have for their job and you will see where you need to help. Stop addressing your own personal agendas and fix the education in Utah.

*Ashley Oney, Alpine School District*

My need for a second job does not make me a better teacher.

*Gary Peaslee, Alpine School District*

Teachers are not the enemy - lack of student and parent commitment to education is undermining all of our efforts to make a difference. Our morale is in the toilet - that's why I would not encourage anyone to go into education for a career at this point. It's not worth it! Something has to change and targeting teachers is not the answer. WE are doing the impossible in Utah with NOTHING!

*Josette Pitardi, Alpine School District*
Compensation

Place more value on the education of our children by paying teachers more and lowering class size in elementary school.

Vickie Richey, Alpine School District

My two main concerns are class size and teacher pay. I currently have 34 students in my class and everyday I worry about how I'm going to meet all of their needs. I work past my contract hours to meet the demands of my large class size and yet my pay continues to be minimal. I just wonder when teachers are going to be truly valued for the endless hours they put into educating young minds.

Kelly Robbins, Alpine School District

Do something about education in Utah--teachers are worn out doing paperwork and charts when they need to be using their creativity and skills to teach their classes.

Cheryl Rogers, Alpine School District

As far as I'm aware, teachers are the only full-time government employees that do not receive holiday pay. Teachers should receive holiday pay. Additionally, it is impossible to support a family on a teacher's salary. Administrators are abusing their power and treatment of teachers who would do well are being pushed out by poor work environments. We should be able to take "personal days" without the punishment of paying $45, which, to my understanding, is not to pay for the sub, but is punitive to deter teachers from taking personal days.

Spencer Saluone, Alpine School District

Teachers are feeling very beaten up. We're tired and discouraged. We've been blamed for everything. There's very little respect from parents and legislators. Spend some time in a classroom. See what we do. Just because you went to school as a kid doesn't mean you have the faintest idea what it's like to be a teacher. I've been to the dentist a hundred times. Would you let me work on your kids' teeth? Of course not. Neither do you know what it takes to create a successful classroom. We need to be listened to and really heard. We need support. We need to be paid enough that we don't need second jobs that take our focus and energy away. We love what we do. We want your children to reach the stars. We're working so hard. Don't just say you support us, show you support us.

Jake Southworth, Alpine School District

I'm a 33 year old Speech Language Pathologist. Graduate programs in my field, with a bachelor's background take 2 years of full time schooling (I knew no one who was able to work a part time job in my program) and I struggle to meet my financial obligations being single. Many of my colleagues are the main breadwinners of their families. I can only imagine the struggle. If Utah wishes for well prepared and articulate students they should be ready to pay. As it is it is difficult to retain even the new Speech Language Pathologists schooled and trained in the state due to the state's uncompetitive pay rates.

Benjamin Rudolph Stair, Alpine School District

Children are not numbers and schools need to not be treated like businesses. Teaching children has so much more significance than any data/testing will ever show, and we need to focus on educating the whole child and not just focus on subjects that are tested. I am all for training and teaching with the latest/best practices that have been researched, but this doesn't happen without significant time spent on lesson plans, material development, and assessments created to measure learning. It is not fair to implement new curriculum standards or give teachers new assignments or expectations and expect them to invest their own time to always create materials, learn new material, and organize and prepare it all to be able to teach it. This job can be, and usually is utterly exhausting and doesn't just affect a teacher but also their families. We do it because we care, but you can only care so much and for so long. Probably the only other professions that put in the kind of time that teachers do, are given time during their work day to prepare and learn information necessary to do their job, and have a great deal of responsibility expected are paid a whole lot more. More pay would definitely make it more worth doing, but honestly there just isn't enough time in the day to do all that is expected even if we were compensated. Most people just take for granted what has to go into teaching to pull off even minimal success and don't realize what it takes to really accomplish some of the amazing
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things that we do, most of what can't be shown on a standardized test. I think what public education (well any education) does is crucial to most kids' lives and to our society, which is why I do what I do and will continue to do as long as I am capable. But we can't do it alone and need the support of parents, politicians, and the entire community that we live in because we're all interconnected, so it's important we understand each other and work together. Thank you for all you do in support of public education.

Heather Stewart, Alpine School District

I am a school counselor member of UEA and a passionate supporter of public education and know public ed, with the appropriate funding and resources, is where all student can achieve at high levels and we need to continue providing that support from the legislative level rather than limiting what educators can do to help my students, your students and everyone's students come out of high school prepared to take on the life that is next for them. As a counselor, I can see the impact our educators make on students, especially those who don't have the opportunities or resources and it can make all the difference. Public educators are in this profession to make that difference. Please support them.

Maja Stocking, Alpine School District

I am a first year teacher and my friends and family are shocked when I tell them how much I work and then how much of my own money I spend on my classroom. It is not fair that I should have to spend my own as well as have such a low salary. There needs to be an increase in salary or increase in classroom supplies fund.

Elora Stump, Alpine School District

Educators are leaving teaching because of poor pay, curriculum always changing (6th grade science), and class sizes are too high.

Kelley Tenney, Alpine School District

I love teaching! I am willing to make a lot of sacrifices to teach because I love it so much, especially monetarily. However, I have considered finding different employment for the benefit of my family and our futures multiple times. I also have a number of friends who would make amazing teachers and have even said they would love to teach...if teaching paid more. If education is to be taken seriously, and if teachers are to be truly respected as professionals, then they need to be paid as professionals, and treated like professionals. And merit pay is not the answer. That is being treated like a salesperson and teachers are not selling anything. They also don't pick their product (thank goodness) but they take what they are given and they work to help their students grow and flourish. Please help teachers be paid like professionals. If you want to give them bonuses for great work, that would be a great "bonus", but a bonus should not be needed to survive, because then it is not a bonus. A teacher's base pay needs to attract highly motivated and hardworking individuals.

Matt Thornton, Alpine School District

Teachers are here to help students. Give us the tools we need through funding to do that!

Cherie Tobler, Alpine School District

I love what I do. I love working with students and seeing their progress. I appreciate the support that allows me to work with students.

Kristi Tonga, Alpine School District

I love teaching in Alpine district but I continue to actively search for a higher paying position out of Utah state. I'd prefer not to move but I cannot start a family or pay student loans on the salary I make. I have to coach multiple teams, supervise every after school activity, and participate in every teaching incentive/extra hours program I can just to try to make a living wage. I've taught for 6 years, but I cannot maintain this pace much longer. Moving just one state over ensures a $12k starting raise compared to Utah and a limit of 28 students per classroom. That's difficult to pass up.

Lee Tortorelli, Alpine School District
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I think it is very important to retain good quality teachers and the best way to do that is to pay those teachers adequately for their time spent. My first year of teaching I would frequently get home at 8:00 pm. I still put in many extra hours outside of our “paid” domain. Trust your teachers to put the time that is required and compensate them for all their extra time. We wouldn't be in this profession if we didn't care about student learning and we will naturally put in the extra time without anyone looking over our shoulders to make sure we do. We are professionals after all.

Shilo Ward, Alpine School District

I have taught Kindergarten or Preschool for 21 years. The teachers I’ve collaborated with over the years are amazing but so much is being required with so little being given back that most are ready to quit or move to another state. We are now required to take so many children with serious behavior issues... YES, even at 4 and 5 years old many children already have been abused or neglected to the point that they are violent, depressed, and discouraged with low self esteem or pressured by perfection driven parents that they can have ulcers, anxiety or distructive tendencies. We have many success stories, in fact MOST of my preschool children learn ALL of the letters and sounds and can count to 20 or beyond by the end of the year, but in preschool we only have 14 children in each class with a full time aide. The poor Kindergarten teachers are the ones that suffer. PLEASE HELP THEM!!

Irene Lynn Wilkerson, Alpine School District

Increase retirement from 2% to 2.5%

Corey Y Fullmer, Beaver School District

Studies have shown that the larger the class size, the less effective the teacher. This is so true. In our day where teachers are being blamed, or held accountable for students learning and test scores, class size has to be taken into account and dealt with. A teacher can hardly maintain control in a class of more than 25 students, and it is very, very difficult to meet the needs of all those students, to help them learn to read, write, and do math on grade level, when there are so many students and so many needs. I think legislators need to spend time in classrooms to see the conditions, the job teachers are trying to do, and what the struggles and conditions they are working under are, to see what and why they need to make changes to the education in our state. I have taught school for 12 years and do not recall ever seeing a legislator in the school I work at. There needs to be many changes made to education to improve it, but reducing class size would be a first step in the right direction.

Gina Baird, Box Elder School District

Class sizes are simply too big. Over 50% of my students are below grade level. They don't get the help they need. The kids who are on grade level don't get what they need because I am trying to help the kids who are behind. None of us gets what we need.

Lynette Burrell, Box Elder School District

The only students failing my classes are the non-attenders. We need support from our legislators to get and keep students in school. You want test grades to improve- make attendance mandatory!

Stacy Church, Box Elder School District

A change in standards issued by the state with no funds for training or curriculum supplies available without writing our own grants. Increased workload due to the standard change without extra funding for meeting a working together to create new curriculum. Workload is already to large with each class having between 30-35 students in them.

Heidi Heil, Box Elder School District

A teacher's day does not begin at 7:30 a.m. nor end at 2:50 p.m. We take our work home--prepare lessons for the next day/week, grade papers, contact parents, update grades, communicate with other teachers and much more. We love what we do but we are underappreciated by the administration and the legislation. Because we enter each day and help kids to learn and to grow in a safe, inviting environment, we too need an “atta boy”. Those can come in many forms. It is proven that employees in any industry work harder for employers who recognize, empathize, and reward their hard work and celebrate their successes. Education should be no different. I love when my students tell
Compensation

me they love and appreciate me. I love it when my employer recognizes my time and effort in and out of the classroom. I appreciate it when the legislature passes on funding that increases my pay because they know and understand the value of an "atta boy" and a keep up the great work. We are working together to "grow" Utah kids.

Laura McKee, Box Elder School District

We have to allow the teachers to have more teeth in holding kids responsible. Instead of making teachers allow kids to keep redoing things. Kids have to be allowed to fail if they don't do their part. Also when it comes to the point that the judicial system can't do anything to kids if they are on school property, so much so that if a student is going to break a law such as drinking alcohol they want to do it on school grounds we are in trouble. Also there needs to be something that balances out the money available to schools instead of having the haves and the have nots. In my 30 years of education there is so much more expected both time and stress related and the pay relatively the same.

Van Park, Box Elder School District

I am tired of having on the weight, responsibilities, restrictions, regulations and educational red tape. We are currently told by legislators what we should be doing, how we should be doing it, and then how we are not doing a good enough job. Anyone that has NOT been teaching in a classroom, directly infront of studentw within the past year, doesn't understand or appreciate the REALITY of education. I have been on both sides, the classroom is where the magic happens, yet so many players that aren't in the classroom seem to THINK that they know more than the people that are actually working on the front lines everyday. When I worked at our district office, I didn't have to do lesson plans, prepare for a sub. I did do many important things but nothing that comes close to being back in my classroom now! I am sorry but I am using faith and respect for people at the top, they are losing good teachers, they are all patting themselves on the back because Utah teachers do soooooooo much with soooooooo little. To people on the outside that is just wrong! Utah legislators, and local school boards are "Selling the students of Utah OUT!"

Lorie Rasmussen, Box Elder School District

Stop micromanaging education and trust paid professional teachers to improve education.

Clair Schenk, Box Elder School District

I work in a rural school, so class size is not an issue, but I do spend hours on lesson plans and grading, making sure my 3rd, 4th and 5th grades are getting what they need. I would hate to see taxes raised, since we ranch and the cattle market is not the best. I have often wondered and I am not educated with enough information to say this next idea is the answer to our problems with education in Utah, but sometimes I think why not bring in the lottery and loosen up the liquor laws. So many people go out of state to play the lottery and purchase liquor. I also think we are TESTING our kids way too much. I get anxiety and so do they when it is testing time. If the 3rd grades and up are required to SAGE test, I think the lower grade teachers need to be accountable for some state test.I don't see the fairness across the board.

Vauna Wilcock, Box Elder School District

I have concerns that often money is allocated but there are so many strings attached or in the case of technology even required vendors with strings attached that it becomes difficult to put the money toward the greatest need. Additionally we have hard working teachers. When you hear the news stories otherwise these are the outliers. Please be mindful that all teachers/educators are not children who need to be heavily monitored and told what to do for EVERYTHING or reprimanded.

Leslie Burt, Cache County School District

Standards for teachers regarding becoming certified and re-certifying are extremely high, and we have to pay those ourselves, yet anyone who is "highly qualified" can teach due to teacher shortage. These requirements are unfair to teachers--we need more consistency. When was the last time legislators spent SEVERAL days in a classroom to get a feel for the amount of work, etc. piled on us, besides having to meets stipulations that we can't teach without taking classes, etc. to re-certify.

Darlee Dyer, Cache County School District
Compensation

There are many teachers who are dedicated. I average 3 hours of over time a day and that does not include the time that I spend at home most evenings. Most teachers care about their students and the profession. That being said, many cannot afford to stay in this profession unless they become administrators. How sad! Many others, my son included, are choosing other careers. My son always wanted to be a history teacher. He loves history and would have made an incredible teacher, but...sadly he cannot raise a family on a teacher’s salary. He watched me all these years and knows all the extra time that needs to be spent to be a good teacher. He chose another profession and I encouraged him to do so.

_Wendy El Bakri, Cache County School District_

We need to retain and attract quality teachers. Pay us like other professionals. I do just as much as an accountant, a tax adviser, a nurse, or any other college educated professional. In fact I give up more of my free time than most other professionals just to make up lesson plans, grade work, help out at school functions and get training to help me become more computer literate or updated on the newest best practices. I hardly ever have a “free weekend”. When I am gone, it is important enough to have a substitute. Please treat what I do with respect and appropriate compensation.

_Ruth Mudrow, Cache County School District_

We are passionate, caring, professionals who love our students and the opportunity to give them a brighter future. We work much more than our contract time preparing to make each day as meaningful as possible. We teach the individuals, and monitor and assess everyone’s growth. As teachers we push our selves to utilize best practices. Most of us take classes, and earn certificates well beyond what is needed for relicensure. Throughout the summer I will take classes as well go in at least once a week to prepared, adjust, or improve curriculum. I am not only not paid, but I still pay for day care. It is important to me to continually improve even in my twelfth year of teaching and implement best practices I am learning or ways to deepen understanding. I come in early and stay late to help individuals that struggle with concepts. We spend much more than we are compensated for on supplies, rewards, or things that make our lessons more meaning. I’ve done this for over crowded classrooms. I’ve had up to 32 third graders in class and 30 second graders. I care too much about the kids each year not to contact each family individually with a positive phone call throughout the year and individual attention and praise. I can not do this when in my contract hours or with the legislative money allotted. I sacrifice my family time and money to help support these kids knowing I may be the only praise and love they get some days. Knowing they may not get support with reading or homework at home. As educators we do all these things because we care. Please support us support the wonderful children of Utah.

_Alisa Olsen, Cache County School District_

I went through the ARL program to become licensed. We should require a more rigorous licensing program and expect more of our teachers in an effort to increase pay to a respectable level. More meetings is not the answer. Meaningful training and licensing sessions to make the licensing program more meaningful.

_David G. Smith, Cache County School District_

I’m a 30 year professional with a masters degree. I make a fraction of what other professionals make with similar education. Everyone talks that there is nothing more important than education, educating our children, no more noble calling than teaching. If that is true, look at how teachers are paid and treated.

_Rob Stewart, Cache County School District_

If we could lower class sizes, increase teacher pay based on growth performance of students rather than benchmark, or provide more classroom support- I believe that every student would benefit immensely.

_Whitney Tibbitts, Cache County School District_

Please come into our classrooms before making legislative choices.

_Wendy Western, Cache County School District_
Compensation

By investing in education, we invest in our future. Teachers play such a vital role in the lives of today's youth and are tremendously under paid for the time and effort they put in. It is a labor of love and one we are happy to do. We work hard and get more with less funding than anyone. Visit the schools, talk to teachers, and please make informed and educated decisions.

Skyler Beard, Canyons School District

Teacher evaluations are not always the answer if the people doing the evaluations are not good in the classroom.

Ryan Bullett, Canyons School District

Legislators, I LOVE teaching, but I am increasingly losing the joy in my profession. Maybe it's my district and it's emphasis on one curriculum, or the SAGE-type testing at the end of the year, or the increasing mental-health needs of the students in my classroom? Maybe it's the way my salary increases are eaten away by healthcare costs and premiums? Maybe it's feeling like there's no one REALLY listening to my concerns? Let me have a voice. Let me help inform you about what is happening in today's classrooms. Let me help you affect positive change in policy. Let me help you understand the value of increasing your investing in public education. Thank you!

Jen Buttars, Canyons School District

Cost of living vs. Teacher pay in the State of Utah. Look at housing market for a reasonable house payment is close to have of a monthly check

Brandon Cornaby, Canyons School District

Teaching needs to be recognized as an extremely important career and funding should be of the state's top priority. Benefits and retirement plans should be similar to other state employees such as police officers and firefighter packages. Underfunding, underpaying education is inexcusable.

Jana Gold, Canyons School District

Get with the times...don't make any legislation 're education until they have been in the classroom at least a week. No one tells an attorney, doctor or even a mechanic how to do their jobs, why is it that everyone else has a say in what and how we teach? Pay us for our time. Utah is getting to be more expensive to live in. I know of teachers - teachers who are sole breadwinners or who are divorced, widowed or single having to work two jobs to make it here in Utah.

Mary LeCheminant, Canyons School District

I teach at an elementary school. I have many bright talented students who could use more creative ways to think. I work more than my contracted time just doing my daily tasks to keep up with what needs to be done. If I want to create really great lesson plans that engage the students each and every day I work much more than my contract time. Teachers need smaller classes and more planning time. Most of all teachers need to be paid for the hours they work!! I'm sure you are all paid for the hours that you work.

Suzanne Malloy, Canyons School District

The unpaid time and overall commitment that I give to my job that goes unrecognized and uncompensated.

Jennifer Mattson, Canyons School District

Unless you make education a priority and back it with money you will continue to struggle with finding quality teachers.

Julie McFarland, Canyons School District

I have been a teacher for 14 years in Jordan and Canyons districts. As a single person with no spouse's salary contributing to my household, in addition to taking care of my elderly parents, it is really hard to make ends meet on this salary. My friends and relatives in other states have been teaching for many less years, and some make double my salary. The cost of living in Utah has risen sharply since I was in college, but my salary has not kept up with inflation. I teach AP Art History and college Humanities (through SLCC), and the state and districts always claim to
Compensation

have class sizes around 28. As far as I can tell, that class size only applies to elementary classes. I think this is false advertising. We all know that high school/secondary classes are much larger than this and I don’t think it’s fair to pretend that number is true. Secondary schools are allowed FTE based on a number that is inaccurate, and that makes all of us have larger class sizes. My AP Art History classes always have 35-40, while my colleagues in every other state are able to teach classes of 15-20. When my AP pass rates are lower than theirs I am told I’m not a highly qualified teacher, or that it would disqualify me for merit pay. At my age and years of teaching I am committed to teaching until retirement, but it is demoralizing when new teachers this year are making what it took me 10 years to make, with a master’s degree.

Wendi Miller, Canyons School District

I’ve been teaching for 11 years and am so frustrated with the pay. I’ve seen so many good teachers quit because of it, six of them on my team alone over the last 6 years. As much as I love it, I can’t lie and say I’m not tempted to go to another job when, with my masters, I can double my salary. It’s just a heart-breaking decision but I’ve realized after this last “pay-raise” where the new teacher are now making what I make with only a few years experience that I need to starting thinking about what’s best for me. Hopefully, it will change. The kids deserve good teachers.

Cari Obuchon, Canyons School District

As a speech-language pathologist who gets paid on the teacher salary schedule, I help recruit and train new speech-language pathologists. When I speak to graduate students at the University of Utah, they express the difficulty of paying their student loans on a teacher salary. They can make more money working for a medical provider or opening a private practice. As a first year Speech-Language Pathologist, they can make twice as much money providing home health therapy than working in a school. This makes it very difficult to recruit and maintain speech-language pathologists in the schools. I have worked in several elementary schools with very large class sizes, especially in the upper grades. It is not uncommon to see 5th and 6th grade classes with 35 students. The saddest situation was when a student with Cerebral Palsy could only enter the first 10 feet of her classroom because her wheelchair would not fit between the 36 desks that were crammed into her 6th grade classroom. Student learning and growth is difficult when students cannot move around to fully participate and access the curriculum.

Joelle Rasmussen, Canyons School District

I work an average of 10 hours a day during the week, and still end up taking home an average of 3-5 hours of work including grading, lesson planning, and parent e-mails. In addition to working 50+ hours a week teaching, I work a second job in order to make a modest living and prepare for unexpected expenses. I was hoping that my recent pay raise would be enough to allow me to quit my second job, but it was not. Many of the experienced teachers that I work with feel undervalued because recent raises where significantly smaller for teachers that have more education and experience.

Barbara Reese, Canyons School District

I know that the conversation isn’t just about money, but logically, if you pay teaching professionals a competitive wage, you will not only attract higher quality people, but you’ll be able to expect a higher quality outcome. People work to earn a living. Give quality teachers a better way to live and you won’t lose them to other fields.

Shanalee Sadler, Canyons School District

Things have changed since you went to school. We no longer have a homogenous population where everyone has mom at home to build on the school day. Stack ‘em deep and teach ‘em cheap will no longer get it done.

Scott Stucki, Canyons School District

Why am I as a teacher automatically bad, until I prove to you otherwise.

Bret Thomas, Canyons School District

I currently have two 8th grade science classes with 40+ students in a high impact school. The majority of those students fall into some at-risk category; they are in transition, ELL, have an IEP, long running list of behavior issues,
Compensation

attendance issue, etc. In a class of 40 I cannot support these students. I have been made into a baby sitter. I believe ALL kids can be successful but we are creating an environment where we are not giving students the kind of support they need by simply cramming as many of them as possible into a room. It is near impossible for me to get around to each student in any significant way. I also do not enough lab equipment/consumables to support that many kids at one time. I have had many of the students in those classes come up to me and tell me they HATE my class because of all the kids that are not paying attention, being loud, being disrespectful, etc. I do not have poor classroom management or a difficult time creating relationships; My yearly evaluations show that. There is simply TOO many at once. I have had simple requests like, "Please take out a pencil" rebuffed with derogatory comments. I feel that I do not get paid enough to have to deal with situations like this.

Robert Violano, Canyons School District

Come and try teaching in my shoes for a week.

Carol Wheatley, Canyons School District

I teach to make a positive difference for others. I hope you serve to make a positive difference as well

Karrie Wilbur, Canyons School District

Last year due to teacher shortage and district money I had 32 fourth graders. Their reading levels spanned from 6 words per minute to 157 words per minute. I had students with IEPs and 504s for behavior. We did not have a math text, science text, and piloted a writing program. I was responsible to have my students show growth on the sage test. We were lucky to just make it through the day without some major interruption, or catastrophe. All the while I'm being paid about the same as the local garbage collectors.

Jared Chiara, Carbon School District

Raise teacher wages!

Tyler Grundy, Carbon School District

Teachers deserve more pay

Laura Anderson, Davis School District

Come spend a day in my classroom. I would love to have a representative shadow me for a day. See how hard most of us work, the effort and time we spend with your children. Maybe then, you would be willing to support us better, respect us as Educators.

Kelly Avalos, Davis School District

Teachers spend their own time, and often their own money to support the education of the students they teach. We need to show the teachers that they are appreciated.

Megan Barton, Davis School District

That I am often (approx once per week) in my classroom until the last minute before the silent alarm goes off (9-10 PM) in an effort just to stay caught up in my responsibilities. I am ALWAYS in my classroom every day at 6 AM, no later.

Geoffrey C. Bovey, Davis School District

Teachers are hard working educated people who deserve to be respected and compensated for the endless hours they give in behalf of children.

C. Braegger, Davis School District

Talk to teachers in real classrooms about their needs and thoughts on education rather than listening to outsiders - outside of the teaching/education field

laurie brown, Davis School District
Compensation

I'm trying my hardest, but I am sometimes overwhelmed with everything I have to do. I could really use more prep. time or fewer students.

Susan Callister, Davis School District

I would say that I love my job, but like most teachers, it is not enough pay for the amount of work I put in, so much so that I am considering doing something else.

Chris Carpenter, Davis School District

We're overworked and exhausted. Many of us are tired of having to work on school things evenings and weekends just to try to keep up. We are being held accountable for things we have no control over. Parents and students don't have any accountability unless they choose to. We are expected to do more than 1 person can possibly do and are criticized when we can't do it. We are professionals. We work in education every day and we should be making educational decisions for our students. We have too many students with many different needs and we can't help all of them. Our curriculum is more than we can teach in one year. We've had many things added to the curriculum, but very few things taken out. We're stressed because of testing and observations and evaluations and so many other things expected of us. Valuable learning time is spent testing and practicing for tests. Tired, stressed out teachers don't make better teachers or enhance relationships with students and it does not improve education. If I were choosing a career today, I definitely would not choose education because of the stress and my own time and money that goes into it.

Susan Carter, Davis School District

Fund public education more!

Gwen Christiansen, Davis School District

I just finished my degree in Elementary Education. I certainly didn't do it because of the money, but after doing my student teaching it has opened my eyes to how much teachers truly do! It feels like a slap in the face how little teachers get paid, for how much they do. I also have a 4th grader and his class has 33 students. The teacher is amazing and I love the school but the district won't approve another teacher for next year. It's a problem.

Magali Cromar, Davis School District

I teach 2nd grade in the regular education side of a dual immersion school. Each year about 50% of my students are below grade level in reading. In order to better meet the growing numbers of struggling readers in my classroom, I have spent the last two years of my own time and financial resources to work towards earning the extra credential of a reading endorsement. I spend time outside of my contract hours planning Tier 2 reading interventions for all of my below level readers, as well as interpreting the data of their progress. Much of my time and energy is focused on these struggling students with very minimal support from parent volunteers or even classroom aides in the school. I would like to think that I'm doing everything possible to help these struggling learners grow. It's one thing to boast about what we do as teachers, schools, districts or the state for our highest achieving students, but we must always have the question foremost in our minds, “What are we doing for the students who struggle most?” As a legislature, I would ask you the same question. What are you doing for the students who struggle most?

Kynda Farrell, Davis School District

Come spend a "real" day in my shoes. I don't want to you teach my class, but just come and see what I do from day to day, minute to minute, student to student. Gain a understanding of being in the education trenches without all the glory of you teaching what you'd like to teach or just talking. Please have some respect for my degrees and my importance of creating well function adults. That will become legislators, voters, doctors, etc...

Carrie Follett, Davis School District

While working as a Special Education Teacher. I had the opportunity to help a few students attend an ATC program while going to high school. Through academic assistance and their hard work these students completed their program while still seniors in High School. Fabulous for them, and I feel blessed to have been a part of their success.
Compensation

After graduation, I talked with these students and they informed me they had been hired on at local shops using the skills they learned in the ATC program. These students salaries were impressive. Much higher than my own and I had, at the time, been teaching for 12 years with my masters degree. Teachers simply do don't get paid a fair wage for everything they do. I was very happy for my students, but it really cut hard to my soul at how little I truly make as a teacher.

Melissa Fox, Davis School District

No matter how many hours I put in or how hard I try, it's never enough. The district just keeps handing down more and more that they expect me to accomplish in the same amount of time each day. They open the buildings on Saturdays so that we can donate even more time. Every day I think to myself, "This is why no one is going into education."

Lisa Gehmlich, Davis School District

Don't mix public and private education. Get rid of SAGE testing - it is almost meaningless. Since students know the tests are meaningless to their grades - they simply don't care/the 'opt out'/or they deliberately 'throw' the exams to punish teachers they don't like. They do NOT do what educators seem to think they do (rating schools/teachers). Just admit that if you don't have student accountability (grades)...you don't have a viable test.

Daniel Glad, Davis School District

Our children are our priority.

Ryan Hansen, Davis School District

If teachers are paid more, the best/brightest will go into teaching. Have them read The Smartest Kids in the World by Amanda Ripley (which discusses this idea of teacher pay and it's effect on student learning). Utah could lead out on this, since we value education. :) 

Laura Harris, Davis School District

Please pay us more. I'm living day to day, use food stamps, Medicaid, food pantries, and can't even won't even be able to pay for my student loan when I'm done with my Masters degree. The pay increase of a higher degree is cancelled out the loan payment.

Nate Hillyard, Davis School District

As a first year teacher in my second profession (I previously worked in marketing), my salary is less than it was 13 years ago when I stopped working in marketing to have my children. Something has to be done to increase teacher salaries to retain the good teachers that are out there.

Kim Howe, Davis School District

I love teacher work days. I love the opportunity to effectively plan and prepare engaging lessons and materials for my students. As a teacher, I would love to have teacher work days more often. I feel I would be a better teacher and my students would learn more.

Sharlie Howe, Davis School District

Most parents are not present in a students education. We are a babysitter. Students need parent involvement to be successful.

Stacey Howell, Davis School District

We can't give students a top rated education if teachers are not given time to plan and collaborate with each other.

Mark Hyatt, Davis School District
Compensation

Children learn from their parents. If the parents don't value education they won't help their children to improve and value learning. Get the parents off “free money” and get them working for what they receive to help them understand that education and working are the way to provide for your family.

ReNae Jackson, Davis School District

Before you write and pass a bill into law affecting education, spend significant time in the classroom teaching and working with children with the ideas in the bill. Use and test your ideas in the classroom before writing them into a bill. Write your bills with significant teaching experience, not your own student experience. Learning and teaching are night and day different. You need to know what teaching children today is like in Utah to be able to craft effective bills to help children learn and teachers to be able to help children learn. Law like the Sage test burden our children and teachers with a wasted and poor use of time. Let's empower, not burden.

Bryan Jenkins, Davis School District

Teaching is getting harder, and we are less respected, including pay and support.

Kate Johnson, Davis School District

Our parent teacher conference time has been cut in half this year. First of all, the time remaining is not enough to really sit down and plan/conference with the parents. So we are supposed to "schedule another meeting." While this may be able to happen within the 30 minutes we are contracted (aka. paid) after school, that time is already taken up with lesson planning, grading, and a multitude of other teacher tasks. So basically we are being forced to meet outside of our contract time with the parents. Teachers are undervalued. We are creating the future. Without the proper tools, time being the key, the vast majority of us will not succeed with more that only a few students.

Crista Killpack, Davis School District

Teaching is becoming an even more difficult profession. While educators are beholden to parents, administration, and counselors too, teachers have no advocate or voice against unfair practices and treatment without fear of retribution. There needs to be an evaluative practice for administration and counseling that teachers get to be a part of. These positions of “power” should undergo the same scrutiny and observation as educators.

Carina Kinney, Davis School District

I work with over 200 junior high students everyday; Grades 7, 8, and 9. I often work through my lunch in an effort to keep up with grading and preparation. I also go in early and stay late. More often than not I put in at least an extra 20 hours per week at work. There are increasingly more administrative tasks to attend to and higher expectations of excellence to achieve. However, with the increase of time and effort there has not been equal merit. I need a $5,000 raise and great benefits for the work I do. I can't appreciate a raise in the form of “better” or "increased" health care benefits. Benefits should be benefits not pay! Pay me money to pay my bills with. Pay me money to help me feel not only appreciated and valued for excellence in teaching your children, pay me money because of the value of the occupation itself and the personal time, talents, education, and experience I a provide on a daily basis to ensure your future and that of your posterity are good and full. Invest in me and I will do everything in my power to protect and grow your investment!

Laura Larsen, Davis School District

Teachers are burning out. New mandates are thrown at us frequently with new training to attend and evidence of practice to provide. All of these equal less time for actual lesson prep and reflection of teaching. I am in an inclusive gifted classroom with 29 students. One third are typically twice exceptional and have behavior issues. I have no support to help these students because special ed is not the appropriate place for them. I can't get to my highly gifted students because my time is spent managing the many fires in the classroom due to the behavioral issues. Gifted students require twice the prep, twice the lessons, and twice the resources than regular ed because they excell so quickly. Plus we have twice the meetings....a set for the school and a set for the district gifted program. Yet, my prep time is the same as other teachers and I have the same pay. I am tired and burned out, yet my passion is gifted kids. We need help and it can only come financially so that classes in this population of students can be lowered, aids can
Compensation

be added, and our overtime compensated. It is these students who drive the high test scores and they need the resources to keep excelling.

Karen Long, Davis School District

Special Education does use a lot of education money but is important in so many ways. Our special ed. students have a very positive influence on the gen-ed population. Our students SPED- learn so much about how to function in the real world from being with and watching the gen-ed population. However, in so many schools not all technology in the gen-ed classroom is given to the SPED classrooms. Also, some schools in our district have all the bells and whistles (smart while others limp along with broken windows and orange water. Resources should be evenly distributed, especially schools within a district. Let's be fair and above board.

Barbara Lovell-Waddell, Davis School District

It is sad that after 23 years of teaching, I can't hardly afford a decent apartment without the help of a second job.

Pam Martinez, Davis School District

What teachers are expected to do keeps increasing and changing and they aren't adequately compensated for this extra burden it puts on them

Lesley Mason, Davis School District

When I am pulled out of my class for teacher training, my students suffer. Substitutes are not as effective as the professionals. They don't know the curriculum or individuality of each child's needs. Students will attempt to get away with negative behaviors when a sub is in the classroom. (Please remember...they are children.)

Denise McMasters, Davis School District

I would like to share that teachers are everyday heroes that deserve the same respect as fire fighters and the police. We are the people that meet with the children on a daily basis when it isn't an emergency and try to keep the students from ever needing to be seen by a law enforcement official or a first responder. This is not as glamorous, but every bit as needful. We are on the front lines trying to get every child to read so they don't become a statistic like the kids that can't read have a greater chance of being arrested and spending time in jail. Thank You for recognizing the importance of what we do and funding it adequately so that we can do our job to help each Utah student be as successful as possible.

Wendi McCloy, Davis School District

Kids need dedicated teachers to be successful. Teachers need to feel valued to continue giving what students need. We all need community support.

Sara McKay, Davis School District

COME SEE FOR YOURSELF...ALL DEMOGRAPHICS IN THE STATE.

Camille Meriwether, Davis School District

The quality of my own children and my students' education has continued to decline drastically. Very few children want to go into the teaching profession. Those who do - leave, and they leave quickly! It is an overwhelming job that is absolutely impossible to do properly within the contract time we are given. The pay is downright pathetic, especially when you consider the higher-level education and hoops we must jump through to get our jobs. Public respect towards teachers is at an all-time low. Money is put into the wrong places to supposedly create a quick-fix. I am truly scared for the future as I've watched these kids move on into life less prepared than ever. It's time to quit looking for a magical program or the fluffy words to make it appear that we are doing okay. Education is an incredibly broken system. Smaller class sizes would immediately increase student learning! Please DO SOMETHING!!

Kris Orton, Davis School District
Compensation

I teach at a large elementary school. We service over 1,000 students. Our class sizes are inconsistently reduced. Some classes are at 25 students while third grade has over 30 students in a class. The toll on students and educators is unfair. There are space issues of safety within the class and on the playground. In addition, the stress level on these educators is significantly greater.

Stacey Osborne, Davis School District

We are being spread too thin. We are faced with large classes, increasing responsibilities to meet the needs of struggling students, and fewer resources. We are not paid for the extra time all of this takes. It is my job and career which I love, but more and more it is becoming my life and taking away from family and other pursuits.

Tamra Owens, Davis School District

It is time for people who know nothing about education to stop making all the decisions regarding education. It is time for our legislators and their family members to stop getting rich by building charter schools. It is time for teachers to have the same retirement benefits as other professions and it is time teachers were treated as professionals. It is time for Utah to spend the same amount of money per student on education as the top spending states in the country...it doesn't matter that we have more students.

Candace Peters, Davis School District

Our students need support in dealing with life. I remember one afternoon seeing a student running down the hall in hysteria screaming at the top of her lungs that she had just gone home to lunch and saw her mother in bed with another man. She was hyperventilating and a kind loving female teacher ran into the hall and put her arm around her to provide help and compassion. It was inspiring. The main role of a teacher is to inspire students to want to learn and to be there when they struggle with life. I remember a student that would come and see me every day after school and I knew that he did not have anywhere else to go for support.

Dan Pitcher, Davis School District

Please don't make any more big changes to education before allowing us time to implement all of the previous changes. Also, please don't add more things to do without taking things away first. I already work 11-12 hours every day just to keep my head above water. Good teachers are feeling like bad teachers because the work load has become impossible for us to meet. We love helping kids, but more and more of what is being required of us takes us away from our students and they are where the focus really should be. Thanks for listening.

Lisa Prochet, Davis School District

Our class sizes are too big.

Melanie Reeves, Davis School District

It would be financially feasible to know this could be a lifetime career not just temporary due to time and salary demands.

Jodi Searle, Davis School District

One of my science classes contains 35 students, and I only have 34 chairs in my room. Even though I teach at a Junior High, some of my students are reading at a 1st grade level. How am I supposed to diversify my lessons so that the low students are given the time and resources that they need, while the gifted students are challenged to their full potential? With a class of 35 it is impossible for me to give every student the learning experience that they deserve.

Amanda Shea, Davis School District

Help make teaching a profession that would make it so teachers would encourage our own children to become teachers. At this point very few would ever encourage our own children to follow in our footsteps.

Todd Street, Davis School District
Compensation

As an educator, I work hard to ensure that my students are learning and are successful. The biggest challenge in teaching is not the students, it is the lack of support from the community and government. We have such an important task, we are educating children. Educators need to be valued and respected. We need smaller classrooms to help each child succeed. Educators also need wages that reflect the amount of education and experience they have.

Becky Tatum, Davis School District

That I personally spend hours of overtime each week to help ensure each of my students can be successful. I don't usually get home before 7 p.m., and on Fridays I stay until 10:30 or 11:00 p.m. Additionally, I spend between $3,000-$4,000 of my own money each year on classroom supplies. I am not exaggerating.

Traci Taylor, Davis School District

They already know the importance of education. I appreciate their continued support. Each year requires attention because of the student population growth and advancements in technology.

Timothy Ward, Davis School District

Teachers should be valued, respected and compensated for all their time and effort

 Celeste Watkins, Davis School District

Teachers are professionals and not just anybody can be a teacher. Compensate and reward good teaching!!

 LeNina Wimmer, Davis School District

Keep good teachers who are committed to good teaching

 Lisa Wright, Davis School District

We have benefitted a great deal, seen huge student gains with new online programs, i.e. Lexia (Rosetta Stone), Reflex, Imagine Math, Utah Compose. However, the students must have one to one computers for them to utilize these resources. In addition, Hattie's research has revealed that teacher collaboration is one of the top indicators for student growth. We have benefitted a great deal from the time we have to glean from each other's experience, but we need more time to collaborate. Also, we have seen huge student gains from kids who have always been low functioning in reading and were formerly classified as “dyslexic" who have had access to "vision therapy" to help with visual tracking. Yet insurance companies are refusing to fund this therapy. I wish they could see what I have seen, kids who have been failing at reading, with an an attitude of hopelessness and failure, but are now becoming students who are experiencing success and having confidence in their educational experience.

Lenore Burgi, Duchesne County School District

When I first began in this profession, I considered it the best job in the world. About five or six years ago, that attitude changed with more government intrusion and mandates but no increase in pay. The last two years, there has been a District takeover of the classrooms with mandate after mandate that has taken away more teacher autonomy and teacher innovation and has increased the work load with no increase in compensation. Any enthusiasm for this job has been completely crushed.

Eric Gubler, Duchesne County School District

I am a JPAS-rated highly effective teacher who just applied for level two licensure. Teaching is a passion. However, if passions do not pay the bills and allow me to live comfortably, I am tempted like many other educators, to find more lucrative opportunities.

Lisa White, Duchesne County School District

Teachers in communities that are mainly supported by tourism are having a hard time finding affordable housing and supporting their families.

Sophia Sopuch, Grand County School District
**Compensation**

I work in special education and I invest a great amount of time to write IEP’s keep abreast with laws and appropriate lingo, collaborate with teachers/staff in an effort to better teach the students and for planning unique and successful lessons with differentiation and scaffolding. Increasing paid time to teachers for such activities could greatly increase teacher morale as well as provide better opportunities for student learning as teacher morale increases.

_Cameo Torres, Grand County School District_

Being a teacher is a very important job. It takes a lot of time and effort to make sure every child is learning. I feel that I am accountable for too many students and feel that classroom sizes should be decreased in order to be an effective teacher. I spend most of time devoted to getting lesson plans ready, correcting papers and time away from my family for the interest of my students. I also feel that I am spending more than I should out my own pocket monies to make my lessons engaging and helpful for students to do well on year end testing. There is so much pressure put on teachers to plan effective lesson, use resources that are not supported by the state or district and classroom sizes are too large.

_Sonja Aoki, Granite School District_

Depending on the area I am teaching in students either have school supplies or they do not because there is not enough money for me to spend as a teacher on my students supplies. I have 31 students in my classroom and in order for them to be successful and keep up with the curriculum and testing required of them, they need certain supplies. It is very expensive for me, on my own, to buy supplies for 31 students. I am lucky enough that my students parents are able to purchase their childs’ supplies. Whereas other schools families are unable to purchase their supplies, putting a financial strain on teachers. We need more money in order to encourage student-centered and hands on learning so our money is being spent on school supplies for science and math manipulative instead of purchasing pencils and notebooks.

_Emily Atkinson, Granite School District_

Refugee students learning English and contributing to our state.

_Renate Brunsvik, Granite School District_

My kids are disrespectful and their major behavioral issues cut into teaching time EVERY DAY for 10-30 minutes daily. We need aides (who get paid decent money) to help govern so we can teach. Also, we need paid time to plan, grade, and learn curriculum/standards without kids and without professional development sucking up our time so we can meet the goals set for us.

_Ali Brusa, Granite School District_

Leave me alone to teach.

_Stacey Chappell, Granite School District_

Students are currently required to complete multiple test in which the teacher is held accountable for. This includes students that have behavior issues, SPED students that do not understand the information as the material is above their level of understanding, and those students that simply do not care to take the test. While I believe that teachers should be held accountable for the progress made by their students it should be the progress made by the student compared to the same student, not progress made compared to a student from a previous year or even a different student in the same year. Each child learns at their own pace and a teacher can and should help increase knowledge and therefore the student will progress, but compared to where they began.

_Dawn Christensen, Granite School District_

My proposal is to have a portion of the current School Trust Lands money taken out of what we are currently receiving, invest it properly, let it grow exponentially, then make it untouchable by the legislature, then only to be used by public education for decent salaries for licensed teachers--keeping the principal intact.

_Jerry Corbett, Granite School District_
Compensation

Teaching is so beneficial but it’s also hard work. There are others influences on kids that affect their learning-the kids sensitivity issues when their socks bother them, teeth problems and parents unwilling to pay for dental care, custody issues and kids moving in and out of schools. I love teaching and I want the kids to love being in my class. I love doing stem projects and making learning hands on and fun, but that requires me to spend a lot of my own money in my classroom.

Barb Taylor, Granite School District

Don't dismiss the will of UEA as you have tended to do in the past.

Travis Dahl, Granite School District

Support teachers by recognizing the education they received and the importance of shaping students to be future leaders. Stop cutting funds to schools.

Rochelle Deeter, Granite School District

Teaching is very demanding physically and mentally. My job takes a lot of time away from my family (an average of 60 hours each week). It also takes a lot of money out of my household budget. Please realize that teachers are willing to do what we can, but we are not bottomless pits of time and money. We need help.

Susan Doman, Granite School District

The classes are too large for students to learn easily; also, teachers are not paid enough.

Susan Dyer, Granite School District

Every year I spend hundreds (and my first year I spent over $1000) of my own dollars to provide my class with items like: snacks, pencils, paper, science supplies, art materials, rewards/incentives, etc. I do this because my students come to school hungry, their parents don't have money for school supplies, and because I value imbedding learning into real-life, meaningful activities such as art and science. I have to spend my own money because $300 a year does not cover the cost of all of those items for 25+ students. I have taught for 5 years, and I have NEVER had fewer than 25 students. On average, I have 28. I do not make enough in salary to continue to spend my own money on my class. I am happy to do it, because I love these kids and want them to learn, but I should not have to. I am only a fifth year teacher, and I am burnt out. I do not intend to teach another year, and not because of the kids, but because of a combination of difficult situations that exist in the teaching profession. Here are a few of the situations that exist which make teaching an undesirable profession: lack of respect from the community, administration, and legislation; low pay (made even smaller because of the amount that I use to fund my own classroom), lack of funding and support from administration and legislation, and large classroom sizes.

Adree Fairbanks, Granite School District

There is a lot of professional development which is very helpful. However, what we really need now is time to implement what is expected. This time could be paid time after school, time during school etc.

Cindy George, Granite School District

We are all trying to do the best we know how. Students coming into schools now have been raised by the internet and coming less mature, lower academically, and with more behavior problems than ever. We need more support and funding.

Elizabeth Gifford, Granite School District

I welcome legislators into my classroom so they can see how underfunded and unsupported teachers are with the expectations that are placed on us. We are willing to do the work, but it is impossible to make the gains they are expecting of us without more money for supplies, technology, and salaries of support staff.

Andrea Grant, Granite School District
Compensation

I believe students learn by touching and manipulating things, you can't learn Science or Math unless you can touch it. I spend a lot of money every year buying supplies for my classroom so we can do experiments almost daily. I have created a wonder and love of Science. It can get expensive to teach this way so some teachers just use web quests, videos, etc. I believe we need more supply money each year so students can touch, manipulate, discover, and experiment their way to a more informed education.

Crystal L. Guy, Granite School District

I have taught for 33 years. The students have more problems now. They have so many issues with home and family. Behavior has become a greater issue and more difficult to control. Teachers are held to a high standard, which they should be, for testing scores. However, students and parents do not have the same high standards. I would like to see students and parents have some kind of accountability for SAGE testing other than just opting their students out of the test. Teachers can be the very best and still have students who just click the buttons on Benchmark tests and SAGE tests. We cannot reward or punish students for test scores. It is difficult to motivate students to do their best, when there is no incentive. Yet, teachers are told that we will not get increased pay if our students do not perform well.

Michelle Hanson, Granite School District

As always, I spend hours of my time at school and at home filling in ridiculous objective, targets, lesson plan forms, collecting data, data, data, and more data etc... that does not support me in actual planning and teaching. It's like I have two jobs: 'professional educator' and glorious administrative/secretarial professional. They say, "When you plan your lessons"; when do you do that much less even look (and I mean look) at the next weeks materials. I work at a Title 1 school where most parents do not help their students. With free breakfast in the classroom, I've now lost 20-25 minutes of instruction time. I have to stand by the food (can't have a student do that now), log it, count it to make sure entrees match with fruit (if not, toss some fruit over to the sharing basket/but in the lunch room you can't share???), listen to several students questions or problem, take tardy slips (don't lose those while you are at the back of the room serving breakfast), reminding them everyday to do the same routine we've been doing since August, go to my computer and log onto Gradebook to enter roll, keep telling students to eat instead of talk (those that have seconds (2 milks, 2 entrees need more time), tell them numerous times to begin their self-start; we don't begin 'school' until 9:20-9:25. And that's not to mention that on Mondays the Star Spangled Banner is played and we say the pledge. Oh, and add announcements in there somewhere. Breakfast needs to be in the cafeteria where students can eat and chit chat and learn to sit at a table and enjoy a meal. Not turned around in their seats, walking around the room, shoving food in their desks (yes, they have been told over 100 times/one time we had fruit flies for weeks until I found a rotten banana and rotting apples mashed in back of a student's desk), milk everywhere, smelling sink where the left over milk is emptied........ We waste 15 minutes during small group time by 15 students going next door to get a Chromebook from a cart that needs to be unlocked, walking back, students going to their group desk seat and logging on. That's one group time wasted. I asked Donor Choose for 15 Chromebooks but I haven't been lucky with that. Sorry for the run-on's and fragments.

Robin Harman, Granite School District

How unfair many teachers are treated.

Michele Hart, Granite School District

They are making very important decisions, that unfortunately many of them do not have enough information or experience to address. I want them to spend some considerable time in the classroom teaching, and experiencing a classroom situation in Utah before they start deciding what is important and what is not.

Gloria Holmstead, Granite School District

As a special education teacher in a resource setting in elementary school, I do not have any time during contract hours to do my paper work for the IEP's or hold IEP's during a time that parents can attend. I spend hours of my own time to complete these tasks. I do get time at the end of the year or the beginning of the school year to help with this.
Compensation

However, what I really need is to be able to collect the additional pay during the year when I am putting in the time to comply with the law.

Colleen Jensen, Granite School District

Value us, just like you value other like-educated professionals.

Amy Nagle Jones, Granite School District

Educators are often expected to pay for their own training, or to sit through 'standardized' training at their schools that does not apply to their specialty/interests. This causes a feeling of disrespect for our time and creates friction between educators and administrators who have to 'provide' these trainings. We are professionals, and as such should be given opportunities to choose what we would like or 'need' to improve our teaching, not given a 'one size fits all' generalized 'workshop' with no paid time to use the information so that we can create something that would be used to better the education of our students. Also, changing the testing 'system' every few years is a disservice to both educators and students, as students are now focusing on navigating the 'system' rather than showing their knowledge on the content. Instead of spending time teaching the content, teachers must take time out to show students how to navigate the new 'system'.

Alisha Kerby, Granite School District

What skills do you wish you had learned before attending college? Why do you think that you did not learn them?

Deborah Kesner-Steinberg, Granite School District

I appreciate how my local legislators support education and make a difference for myself and the families they serve. Patrice Arent, Jani Iwamoto from my school area, Marie Poulsen, Brian Shiozawa (until he just left) from my home area. They are all great supporters or education and I appreciate them!

Kelly Kline, Granite School District

My job is hard. I know all jobs can be, but it is emotionally, logistically, creatively, and temporally demanding.

Benjamin L McGowan, Granite School District

Use the science and real rational of the educating process to direct your decision making and money directions. Testing is not the solution to success of students. Neither is school grading. Class size affects student outcomes. Parents and communities need to be held accountable for their children not just an educator, their administration or the school. Where the money is spent needs to be directed to these issues not charter special interest groups.

Johanna McMullin, Granite School District

We are drowning in senseless meetings and paper work. We need time to help our students, not the bureaucracy.

Suzie Michaels, Granite School District

Fund education! Put students first. Support teachers and fund them also.

Jane Munson, Granite School District

I have a 6th grade program my district has committed to that requires 90+ minutes to teach effectively then threw us into a junior high setting with this program and have larger classes and 45-50 minutes to teach. No time whatsoever to help struggling students, or time period to do nothing but direct teaching! The district doesn't care & our grades will be compared to the rest of the 6th grade in our district who are still elementary schools and other middle schools with programs made for that time frame. Not fair, and this is how we burn out teachers!

Belinda J. Nelson, Granite School District

Additional funding needs to be provided to either lower class sizes or hire intervention teachers to help academically at risk students become proficient in reading and math. Based on the current FTE Class size of 27.5, it is difficult for
Compensation

a classroom teacher to meet the individual needs of every student; especially with the large number of economically disadvantaged and English Language Learner students found in many schools within Granite School district.

Janet Nerdin, Granite School District

Teaching is hard and should be respected. Improved pay and much more support is needed if teachers are to be retained.

Robert Osborne, Granite School District

Please give me daily planning time and more classroom funding.

Tracy Regnier, Granite School District

It's time to really look at class size. I taught in a junior high and my class loads ranged from 30 to 40 students. That is not what the legislature sees.

Louise Rounds, Granite School District

My bachelors degree is in Mathematics and Statistics. I have a background in programming and can program in several computer languages. I am bilingual. My wife wanted me to pursue other higher paying careers such as actuary (which I have the education for). Such a career would have tripled the starting pay I received as a teacher. I chose teaching because I am passionate about it. However, I now have children of my own to worry about. I am the sole income provider for my family. It is tough to make it work financially when my skills are so easily marketed elsewhere. With high class sizes the benefits of teaching are decreased. I spend less time helping students and more time with classroom management and grading. The larger my class sizes are the more I need to resort to a lecture style of teaching. It is ineffective but I cannot provide the more individualized education the students deserve when I am responsible for so many.

Matthew Shepherd, Granite School District

I would like them to know how much money I spend out of my pocket to fund my classroom.

Janet Stenberg, Granite School District

I have only been teaching for 2 years and I have notice my class sizes go up, the demands go up, and the students motivation at home decrease, and a slight increase in salary. I do not believe students need iPads in second grade they need to learn to read, cut, and color, and how to communicate. They spend way to much time playing video games anyway. Students in grade school need to learn to socialize and not be on a computer. Other issues are my students are tested to death they are to young for all the testing.

Christina Torres, Granite School District

It is really hard to get to ALL students and meet their needs when you have more than 25 students in your class. What would they do if they had 25 children to look after? Resources are important because so many of us use our own money to accommodate those needs.

Wendy Wagstaff, Granite School District

Teacher burn out is real. After 8 years of teaching I'm considering finding a new job. I love to teach and love working with my students but the new demands each year with little to no compensation isn't worth it anymore. Teachers feel unsupported at all levels and criticized daily. We are not paid for the time we spend. Our class sizes are getting bigger each year, but our budget stays the same, or in some cases, gets lower. I have to begged parents to donate to my class in order to have paper and pencils throughout the year. How are we expected to reach our goals with no supplies to do it?

Carly Walkenhorst, Granite School District
Compensation

I work with all day Kindergarten classes. I see a lot of growth for those students. They get the instruction they need, and they are absent less than half day peers. Teachers are burning out with the workload they have. Students have great emotional and behavioral needs, and smaller classes will help teachers meet intervention needs as well as better manage increasingly difficult behavior.

Marla Ward, Granite School District

Our job requires skill, knowledge and is important to our society.

Colin Williamson, Granite School District

Paraprofessionals increase of pay

Rachael Wilson, Granite School District

I had to work two jobs last last year to pay for home repairs. I was the only person at the janitorial interview with a master's degree.

Aaron Woodbury, Granite School District

Well seasoned and experienced teacher here (19 yrs. public, 5 yrs. my own preschool) with serious requests for your attention. 1. Please consider specific funding for paid personnel to cover morning/recesses/after school duties so that teachers have time for further class prep, and TIME TO USE THE RESTROOM. (Having no a.m. recess or having recess duties, makes it IMPOSSIBLE to maintain a healthy urinary tract system.) Specific improvements and an increase in overseeing per grade level can happen, and happen more quickly if teachers were supported with paid peer planning/consultation time.

Wendy Wright, Granite School District

Utah public schools deserve the best. We have the highest percentage of children per family in the nation. Our children are our future.

Gail Sardoni, Iron County School District

For the past 3 years I've had over 30 students in my classroom, one year 36. It is impossible to meet the needs of students academically with that many kids in the classroom. There is not enough text books, technology or time to even come close to meeting their needs. Teaching today is different than 20 years ago. Every year I have many students facing problems of homelessness, a parent in jail/prison, mental illness, abuse, suicide and often my main job is keeping these kids safe and help them navigate through very difficult circumstances. My frustration is that I am constantly barraged with mandates that make it almost impossible to teach. I spend more time testing, collecting data, retesting, trying to reach 33 students that I have no time to TEACH or plan effective instruction. In my current school the majority of teachers are burned out and do not enjoy coming to work, this is a sad state of affairs because these people are phenomenal teachers who have been overworked, underpaid, and undervalued. There is no other occupation where so much is given beyond what is required with little or no recognition. In fact, it's almost to the point where it is expected. We do what we do because we want to help students, however, at some point enough is enough.

Cindy Anderson, Jordan School District

I have taught for over 22 years, and throughout that time I have spent a very large amount of personal money on my classroom. This money has gone towards activities which enhance learning and education. I believe this is very important to help deepen understanding of the standards to my students. I am willing to pay for it, but would like the support of our government to help fund these activities. I also believe that lowering the class-size is essential to the quality of education and learning process of children. By supporting teachers financially to help run their classroom and lowering class-size will make a impact on students in the 21st-century.

Ami Anderson, Jordan School District
Compensation

I would like to share the multiple stories of really good teachers who come to me in tears because their health is suffering, their families are suffering, and their students are suffering because they just don't have enough hours in the day to do all that is needed.

Andrew W. Baggs, Jordan School District

Teachers shouldn't have to fund their own classrooms to do their jobs. I don't know a single teacher that doesn't use personal funds to be able to do their job. Not just extra things but necessary school supplies and materials.

Susan Call, Jordan School District

As a teacher, I am overwhelmed and it only gets worse every year. I have no time to teach my students, standards increase and support from the state decreases. We don't have the capacity to continue to take care of these children, educate them, and fully take care of ourselves and our families. If you paid us more, and gave us more help, we would be better equipped to handle the increasing workload that is given to us. We love this job, but the overwhelming downsides sometimes outweigh that. Take care of your teachers, and you'll see better results. Keep standards high, and have our pay match those standards. Stop disrespecting the work and knowledge of college educated teachers by hiring random uneducated people in the community to do their work. It all starts with the teachers. What you give to teachers, you'll see an equal improvement in the students.

Kasey Chambers, Jordan School District

I've taught 33 years and have 2 Masters and make less than Vivant employees that sell security or solar - wake up and pay for quality teachers

Laurie Christensen, Jordan School District

Help! Please support us. You will never be sorry you supported those that take on the responsibility of helping to educate our children.

Tania Falcon, Jordan School District

I became a teacher because I wanted to help and teach children. Being able to achieve this goal is difficult when there is not enough funding to provide teachers with the best resources and proper compensation.

Erin Gotay, Jordan School District

My husbands pay has continually dropped the 20 years in education due to insurance costs

Laura Hales, Jordan School District

Reduce testing so teachers have more time to teach.

Laurie Hamblin, Jordan School District

I need to make more money in order to want to deal with the stress and pressure of this job. If I didn't have my alimony check, I wouldn't be able to make it on my own financially. After taxes, I bring home about 2,700 a month. My rent takes up about 1/2 of that. I have 4 children and money is extremely tight. Please try to increase teacher pay.

Michelle Hansen, Jordan School District

Every year I have excellent students who opt out of taking year-end exams because of their parents' political reasons. Their absence distorts records of my performance and my school's performance which feeds the perception that the education system doesn't merit respect. It also teaches students that if they don't agree with something, they are not accountable for it, which any worker in any workplace knows is not how life works. The state's inability or unwillingness to address this problem in a meaningful way is embarrassing.

Michael Henriken, Jordan School District
Compensation

I have worked as a teacher for 28 years. My first 15 years, I could only afford a house with no garage and one bathroom. Finally in 2008 we moved into a home with a garage but now I have to work evenings Monday through Thursday to afford it.

Tyler Howell, Jordan School District

I have been an educator for many years. I feel like my work load has increased and my pay scale has not. I want them to know I work about 10 hours a day and do not get paid any type of overtime. Retirement and incentives that were there when I started teaching are not available to teachers anymore.

Lori Huey, Jordan School District

More needs to be done to compensate teachers for their time.

James Jaramillo, Jordan School District

Help with stop demonizing teachers Less data collection for data collection sake think of education as an investment

Becca Kirkman, Jordan School District

I have done this job for 14 years. I am waiting for the time to come when I can look for a new career. After falling into Jordan School Districts "worst bracket" and not even getting a raise this year, being asked to mentor more teachers, and asked to have a student teacher.... I am stretched to my limits!

Shireen H. Larsen, Jordan School District

I am a Special Education teacher of 16 years. My priority is with my students. I struggle every year seeing high school age kids struggle to read on grade level. My biggest frustration is that I do not have enough time to truly help them, because of the demand of paperwork that is required of me. This is not only Special Ed paper work, but PLC required paperwork. I am not opposed to change, and appreciate the efforts that are being made to better education for students. However, I do not see a point, when we do not have the time to truly study, prepare, and implement these new ideas. I feel the decisions are made on for teachers by people who have no idea the amount of time it takes to teach. I would like to propose extra paid time each day for teachers to prepare and work with students. I would also like to see Special Education departments in each school get funding for a secretary to help file, schedule, and arrange meeting, so that teachers can teach.

Alison Lavery, Jordan School District

Charter schools are currently failing look at the school grade most of them are below a D

Christofer Lutz, Jordan School District

I feel like I am being treated like a yo-yo and that I have to teach my students like they are robots. I understand that we need to test but the testing is out of control and my students don't have time to be creative because we are worrying about making sure we have good test scores!

Karen Mann, Jordan School District

Veteran teachers are not given the respect they deserve!! We need more planning time. We need people who can do data analysis all the data and then show the teacher the results. We don't have time for all that data. We are doing data and tests more than we are teaching. This teaching gig is for the children. I was a child of the 50's. I can read do math and have a Masters degree all without the data. We were learning not taking tests, teachers were not taking a good amount of the day putting in data. We were kids and we excelled.

Cyndy Mikesell, Jordan School District

I would like legislators to support giving special ed teachers a pay increase. Special education teachers are expected to do what classroom teachers do and more.

Genelle Morrison, Jordan School District
Compensation

Teaching has changed so we are not only teaching but expected to entertain as well. This takes time and research and technology is moving so fast it takes time to learn. I feel that we need to decrease class sizes, increase preparation time, make sure we have quality teachers by paying more and holding them to a high standard which means giving them support in terms of continuing education, etc. I need to stay current in my subject area as well as in teaching methodologies.

Angie Pommerening, Jordan School District

Your children are being hurt because the teachers feel under appreciated....morale is way low in most cases and 90% have other jobs just to make things work...wondering how many other jobs have people who have to work a 2nd job?

Rand Rasmussen, Jordan School District

Teaching can be a stressful, demanding profession, but one with many rewards. Having to fight for every dime of compensation, year after year, instead of having those needs met just adds to that stress.

Shauna Robertson, Jordan School District

Stop Micromanaging. SAGE is a good test - but everyone needs to take it and have it count on their grade. Parental rights are important, but so are parental responsibilities, if you are going to legislate one, you have to legislate the other, they aren't independent of each other.

Tony Romanello, Jordan School District

Please just let me teach! Forget DATA!!!! My students are not just numbers on a wall. Reduce standardized testing! I have had to cut out so much of my fun lessons because there is no time for them anymore. Treat us like professionals because we are. Don't tell us we're doing great when we have so little. Give us more and let us do more. Keep class sizes low and add aides to every room! Thank us with words, but also with bonuses. Give elementary teachers that teach all subjects those same STEM based bonuses that secondary teachers get. Come walk in my shoes for a few days and see what teaching is really all about!

Lynece Rowntree, Jordan School District

I can't afford insurance through my district (Jordan...), which is pathetic and shameful.

Scott Sommer, Jordan School District

How difficult it is to support and provide for the needs of my family on a teacher's salary.

Ami Swallow, Jordan School District

Please support education of our students! 1.) If we want our students to learn, then our students need to be in school. In order for students earn credit for a class, they need to be present a minimum number of days. 2.)If Charter schools are going to receive state funding, then the charter schools need to have the same regulations and educational standards that all public schools are held. For example, charter schools that receive state funding need to provide the special education plans required for all public schools, and need to be equally available to all students regardless of ethnicity, religious belief, socioeconomic group, learning ability, or any other discriminatory practice. As the minimum requirement, Charter schools need to teach the core subjects at the same breadth and depth of knowledge required by public schools in the state of Utah. 3.)Schools need funding in order to help our students have the equipment, resources, and technology to allow students to learn to the best of their ability. This includes having experienced and knowledgeable teachers to help challenge our students to think and develop. However, most teachers have to have a second job in order to pay our bills. Imagine what teachers could do if they made enough money to support their families with just one job, how much their energy and attention would increase if teachers could focus their time on their classroom.

Melissa Usher, Jordan School District
Compensation

I have always been passionate about educating children and so when all of my children had grown I decided after pondering the idea for many months that I would teach 5th grade. It is my first year teaching and I am turning 50 this year so I have a different perspective than the average brand new teacher. I spent years helping in each of my four children's classrooms, being a room mom, and always serving on the PTA. I worked as a substitute teacher, Reading Tech at a Title One school, however, nothing prepared me for how difficult it would be teaching full time. I have been blown away by the amount of time it takes to plan lessons for my students. The amount of time it takes to correct papers, the amount of personal money I have had to spend to make sure great learning takes place in my classroom. Teaching is exhausting when your students walk out the door, but then they are hours left in the day to plan lessons, set up the lesson and find ways so that each child can learn something even though each student is uniquely different. I had never fully appreciated how hard a teacher works until I became one myself. I didn't understand the tremendous pressure they were under because of all of the tests that they need to administer to their students and how pretty much everything we do for each moment of the day is tied to a standard and is pertinent that each of our students learn and do well on their tests. It is challenging at best to teach students on grade level, but in my class, I have 6 students who go to Resource just in my class and I have students who range in grade level from 2 grade to 9th grade and they are all expected to take the same tests. I feel like it is expected to teach to my children so that they can do well on a test and not how they can best learn. Every student is learning different and at different grade levels though each student is required to take the same test. I don't understand how this even makes logical sense. I feel like my students are completely burned out based on how many tests that they have to take. I feel like the workload that is required for a teacher to be successful is placed way too high. I am a hard worker and I spend countless hours so my students can have the best opportunity to learn in a way that is both challenging and fun as I believe that learning can be fun. However, with all of the tests that a teacher needs to administer it certainly takes the fun out of learning and add unneeded stress to each student. I left a management job where I was being paid over 20 thousand more a year and I was not working any overtime and did this because of my love of teaching. Most people thought I was crazy but I wanted to do a job I was passionate about and that was teaching. I love helping children learn, but teaching should not require these many unpaid hours, and require that I spend my own personal money in order to ensure that my students have the best education. If it wasn't for my love of teaching I would immediately go back to my other job. I feel like teachers are not valued as they should be and are not given adequate compensation for all of the additional hours that they work. I can now understand why there is a teacher shortage and I realize this problem will continue to get worse unless we value educators much more and provide the additional resources they need to be successfully and so they don't have to break the bank.

Cami Vail, Jordan School District

That the pay scale this year was very unbalanced!

Carolyn Videtich, Jordan School District

Utah spends the least amount of money on their students. This must change if we want to keep up with the growth of Utah businesses.

Mathew Walker, Jordan School District

I love teaching! I am proud to be a Utah teacher and am happy with a lot of the progress made in recent years to improve education in Utah. I hope that legislators will continue to pursue a solution to compensating teachers who are doing a lot more than teaching-I personally mentor other teachers, run the school's ESL program to keep us in legal compliance, and advise the National Junior Honor's Society-these responsibilities are an enjoyable part of my job, but often require hours outside of my contract or for me to sacrifice my much needed prep period to things other than data analysis/curriculum development/grading. Compensating teachers, even minimally, for this work would go a long way. Thank you for fighting for us, and please continue to advocate for Utah teachers.

Alisha Wheeler, Jordan School District

Please do what you can to lower class sizes and increase teacher pay and benefits.

Amy Williams, Jordan School District
Compensation

Teachers do a great job, a pat on the back would be nice.  

Patti Zealley, Jordan School District

I love my job. I come to work everyday facing challenges that require creative answers. I get to interact with 200 different personalities each day and it is a joy! However, the hours I work far extend my contract hours. While this will lessen as I become a more experienced teacher, a good teacher is always working beyond their contract hours because they aren't relying on last years material- they're reinventing it and making each day work for every individual student and this takes time. Unfortunately the effort and compensation don't match. It is easy to see how too many teachers who are great at what they do move on to other pursuits- not necessarily because they want to, but because the compensation just doesn’t add up to the work that's required. This is not a new problem, but it should become a problem of the past.

Georgina Dibble, Juab School District

Teachers deserve to be supported, not thrown under the bus when it’s convenient. Also, we should be compensated more for how much time and effort we put in to making a difference for our kids.

Tyler Ellertson, Juab School District

My personal success comes when my students succeed. I give 100% EVERY day. On block schedule I see 240 7/8 graders every two days. Grading NEVER ends--I spend 10-15 hours a week of my own time (totally uncompensated) preparing and grading. There is NO other profession where this is EXPECTED. I will be retiring early (age 60) in 2019 because I just can’t continue to cope with anxiety and stress. Teachers can't and shouldn't be expected to continue to do more. The “badge of honor” that our legislature seems to equate with bottom of the barrel funding must stop. Compensate us for our outside of class hours, compensate us for REAL professional development. Encourage us rather than demean and belittle. Teaching is both a science (pedagogy) and and art (love of subject). It's time Utah recognized that. And my “favorite” Utahism...children are our most valuable resource. Sadly the legislature of this state fails to adequately fund education, wants to make USBE partisan, and believes that online and charter schools are somehow better equipped to educate that priceless resource. I think that truism is a lie.

Ann Peterson, Juab School District

Something needs to be done in the community to help parents learn to support their children. Some of our students most likely will not go to college and would benefit from learning skills during high school that they can use to make a living. Change the graduation requirements or have two different diplomas so that learning a skill (mechanics, etc) would be enough to graduate or earn a diploma.

Juliann Bales, Logan City School District

Increase pay!

Sydney Robinson, Logan City School District

Before they make all the rules and pass all the laws they should be required to be in the schools working with educators at least 50 hours a year

C. Carrigan, Morgan School District

Long hours, chasing down supplies to purchase, more and more and more required teaching items with less and less curriculum provided. If you require me to teach something provide me with the curriculum, training, and prep time to teach it.

Wendy Jensen, Morgan School District

I have taught for nearly a half century and still feel that my standard of living has not raised as many other professions, yet cost of living has increased at an alarming rate. I still remember my nephew graduating from high school and starting out in business for $10,000 more that I was making after 10 years of teaching.

Sandra Peck, Murray City School District
Compensation

Teachers are extremely important to the future of our world - help us to feel important, be properly compensated have the time and resources to do our jobs the way they should be done.

Annie Taylor, Murray City School District

I teach English at an alternative high school that includes Youth-in-custody. We are working miracles with some students here, earning high school diplomas when there was no dream or hope to achieve one. Please come see us at Pleasant Creek High School in Mt. Pleasant, Utah.

Matthew Arnold, North Sanpete School District

I'm tired!!!! I'm tired of fighting for my students. I'm tired of supplying my classroom out of my own funds. I'm tired of fighting standardized testing that doesn't actually test what students have learned. I'm tired of legislators, who have no knowledge of a classroom environment, deciding what should happen in my classroom. I'm tired of rural schools being segregated from the Wasatch Front schools. In my 26th year of teaching, I'm tired of fighting for the same things year after year.

Kate Carney, North Sanpete School District

Increase teacher's pay

David Miller, North Sanpete School District

I would like to invite a legislator to come join my classroom and see what the students are learning. I believe when they see the good that we do, they would be more willing to pay teachers more rather than us always saying we don't get paid enough.

Marilyn Blakley, North Summit School District

Most teachers are very hard working and love their jobs. I take home school work every night, because it's important to me that my students succeed this year and have learned what they need to be successful in their next school year.

Susan Pratt, North Summit School District

We need more long-term solutions to solving problems in schools.

Joe Anson, Nebo School District

I find it outrageous that a state that values family and education pays its teachers so poorly and treats them like second class citizens.

Rebecca Antares, Nebo School District

They have already heard all the stories - we need districts to step up and put money into keeping and retaining quality teachers and staff. Legislators do put money into education, but it doesn't ever make it to the teachers. District Admin use most of it. So I would like the legislators to ear mark the money for teacher salaries and other support staff/stipends.

Brad Burtenshaw, Nebo School District

Often, I see educators leave teaching because they feel undervalued. They are able to get other jobs and opportunities that are rewarded monetarily. In order to have consistency and attract influential teachers, salaries need to be appealing. My 17 yrs. in education have continually required more of teachers without compensation. While teachers at heart want what's best for kids, they find themselves resentful of the work that takes them away from a more balanced life without compensation.

Kelly Taylor, Nebo School District

I am a first year teacher intern working on half salary. I understood when I got into this career that I would not be getting large pay, and so I am okay with that. The joy that this career has brought me in the last year has been so so worth all the extra time and money I have given to this first year of teaching. That being said, I am not going to be
Compensation

able to teach for very many years. I am starting a family and the pay is simply not enough to support my future family and simply not enough to make leaving my children each day worth it. I have a desire to teach. I love it. But I am not the first one in this boat. Many teachers that love teaching have to quit and find other job or means to support their family because this job does not pay enough. I am sad to say that many amazing teachers are leaving this profession because of this reason.

Caroline Erickson, Nebo School District

I am grateful for those legislators who truly are friends of public education and public educators. I recognize the daunting challenge of funding the education of our children in this state, but our mainstream public schools must remain the main focus. I need small class sizes to be able to get around to all my students. I never came into this profession to get rich, but I need funding to continue to at least match the rise in health care for my family. And I need legislators who do their best to collaborate with me and my professional association and not work against us. We have to keep building bridges, not tear them down. Thank you, Perry Ewell 28 year veteran Public School Teacher

Perry Ewell, Nebo School District

We aren't belittling or downplaying other professions, why education? There aren't alternate routes for obtaining many other professional licenses and those professional are paid fairly for the stress, added requirements and time spent working. Why not education?

Stephanie Galt, Nebo School District

I serve as teacher in addition to two "stipend" jobs as well as numerous other responsibilities at school. I visibly/publicly work 60 hours during a week. That does not account for the late nights, when my family is in bed, I spend at my computer planning, studying, and grading. All of this with a Master's Degree, I do for 50k a year. This is just my school responsibilities. I also am a husband, a father, a son, a brother, a neighbor, a civic leader, and must attend to my financial responsibilities. Each year I ask myself more and more - How? Talk is out there about teachers need more pay, teachers need more respect. The talk has not helped my situation. Yet, the expectations are that I control/compartmentalize my stresses and give my best effort to my students and players. I need to accommodate 200+ kids and their parents. I need to meet endless rules and guidelines. Legislators, I could go on and on. We, in education, need your full respect, support, and action.

Lee Gillie, Nebo School District

I would want them to know how much money and time educators put into their classrooms.

Melody Green, Nebo School District

I often hear the argument that increasing funding has not been shown to improve student achievement. I disagree. I believe that an increase in funding can have a huge impact if that funding is allocated appropriately. For instance, additional teacher work days and lowering class size would be extremely beneficial to both students and teachers.

Jennifer James, Nebo School District

I (we) as teachers are always going above and beyond the a call of duty to help and support our students succeed. It seems that the legislators and the public (vocal) minority want to demonize and degrade teachers for not being perfect. Give the teachers the pay and the support that is needed to push to higher standards. Don't just legislate and make it harder for teachers to do their already complicated job.

David Jones, Nebo School District
Compensation

I am a relatively new teacher and worked for years to get here. Now that I am here I don't want to stay because I don’t feel valued at a professional. I could go get a higher paying and "easier" job tomorrow but I continue to sacrifice time and money because I want to help students. But if the constant disrespecting of teachers from the legislature doesn’t stop I cannot stay for the sake of my own mental health

Greg Jorgensen, Nebo School District

They always said education is their #1 priority but actions did not show it.

Mong-Hoa LeBras, Nebo School District

Kids achieving great things because teachers are allowed to teach. Stop making their job hard and treat them like professionals.

Tim Mendenhall, Nebo School District

As a first year teacher I am totally swamped. I am at school everyday until after six and come home and work another two to three hours after dinner. However, I feel like no matter how hard I work or how well I do on evaluations my efforts will not be recognized with benefits nor monetary bonuses. I am not even entitled to a paid maternity leave until after I have completed three years of teaching, which is just ridiculous!

Erica Murdoch, Nebo School District

Students are not numbers. We may have to work with numbers to help the masses, but individual students need the care and attention necessary to grow and function in society. Class sizes should be no more than 24 to a class if possible. There should not be a class with more than 30 students--that should be against school policy. Additionally, teachers are payed less than many jobs that require little to no experience, let alone a degree. Yes, teaching is very rewarding and intrinsically motivating and satisfying, but there comes a point when teachers get burned out because they are doing too much for too little and it's hard to live off of such a little salary. After getting multiple degrees a person shouldn't have to have a second job to support themselves and a family, especially when this type of job is life consuming. School work does not stay in the classroom. Teachers should be valued more than many of the high paying, shallow jobs of the world.

Kate Ormond, Nebo School District

We need smaller classes and higher pay to keep quality teachers. There are so many extra demands put on teachers too. It's hard to be a good spouse, parent, and teacher when all you do is go home and make sure everything is ready for school the next. There are way to many hoops to jump through. (Spend at least 2 hours a night thinking school) Trust us and let us do our job which is being the best teacher we can for our students.

LeighAnn Penrod, Nebo School District

I constantly hear or read that students love to come to school.

Ramon Saldívar, Nebo School District

I personally feel from my point of view that the amount of work and energy that "good" teachers put into teaching is burning "good" teachers out, because their work is not compensated fairly.

Krissi Tanner, Nebo School District

Teachers continue to work for less. Administrations use too much money to pay unneeded admins. Give the money to teachers or technology Needs

Jeanette Taylor, Nebo School District

I never would have gone into education if I would have known it would be like this.

Lori Thomas, Nebo School District
Compensation

Each child in my classroom has a story. The children that we are teaching today are suffering more and have more challenges than a child used to. Each year is less and less parent support. Not only is our student population becoming more difficult to help and teach, but the load we are receiving is more and more heavy. I have students who at 6 years old have already had a parent pass away. One student even commented in the middle of a lesson, "If my mom dies, I will be an orphan." That is what was on their mind...not the reading lesson I was teaching. Students whose parents won't help them do their homework or even let them have books to borrow because mom and dad don't want the responsibility of a lost or damaged book. This child is low in all areas and doesn't have a reason to learn because parents aren't invested in them. These kids are our future doctors, teachers, pilots, managers, cooks, etc. Invest today, for a better tomorrow. We need respect for our teachers. They need more compensation for their time. We need smaller class sizes to help these kids who their teacher is the only one who is helping them with their education. To give extra love and attention to those kids who have hard lives. We need a lighter workload to spend our time on things that are of more importance.

Brooke Vaquerano, Nebo School District

My job, my passion for everything it entails doesn't end. There is an unwritten expectation that as a professional I am "on call" all the time looking out for the needs of my students inside and outside the school walls. I wish better pay was given for the demands this amazing job requires. I am a dedicated teacher and love what I do but having a Masters +30 seems like more pay should be extended. I am worth it.

Tracy Wareniski, Nebo School District

I teach special education- resource- in an elementary school. I have students in grades K-6. I have to be aware of curriculum for every grade. I have 34 students on my case load. I am responsible for all the federal paperwork for these students along with teaching them. IEP meetings take 30 minutes to an hour or more. I have mainly students who have learning disabilities, however I also have a blind student, a student with Down Syndrome, students with autism, a few who are intellectually disabled, and behavior disorders. I have a half day aide. I would not be able to serve my students without the aide. However it also makes more work for me as I have to plan the groups she teaches. So on top of teaching, and planning my own groups, I am planning hers, and instructing her on how to teach. I have too many students for her to just be an aide. I also maintain all the IEP files- federal paperwork. Some of my files are in binders of 4+ inches. I am regularly at school long after my contract time of 3:45. I rarely in 20 years have been able to actually schedule in the planning time I am supposed to have due to the high number of students. I would have to have groups of over 10 students to do that. There needs to be more help in special education.

Christine Wilkinson, Nebo School District

Teachers are over worked and under paid. Then on top of teachers being underpaid we tend to use our own money to buy supplies, and things we need for our classroom. Teachers often (typically every day for me) take work home, or we stay late to work, and do work when we are not being paid, because we have so much to do in not enough time. Standardized testing doesn't really measure how much the students are learning in class, because they aren't motivated to do the best they can. The tests also do not take into consideration how much they have grown as a person, (learning the life long skills they need to succeed as an adult).

Coy Taylor, Nebo School District

Teaching is a challenging job. Teachers work tirelessly trying to do the best for the students they love. We work countless hours and deserve to be compensated and respected.

Deon Youd, Nebo School District

Teachers should get bonuses based on testing scores and satisfaction of the students and parents in that years' classroom.

Jennelle Youngs, Nebo School District

Quality teachers are leaving far too fast.

Linda Brown, Ogden School District
Compensation

We are drowning over here. We are drowning in a workload that increases year to year without an increase in support or funding. We are drowning in disrespect from our communities, our parents, our supervisors, and our legislators. We are drowning in students who's needs increase every time we turn around. We are drowning in Charter schools, that bleed our funding dry.

Christina Charbonneau, Ogden School District

Teacher salaries are low for the rigorous job we have. There is not enough technology for each student to be successful in a technologically progressive society. Too many charter schools are taking funding and students from public schools. Class sizes are difficult to organize, and makes it harder to differentiate instruction.

Sharon Emmert, Ogden School District

Educating our children is the most important priority.

Earl Gardner, Ogden School District

Teachers work hard every day to ensure a quality education for our students. Properly compensating teachers for their hard work would be appreciated. Class sizes need to go down to give students the attention they need.

Bradi Holder, Ogden School District

Teachers are the future. Treat us with dignity and support us with all your might. We are teaching the people who will be running our cities, counties and country in a very short time. You get what you pay for. Maybe that is the main reason there is a tragic teacher shortage. WAKE UP!

Suiska Rhodes, Ogden School District

Teachers work above and beyond to provide the best education and classroom experience for their students. We need to have adequate planning time and more paid prep time at the beginning of the school year. It feels as though we are expected to work many extra hours without pay at the beginning of the school year (and other times throughout the year) in order to be prepared. Please add a few more paid planning days at the beginning and throughout the year.

Riliann Stettler, Ogden School District

Charter schools are NOT the answer.

Ruth S. Burkett, Other

Each legislator should be required to spend one day in class every year. Let them see what is happening in schools. Then they would understand and be able to help more effectively.

Jessie Datwyler, Other

Many classrooms are becoming very crowded because of the lack of teachers. The lack of teachers is most likely because the pay they are receiving is not enough compared to the amount of work that is being asked of them. If you want better higher quality teachers and students to do better on tests and in their academic classes we need to higher more qualified teachers which means we need to look at compensations.

Allison Gorringe, Park City School District

INCREASE TEACHER PAY!!!!!!!

Steve Hoagland, Piute School District

The workload is too much. Our classes are too big. Everyone expects more of us and provides no compensation or time to complete such tasks.

Denise Abbott, Provo City School District
Compensation

I currently have come back to teaching after taking a break to have a baby. As a new teacher I have loved working with our future generation to support them to grow and become critical thinkers. A few things to improve our situation is payment for teachers for planning. I spend so many hours out of contract time to plan and prepare. Also, it is becoming increasingly competitive to work in different districts. I love my district and want to stay, but I could be provide better for my family elsewhere. I would respectfully ask for an increase in teachers salaries and payment for planning and prep time. Lastly, my class is continually looking for opportunities for hands on learning. Through collaborating with other teachers we are able to pull in activities, but the budget to buy supplies is now. Budget for supplies is in dire need. Though I get some donations, it is still not enough to build a collection of STEAM and interactive activities. Please take into consideration teachers payment and teacher budgets.

Megan Anderson, Provo City School District

Recently one district stated, "When we pay teacher more they perform better." Please pay teachers a fair salary. I recently returned to teaching after being home for 16 years. The pay has not increased much since I left but the demands have and the cost of living. Please quit having the conversation on "how to retain great teachers" if you are unwilling to recognize the greatest problem, pay! Please let teachers feel they are important and doing an important job by compensating them fairly. A single person might be able to survive on a this salary but not with a family.

Tricia Biggs, Provo City School District

One of my classes loves to have science class parties. But, of course, I don't get a lot of money for additional supplies/materials. My kiddos love doing experiments and so any materials I need are purchased with my own money. One recent science lesson involved different experiments with salts. The kids come from backgrounds where they don't get to do a lot of these things at home and so it is doubly exciting for them. We experimented with make crystals grow on a cardboard tree and the kids were stoked. My message is this: Teachers are doing everything they can to make school exciting for their kiddos, even if it means money out of their own pocket. So, when teachers aren't paid enough or recognized for their efforts, it makes it difficult to come back, even though we love our kiddos.

Jennifer Delfin, Provo City School District

I really hope that funding for teacher's salaries increases. My fiance and I are both teachers. We would like to have kids, but it would mean one of us quitting our teaching job to raise the infant. We can live on both our salaries combined, but if we have kids, I will have to quit this job and find a better-paying one, which is really sad, because I LOVE my school and students.

Spencer Duncan, Provo City School District

Teaching is hard work. 99% of the teachers that I know are working really hard and educating our students because they love teaching and are committed to improving the lives of future voters and taxpayers. But I do feel like apologizing to my own childrens' teachers. As a taxpayer, I wish I could donate directly to their classroom. I know how much money they make, and I do feel guilty that we (as a community) can't find a way to pay them more. I think you need to listen to the people of Utah and improve educational spending or the people of Utah are going to go around the legislature and pass the educational funding through ballot initiatives. I'm not asking for Utah to spend as much as New York or Illinois. Let's just try to get out of last place for per pupil spending. Please! Also, don't forget about the special needs that so many schools are facing--special education students, students coming from poverty, and English as a second language students. They want to work hard and achieve their goals, but if they are in a class with more than 35 students, it becomes very difficult for the teacher to know their needs, let alone give them any extra support or help. When schools can provide paraprofessionals to translate and help teach, we can individualize instruction better and help more students learn. Feel free to come visit my classroom any time. Thank you, Julie Hagen

Julie Hagen, Provo City School District

This is my fourth year teaching, and I am burnt out. I would say I am an excellent educator, but because of the mandates put on me by both the district and the state I feel that I can't do this anymore. I love teaching, I love my students, but I feel I am slowly being left with no choice but to leave. I'm begging you, raise teacher pay or figure out
Compensation

how to retain quality teachers. Figure that out by talking to current teachers who are in the thick of it and listen and care about us. We need help.

Riley Hanni, Provo City School District

Teachers work so hard. Well beyond a 40 hour work week. Yet are continually required to do more & more; without lessening the overflowing work load that already exists. If teachers are required to do more & have more responsibilities, then, something should be taken out of their present workload in order to make time for the new requirements. Also, most teachers spend a lot of time working & creating things for their classrooms during the summer & are not recognized for those efforts that go above & beyond their contracted time.

Paula Hatch, Provo City School District

I am a special educator for students who need significant support (behavior support, physical therapy, feeding, toileting, etc.) and I cannot do my job without para-educators. Unfortunately due to the low pay, low hours, and lack of benefits, we cannot keep them. Between myself and the other self-contained teacher we have lost 5 excellent para-educators in two years. They have gone on to higher paying jobs, a less intense workload, and often careers with benefits. As long as para educators are capped at $12 an hour--no matter how well trained, experienced, or overqualified they may be--are limited to working 29 hours per week or less, and expected to be highly qualified for their positions, we will not be able to fully staff our classrooms. Without a full staff, our classrooms cannot run efficiently and we cannot provide the quality education that our students deserve and are legally entitled to under federal law.

Tierra Healy, Provo City School District

As much as education is fulfilling in and of itself, it is still a job that should be paid for what it's worth. Educators should be compensated for the incredible time, effort, and dedication they bring to the profession - not treated like the job is the reward itself.

Christine Lavallee, Provo City School District

I work in a low income, high risk, Title 1 school and we work so hard to help our little friends feel safe and happy for part of their day, everyday. We should be able to take care of ourselves and our families with our income. Some of our teachers have to have two jobs to make ends meet. We are running from the second we get here until the moment we leave. When we get home, we are worrying about the difficult circumstances our students are living in. Teachers should be honored more for the things they do; better pay, better insurance, etc.

Suzanne Martinez, Provo City School District

I would like my legislators to consider the following things: 1. One-to-one tech is pointless without teachers who are trained (and trained WELL) to use it. 2. Admin Rule R277-531 (the PEER framework) feels extremely controlling for such a Republican congress. Its micro-managing language makes me certain you don't trust me as far as you can throw me...I can't imagine how it makes lifelong teachers feel. (Some kindness and validation from your direction would go a long way.) 3. When you consider points 1 and 2, hopefully you can easily see why young, tech-savvy teachers like me are never going to stay longer than a few years. Fifty percent of my prep time is taken up helping my older peers figure out how to use their tech and the other fifty percent is like forced A.D.D....I can't get anything done because you have me way too hyperfocused on my PEER plan and all of the other EYE requirements. I could have a higher paying job that is less time-consuming with like-minded peers who don't require constant help and a boss who trusts and respects me...why does anyone stay longer than 3 or 4 years? I mean, would you?

Chaela Mcdonald, Provo City School District

Teachers are getting very discouraged with our salaries and little they go up. Our work load continues to increase but our pay does not.

Julie Nelson, Provo City School District
Compensation

Teacher morale is low. Our class sizes are huge. We need more paid planning time in the summer. We need a raise.

Suzanne Parker, Provo City School District

I teach classes and work as the school's athletic trainer. Both are full-time jobs. I average 65 to 70 hours a week, and I do not do either as well as should be. I would like to be a full-time Athletic Trainer at the school, I work but I have to teach so they can afford to have me around because the state does not fund the position. I have been doing both for 25 years and I don't know if I can make physically or mentally to 30.

Ben Ross, Provo City School District

Teacher are professionals and deserve to be paid a fair wage to educate the future generations. Teachers continue to be educated and need to have access to free or low cost classes to continue their education.

Gina Solis, Provo City School District

I have sent emails. I get no response.

Frank Thompson, Provo City School District

Increase teacher pay, lower classroom sizes

Linda Threlfall, Provo City School District

Education needs to be top priority! Class sizes are too high. We either need smaller class sizes or funding for aides in every classroom to assist with the demands of various abilities of children. Additionally, we are one of the lowest paid/funded in the nation and with the demands of educating students, teachers are getting burned out or leaving the profession because of too much stress and not enough pay to compensate the numerous hours (beyond contract time) that educators are spending on preparation and professional development.

Michelle Peterson, Rich School District

I am a male teacher doing what I love. It is very hard to be the provider for my family on my wages alone. I have a summer job and my wife works in order to be financially stable. I would love for my wife to be able to stay at home if she chooses and not depend on a summer job to make ends meet.

Josh Sulser, Rich School District

Pay teachers like professionals.

Matt Wahlquist, Rich School District

We need more money for the specialist areas.

Jay Griffin, South Summit School District

Testing only gives a snapshot of how students perform. Teacher effectiveness cannot be measured in student test performance.

Patricia Christensen, Salt Lake City School District

Why is Utah ranked so low in average spending per pupil and test scores? I have now taught 5th grade classes with 28, 37, 34, 30, 31 students in each of the past 5 years. How can I effectively teach with so many students in my class? How come charter schools receive money from the state, but they aren't held to the same standards as public schools?

Peter Haslam, Salt Lake City School District

I feel that having severe SpEd students who continuously wander the halls creating distractions and disruptions for the main stream students should be addressed. We have three students that walk the halls ALL day long with aids because their disability is too severe for them to remain in a classroom. These students run in and out of classrooms, we have one who is a male student that keeps running into the girls locker room while girls are getting dressed. This
Compensation

student has injured teachers and aids because of his behavioral issues. The three of the students create major
distractions and disruptions in ALL other classes throughout the day. Why do we not have a school specifically for
their needs. We have to put the classes, office and bathrooms on lockdown because one of these students is out of
control. Why should the entire school be locked down for one student who is out of control. The safety of other
students and faculty is compromised because of these students.

Denise Howard, Salt Lake City School District

I have been a teacher in Utah for 22 years, and I have watched students get lost in the huge classes for years. Utah
has never made an honest effort to fund education the way it should be. My husband is also a teacher, and we pay
everything we have to send our children to private school. It is a struggle, but we see first hand the underfunded
schools. We grew up in NY state, and we both had very small classes. We know the advantages that an amazing
education can bring, and we refuse to allow our own children to be in the huge and overcrowded schools of Utah.
The teachers do everything they can, and are underpaid and overworked. Utah should do better. Family values are
talked about, but not funded. I would love to see Utah put money into education that meets the needs of the amount
of children that are in Utah.

Michelle Misco, Salt Lake City School District

Increase the WPU, please.

Becky Petersen, Salt Lake City School District

All schools are different, east v. west, Title I, these issues should be taken into account when looking at the all too
important 'test scores'.

Barb Rodgers, Salt Lake City School District

More even funding dispersed between Title I and Non Title 1 schools within the state of Utah.

Molly Sprague, Salt Lake City School District

Rural education is continuing to be short changed, the WPU and Transportation budgets need to be increased.

Nathan Chamberlain, San Juan School District

Please, please, please focus on the needs teachers have. We have a system where teachers are both overworked
and used as the scapegoat when they are often not the problem. Please recognize the adverse role some districts
have on growth in individual schools.立法使学校有更多自主权。

Robert LeCheminant, San Juan School District

Students are not a product but people; and funding, incentives, collaboration, and planning needs to reflect that.

Barbara Balch, Sevier School District

If you don't make this a desirable profession you won't get people to invest. You get what you pay for.

Penny Christensen, Sevier School District

Rural students matter too

Ursula Mackay, Sevier School District

Public school teachers are doing more for less! The expectations continue to rise with little State and Community
Support. Teaching is a profession that should be supported to the fullest...it is a hard job.

Shauna Mills, Sevier School District
Compensation

I think increased pay would help teachers be teachers and not hold a summer job as well. I also think districts should honor step changes. Example: I had 18 years in a previous district. I wanted to move closer to my aging parents and my new district will only acknowledge 8 years. It equaled a 20k pay reduction. Ouch. However, it was necessary. Now I am teaching over 250 students on 40k.

Cassy Moon, Sevier School District

Too much money in administration at state and local levels. Invest in teachers. Pay teachers. Too many administrators that never mastered teaching and didn't spend time in the classroom make more money than teachers. Doesn't make much sense does it? Form supervisory councils made up of teachers to run schools.

Marc Peterson, Sevier School District

This is the first year I have had less than 24 students in my Full Day Kindergarten class. We have been able to accomplish more with our writing, STEM activities, and intervention groups because of the manageable number of students. If you really want to put the Child First, Utah needs to lower the class size teacher-student ratio.

Maureen Erickson, Tooele County School District

I am physically and mentally exhausted at the end of the day. Sometimes it feels like there is little support. We certainly don't teach for the money, but it would be appreciated. Also, the lack of respect from students and parents is getting ridiculous.

Elaine Carter, Uintah School District

How much extra time we put in as teachers and how little our budget is to provide supplies for our students.

Lauren Cullen, Uintah School District

Spend a week with us and see how much we care, do, and make a difference. Then understand why so many teachers work 2 or more jobs.

Stephanie Reed-Tippet, Uintah School District

Teaching takes more time than we are paid for especially when you have muliple classes of 35-40 sixth graders.

Rebecca Rich, Uintah School District

How I came to Utah from Illinois and did not get all my endorsements on my teaching certificate, took a $20,000 pay decrease, after 20+ years of teaching I had to retake the Praxis (Utah did not recognize Illinois's version), and I only received 7 years of credit

Justine Schwarz, Uintah School District

Teachers need more money. This will attract more and better teachers. Good teachers will stay in the profession.

Reen Slagowski, Uintah School District

I am an Outreach Teacher of deaf children in five different school districts and I go to seventeen different schools at the present time. I see a variety of students with all kinds of special needs. There is so much that each one of them need in addition to their hearing loss concerns and I find myself buying things for them all of the time. I know that it isn't required but if some of these basic needs aren't met, then they don't progress in other areas. I wish so badly that I earned a little more so that I could help more. It is killing me as it is to buy things I do in order to help them. There is just no way that the districts or the School for the Deaf can finance extra things so I do what I can myself.

Peggy Perry, Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind

6th Grade Core Class sizes of 41 kids!

Kevin Brindle, Wasatch County School District
Compensation

I have been an educator for 14 years. I LOVE teaching but a few years ago I decided I needed a 5 year plan to leave teaching. I couldn't do it anymore. The pay, the lack of support for supplies, the lack of support with large class sizes and behavior students. The sense of moral in my building... all these things made me cry almost everyday that year because I couldn't do it anymore but I LOVE teaching. Something has got to give to help support our teachers! It isn't just money- yes we need higher salaries but not because we are greedy, but because this is a stressful job! We face so much stress and pressure everyday as educators and then to face the additional stress at home of how do I pay my bills? How do I buy a house or save for the future or even go on a vacation to relax (I work in the summers to have extra money to help survive the rest of the year)? it is all the stress together that are making teachers crack and breakdown. We ask for college degrees and masters degrees and endorsements which all come with student loans for many- we need to pay teacher enough to pay back those student loans. Student loan forgiveness programs are such small percentage of the cost of student loans. If as a state we can reduce some of the stress and burden teachers face in their lives as a whole- the stress of the classroom wouldn't be as great a burden since the load would have been lightened.

Elizabeth Brown, Wasatch County School District

Lack of qualified paraprofessionals in the special education classroom.

Nela Craig, Wasatch County School District

Teachers work hard every day to do their best; provide them the tools to succeed.

Christine B. Garloch, Wasatch County School District

Please come spend a day or two in special education classrooms. Get to know what our daily challenges are and see what a great job we are doing.

Glenda Gray, Wasatch County School District

I really enjoy teaching students and making a difference in their school day. On the other hand, the way things are in education today, I would not encourage anyone to go into teaching. That is not an easy thing to say as I come from a family of a lot of educators.

Dan Hill, Wasatch County School District

I love teaching but is very hard to stay a teacher. I currently have 4 different employers in order to stay on top of my bills and maintain the basics for my family. I am stretched very thin and it has a negative effect on my teaching. If my salary was increased I would have more (time, energy, funds) to give to my school and my students. It is pretty simple, if you pay teachers better you get better teachers.

Zack Alvey, Washington County School District

When I'm paid more for my time, I feel valuable and more willing to do a better job for my administrator and students.

Tina Crawford, Washington County School District

There is a lot of talk about why we are losing or not attracting new teachers. From my experience it comes down to that the demands on teachers increase every year. The students become more difficult every year, the principals and districts demand more every year and so much time is spent in meetings rather than actually preparing,and the pay doesn't make it worth the stress and hassles. For double the pay it might be worth all the stress and unpaid overtime. We also definitely need more support and options for unruly students. I've had 5 year olds curse me, yell at me, and hit and bite me. And I have a very structured well run class. It is not that I'm not doing my job. We have emotionally disturbed children in the regular classroom and 5 min with the counselor doesn't fix it. In years past they'd be expelled. Now they want to fix the teacher, not the kids. When I meet a young person who says they want to teach, I warn them that teaching is a small part of what you actually do.

Jean Doty, Washington County School District
Compensation

Without quality teachers, quality education of our children will not happen.

Jennifer Farish, Washington County School District

It feels like we are headed in a direction to dilute and undermine the qualifications of our job. We seem to receive less trust and more "babysitting", we seem to incentivize new temporary and under-qualified teachers rather than seasoned and educated ones, and to be putting a lot of money into "alternative" education such as charter and online schools. All of these things compound the current problem of diluting the quality of education.

Michelle Green, Washington County School District

Go to schools - not the districts - to find out what is really going on - get your hands dirty

Dana McConnell, Washington County School District

Very frustrating to live in a state that considers my career as a “calling” therefore I am not paid as the highly educated professional that I am.

Dina Murphy, Washington County School District

As things become more expensive for school districts, more and more of the money is coming out of my pocket. This is the only professional occupation where teachers are not only expected to fund their classroom, but the also fund the classes that are needed for licensing and increased knowledge for our changing world. I would like to see more support in these two areas, along with salary increases and class size reduction for the intermediate, middle, and high school classrooms.

Rosemarie Olsen, Washington County School District

Support for severe special ed teachers

Brittany Stull, Washington County School District

SAGE testing is a failure

Dan Zaleski, Washington County School District

Most teachers go into the teaching profession because they want to help our youth. They are interested in investing time, energy, money, and love for starters into educating our youth to be good, productive, law abiding citizens of the future. However, this can’t be accomplished by the school system alone. Parent and community involvement is needed. Parents need to be held more accountable for their children. Teachers should not be "graded" on how successful students are. There are many factors that determine a student's success. Many teachers I have spoken with get discouraged. We are asked to add more and more to our responsibilities for no or little extra pay. I know many who have left the field due to the pay. Yes, many are willing to sacrifice, but some must also look to the financial needs of their own families. When looking at other states' pay scales, Utah seems to be far behind. I have been teaching over 20 years with a Master’s Degree. My income is about $3,000 to $4,000 more than other teachers in many states who have been teaching only 5 - 10 years. I have often said I would be willing to pay more in taxes to have a better public school system in UT. (My own children attended private Christian schools, (which I paid tuition for), and I paid my taxes willingly).

Nikki Bachman, Weber School District

Teachers spend much more time (1-2 extra hours per day) preparing for lessons and correcting and other necessary tasks to be effective teachers. More time than this is spent particularly within the first 5 years of teaching and if you teach kindergarten and First Graders. More planning and preparation time should be given to teachers of these younger children.

Lori Barker, Weber School District
Compensation

First of all, I am concerned and frustrated with all the testing we have to administer to our students. We are testing more than we ever did. While collecting data is important, instruction is critical for the students to be successful with evaluations. Second: our supply money for ink, materials, etc. is insufficient for the needs of our students. If we continue to cut the budget, our students and their ability to progress will suffer, which means we will suffer in the long run. We must remember that these children will be our leaders of tomorrow.

Teresa Brewer, Weber School District

The maxim "You get what you pay for" is as true with education as it is with anything else.

Joseph Burke, Weber School District

More money needs to go directly to teachers that is not funneled through the hands of the district and others. I need more money to help my individual classroom. I don't need more regulation of that money and hoops to jump through. I don't see increases coming down to me to use grandiose plans for technology don't make it elementary schools. How about asking the teachers how they want to spend the money on technology individually? Now there's an idea-huh?

Lee J. Claycomb, Weber School District

Utah has always been way too cheap and I really doubt they could change

Jocelyn Cook, Weber School District

Ask a teacher about what teachers and classrooms needs. And, commit to spending time with teachers and as teachers before deciding up issues that affect students and teachers. I choose to teach, but to do so has been expensive in so many ways: I often PAY to do my job, PAY to keep my job, PAY with my a decline in my health due to rising expectations on my part and a lowering of understanding and support on your part.

Cassie A Cox, Weber School District

It is about timer to treat teachers (not administrators or other employees) to a decent pay increase!

Clyde Ellertson, Weber School District

Our society puts money towards what they believe is valuable, except for paying teachers. If education is valuable then pay teachers accordingly.

Kaylene Astin, Weber School District

If it takes a village to raise a child then the village needs to be accountable. Teachers are professionals and should be paid accordingly.

Linda Fox, Weber School District

I have been teaching in the state of Utah for 23 years. My job has gotten harder and harder every year I teach. We are asked to do so much. I have a master's degree and four specialized endorsements on my teaching certificate yet my pay is at $65,000 a year. In any other career, with the same amount of education and experience my salary would be much higher. I did not choose to be a teacher for the money, and that is why I will always be a teacher, however, I am constantly told that I need to do more. Teachers are not the problem with education. You need to listen to what we are telling you. Lower class sizes, gives us time to plan and collaborate, support us with difficult students and parents, and quit blaming us when test scores are low. Stop tying our hands with so many controls and mandates. The last faculty meeting we had we were told we can't ask parents to donate tissues, paper towels and ziplock baggies, i.e. grocery items. These are things that I use in my classroom every day. Where am I supposed to get the money to buy these every year??? Come spend a day shadowing a teacher. It would really open your eyes as to what it is we face every day.

Adrianna Griffey, Weber School District
Compensation

The biggest battle I fight is getting parents to be supportive and involved in their child's education. I want there to be more accountability on the part of parents and students. The demands for my accountability has tripled since I have been teaching and there is no accountability on the part of parents and students. They can come every day and do nothing and they know that they will move on to the next grade and parents know that there is no consequence as well. However, if that child doesn't test well at the end of the year it is my fault! There is nothing by that child's name that says they missed 1/3 of the year, or that they never came prepared to school with anything, or that they took the end-of-year test in 5 minutes because they just guessed. I have 30 students in my 4th grade classroom and there is 1 of me. It is extremely difficult for me to be successful with that many students without extra support from home. There has to be a way to get parents to buy into the importance of an education!! Our future depends on it.

Kristie Herzog, Weber School District

Make teachers and educators a top priority AND give them the pay and benefits they so deserve which is way long overdue!

Connie Hunter, Weber School District

Please fund education in Utah and get out of our way and let us teach.

Kim Irvine, Weber School District

So many good things happen when we are allowed to do them

Shannon Iseminger, Weber School District

Students are becoming increasingly more difficult to teach and we need more resources available to access not punishment or testing incentives.

Tracie Jackson, Weber School District

Talk to teacher BEFORE writing new curriculum/law/evaluations

Laryrn Jones, Weber School District

I feel that students are being short changed by my large class sizes, the average size is 34.

Wendi Jorgensen, Weber School District

There is research evidence (Hattie) that proves teacher collaboration has one of the highest effects on student growth.

Laurie Key, Weber School District

Teaching is a difficult job. I always spend at least 10 hours beyond my contract hours making sure that my students are given the best that I can offer. Please reduce class sizes or find a way to pay teachers for the hours that they work beyond regular contract hours. More preparation time is needed to be an effective teacher that is able to do their job during regular contract hours.

Matthew LeDuc, Weber School District

Stop putting more work on teachers with no compensation in terms of wages and especially no time to complete what you are asking for.

Terri Mason, Weber School District

K-12 needs more funding, but K-3 teachers (even K-6) are inadequately represented in both major districts in which I have worked. My spouse is in secondary, and the discrepancy between funds/prep time/consideration is astonishing. Elementary teachers are "on stage" all day. In many districts, they get no duty-free afternoon recess. Can you "hold it" from 12:00-3:30. That's what teachers must do every day. Yes, secondary classes are larger, however, many classes require little correcting or one-on-one instruction. Secondary prep time is incredibly unfairly distributed. The only "prep" time elementary gets is usually taken up with things other than prep: bus duty, parental issues, or required time in PLCs, with precious little time in their own classroom. The legislature needs to provide increased
Compensation

funding for ALL education K-12, but K-3, is in desperate need. Kinder teachers, especially, will leave the grade just for survival.

Patty Nielson, Weber School District

Charter schools and on-line schools are not the answer. Too many of these kids return to the public schools credit deficient and not ready to graduate. Further, funding counts are made in October, then students leave the charter schools and return to public schools but public schools don't get the funding.

Russ Porter, Weber School District

Time commitments have increased due to additional responsibilities - flex time classes requiring preparation, referrals to special programs like homework lunch and academic support, increased expectations for remediation & retesting, increased quantity and variety of parental notification, teacher training on days that used to be preparation days. There has not been additional compensation for these extra responsibilities, thus restricting my availability for the second job that I need in order to support my family. Additionally, parents and administrators are quick to criticize any perceived shortcomings in any of these areas. On top of that is the constant push from state and district officials and policies to improve, putting more blame and responsibility on teachers instead of students.

Karl Powell, Weber School District

Teaching is a very rewarding profession. We work extremely hard. It should be a profession that others seek rather than one many stay clear of. This could happen if teachers were payed better and had the needed resources and time to better their instruction. Planning and collaboration time is important. Having this in place will help retain teachers as well.

Tina Satterthwaite, Weber School District

Too many teachers are taking on multiple jobs, and compromising quality teaching in an effort to make ends meet.

Jaxson Schreck, Weber School District

This country needs better conditions for teachers. Teachers have created the past, constructed the present and they are ones helping to shape and secure our future. Without teachers, there is no Nation. We do not ask for anything out of this world, we are asking you to invest in the present and the future of our state and country.

Jose Garcia, Weber School District

There are more demands and less time. Students are coming with more social and emotional issues that have to be addressed along with additional educational needs.

Kim Vorwaller, Weber School District

Get in the classroom, talk to educators

Anonymous, Weber School District

Keep education as your first priority during the upcoming session.

Michael Yardley, Weber School District
Overall Education Budget

We appreciate any effort to aide in helping us teach our children. They will be our future leaders and should be prepared. Pour the funds and resources into having great teachers to be the guides for our students. You have to make education an attractive career choice for college students.

Lisa Aase, Alpine School District

I get tired of hearing how bad our education system is compared to testing of other countries when we test everyone, even student with accommodations where other countries filter out students before high school who have challenges and test the rest.

Kevin Aston, Alpine School District

Teachers work very hard and are not compensated for the hours that they are putting in beyond contract time to do their jobs well. I don't know very many other jobs where once the work day is over, work is taken home with them. It's set aside until the next day. Large class sizes (some over 42 in high schools) make it VERY difficult to give students one on one attention that they deserve. There are more requirements of us as teachers with evaluations etc. that take us away from designing and implementing fun, informative lesson plans. Burnout is high when you aren't appreciated or provided with resources.

Becky Bailey, Alpine School District

In our school our kindergarten class size is 26 children, which is 52 children with two sessions to progress monitor. The expectations for the teachers are to teach a 3 hour block of literacy that doesn't include time for recess, computers or math. It also doesn't allow for time to help connect with students, especially ones that have very little time with parents.

Lorri Case, Alpine School District

If merit pay is funded, focus should be on student achievement that is not solely based on standardized testing. Teachers in special education settings often have children who do not do well on standardized tests, and this should not be the only way to gauge the effectiveness or qualifications of teachers. In addition, recent budget cuts to classroom supply funds has made it difficult to provide/replace materials needed for child success in classrooms. Hiring teachers without a teaching degree and expecting seasoned teachers to “mentor” them in vital strategies such as classroom management is unreasonable. Teachers are not compensated for the number of hours they work outside of contract time in order to help the children be successful and complete other required assignments. Mentoring unqualified teachers is yet another responsibility on which experienced teachers are expected to undertake in already strenuous circumstances, without additional compensation. In order to keep qualified teachers, districts/state should offer incentives such as helping with student loan repayment and increasing salaries of licensed teachers, instead of trying to fill positions with persons unexperienced or uneducated in the field of teaching. Hiring persons who have not graduated from an accredited college with a degree in teaching is like a “slap in the face” to those teachers who have worked for such an achievement and indicates to them that their hard work is unrecognized and unnecessary. Not everyone can be a teacher and it is high time that they are recognized for what they have achieved and not given the indication that they can be replaced with anyone off the street. Teachers are what makes all other professions and without them other careers would cease to exist.

Tina Cole, Alpine School District

I am an adapted physical educator. The high school I teach at has a Unified Sports program (peers and student athletes with disabilities learning, practicing and competing in tournaments together). This program is very successful as all of our students become so involved in activities both during school and after school hours. Cooperation, friendship and teamwork as well as sportsmanship during competition are emphasized. All students grow personally as well as physically.

Julie Hines, Alpine School District
Overall Education Budget

The teacher shortage is caused because of lack of pay first and then because of lack of respect given to educators. Educators are on the bottom of the pyramid of respect. It starts with parents and then students and then administrators and teacher are left to the demands of the above three factors. Give teachers the ability to follow through with classroom policies and procedures without being overridden by threats from parents and students of being sued. Return respect and control to teachers.

Karen Finley, Alpine School District

Resources matter when trying to help students on an individual basis. As we have been mandated to help every student be successful, the difference between 25 and 35 students in a classroom becomes quite clear. It is impossible to effectively help every student in the way that they deserve when there is not enough time to talk to them. Make class sizes smaller by increasing the number of teachers. Increase the number of teachers by making this a profession that is respected and fairly compensated. Show the citizens of this wonderful state that you care enough about them to invest in their future.

Devin Fisher, Alpine School District

When I first got into teaching, I thought having holidays off at the same time as my kids would be awesome. I didn't realize at the time that teaching requires so much more than that. We don't get overtime, 'cause if we did our school would run out of funding before we were even halfway done with the year! The amount we are paid is minuscule when compared to how many hours we spend to prepare our lessons. Add on top of that the high volume of students in each class, the lack of funding for science materials (I have to purchase what I do mostly out of my own pocket, which means I can't do as much as I would like), and the lack of classroom aids when they are really needed. I spend a lot of my “vacation time” either preparing for or finishing up things for my students. I've even had my family in helping, which, I can assure you, they weren't keen on doing for their vacation. And that doesn't even begin to address the teacher shortage (I totally understand how some could burn out!), the lack of respect we get from “choice” people (dare I put some partners in that mix?), and certain students, and you've got a recipe for a high-stress job with low pay and low morale. I just want to get you in touch with our teacherly realities. Please don't forget us when the big guns roll in with their powerful allies and gung-ho ideas to use your influence for. We may not hold as much clout as they do, but we hold the hope of the future in our hands. Thank you.

Sharee Garcia, Alpine School District

Our teachers are among the lowest paid in the country and our class sizes are among the largest. When you increase teacher pay you attract more quality people to the profession. When you increase funding for public schools, you make an important investment in our children's and our state's future.

Mark Gatto, Alpine School District

We need to address teacher shortage, teacher morale and that teachers should be respected for being professionals.

Patrick Gleaves, Alpine School District

Education is the future; with poorly funded education comes ill-prepared citizens.

Kristin Greer, Alpine School District

I have been an educator in Utah for almost 20 years. I have heard again and again from leaders and communities that they consider education to be a top priority in Utah. I understand that we have more students and unique challenges in Utah. However, the reality is that we do not have the funding to attract and retain quality teachers. Why should college students choose education as a career when the hours are long and hard, the “real” expectations for what teachers have to do are way beyond the actual expectations, the pay is mediocre, and they are constantly berated by parents of their students for every perceived problem. Teachers should be protected from being yelled at by parents and respected for what they do day in and day out. Practically, we need a long term solution to fill our teaching positions - especially at the most challenging neighborhood schools. Teachers are professionals and need to be seen and treated as such.

Janelle Griffiths, Alpine School District
Overall Education Budget

I took a almost $8,000 pay cut to move to Utah. I would love to see more incentives for senior teachers to want to move to Utah.

Nolan Hansen, Alpine School District

In order for students to succeed there needs to be more adults per student. The only way a class of 30 students with one teacher works is if every student has the same needs and that will never be a reality.

Kristen Amber Holladay, Alpine School District

If we expect our students to be successful and for the school systems to improve so that each generation can progress, we need better teachers who are more committed. Teachers should have a better salary which would be based off of fitting requirments, such as Bachelor's Degree, to prove dedication to the profession.

Alexa Martin, Alpine School District

Any additional funding education can receive would not be wasted. I see dedicated teachers sacrifice large amounts of their own time and resources only to be made to feel they're not doing enough because an unreliable standardized testing system tells them so. Utah’s Education could benefit greatly first from giving teachers a salary that compensates all they sacrifice, and next by funding greater technology and resources for the classroom. Teachers will be more energized to do the best job possible when they have less financial strain to deal with.

Sarah Martins, Alpine School District

Class sizes just continue to increase as our state is growing. Students miss something without the individual interaction with a class and teacher that online classes do not provide. Smaller classes and more teachers are needed to connect the students with a teacher who can help them to learn.

Albert McFerson, Alpine School District

Teachers and students have been waiting for many, many years to have a legislative strategic plan for education including class size reduction, increase in salaries and benefits, money for supplies and a respectful attitude toward teachers. Our students deserve the best education we can give them. And that costs money.

Phyllis Sorensen, Alpine School District

Many of problems with teaching just stem from a lack of funding or lack of personal finances. I know many people who would be great teachers or drop out of teaching simply because they can't make a good living off of it. If you increase the pay to match teacher appreciation, then you will keep or gain good teachers. Also, schools need more money in general to support their programs and students. The current system does not create a good environment that makes teachers feel appreciated on a consistent basis or that they are being paid worth their time.

Jeffrey Sosa, Alpine School District

If you truly want to know what is happening in classrooms/schools each of you need to sub for a week in a classroom to really find out what teaching is like. Then you may have some different opinions and willing to start doing the job you were voted in to do!

Kriss Spencer, Alpine School District

Allocate more money to pay teachers so we retain them and reduce class sizes.

Janel Tuckett, Alpine School District

I think teachers also need to be able to talk to parents about disabilities that they see within students.

Alene Weakley, Alpine School District

First of all, I would like to thank our legislators for the important role that they play in our democratic process. Without your service I could not do my job. As a public servant I would like to see teaching become as important as any other public servant's job. I am willing to sacrifice if I know it has merit but sacrifice without merit is useless and drains me.
Overall Education Budget

as a teacher. When I feel that I am getting the support for my students that I need to teach, i.e. an aide in the classroom, technology, supplies, etc. I can teach much more effectively and feel that I can truly do what I intended to do when I became a teacher, Be a Change Agent! I hope that as this legislative session begins you will take into account that I might only have 28 students but half of those students need some kind of intervention. The other half might suffer if I can't get to them in a timely manner without support staff that I need. When I can have just one more body in the room I could possibly make the change for your student that would not otherwise be possible. Please help me teach the children in this state what they need to learn to carry on our democracy!

Karen Webb, Alpine School District

education = economic growth

Kelland Willis, Alpine School District

We must invest in the education of our children. We cannot continue to do so much with so few resources. We need technology to be funded and maintained. We need adequate classroom resources without having to spend our time writing grants to beg for money. Please fund education and invest in the future of our state.

CarolAnn Barton, Box Elder School District

I and many of my colleagues feel strained with the increase of class sizes and the low incomes that cause us to look for supplemental incomes.

Clark Funk, Box Elder School District

We need help with one-on-one technology in our classrooms. I just received my first iPad for my classroom, so we have alone to share with the class. Pay the teachers to keep the teachers. Charter schools need to held to the same standard as all schools. Why do they have so much money to go on all their field trips? Where does this money come from? Does the public pay for the trips to National parks? We need more help with social issues in our schools. We need more help with students with special needs, the students who don't qualify for resource.

Denise Lee, Box Elder School District

People on the hill decide what happens in the classroom without full understanding of what happens. I would like to see more legislators have round table talks with actual classroom teachers.

Nancy Ulsh, Box Elder School District

Please listen to what we are saying to you. We are in the “trenches” everyday and can see what is needed in our schools for our students to succeed.

Barbara Warburton, Box Elder School District

Why is it always a battle with legislators to fund public education? Utah is a state of family unity, so why not provide what is best for children without always having to prove why we need money to support education. I would love legislators to come spend a week in my classroom and school, so they could see for themselves why public funds are important. Teachers put in so much extra time to planning for their student's learning without compensation and yet, they are still being told it's not enough, plus the message being sent from legislators, we don't value our teachers, you are just expected to meet all the demands, so quit whining about it and just do it. The teacher shortage comes from low pay and demanding expectations, I feel legislators created it to begin with.

Jacquelyn Austin, Cache County School District

Accountability, technology and PLCs have stepped up the quality of education. However, the additional time requirements for planning, collaborating and follow through is at the same time pinching the quality of teaching that is being demanded and desired to be given by educators. More planning and preparation time is needed for the educational process to reach the levels that are being pushed for.

John Petersen, Cache County School District
Overall Education Budget

I stopped teaching when I stopped getting the support needed from administrators (who were too over-pressured by those above them) to maintain a classroom where students were not held accountable for poor behavior. It was a unique year when we had many transitory students who came from self-destructive homes. Those kinds of students need support before and after school so they can succeed in the high pressure environment of today's schools. We will never succeed with students whose everyday needs are not being met either because of poverty or lack of adequate supervision in the home.

Anita Price, Cache County School District

Being a teacher in public schools since I began my career in 1987 has been an amazing and difficult and wonderful experience. It's an honor to lead youth, to help them grow, and to hopefully be a positive impact in their lives. The challenges today are more difficult because we are required to do so much more, with so much less money, and the support from parents and society in general is just not what it used to be. The respect for the profession has diminished. This is partially due to the level of professionalism displayed by teachers. I don't want to sound like a complainer, but you get what you pay for. Some of the student teachers I have mentored through the years did not demonstrate passion for teaching or for the youth. Let's make teaching a highly respected and sought after career again! Put a high value on amazing educators! Find a way to attract the best and retain them with fair salaries and fair expectations, lots of support and Utah Schools will continue to be excellent. If not, the only ones you'll get to do this job will be desperate, unmotivated people who are only in it because they think they get their summer off.

Kimberly Sorensen, Cache County School District

If the classroom teacher has the biggest impact on student learning, then we need quality teachers with excellent training in every classroom. This cannot be done through lowering licensing standards. We must make a concentrated effort to attract teachers to teacher preparation programs and provide mentoring and support to retain teachers once they are in the classroom. This includes increasing teacher pay, forgiving student loans, and improving retirement benefits among other things.

Erika Bradshaw, Canyons School District

High quality teachers provide effective instruction which leads to student success. You can not get around having high quality teachers in every classroom if you want Utah's students to lead academically. There is no quick fix through technology or alternative route to licensure to improve education opportunities for Utah's students. Pay a fitting salary to attract those who you would have teach your child.

Madaline Chilcutt, Canyons School District

I work at a highly impacted Title I school. The staff at my school is amazing. We face many challenges throughout the school year, such as homeless students, students from poor backgrounds and bad situation, high behavioral problems, and low academics. Our school has bushed through all of the hardship and we have come out shining in the end. We make a difference in not only these students educations but their lives. We teach them not only math and reading, but also how to be decent successful human beings that can contribute to our society. This year much of our funding was cut and we did not have nearly the supports we need to help us in our classes. We need more interventionists in the school to help teachers target the students that are extremely behind. I currently have fifth graders learning their alphabet for the very first time. We need more money to obtain the services these student need and deserve. I also believe that teachers that work under these difficult situation found at a Title I school should be rewarded by higher pay. We have a very hard time keeping teachers at our school, because of the things we have to deal with and handle everyday of our lives. It is a very emotionally taxing place to be.

Raschell Davis, Canyons School District

The teaching shortage in Utah is causing schools to settle on less prepared, less skilled, and less experienced teachers. Legislators need to draw trained professionals to the state by DEMONSTRATING that they truly do value teachers. Right now it seems like educators are largely looked upon as poor public servants in Utah rather than qualified professionals.

Melissa Hansen, Canyons School District
Overall Education Budget

The class sizes are too large to teach what is expected.

Suzanne Mackey, Canyons School District

I will tell you first that I love my profession, my students, my principal, my colleagues, and living in Utah my entire life, but we have had some issues that need addressing as of late. Salary is a huge issue in Utah education! Every human being has to go through an education for his or her profession, so we should value the teaching profession the most. Many teachers, myself included, have over 20 years’ experience with Masters Degrees and several other endorsements, which give us extra years of college education. Most of these added courses are to benefit our students in the classroom, yet, sadly, our salaries do not reflect our knowledge or experience. Our state should respect and appreciate those educators who have continued to teach and worked to increase their personal education by giving them increased pay. Many states hold dear their teachers who are highly educated and show appreciation in higher salaries. Consequently, Utah college graduates are turning away from the education field because of low pay, little recognition for their skills, and no respect. In addition, I cannot begin to tell you, how many teachers give much of their salary in supplies to their under-privileged students, without expecting anything in return except a smile and a thank you. Now, I understand that the small supply stipend teachers receive from the state is going to be axed. Utah’s Governor Herbert said in his state address, the Utah sales tax collected from Amazon purchases would go toward education. Where did it go? Currently, our education system feels more like “Life Depressed” than “Life Elevated.” The school attendance is important! Since legislation has changed our laws for student attendance, we do not have students/parents held accountable for education. In our local schools, we see an increase in absences in several students, and our high school teachers believe there will be a decrease in high school graduates. Teachers and schools should not be held accountable for testing scores when students do not attend school. Students will always miss school if they can because they underestimate the value of education. If our youth fail their complete education, Utah will have a future society of illiterate people, unable to live in a functioning society. This will increase our welfare population, homelessness, and crimes because they will not have any proper job skills or be able to attend college. We must bring back mandatory education. Instead of being “Life Elevated,” Utah will become “Life Deflated.”

Michelle Fidell, Carbon School District

My son also went in to teaching, and called to brag about his AP European History scores being the top in his district. “THAT’S my boy!” He is successful, and the students love him, but he’s quitting at the end of this year. He lasted five years. He just can’t raise a family on a teacher’s salary.

Ann Allred, Davis School District

Students are our future and they deserve the best teachers possible. To attract and maintain the best teachers they need to be paid more and have more time to plan.

Donna Anderson, Davis School District

If education is as important as people think it is, there should be more money allotted to make class sizes smaller and pay educators more money to keep good teachers around. I spend at least 10 hours each day at my school, then I spend about 2-4 hours more, each night, working on school things. It’s exhausting and I’m burnt out! This is my 23rd year of teaching, and it’s not getting any easier. Although I put a lot of pressure on myself, it seems like educators are being required to do more and more every year.

Jodi Andre, Davis School District

Education has to be something you are willing to invest significant money into. Without the profession being something that will pay enough for a family to survive on, there will be a serious teacher shortage. It has to be a viable option for new college graduates to choose.

Corine Barney, Davis School District
Overall Education Budget

Please support our teachers and children through the necessary measures of financial funding and meaningful supports. We need more qualified teachers to support the growing population and class size epidemic teachers are facing and we need to support current teachers so that they stay in this amazing profession and do some of the most important work.

Karly Bates, Davis School District

This is about our community and funding education funds the future. The us vs. them idea needs to end.

Alyn Bone, Davis School District

Our classes are overloaded! I spend $2500 or more each year to buy supplies and technology to help my students. I am getting out of this profession and do not advise any one to enter it. We are micromanaged to the point that apathy has set in among the majority of teachers.

Sharlene Bremer, Davis School District

Dear Legislators, As a veteran teacher, I have watched our profession dramatically suffer in the past ten years. Not only do we have teachers that do not want to stay in our profession, they are running from it. Young people are discouraged from seeking this career path--not without reason. Teaching is arguably the hardest career and one of the most disrespected. If I were to average out my salary over the true number of hours that I work, I would be making much less than the minimum wage. I knew that teaching wouldn't be lucrative when I came into the profession. Money wasn't the reason I chose to work in education. What I did not know was the true lack of support and respect teachers receive. I currently teach in a classroom with 32 third grade students. There is not space in my classroom to accommodate them. My classroom budget was made for a class size of twenty-six students. That means that all of the supplies for six more students come out of my pocket. That's on top of what I already spend to enhance my curriculum. My school email inbox currently has 53 unread emails, most of which are complaints about one thing or another, that I have not had time to read due to my other responsibilities. I arrive at school no later than 7:00, and rarely leave earlier than 6:00. I still take work home every night. I take grading with me on vacation and feel guilty if I don't work on it after my family has gone to sleep. I am asked to create trackers for multiple students. I try to stay on top of everything that I am asked to do, and if I drop one of the forty balls that I am juggling, I am belittled. The “fun” has been sucked out of my classroom. I am moving through curriculum at a break neck pace, attempting to prepare my students for “The Test” at the end of the year. There is little to no time for slowing down to make snowflakes or, more importantly, teach about character, citizenship, and friendship. There is a disconnect between administration and the classroom. We are constantly being asked to do “little things.” However, when you have a list of twenty little things that each take a few minutes, it adds up. I’ve always known that I was meant to be a teacher. I know that I make a difference in the lives of others every day. I’ve seen positive differences happen in amazing ways. However, it’s getting harder to see that silver lining amongst all of the dark clouds. We need your help and support. Our profession, our students, and the future of our state depend on it.

Katie Brown, Davis School District

This world we live in is a difficult one. Students come to school less prepared, with less support from home, and many behavior issues. Instead of helping teachers confront these issues, or provide incentive to feel valued, teachers are constantly asked to jump through hoops, fix things that are not really broken, and implement gee whiz programs at the whim of people who are out of touch with the classroom. The sooner teachers are looked upon as professionals equivalent to those with equal education, the sooner the public will stand behind teachers and education as well. Set the example, actions speak louder than words!

Cori Burns, Davis School District

Special education teachers are overworked and underpaid.

Tanielle Carter, Davis School District
Overall Education Budget

All students can learn! Teaching is an important! We need to provide teachers with additional preparation time and exposure to quality PD so that they can improve their craft and thus outcomes for students. Are special education teachers are dealing with more difficult student behavior and more challenging parents. On top of paperwork, their workloads are mounting with no relief in sight.  

Kathy Chisholm, Davis School District

Teaching is a huge job that few realize how involved and draining it can be. We have to figure out a way to make teachers want to stick it out and stay with it!  

Maureen Clark, Davis School District

District oversight is top heavy, money does not reach the classroom  

Kristen Davidson, Davis School District

Education isn't cheaper by the dozen.  

Eileen Dempsey, Davis School District

Grading schools for test scores is not OK!  

Allison Downs, Davis School District

How hard it is to teach without feeling valued.  

Erin Fuller, Davis School District

I would like my legislators to know that SPED teachers are extremely underpaid compared to the rest of the country, we are losing them because of this.  

Laura Guillaume, Davis School District

If I could share one message with legislators it would be to put your feelings and biases towards public education to the side and focus on the wonderful children/students of our state. Be more supportive and less critical of teachers. Many times, our hands are tied and we are doing the best that we can. Our voices often go unheard, but as some of the people who have entrusted our vote to you, it is your job to represent our voices instead of special interest groups. There are no perfect teachers or parents or legislators for that matter, so let's work together instead of against each other in doing what's best for the children of our state. Also, I would like to thank those legislators that support teachers. They are those legislators who know that teachers didn't go into teaching for the money. We are here to provide our students with the best quality education that we can give. We have no ulterior motives other than to see our students' smiling faces each and every day. When we feel valued as professionals in education, it encourages us to do our very best. And when I say professionals, we have earned that right by earning a degree in education which should be a fundamental requirement in any society. So, thank you for your monetary and emotional support.  

Kammy Hanson, Davis School District

In my experience, teachers work very hard, and are very dedicated and give many hours beyond what is expected. It would be nice to be appreciated more.  

Robin Harris, Davis School District

Now is the time to stop messing around with teachers: let them do their jobs, pay them as professionals, back off with needless testing, stop treating educators as over-educated peasants.  

Richard Heath, Davis School District

I love teaching, I love working with students. But, I wish it was that easy. I work very hard to plan and make sure all their needs are met. I put in two extra hours of my own, unpaid time, everyday. Plus, I take work home over the weekend and I still feel like I can't get it all done. I have used a lot of my own money and resources on my classroom
and students. I have a lot of behavior problems with students stemming from home or parental problems. I spend so much time disciplining and parenting students, that I can't get any instruction time in. I have 4 students that have already had over 14 absences and it's just the second term. It gets really depressing when I see other professions (same amount of education) put in less time and less stress and get paid a lot more. It's no wonder teachers are leaving the profession. Our brains tell us it is not worth it, but our hearts tell us the students are worth it. It's an internal battle that each teacher has to face and make decisions. It's a slap in the face when they hire people without teaching degrees, and I'm expected to teach and help them without any extra pay. I have been observed during snack time when I taught Kindergarten, and got marked down for not using technology. I have been marked down for not having my daily objectives listed, when in reality they were on the white board behind my principal giving the observation. I have been observed during a Valentines party and got marked down for not assessing and explicitly teaching. I got marked down for having garbage on the floor on another observation, and the students were cutting out word sorts. There is no place for the educator to write their thoughts or opinions, or defend what was really going on. We just get marked down and it makes our averages drop. There are a lot of things they can do differently on the observations to make them more valid and fair.

Susan Horning, Davis School District

My students are the future and they will be taking care of us one day, lets make sure they are getting a good education and support.

Margaret Jensen, Davis School District

you're not listening to the people who voted you in. You come in with your own agendas. Our state's growth in family sizes that affect schools and quality education can be the last thing funded. You can't squeeze anymore blood out of the turnip you've squeezed over the past decade. Wake up and make a significant difference in the lives of people.

C. Kirkham, Davis School District

Special Education has been on the back burner long enough

Kathleen Lamborn, Davis School District

You make decisions thinking you know what's best for all the schools, students and teachers and you never even set foot in an actual classroom. You're looking at raw, often times incomplete data. Would you for one second think like educators instead of businessmen? Come and observe classes, think about everything you put on the shoulders of teachers and try to teach something rather than making laws and rules based on what you think is best?

Maria Lee, Davis School District

Come to my classroom. See what I do.

Carol Madsen, Davis School District

Class size does matter!

Anjanette McNeely, Davis School District

Teacher shortage is effecting student learning.

Lisa Menlove, Davis School District

Education needs more money so people will value teachers and learning.

Marilyn Merkley, Davis School District

My students enjoy that I do not have them do their assignments using laptops or computers. They would rather do worksheets, assignments from the book, or hands-on activities. I am telling you this because the big push is for one-to-one technology in the classroom and the kids do not really like learning that way.

Troy Murray, Davis School District
We need to show how much being an educator is valued by respecting teacher demands.

*Megan Porer, Davis School District*

It is time for you to start treating educators as professionals and to stop creating mandates and programs for us to follow. Get out of our classrooms and allow us to do what we have trained and qualified to do -- teach! We appreciate financial support, but the constant meddling in our profession has destroyed any incentive we have to creatively solve the problems that we face. You do not over-regulate any other profession and you do not have the training and experience to micromanage us. We invite you to actually sit in classrooms and try to manage them, rather than attend the dog and pony shows that you typically see in the schools. We love our students and we are deeply invested in their success. Please allow us to do the jobs for which we were hired.

*Debbie Quigley, Davis School District*

Education is vital part of a better society, if we care so much about families and children here in Utah you can show it by supporting education legislation that betters schools and helps keep professional and qualified employees in our state.

*Lauren Rich, Davis School District*

I am a teacher and I love my job. I love the students and want the best for them. My parents and both my brothers have been or are currently educators. So I come from a long line of educators. However, Raising kids on a teacher salary has its challenges and when I was a single mom, there were times we could barely make ends meet. I was offered another job and would have made more money although it was a job that didn't require a degree. After talking to my children, they knew I wouldn't be happy doing anything but teaching. They were willing to sacrifice so I could continue in the profession I love. As a kid, I always knew I wanted to be a teacher. I am so glad I am still a teacher and wish more good people would join the profession but I hear all the time I wouldn't make enough money. Just for instance I have two grown sons who now make more then I do without a degree and I have a masters degree. This gives children the idea education isn't important. I would love to see teachers paid more so we can get more people interested in being a teacher.

*Natalie Roach, Davis School District*

We are in this profession because of our love of children and teaching. Over the last 10 years our workload has increased significantly, while support has not. Please consider that the policies you make regarding teachers also affects the education of the children of Utah.

*Gloria Smith, Davis School District*

Why I teach and why I feel it is not possible to do so at this time. Too many demands with large classes and no time

*Donna L. Trease, Davis School District*

Teachers are overworked, under paid and under appreciated. Expectations for teachers are too much, and if things don't change, teachers will quit. Teachers should have a life outside of school, but we don't. Teachers' own kids need to be their priority, but as it stands, teachers' families are sacrificing more than they should have to.

*Heather Jacobson, Duchesne County School District*

As a technology teacher who supports the entire staff and teaches all grade level classes I see the many needs of the students and teachers. We need to lower class sizes for teachers. Having a class of 37 fifth grades is unacceptable and detrimental to student learning. We also need to increase teacher salary to recruit the most talented and committed educators to provide the rigorous and high quality education that our students deserve.

*Rebecca Baggett, Granite School District*
Overall Education Budget

THE INCREASE IN SALARY LAST YEAR WAS APPRECIATED. WE NEED TO CONTINUE TO TAKE STEPS TO ATTRACT AND KEEP NEW TEACHERS IN ORDER TO ADDRESS THE TEACHER SHORTAGE. RULES LIMITING RETIRING TEACHERS FROM RETURNING SHOULD BE CHANGED TO HELP ADDRESS THIS PROBLEM

Ray Barton, Granite School District

Teachers work hard, and aren't treated as most professionals. We are struggling with keeping qualified teachers because the pay isn't great, and the load too much. The testing also is way too much throughout the entire school year.

Jennifer Bodell, Granite School District

Teachers are the solution to education not the problem.

Diann Bowles, Granite School District

This is a hard job, and a big responsibility, to educate our future leaders and community members. In order for teachers to be able to handle the stress and commitment and time it takes to do this job well, we need a more professional career salary. Right now we are being undervalued and pushed aside.

Beth Christophersen, Granite School District

If I was to ever leave teaching it would be because of the ridiculous expectations I am held to and the lack of support from legislators dealing with difficult parents and students. I should not be the enemy.

Alexia Crandall, Granite School District

We would greatly appreciate being viewed as professionals and trusted to do the job that we have been trained to do.

Brooke Deardorff, Granite School District

First, I feel there is a definite need for more full time professionals to be positioned at one home school, which are trained to deal with mental health and wellness. In addition, Special Educators are being inundated with so many referrals it takes months of tracking data and testing and then those special education teachers are not full time at one school because they are so far and few between. This, in my personal opinion, creates a lack of consistency. Camaraderie between general education and special education teachers plays a key role in student gains when collaboration and consistency are prevalent. Full time teachers are not equipped or trained to deal with the rising amount of children experiencing adverse childhood experiences. It is extremely difficult to teach and learn with so many outside obstacles and emotional barriers. In many cases, the heightened demand on teachers and school communities to help students rise to academic achievement becomes an unattainable accomplishment for not only students but all stakeholders. i.e. teachers, parents, administrators, districts because of these influences. In turn, both students and teachers taste the bitterness of defeat and failure. We are trying everything to overcome so many of the hardships students face but it is a daunting task - but done with love and trust. However, it is exhausting! Often, as an educational cohort, we look at the academic aspect of children, but it seems as though we forget to ascertain whether or not our students are in a healthy socio-emotionally stable frame of mind to learn what we as educators are trying to teach them. Sure we can do clubs, and have an open door/open teacher-parent dialogue, have food pantries, wash clothes, give children gloves, talk to them when they have a rough day, and deal with the overwhelming effects of poverty on their brains and physical toll of their body, but then am I educating them academically or mentally and emotionally? Why isn't there an assessment that asks about the whole child, not just the academic child. This MAY or may not have an impact on their successes in other areas of instruction and curriculum. Secondly, teachers should be treated with respect as professionals and many in society forget the life-long impact of fabulous teachers. I still have not come to any sure conclusions as to why such a huge shift has happened ultimately giving teachers a bad reputation, but even as a first year teacher I feel the affects of this from districts, administration, parents, legislative decisions made on our behalf, and all of these people’s views trickle down through student points of view. How do we change this?

Kim Dillingham, Granite School District
Overall Education Budget

Education needs to be the number one priority on every citizen’s mind. We can’t afford to put it anywhere but first.

Aubrey Dillman, Granite School District

Not all schools have the same supplies or opportunities and the legislators need to make sure all schools are on equal footing

Sonya Dollins-Colton, Granite School District

The number of mandates elementary is receiving is becoming a huge over load.

Jay Graft, Granite School District

I teach Kindergarten. Every day I come to work I feed my students two meals per day, check for properly clothed bodies, dry tears, watch for bruises of the body and the soul and address them appropriately...then teach. There is so much more to teaching a child than test results. Please remember that.

Charmaine Grimm, Granite School District

As a teacher I aspire to educate, condition, and prepare my students to take lead, protect, and preserve our communities, economy and planet for future generations to come. I do this with a passion that drives from being a citizen, mother, and educator of this country. I would only ask that as an educator I am recieved with trust, proper support, and a sense of being valued for what I give to our community.

April Guardado, Granite School District

Story #1--Before our recent pay raise, I was living from check to check. Now, I am able to put money into a savings and am able to buy a home. Story #2--There must be a way teachers can have smaller class sizes. There needs to be a way teachers are not teaching 20 students in one class then 39 in another class.

LaDonna Gustafson, Granite School District

That Teachers are treated not very fair!

David Head, Granite School District

Charter schools and public schools must be held to the same educational standards (accountability). Utah education should use ESSA as a guide for better education of our students. Utah is competing NATIONALLY for quality teachers. Utah’s quality of life is not as good as it has been in the past because of air quality and higher cost of living. Those cannot be used as recruitment vehicles as in the past. Teacher compensation is becoming MORE of a priority in obtaining quality teachers!

Dennis Heidel, Granite School District

There are a lot of talented special education teachers. The students in special education classrooms might not score the highest on testing, but there is a lot of amazing progress that takes place in self contained special education classrooms. These teachers and students work very hard and should not be forgotten, set aside or told to work harder to get the students up to grade level. It is our intent to work with our students to their own unique abilities and to celebrate their successes no matter how small.

Heidi Henderson, Granite School District

Homeless youth prevention. Teacher Salary vs. Administrative Salary. A voice for teachers

Patricia Honey, Granite School District

I need smaller class sizes. 20 kids per class would be perfect!...or I need more funding for more aids in my class. I am a 5th year teacher and I am exhausted. I can't keep up with all the small groups, differentiation, language support, resource referrals, and interventions I am expected to do. I am worn out and ready to quit.

Michelle Hortin, Granite School District
Overall Education Budget

The urgent need to invest long term in a progressive and comprehensive education program to secure the future of our state

Richard Jenkel, Granite School District

The frustration of testing. All students shouldn't be tested only on paper, but through observations and real life situations. Preparing for the real world requires time, patience, consistency and a knowledge of their needs individually. Allow teachers to all be paid equally from K -12. We should only be required to specialize in 1 to 2 areas to be proficient at what we teach and not make Elementary specialize is 6 + areas while Jr. High and High school teachers need one area of expertise. There are many areas of relevant that are indicators of what makes a successful student successful through the support of their teachers. Teachers in elementary are require to be experts in more areas of studies than most people who work in other fields. That is not reasonable to ask. Our pay and hours we put in are not indicators that the future leaders of our country are important, when not enough funds are put into pay or funding needs of public schools. It's frustrating to keep loving and sharing your passion for education when teachers are force to work more with less everyday.

Sandy Thuy Jensen, Granite School District

Class sizes are way too large. Anything above 28 becomes crowd control, not teaching.

EllenMae Johnson, Granite School District

It is time to fund education. Education powers our economy, helps children climb out of poverty, and enriches our cultural environment. Please, let now be the time to fund education in Utah.

Susan Jones, Granite School District

Teachers are not being supported in the classroom.

Mackenzie Kemp, Granite School District

I recently read an article about the best high school in every state in the United States. Each one had very small class sizes. Class size does make a difference in teaching ability. You can't have your class sizes unless you have more teachers. You can't have more teachers unless you offer a better salary and benefits than other places.

Paul McClatchy, Granite School District

We have kids with high needs (regular ed and special ed) who are sharing their teacher with 34 other kids, and we can't fill the aide positions. We need smaller class sizes, and better pay and benefits for teachers' aides.

Michael McDonough, Granite School District

Feeling supported and safe should be the right of every teacher in the classroom. It is sadly getting to the point that every teacher I know is planning their exit, whether leaving the profession or counting down to retirement. It is becoming a burden that we don't know if we can bear any longer.

Jenny Morris, Granite School District

It's time to put of children first. They are our future. We need quality teachers, smaller classrooms, more support from our legislators. Testing has taken over teaching.

Cindy Moyle, Granite School District

Most of us have had to work 2 or 3 jobs while teaching to support our families. That decreases the time that we can spend planning, but it is the only way to pay bills for children. You took away the pension when times were rough, but we still make much less than others with Bachelor's degrees or Master's. Gangs are increasing again and the behavior makes it harder to teach.

Jane Myers, Granite School District
Overall Education Budget

Students deserve to have veteran teachers instruct them in a smaller class size, up-to-date materials and technology. I have 39 students in a class, no new textbooks, and not enough time in the day to grade papers, build my curriculum, consult with teachers from my department, mentor new teachers, and write emails, or make phone calls home. I have been teaching for over two decades and have worked with about 25 new teachers in my field. This revolving door in our profession only harms students and puts such burdens on the teachers that continue year after year. Please consider lowering our class sizes, give us up-to-date materials, pay teachers or give bonus money to those outstanding in our field, and stop giving the Public Education money to Charter Schools that do not have the same strict guidelines to follow. Thank you.

Susie Myers, Granite School District

Help our teachers

Sharon Poulsen, Granite School District

Class sizes are problematic, especially with the younger children. Grade schools needs smaller class sizes, and educated teachers with twenty first century skills. Education should be a high priority, and our world is dependent on our children.

Kelly Price, Granite School District

Education of our children should be one of the top priorities, not something that is taken care of among the last priorities.

Karen Reynolds, Granite School District

Every child in Utah should have a safe, public school in his neighborhood he can walk to. Parents should send their children to the child's neighborhood school, a public school, which has a solid basic educational curriculum - even though they feel the school is not good enough for their child. If improvements are needed they should work together with other parents in their neighborhood, at the school level, to insist the school to become "good enough" and thereby help their community and all children. The legislature can work toward the goal of a safe, appropriate neighborhood school for all children. (This can also have the added bonus of reducing car emissions to clean the air around us.)

Kathleen Rice, Granite School District

I teach kindergarten and I had very large classes last year, 28 in the morning and 29 in the afternoon. This year I have 24 students in the morning and 25 in the afternoon. Even just having 4-5 fewer kids in the class has made a huge difference and I feel like I can better serve my students this year. I am more aware of their individual needs, I can work with students in smaller groups and give them more of the attention they need, and I have more time for planning because I have less grading, copying, etc. I think I would be able to do an even better job if my class sizes continued to decrease in the future. I would love to see more teachers hired to reduce class sizes and that is the most important issue for me. I also would love to have more funding for classroom aides to help with the workload and student support and have them be more fairly compensated (I have had a couple really great aides who have had to quit because they didn't make enough money), more money for classroom supplies, and increased salary/compensation for classroom teachers.

Rebecca Riley, Granite School District

Something needs to be done to help increase teacher morale. Teachers are very highly educated, yet are treated like we are uneducated. Society cannot function without teachers, and they need to be treated that way. This would do a lot to help with the teacher shortage that we are dealing with. Privatizing education or giving more money towards charter schools is not the answer. The education budget needs to be spent on finding the most qualified teachers who have a passion for education and who are willing to stay in the profession. Public school teachers are teaching the future leaders of this state and country. Supports are needed in classrooms, not just in increased funding and decreased class sizes, but also with increased funding for classroom aides.

Emily Saltas, Granite School District
Overall Education Budget

Teachers work hard and long to assure their students succeed. When there are more than 25 students in an elementary classroom a teacher spends most of the time disciplining and managing the class. Everything is not within a teacher's control, parents should be held accountable. I see and hear stories of parents blaming teachers for their child's poor grades or behavior. Many things begin at home. Misbehaving students in elementary schools is a real problem and must be addressed. Teacher burn out with these students is overwhelmingly high.

Becky Schaap, Granite School District

Quit marginalizing education and thinking one-size-fits-all packaging works when kids don't come in those packages. A business model is not best for education. Public funding is critical for education or decisions about your age related needs will be made by those not prepared.

Jill Sparks, Granite School District

The demands on teachers today are outrageous! No one can possibly do all that teachers are asked to do. It is not humanly possible. No wonder teachers are getting burned out and are leaving the profession. Make fewer demands, and allow us to simply teach.

Joan Thompson-Harris, Granite School District

Teachers are passionate about their careers, but without adequate living wages, small class sizes, nor supplies to be successful within the classroom, there isn't an incentive to stay in the field, let alone to encourage others to enter the field.

Joanna Timothy, Granite School District

One of the major issues that needs to be addressed to solve the teacher shortage program is the constant negative treatment of teachers by the legislature. If you truly value us and the work we do, increase our funding to try to catch up with the per pupil funding enjoyed by so many of our colleagues throughout the nation. If you want to attract people to our profession, treat us like professionals.

Kurt Twining, Granite School District

Teachers have more demands placed on them then ever before. The teacher shortage will only increase if we don't start addressing class size, teacher salary, and if we don't start finding ways to boost teacher morale. This all starts with funding, but also coming straight to the source -- THE TEACHERS, before making new laws and decisions that will directly affect students and teachers.

Rebecca Vala, Granite School District

I am a Dual Language Immersion Chinese teacher who grew up in China and have been to graduate school in the US. I have taught both in Hong Kong and the US at tertiary, secondary and elementary level. Three biggest structural impediment to improving student learning are: 1. Multiple preps. Currently, I have four preps (beyond contract stipulation), two of which are brand new curriculum and two are a couple years old. Having these many preps make it impossible for me to fine tune my courses. I also have many great ideas that I do not have time to implement. If I spend too much time on one class, my other classes suffer. Consequently, no classes become as better as I'd like. 2. Lack of unstructured planning time. Growing up as a student in China, I got feedback from teacher on my assignment the same day I handed them in. That loop of practice and feedback is important for both the educators and the students to monitor learning. Lack of planning time makes individual feedback impossible. Also, having to teach 6 out of 7 periods in a day makes collaboration a luxury. 3. Students need recess. Students need unstructured free time to socialize, relax and go to the restroom. Few adults can function effectively having to go through 7 periods a day with only 4 min in transition and a 30-min lunch break. Many students, afraid of being tardy, simply do not go to the restroom in that 4-min transition time. Instead, they miss part of the class to go to bathroom. Giving students regular break will significantly help with classroom management and engagement.

Mengqi Wang, Granite School District
Overall Education Budget

I would like to challenge all of the legislators to go to a school and sub for a day. It would be the administrators choice which classroom they subbed in. They should work with the teacher to see what goes into planning for a day and then stay and teach for all that day. It would be even better if they went for 3 days. I know that they have other jobs, but let them take the subs salary for that day or days. Let them work with some of our challenging students, or students who have left for Mexico for three weeks, or who come to school ill, etc, etc. I think that this should be a requirement to be a legislator that they sub at least one day a year.

Janet Wellman, Granite School District

I love my job and I love teaching the kids. Even with the low income, I am willing to be a teacher. Saying that, for how much we work, and plan outside of our contract hours so we can find the best ways to teach our kids, we're not getting paid enough. I also think the other faculty members such as the lunch ladies and janitors should earn more as well. They work hard and are a big part of our team at school. Also having a smaller class size would be amazing. That would give us teachers more time to focus more on the kids one on one. I think tests scores would go up much higher. With test scores as well, you need to think about each school and the environment. The school I'm working at is a title 1 school with over 30 different languages. You can't possibly think that these kids who can't speak English very well or at all can meet the state standard scores? Now that doesn't mean they don't learn anything. If you actually looked more at growth, you can see how much these students have learned which I think is a lot more important than seeing if they met the scores that should have been reached. How would you feel if you took a test in a language you don't understand to well and expect to get a high score. You will feel pretty lousy. Another huge problem I don't agree with is that anyone who has a bachelor degree can become teachers. I think teachers should have a degree in education. First, it's not fair to those who worked hard in school to get their teaching degree. Second, the state shouldn't be so desperate for teachers that they will hire anyone that has any degree. If you want good quality teachers, hire teachers that went to school in that field. If you need more teachers, maybe think about actually paying us better and that would probably be a huge help on not having a shortage on teachers. Also, I don't think teachers need to take the praxis tests to get their license. We already went to school for at least 4 years, why do we need to take a stupid test that we don't actually need because we don't really teach that to the kids. These tests are college level tests that the kids don't ever learn. I would think having a degree in education would be good enough. I know for me, I have major testing anxiety and science and social studies are subjects I have a hard time learning. The praxis content tests almost made me not be a teacher. I had to retake those tests several times in order for me to finally pass them, plus pay so much money! If you need good quality teachers, pay us more, have smaller classrooms, and don't require us to do more testing to have our license when we have our degree in education. Believe we can do our jobs without having to take these tests.

Tarikua Whatcott, Granite School District

UEA is not a liberal organization. It exists only to fight for the rights and benefits of teachers, and for practices that are best for students in Utah

Fred Ash, Jordan School District

more money=better education

Brett Freeman, Jordan School District

Some of our public schools are getting many monolingual students and English is NOT that language. We need more assistance in working with these students.

Bev Griffith, Jordan School District

Education is one of the most important things you are addressing this year. Please take time to look at this fact: teacher shortage. People are not wanting to enter into the teaching profession due to government micro management vs autonomy. Professionalism should be valued and encouraged. Why are we not giving trust to a teacher to reach her/his students needs with an educated accountability and not just a check off sheet that we need to account to an administrator who is accounting a check off sheet to a district ... etc. with so many requirements and restrictions that it takes more time doing that than it does teaching our students ... not to mention the stress and
Overall Education Budget

worry if we are doing it exactly the way it is required by our administrators (and it seems to change a bit every year just to cause more stress)? Money is not the biggest issue for most teachers ... please take the outside testing "stress" away, all the testing accountability that we have to "report" and let us teach not just account. Teachers need support. We have parent support... we need legislator support! Please... keep class size small, support full-day kindergarten (as it is really first grade as compared to when you were in school), give compensation to teachers who are willing to do extras, reduce testing accountability, and give us our autonomy to do what we know how to do, namely, TEACH.

Vivian Gubler, Jordan School District

Stop requiring teachers to do more with less! Also, quit requiring so many tests (probably more from the district) to where we feel like we are always testing.

Liz Halloran, Jordan School District

I began my teaching career in a Title I school in Granite District as a classroom aide, then became a certified preschool teacher, and finally became a certified elementary teacher. I am in my 21st year of service in a classroom, and my 13th year as a certified kindergarten teacher. I currently teach in Jordan School District. I am a teacher because I absolutely love working with, and teaching children. During the past 20 years I have seen many changes in education. One of the things that impacts my ability to teach the most is class size. My classes are usually smaller because I teach in kindergarten, but many of my colleagues do not have room for all the children's desks, and their class sizes continue to grow. Teachers in our school are told that we need to be creative and figure out ways to deal with the ever growing class sizes. My classes are usually 5 or 6 children over the optimum student to teacher ratio for kindergarten, but I feel lucky as many other kindergarten teachers have over 7 to 9 children more than is best in an early childhood classroom. I feel my love for children and teaching is used against me. I will do my job for less pay, little to no recognition for a job well done, less than desirable classroom supplies and conditions, and constant pressure to do more with less. Over the past twenty years the testing requirements have become outrageous and I am now spending so much time assessing my kindergarten students, I hardly have time to teach the required curriculum. I am a good teacher, I am always learning and perfecting my teaching skills, I have received awards for my teaching, I have taught and mentored other teachers. I will never quit my job or let my students down, they receive my best every day. The people making decisions about my students and my classroom have no idea how things work in a classroom and all the things I do each day. We need the people making the decisions to be more involved in education. Come into my classroom and my colleagues classrooms, see how we make a difference in our student's lives each day, and see the things we do with so little. Please make decisions based on actual knowledge of the issues, get involved and listen those of us who are in the trenches each day trying to make a difference in our corner of the world!

Kerry Hoffmann, Jordan School District

I am a retired educator. It is sad to see that the education needs in Utah are still the same needs that were there in 1979.

Ann Hollowell, Jordan School District

Fund education.

Terry Huff, Jordan School District

Stop with the testing and really look into the impact teachers are having

Robyn Kabwere, Jordan School District

I teach middle school reading and have also worked as a literacy specialist in an elementary school. I feel as though more and more students are getting to middle school without the basic reading skills necessary to be successful in secondary schools. I feel this is due to underprepared teachers as well as budget cuts over the past several years. Once students reach middle school, it is much more difficult to remedy these reading deficits.

Toni Lasater, Jordan School District
Overall Education Budget

Utah cannot afford to continue to be last in education funding in the country if you hope to attract big tech firms to locate in Utah.

*Megan Mccormick, Jordan School District*

Before I went into education, without a degree, I was taking home, after taxes, 100K per year. I have four degrees and went into education, not to make money but to help kids, so they might have a brighter and better future. However, it took me 30 years to go from a beginning salary of 28K to 50K. We live in a very sad and disrespectful state of how our legislators treat our teachers...., those on the front line, in the trenches.

*Max Weiss, Jordan School District*

We work hard, and do our very best. Please don't portray us as not trying to do our best.

*Donna Allred, Juab School District*

Thank you for your efforts to fight for public education! The fight, however slow, is making a difference.

*Betty Chamberlain, Kane County School District*

Special Education is under funded and has high burnout. Aides are not paid enough and are not given adequate training. We also lack good curriculum and technology to help students with disabilities.

*Pat Black, Logan City School District*

Teachers don't feel that they are respected. Teachers have the summer off and they get alot of vacation time in between. They don't relize what it is like being in the classroom.

*George Duersch, Logan City School District*

Teachers are the life blood of of our nation's future. Second to only the family.

*Kirtt Myers, Millard School District*

As a veteran teacher I am very concerned about retaining and attracting new teachers. I want my replacement to be a good one!!!! However, many of the quality young educators are losing interest in teaching. Also many of the new teachers we interview are far below the quality of those retiring. Something needs to be done!!!!

*Mark Durfey, Murray City School District*

You get what you pay for and more with teachers.

*Keeko Georgelas, Murray City School District*

There is such a disconnect between how they perceive the school and the reality of it. I want legislators to spend at least a week in schools with different SES, get to know students on individual basis, talk with teachers about their concerns and take them in considerations during the legislative sessions. They need to be realistic when it comes to the achievement expected outcomes of students with disabilities. They all make progress but it depends greatly on their cognitive issues, which need to be taking in consideration. One major benefit that decreases the gap between abled and disable students are the accommodations the IEP team decides the students need in the Gen Ed classroom. For example, if a student has difficulty with short term memory and recall of information, a calculator will help the student with math computation. If they understand specific math concepts, but never get the answer correct because they can't recall multiplication facts, they should be allowed to use the calculator during assessments. We are in the technology era, with any restrictions. Why can't these students use them? Why can't we do all we can to help them experience success? They spend so many hours practicing math facts, when they could participate in the learning process with their peers and feel successful. Great special education teachers and teachers in general leave the profession due to the pressure and high expectation mandated by our legislature, with minimal support coming from them.

*Kathy Hanks, Murray City School District*
Overall Education Budget

Our daily demands. All the moving parts that go into teaching students, people, on a daily basis. The demands are increasing, but also the demands for mental health and emotional intelligence. Our students come hungry, stressed, abused more and more every year. We need smaller class sizes to support these students as well as intervention systems. Basically money for new programs and more teachers. We are here for students. We are not whining entitled people. We just want to do our jobs well.

Jennie LaFortune, Murray City School District

The #1 way to reduce the teacher shortage and increase retention is to increase the income. The more financially viable the career becomes, the more people who will consider it. People keep dancing around this because nobody wants to fork out the dough. The fact is, people are going to go where the pay is. Better pay = more applications. Everybody knows that teachers get paid s###, so who can be surprised when a high schooler sits down with their counselor and declines the idea because, they "want to make more than that." You know it's what happens.

Everybody knows. It's so obvious. Where the pay is, there too will the people go. Stop ignoring it. Stop pretending it's this, that, or the other thing. It's the pay. I LOVE my job. LOVE IT! But if another job were to open for me that I would also enjoy and pay me more, I'll quit teaching and go do that, because I have a family to provide for and a retirement to save for. The teacher's world pivots on the hinge of the paycheck. Everybody acts like being a teacher is some great moral calling; it's not. It's a job, like any other, and we do it to get paid. The entire world expects us to be these high moral giants, but then they pay us barely more than the janitors. This discrepancy is not how you win new converts to the educator pool. The rule goes: "You get paid what you're worth." Well, that tells me that the district, state, and union don't think I'm worth much, and perspective teachers see that. You don't think these college kids look at the pay scales and think, "Huh, they must not want me that bad." They do. I thought that. Lucky for them, it was the path I choose anyway. Pave the path with gold and watch students stampede down it.

Sterling Whipple, North Sanpete School District

There is very little incentive for teachers to stay in the career for the long haul. Things are in place to attract teachers to the profession and monies are spent for Level I teachers to be mentored or coached. Teachers with many years of experience need learning opportunities and incentives, too!

Deana Coates, Nebo School District

Need to pay enough money to attract quality teachers and have them remain in the profession.

LaDell Gillman, Nebo School District

The students are coming harder and harder to teach. For what teachers are asked to do and what they get paid to do it, teaching is becoming a less and less desirable job.

Heidi Hall, Nebo School District

I don't know what they haven't heard

Tara Lundell, Nebo School District

“SALT LAKE CITY — Qualifying special educators could earn stipends starting at $4,000 annually under a legislative proposal that is similar to bonuses now paid to teachers of mathematics, some science disciplines and computer science. The proposal by Rep. Val Potter, R-North Logan, and Sen. Howard Stephenson, R-Draper, would cap the stipends at $10,000 a year. Potter, addressing the Utah Legislature's Public Education Appropriations Subcommittee on Wednesday, said the stipend is needed to address a shortage of special education teachers.”(Marjorie Cortez November 8, 2017)
Overall Education Budget

The facts of my job: I chose it and as you can see after 26 years I am still going strong. Being compensated for my extra hours would be a wonderful way to say thank you and we recognize the extra hours you spend being a Special Educator! There are coaches of all sports that spend many additional hours at the school. They receive stipends. Since we are in a teacher shortage, this stipend would also be an incentive to encourage more individuals to pursue the career of a Special Education Teacher!

Kristie McMurdie, Nebo School District

Please come spend a week in any classroom. Please come see the day-to-day intricacies of our day and then see how it compares to what you felt before. See how many of our students depend on school for a hot meal, for TLC, and for so many other critical survival components on top of the educational ones we also provide. Please spend more than an hour or even a day. Then go back and decide how best to serve our student populations and our future caretakers.

Sarai T Memmott, Nebo School District

We are losing good teachers because of low pay and lack of support. Teacher can not live on their salary alone!!!

Callie Naccarato, Nebo School District

I have 21 years worth of stories...I would love to share with an INTERESTED Legislator

Mike Parker, Nebo School District

What do you think the kids of Utah are worth? Do you really think the majority of teachers aren't doing the best they can?

David Rencher, Nebo School District


Cindy Sumsion, Nebo School District

You need to address accountability for district administrators and principals: They cannot be given carte blanche to make "progressive" changes to school systems, holding teachers in check with punitive evaluation measures. Sop worrying about teacher accountability and start focusing on too many administrators (who themselves can't teach) spending money on new methods that don't work. We know what works: caring, committed teachers and small classes. No more tests. No more progressive programs. Back to basics. Kids need to read and write, speak and listen, learn and communicate. Let good teachers do their jobs!

Michael Thompson, Nebo School District

What's more important, student education or your special interest friends?

Chris Vest, Nebo School District

Last year I had a class with 29 1st graders. That's too many!

Rachel Wigginton, Nebo School District

I feel that teachers are overworked, with unreasonable expectations. There are many expectations with very few monetary rewards.

Shea Wimmer, Nebo School District

In the community I teach in...(inner city schools) we are the life line for their total education...You can hardly put a price on that...but good teachers are leaving because they can't meet their own financial obligations. So much pressure is put on them with no financial reward...it has to be a given.

Suzanne Williams Dennison, Ogden School District
Overall Education Budget

There is a country wide teacher shortage epidemic occurring and something needs to change. Having just graduated, I was absolutely amazed at how small my cohort was, comprising of only 5 students. Asking young people what they are going to school for and if they have ever considered pursuing education, most state that they would become a teacher but it is not realistic to live off of a teachers salary. If society stopped funding prisons and started funding schools, there would be an increase in school attendance and a decrease in prison population.

Brigid Giles, Ogden School District

Every year I spend more and more money on my students to ensure they have the materials and newest innovations they need to become successful not just in school, but in their lives. I love what I do, but I am losing money year after year with little to no compensation. My students are excelling and I believe in them wholeheartedly, but I may have to find a higher paying position so that I can take care of my family.

Deanna Shiverdecker, Ogden School District

As a special educa
tion teacher in Utah for 16 years, and a public education employee for 20 years, we need to better fund education, especially teacher salaries to ensure that we keep and entice quality educators to meet the needs of Utah students. I do not know of a teacher who doesn't work above their “contract time” to meet the current expectations they have on them. It has been too long that teachers have done it because they love the students, without compensation for what they are doing. Even though we are at the bottom of funding for education, our students are not at the bottom of the nation in performance. Show teachers, parents, and students that they matter more than they ever have before.

Wendy Wilson, Ogden School District

I retired from the classroom four years ago after devoting more than forty years to the profession. I experienced many changes and shifts in the educational system during those years. But one thing has never changed. Every student deserves a well trained, qualified, caring teacher.

Trudy Henderson, Other

How they are making TEACHING even more difficult than it already is by not understanding OR even acknowledging the efforts the majority of teachers make on behalf of their students.

Brenda Bensch, Park City School District

Teachers and quality schools are vital to the success of our community as a whole. Please provide us with the support we need to best do our jobs.

Joanna Hammel, Park City School District

Growth in funding for public education in Utah began falling behind the rest of the Country decades ago but the resulting decay of services was largely kept hidden from the public for two reasons. Utah possessed some of the most dedicated hard working teachers and Utah students were largely from stable supportive homes. Those teachers are now retiring and the current work conditions are so poor that few college graduates view a career in Utah public education as a viable option. Schools are now forced to serve ever expanding social roles with students because fewer and fewer of Utah children have the stable supportive home life. Utah can no longer hide its failure to adequately fund public education. The crisis is no longer in the future. The future is now.

Charlie Matthews, Park City School District

Utah has the opportunity to become one of the top states for education in the country. We do an amazing job on a limited budget, just imagine what we could accomplish if we were anywhere close to other states in funding.

Melanie Rice Moffat, Park City School District

I invite each member of the legislature to come substitute in any classroom for one week, including planning lessons. (You only need a high-school diploma to apply as a substitute.) When you have walked in our shoes for a week, go back and write the laws you wish you had in place. It will change your whole world. We need legislators who
Overall Education Budget

understand what teaching really means. We need legislators who understand what it is like to manage a class of 27 ten year olds or 44 high-schoolers. We need legislators who care that Utah spends the LEAST of any state on their students, and whose teachers are paid less than most other states. We need legislators who care as much as the students in the desks what will happen to them. We need you.

Mariel Boone, Provo City School District

Utah has gotten away with underpaying teachers for too long. I work 60-80 hours a week, have over a decade of experience, hold a Master's degree plus over 30 additional graduate credits. I have invested thousands and thousands of dollars into my students. (Last year I spent over $2500 out of pocket.) I am passionate, innovative, and exactly the type of teacher that Utah needs to attract. However, I make $50,000 a year. I took a $20,000 pay cut to come to Utah and work more hours than I ever have in the past. I have zero intention of teaching in Utah beyond a couple more years. They can't compete. This year, I know of 3 quality colleagues leaving because of the pay. I witness first hand the lack of quality in candidates because of the shortage. Some of the hires are appalling and I would never stand for my child to be in such a class. Nobody should stand for it. However, if we want quality, we have to pay for quality. Then we can afford to be picky and get and retain the best.

Nicole Guzman, Provo City School District

I really enjoy teaching. I am getting married this summer and my fiance is from another state. As I look at the salary schedules for other states it makes more financial sense to move away from friends and family to be a teacher elsewhere. I have worked as a teacher for about ten years. If I were to move to this state I would start over on their pay scale and make 17k more as a brand new teacher in that state. That is a new convertible every two years for the same fulfilling job.

Lydia L Knudsen, Provo City School District

The lack of pre-service teachers signing up for undergraduate elementary education courses at our local universities is MIND BLOWING! We are suffering! How do we get exceptional people to be the teachers our next generation so desperately needs? I am a sixth generation educator of Utah children. Ten of my siblings or their spouses are current teachers. Our teaching family is struggling to get even one child of our next generation to even look at teaching! Our children are exceptional students (having been educated and tutored by some very outstanding teachers), and are not even interested in the education field. All of them are looking elsewhere for their college degrees. They have seen first-hand how hard we have worked, and what we have to show for our extensive efforts, and are not interested! In fact, in the case of both my father and grandfather, a family farm is the only thing that kept the family with food on the table, and modest clothing on our backs. Excellent health insurance, that was extremely cost effective during the late 60's and throughout the 70's was the drawing factor toward education for my father. In my case, I have lived below the poverty line (this includes with advanced schooling beyond a Bachelor's Degree) for most of my married life. Even with careful budgeting, there have not been enough funds for braces, if we also wanted our four children to play an instrument and participate in school sports programs. Please support "Our Schools Now" and do everything in your power to make being an educator "WORTH IT" again!

Teresa Toluta'u, Provo City School District

I believe in elementary schools one-to-one devices are not the answer to higher test results, etc. Elementary students need paper and pencil practice to learn the basics that will help them to understand apps and programs as they move on to higher grades. If devices are available to elementary students, they should be taught coding rather than just using them for app practice. The state of Utah also needs to pass an education budget that will attract and keep quality teachers in the field. Not only do salaries need to be increased, but other compensations to make teaching more inviting should be addressed: smaller class size, better insurance options, and respect for the teaching profession. The teacher shortage needs our attention now for long-term solutions which should not include allowing under qualified applicants to teach in the classrooms. Another issue I believe is a great concern is the general lack of respect for educators which directly affects teacher morale and longevity in the profession.

Sharron Bird, South Sanpete School District
Overall Education Budget

Focus on the key issues that teachers support, rather than political agendas that sound good to the public.

Darren Mecham, South Sanpete School District

There is a huge teacher shortage in Utah right now that needs to be addressed not by lowering standards and expectations for teachers, but by making teacher education more accessible and affordable, and by making the position more attractive to potential candidates.

Brittany Armstrong, Salt Lake City School District

Listen to our educators needs for their students.

Harriett Arreola, Salt Lake City School District

If the government is going to treat education as a business, they need to start investing in it and training those policy makers in the art of running a successful company.

Mercedes Barica, Salt Lake City School District

Lack of paid planning time negatively impacts students. Teachers spend many hours everyday without pay to planning. Teacher morale is low and the younger generation of college students are not choosing teaching as a profession.

Alison T Brown, Salt Lake City School District

How the legislative funding for school libraries helps.

Sheryl Burton, Salt Lake City School District

If you want this to be a thriving destination for business and culture, you need to stop being the last in the nation in terms of school investment.

Mary Angela Elegante, Salt Lake City School District

The legislator should be ashamed of themselves. knowing that the teachers in Utah are the lowest paid in the nation and we have a rainy day fund. That could pay off the national debt!!!!!!!!!! And what happened to the day that teachers taught. learning was fun and everyone got along. This consent use of testing is useless What a joke..

Federica Gallegos, Salt Lake City School District

It is important for us to attract and retain good teachers. I have friends who have quit teaching because, though they love the profession, they feel that they can no longer afford the luxury of serving our students. Not only is it a matter of salary, but of health care benefits also need to be improved. Too much of my salary is simply handed over to my health care providers -- I have less "available" money now than I did five years ago due to my increased health care and prescription costs. One co-pay for a life-saving medication that I have to take is over $400.00 on my current health care plan, which is the best plan available in my district. Last year the co-pay for this same medication was $150.00 under the same plan, while the previous year, it was $75.00. The pharmacists actually apologize to me when I get the prescription for this medication filled, explaining that my school district's health care plan has the highest co-pay for this particular medication that they have ever seen. Something has to change!

Victoria Muehlberger, Salt Lake City School District

Unfortunately, teachers responsibilities currently include parenting students. Because parents are often unable or unskilled at assisting students at home, teachers have assumed the responsibility for not only the academic success of their students, but teachers also must include ethics and behavior training. Additionally, students level of engagement has decreased due to their generations addiction to social media and technology. We must find methods and pedagogy to counter the lack of parental support and student interest in academics and future success.

Anonymous, Salt Lake City School District
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If they need questions answered about education, ask the experts that are in the trenches everyday. If not, they should have to spend a week doing the complete job of a teacher before they run for office so that they can understand the complexities of being an educator and the changes laws that have an affect on education without understanding the impact that they have on teachers and students.

George O. Judd, Sevier School District

Public Education is more and more demanding on teachers. Pressure from administrators, right up to superintendents is ever more stressful. There is a lack of help with problem students from administrators. Parents are often given more respect than the classroom teacher. Sage testing, in a big way, is as much about manipulating the computer and writing equations than about asking questions and having students show their knowledge. The i-Ready Computer Program used at our school could easily replace the Sage Testing. We get the needed data to help students progress and we wouldn’t have to spend the money on SAGE and take time out of our schedule to do all the testing. Also, with i-Ready, parents would have a better idea of what the testing is about and how to help their student progress. In our school, we test SAGE three times a year. That is a a lot of time taken away from classroom teaching. It is disheartening to listen to teachers and feel their frustrations, knowing that things could be much better. So, besides the lower salaries of teaching, we seem to be asking people to enter a profession in which they will not be receiving a very high salary, but also, a profession in which you will have frustration after frustration thrown at you. Why work so hard in education when it would be easier to earn more money and have an easier work load in another profession?

Kraig Nilsson, Sevier School District

Will you please recognize that your decisions have long term consequences. Listen to the UEA as they represent the teacher voice in Utah. Teachers have solutions that will fulfill the needs of public education.

Kelly Peterson, Sevier School District

If you want better teachers, increase their pay. If you want students to learn more easily, decrease the class size.

William Sullivan, Tooele County School District

We need to attract and retain quality teachers. Look at holding schools accountable for learning, but more importantly, make teaching a respectable profession again. Look at increasing funding and reducing ridiculous demands on teachers in order to attract and keep the best and brightest.

Rachelle Durrant, Uintah School District

I am a professional in education because I want to live in a better world. I am training that “better” world. Many of the rules and policies you create make it hard for me to be successful. Filling my classroom and tying my hands when it comes to discipline turns me into an inexpensive babysitter. Please value me and my time by providing the money to purchase supplies instead of having to create them myself. When a profession is valued, there aren’t shortages in that area.

Angela T. Hansen, Uintah School District

I have 27 first-graders in my class and an autistic boy!! Too many very young students per teacher ratio!! Please, lower classroom

Tanna White, Uintah School District

Help me, help you, to help them, so they can help us

Lori Ruth, Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind

More funding is needed.

Kimberly Niday, Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind
Overall Education Budget

How ridiculous the evaluation tools they are using to evaluate educators. Also that the Sage test is not an accurate way to assess school performance.

Steve Marsing, Wasatch County School District

Education is the key to a productive citizen. Make it a priority.

Joseph Mellen, Wasatch County School District

Same thing I say each year. Watching you guys. Smaller class sizes is must. When caseloads/classes are too big, teachers are overworked, and students don't receive the needed attention and support. Putting more educators in schools to share the load will better help retain educators. Don't burn out educators.

Bret Morley, Washington County School District

It really bothers me that an educators wages aren't enough to support a family. What happened to the time when an individual could go to work and know that their family would be taken care of with the wages they earned. Now I am at the time of life where retirement is around the corner. I have saved my entire adult life so I can retire some day and now I am worried that I haven't done enough. It has put a strain on my finances over the years to prepare for the time I can retire.

Kathryn Parry, Washington County School District

I am a high school teacher in Utah. I am almost finished with my master's degree. Even with a graduate level of education, I will be making less than the average Utah worker. And I am ANYTHING but average. I do extraordinary work with extraordinary students every day. I am unsure of the future for myself and my students. I love my job, but I am not sure how long I will be able to afford being a teacher in Utah.

Dana Raine, Washington County School District

Utah has good public schools and teachers. Compare the data in an objective way, with same comparisons to charter, public school before making decisions. Use data, rather than articulate lobbyists.

Lorene A Sorensen, Washington County School District

Teachers are the professionals, yet legislators, administrators and parents (who believe the quick-fix ideas of legislators), are often the ones who determine how and what we teach. This is counterproductive. I believe that students would benefit if teachers were given much more discretion in the classroom, standardized testing was drastically reduced or eliminated, and pay throughout educators (including administration) was much more equitably distributed.

Kerrie Anderson, Weber School District

I think the legislators need to adequately and equitable fund education, because at some point in time the wheels will come off. Most educators understand the cut in education spending or the lack of education spending when the Great Recession hit. However, now that the economy is more robust how about funding the public education to pre-Recession levels. The lack of adequate and equitable public education funding has made Utah dead last in per pupil spending, to include D.C. I think this is against our values, as we purport to value our children as our greatest treasure, yet spend our treasure some place else. Moreover, the younger teachers coming into the workforce have choices and in a lot of places in Utah, unless the demand placed on public schools can be met with adequate and equitable funding, then there will be a lack of qualified teachers to teach an educated citizenry. Why would young people enter into an underfunded and overworked profession?

Brandon Baca, Weber School District

I would love for any legislator to come walk in our shoes for a day. Melissa Beyer (1st Grade) 801-698-2721

Melissa Beyer, Weber School District
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I believe that teachers salaries and benefits need to be improved to hold and retain quality teachers. Make sure that all administrators are education experienced and qualified to be in an education management position.

Paul Fawson Jr., Weber School District

The most important feature of society is equality, and that extends to equal opportunities for excellent education for all students.

Jenny Hartnett, Weber School District

When you value education by paying teachers as professionals, seeking teacher input on education matters and funding for student growth you will be able to attract and keep quality teachers.

Terie Maxfield, Weber School District

My legislators in North Ogden, Senator Christensen and Rep. Fawson, are continually on the wrong side of history by voting against educational funding and voting for red tape like SB 220 last year- to just name one bill among many. Utah is dead last in WPU funding-no excuse for that! They always quote the same argument "That Utah puts more money from budget towards education than any other state." That's like saying I have a really small apple pie...but I'm giving you a big piece! Its the smallest piece (WPU) in the nation, it's not enough, and I see the results first hand of Utah grossly under funding education for all these years. How they treat me as a teacher is a clear reflection of how they treat students. Not very good.

Paul Pontius, Weber School District

I believe in the power and responsibility that teachers have to influence students for good. However, we need support, compensation, and respect from our legislators and the public to best help these students succeed. Teachers work far more hours than many realize and our wages are not competitive in comparison to others with the same amount of education and training in other industries. In order to attract and retain quality teachers, increasing teacher salaries and benefits must be a priority. In addition, in order to prevent burnout, teachers need more paid time to plan and prepare for high-quality instruction. With the amount of growth we are experiencing in many parts of Utah and in order to reduce class sizes, we’ll need more teachers. Increasing salary and giving teachers more paid time to do what they need to do are two essential things for our students’ futures. Also, teachers should be able to focus less on end-of-level testing proficiency percentages and more on growth of the WHOLE student--academic and otherwise. I think sometimes we feel pressured to cram the core into the kids’ heads when really what they need is to learn life skills (diligence, kindness, organization, respecting for self and others, working as a team, etc.) first, and then they will be able to succeed academically. In order to be able to focus on the whole child, less pressure must be put on educators' test scores. Yes, there needs to be accountability for teachers, students, and schools, but testing is not the only way to do that—student surveys, parent surveys, administrator evaluations, student growth, self-evaluations, etc. could all be helpful ways of showing accountability. Finally, at my school (and many others) we have many students whose problems are beyond what we, as regular education teachers, have the training to sufficiently support. We need more resources available to help those students who need more mental and emotional support than we are able to give. Thank you for your time.

Abbie Twingstrom, Weber School District

Maintaining quality teachers will REQUIRE the state to seriously increase the salary of all teachers, within all districts equally. Allowing districts to allocate the funds tends to allow them to reallocate it elsewhere. Many teachers leave the state or leave the profession entirely because of the lack of importance to be compensated or even trusted at times to be able to manage their own time when given time to plan meaningful and engaging experiences in the classroom. Much time is wasted in just filling the need to have committees and going through the motions of unnecessary programs felt beneficial by those who have never taught or haven't been in a classroom setting for many years. Also, in my experience, the best administrators are those who have taught a minimum of 10 years in a classroom, and just by obtaining a degree online shouldn't be the sole reason for advancing any individual. Much is learned after many years in a classroom that can't be taught by only reading a book or attending a class. Public opinion needs to change as well, that teachers are solely responsible for a child's education. True parent involvement
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is needed. We are educators, yes, . . . we are caregivers as well, but much of what happens at school is first taught in the home. Public awareness may transmit to a higher respect of teachers. I know this is a difficult task, and I know most all teachers rather give up personal time and personal funds to help a child succeed, but this needs to stop. Stop relying on the individuals that entered this profession as a personal call to help others by continuing to have them make the only sacrifices.

David Van Eerden, Weber School District

I really am doing the best I can. I am not sure why you are telling me how to do my job or how I am doing it. Please come visit my class and see what we are doing instead of just giving a grade.

Michael Yamashita, Weber School District

I am lucky in my building because as a High School Teacher I only have 184 students this year. Most of my colleagues have over 200. In most of my classes I have 35 students. Sometimes I think about how hard it is for parents to teach 3 or 4 or 5 or even 6 of their own children at a time, yet we are required to give 35 students individual attention during class when we only see them for 1 hour every other day. It is really crazy when you think about it. It is unrealistic to give students the time and energy that they need when we have so many students in a class. We need more funding to reduce class sizes. We need to recognize and compensate teachers for the impossible task we have given them.

Kara Allen, Alpine School District

We care and we are trying so hard! It takes real champions to do this job with so much pressure and responsibility, and so many obstacles to work around.

Chelsea Alley, Alpine School District

There's a reason we have a teacher shortage: compensation and budgets

Frank Bramall, Alpine School District

Our aides are given no medical insurance, less money than a fast food worker, expected to take a physical risk to their person. This is a reason we have attrition in this field.

Casandra Daugherty, Alpine School District

The number one way to improve education is to retain good educators with pay, benefits, and lowering class size.

Gerald Dibb, Alpine School District

I have been teaching for six years and I have loved what I do. However, this year, I have wanted to quit many times. I have a hard class with 26 students. I don't have sufficient technology and I took a pay cut moving districts. I have to mentor new teachers on my own time and that cuts into my own planning time. I have a Masters Degree and I'm barely paying my rent. I have many other skills where I could be making double what I make as a teacher. We need more money and more respect as teachers.

Aubri Elder, Alpine School District

I teach special education and over the last several years there as been an increase of students with diagnoses that merit specialized instruction, an increase in class sizes, but there has not been a matching increase in classroom funding. My students require a lot of specialized equipment much of which I have to buy from money that I donate. This last year I was told I was not allowed to ask for parent donations, which have helped us to meet the needs in the past. This is not okay. Teachers need to be able to ask for help from the parents, if the parents can't give it that's fine, but many would and having to wait in the hopes that the parents will ask us what we need is an inefficient process, especially when they are expecting me to simply ask for donations as I've done in the past. Another glaring problem in education lately has been our inability to pay our support staff acceptable and competitive wages, this has cause a huge shortage in our district. For the first time in almost 12 years of teaching I had to start the school year understaffed and it took nearly two months to find someone able and willing to take the job. I cannot run my
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classroom (I work with special education mild to moderate students in a special class setting) without my staff. Districts need increased funding so as to pay their support staff competitive wages. Legislators need to stop reassigning money that is suppose to be allotted to schools. Please stop with the lip service when it comes to education and put your words into practice.

Jennifer Gaskin, Alpine School District

I love being a teacher! We as teachers can always use more resources to reach every child.

Jacqueline Hull, Alpine School District

If teaching students is the focus of teachers that should be the thing that is valued not all the extra work teachers have to do. It seem like there is a new requirement every month.

Merissa Jones, Alpine School District

Teachers are not receiving fair monetary compensation for the many hours of time they put into educating children in our state. It is difficult to keep giving away extra hours outside of instruction time to attend trainings and meetings, prepare materials, grade papers, and donate time to extracurricular activities. Teachers don't get to leave their jobs at the office.

Cindy Jovet, Alpine School District

Our elementary school does not provide any music or drama for our students. I decided to put on a musical two years in a row and both were hugely successful with the students and the community. I was given a $100 stipend for the more than 100 hours I put into the production (on top of my full-time teaching job). It is crucial that our students have arts opportunities. We need more funding for these kinds of programs and funds available to compensate teachers who are willing to put in extra hours to support these kinds of opportunities.

Courtney Knight, Alpine School District

Have you ever been a teacher in a classroom? The training that we go through and the paperwork and meetings that we are required to do, all the while testing and teaching massive class sizes and expecting the students to show growth, and yet, we are one of the lowest paid professions. This world would not exist without teachers. I think that our salaries should reflect the worth of the work that we do in the walls of our classroom to raise your children and grandchildren. Think about a teacher that impacted your life. Imagine what your life would have been without that teacher. We perform miracles in the classroom with VERY little funds and TONS of students. It is time for everyone to stand behind educators and make it happen!

Anabis McGill, Alpine School District

I am all for increasing funding for education but I feel like that money never trickles down to the actual classroom and teachers. I have taught for a long time and I feel like the longer I teach the more I spend out of pocket because budgets are reduced and even administration is cutting back on supplies. I should have access to the supplies I need to do my job and to also be able to earn a livable wage. We spend way more time than people realize out of our contract hours and we do it because we love our students and want to see them succeed. We should be better compensated for that. If increasing the education budget doesn't impact classrooms directly, then I'm not sure it is worth it. I wish legislatures would trust us to do our job. I feel like I have way more paperwork and testing than ever before. While there are some benefits to these, I find that I spend more time testing students than actually teaching. I have been well trained and know how to help students learn. Please let me use my skills to help kids. I feel like I am drowning in paperwork and breaking down tests. I just want to teach and assess my students as I know how to.

Kacey Oliekan, Alpine School District

Teachers are overworked and underpaid. Simple as that. Stop putting extra work on top of them and let them teach. Most people who teach love their jobs, but usually because of pay and/or all of the extra political agendas, they leave the profession. Put yourself in their shoes. Go into their classrooms and see what they are doing. When you actually take a minute to see what they do on a daily or weekly basis, you will be surprised at the dedication they have for
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their job and you will see where you need to help. Stop addressing your own personal agendas and fix the education in Utah.

Ashley Oney, Alpine School District

Teachers are not the enemy - lack of student and parent commitment to education is undermining all of our efforts to make a difference. Our morale is in the toilet - that's why I would not encourage anyone to go into education for a career at this point. It's not worth it! Something has to change and targeting teachers is not the answer. WE are doing the impossible in Utah with NOTHING!

Josette Pitardi, Alpine School District

Do something about education in Utah--teachers are worn out doing paperwork and charts when they need to be using their creativity and skills to teach their classes.

Cheryl Rogers, Alpine School District

I am a school counselor member of UEA and a passionate supporter of public education and know public ed, with the appropriate funding and resources, is where all student can achieve at high levels and we need to continue providing that support from the legislative level rather than limiting what educators can do to help my students, your students and everyone's students come out of high school prepared to take on the life that is next for them. As a counselor, I can see the impact our educators make on students, especially those who don't have the opportunities or resources and it can make all the difference. Public educators are in this profession to make that difference. Please support them.

Maja Stocking, Alpine School District

I am a first year teacher and my friends and family are shocked when I tell them how much I work and then how much of my own money I spend on my classroom. It is not fair that I should have to spend my own as well as have such a low salary. There needs to be an increase in salary or increase in classroom supplies fund.

Elora Stump, Alpine School District

Teachers are here to help students. Give us the tools we need through funding to do that!

Cherie Tobler, Alpine School District

Studies have shown that the larger the class size, the less effective the teacher. This is so true. In our day where teachers are being blamed, or held accountable for students learning and test scores, class size has to be taken into account and dealt with. A teacher can hardly maintain control in a class of more than 25 students, and it is very, very difficult to meet the needs of all those students, to help them learn to read, write, and do math on grade level, when there are so many students and so many needs. I think legislators need to spend time in classrooms to see the conditions, the job teachers are trying to do, and what the struggles and conditions they are working under are, to see what and why they need to make changes to the education in our state. I have taught school for 12 years and do not recall ever seeing a legislator in the school I work at. There needs to be many changes made to education to improve it, but reducing class size would be a first step in the right direction.

Gina Baird, Box Elder School District

Class sizes are simply too big. Over 50% of my students are below grade level. They don't get the help they need. The kids who are on grade level don't get what they need because I am trying to help the kids who are behind. None of us gets what we need.

Lynette Burrell, Box Elder School District

We have to allow the teachers to have more teeth in holding kids responsible. Instead of making teachers allow kids to keep redoing things. Kids have to be allowed to fail if they don't do their part. Also when it comes to the point that the judicial system can't do anything to kids if they are on school property, so much so that if a student is going to break a law such as drinking alcohol they want to do it on school grounds we are in trouble. Also there needs to be
something that balances out the money available to schools instead of having the haves and the have nots. In my 30 years of education there is so much more expected both time and stress related and the pay relatively the same.

Van Park, Box Elder School District

Stop micromanaging education and trust paid professional teachers to improve education.

Clair Schenk, Box Elder School District

I work in a rural school, so class size is not an issue, but I do spend hours on lesson plans and grading, making sure my 3rd, 4th and 5th grades are getting what they need. I would hate to see taxes raised, since we ranch and the cattle market is not the best. I have often wondered and I am not educated with enough information to say this next idea is the answer to our problems with education in Utah, but sometimes I think why not bring in the lottery and loosen up the liquor laws. So many people go out of state to play the lottery and purchase liquor. I also think we are TESTING our kids way too much. I get anxiety and so do they when it is testing time. If the 3rd grades and up are required to SAGE test, I think the lower grade teachers need to be accountable for some state test. I don't see the fairness across the board.

Vauna Wilcock, Box Elder School District

I have concerns that often money is allocated but there are so many strings attached or in the case of technology even required vendors with strings attached that it becomes difficult to put the money toward the greatest need. Additionally we have hard working teachers. When you hear the news stories otherwise these are the outliers. Please be mindful that all teachers/educators are not children who need to be heavily monitored and told what to do for EVERYTHING or reprimanded.

Leslie Burt, Cache County School District

Standards for teachers regarding becoming certified and re-certifying are extremely high, and we have to pay those ourselves, yet anyone who is "highly qualified" can teach due to teacher shortage. These requirements are unfair to teachers—we need more consistency. When was the last time legislators spent SEVERAL days in a classroom to get a feel for the amount of work, etc. piled on us, besides having to meets stipulations that we can't teach without taking classes, etc. to re-certify.

Darlee Dyer, Cache County School District

By investing in education, we invest in our future. Teachers play such a vital role in the lives of today's youth and are tremendously under paid for the time and effort they put in. It is a labor of love and one we are happy to do. We work hard and get more with less funding than anyone. Visit the schools, talk to teachers, and please make informed and educated decisions.

Skyler Beard, Canyons School District

Legislators, I LOVE teaching, but I am increasingly losing the joy in my profession. Maybe it's my district and it's emphasis on one curriculum, or the SAGE-type testing at the end of the year, or the increasing mental-health needs of the students in my classroom? Maybe it's the way my salary increases are eaten away by healthcare costs and premiums? Let me have a voice. Let me help inform you about what is happening in today's classrooms. Let me help you affect positive change in policy. Let me help you understand the value of increasing your investing in public education. Thank you!

Jen Buttars, Canyons School District

Teaching needs to be recognized as an extremely important career and funding should be of the state's top priority. Benefits and retirement plans should be similar to other state employees such as police officers and firefighter packages. Underfunding, underpaying education is inexcusable.

Jana Gold, Canyons School District
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I teach at an elementary school. I have many bright talented students who could use more creative ways to think. I work more than my contracted time just doing my daily tasks to keep up with what needs to be done. If I want to create really great lesson plans that engage the students each and every day I work much more than my contract time. Teachers need smaller classes and more planning time. Most of all teachers need to be paid for the hours they work!! I'm sure you are all paid for the hours that you work.

*Suzanne Malloy, Canyons School District*

Unless you make education a priority and back it with money you will continue to struggle with finding quality teachers.

*Julie McFarland, Canyons School District*

I have been a teacher for 14 years in Jordan and Canyons districts. As a single person with no spouse's salary contributing to my household, in addition to taking care of my elderly parents, it is really hard to make ends meet on this salary. My friends and relatives in other states have been teaching for many less years, and some make double my salary. The cost of living in Utah has risen sharply since I was in college, but my salary has not kept up with inflation. I teach AP Art History and college Humanities (through SLCC), and the state and districts always claim to have class sizes around 28. As far as I can tell, that class size only applies to elementary classes. I think this is false advertising. We all know that high school/secondary classes are much larger than this and I don't think it's fair to pretend that number is true. Secondary schools are allowed FTE based on a number that is inaccurate, and that makes all of us have larger class sizes. My AP Art History classes always have 35-40, while my colleagues in every other state are able to teach classes of 15-20. When my AP pass rates are lower than theirs I am told I'm not a highly qualified teacher, or that it would disqualify me for merit pay. It is demoralizing when new teachers this year are making what it took me 10 years to make, with a master's degree.

*Wendi Miller, Canyons School District*

As a speech-language pathologist who gets paid on the teacher salary schedule, I help recruit and train new speech-language pathologists. When I speak to graduate students at the University of Utah, they express the difficulty of paying their student loans on a teacher salary. They can make more money working for a medical provider or opening a private practice. As a first year Speech-Language Pathologist, they can make twice as much money providing home health therapy than working in a school. This makes it very difficult to recruit and maintain speech-language pathologists in the schools. I have worked in several elementary schools with very large class sizes, especially in the upper grades. It is not uncommon to see 5th and 6th grade classes with 35 students. The saddest situation was when a student with Cerebral Palsy could only enter the first 10 feet of her classroom because her wheelchair would not fit between the 36 desks that were crammed into her 6th grade classroom. Student learning and growth is difficult when students cannot move around to fully participate and access the curriculum.

*Joelle Rasmussen, Canyons School District*

Things have changed since you went to school. We no longer have a homogenous population where everyone has mom at home to build on the school day. Stack 'em deep and teach 'em cheap will no longer get it done.

*Scott Stucki, Canyons School District*

Come and try teaching in my shoes for a week.

*Carol Wheatley, Canyons School District*

I teach to make a positive difference for others. I hope you serve to make a positive difference as well

*Karrie Wilbur, Canyons School District*

Come spend a day in my classroom. I would love to have a representative shadow me for a day. See how hard most of us work, the effort and time we spend with your children. Maybe then, you would be willing to support us better, respect us as Educators.

*Kelly Avalos, Davis School District*
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Teachers are hard working educated people who deserve to be respected and compensated for the endless hours they give in behalf of children.

C. Braegger, Davis School District

I teach 2nd grade in the regular education side of a dual immersion school. Each year about 50% of my students are below grade level in reading. In order to better meet the growing numbers of struggling readers in my classroom, I have spent the last two years of my own time and financial resources to work towards earning the extra credential of a reading endorsement. I spend time outside of my contract hours planning Tier 2 reading interventions for all of my below level readers, as well as interpreting the data of their progress. Much of my time and energy is focused on these struggling students with very minimal support from parent volunteers or even classroom aides in the school. I would like to think that I'm doing everything possible to help these struggling learners grow. It's one thing to boast about what we do as teachers, schools, districts or the state for our highest achieving students, but we must always have the question foremost in our minds, "What are we doing for the students who struggle most?" As a legislature, I would ask you the same question. What are you doing for the students who struggle most?

Kynda Farrell, Davis School District

Come spend a “real” day in my shoes. I don't want you to teach my class, but just come and see what I do from day to day, minute to minute, student to student. Gain a understanding of being in the education trenches without all the glory of you teaching what you'd like to teach or just talking. Please have some respect for my degrees and my importance of creating well function adults. That will become legislators, voters, doctors, etc...

Carrie Follett, Davis School District

Our children are our priority.

Ryan Hansen, Davis School District

Before you write and pass a bill into law affecting education, spend significant time in the classroom teaching and working with children with the ideas in the bill. Use and test your ideas in the classroom before writing them into a bill. Write your bills with significant teaching experience, not your own student experience. Learning and teaching are night and day different. You need to know what teaching children today is like in Utah to be able to craft effective bills to help children learn and teachers to be able to help children learn. Law like the Sage test burden our children and teachers with a wasted and poor use of time. Let's empower, not burden.

Bryan Jenkins, Davis School District

 Teachers are burning out. New mandates are thrown at us frequently with new training to attend and evidence of practice to provide. All of these equal less time for actual lesson prep and reflection of teaching. I am in an inclusive gifted classroom with 29 students. One third are typically twice exceptional and have behavior issues. I have no support to help these students because special ed is not the appropriate place for them. I can't get to my highly gifted students because my time is spent managing the many fires in the classroom due to the behavioral issues. Gifted students require twice the prep, twice the lessons, and twice the resources than regular ed because they excell so quickly. Plus we have twice the meetings...a set for the school and a set for the district gifted program. Yet, my prep time is the same as other teachers and I have the same pay. I am tired and burned out, yet my passion is gifted kids. We need help and it can only come financially so that classes in this population of students can be lowered, aids can be added, and our overtime compensated. It is these students who drive the high test scores and they need the resources to keep excelling.

Karen Long, Davis School District

I would like to share that teachers are everyday heroes that deserve the same respect as fire fighters and the police. We are the people that meet with the children on a daily basis when it isn't an emergency and try to keep the students from ever needing to be seen by a law enforcement official or a first responder. This is not as glamorous, but every bit as needful. We are on the front lines trying to get every child to read so they don't become a statistic like
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the kids that can't read have a greater chance of being arrested and spending time in jail. Thank You for recognizing the importance of what we do and funding it adequately so that we can do our job to help each Utah student be as successful as possible.

Wendi McCoy, Davis School District

COME SEE FOR YOURSELF...ALL DEMOGRAPHICS IN THE STATE.

Camille Meriwether, Davis School District

We are being spread too thin. We are faced with large classes, increasing responsibilities to meet the needs of struggling students, and fewer resources. we are not paid for the extra time all of this takes. It is my job and career which I love, but more and more it is becoming my life and taking away from family and other pursuits.

Tamra Owens, Davis School District

It is time for people who know nothing about education to stop making all the decisions regarding education. It is time for our legislators and their family members to stop getting rich by building charter schools. It is time for teachers to have the same retirement benefits as other professions and it is time teachers were treated as professionals. It is time for Utah to spend the same amount of money per student on education as the top spending states in the country...it doesn't matter that we have more students.

Candace Peters, Davis School District

we need more pay as teachers, and to not cut programs such as PE, Art, Music, and Health but invest more money into said programs.

Brock Phifer, Davis School District

They already know the importance of education. I appreciate their continued support. Each year requires attention because of the student population growth and advancements in technology.

Timothy Ward, Davis School District

We have benefitted a great deal, seen huge student gains with new online programs, i.e. Lexia (Rosetta Stone), Reflex, Imagine Math, Utah Compose. However, the students must have one to one computers for them to utilize these resources. In addition, Hattie's research has revealed that teacher collaboration is one of the top indicators for student growth. We have benefitted a great deal from the time we have to glean from each other's experience, but we need more time to collaborate. Also, we have seen huge student gains from kids who have always been low functioning in reading and were formerly classified as "dyslexic" who have had access to "vision therapy" to help with visual tracking. Yet insurance companies are refusing to fund this therapy. I wish they could see what I have seen, kids who have been failing at reading, with an an attitude of hopelessness and failure, but are now becoming students who are experiencing success and having confidence in their educational experience.

Lenore Burgi, Duchesne County School District

Being a teacher is a very important job. It takes a lot of time and effort to make sure every child is learning. I feel that I am accountable for too many students and feel that classroom sizes should be decreased in order to be an effective teacher. I spend most of time devoted to getting lesson plans ready, correcting papers and time away from my family for the interest of my students. I also feel that I am spending more than I should out my own pocket monies to make my lessons engaging and helpful for students to do well on year end testing. There is so much pressure put on teachers to plan effective lesson, use resources that are not supported by the state or district and classroom sizes are too large.

Sonja Aoki, Granite School District

Depending on the area I am teaching in students either have school supplies or they do not because there is not enough money for me to spend as a teacher on my students supplies. I have 31 students in my classroom and in order for them to be successful and keep up with the curriculum and testing required of them, they need certain
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supplies. It is very expensive for me, on my own, to buy supplies for 31 students. I am lucky enough that my students parents are able to purchase their childs’ supplies. Whereas other schools families are unable to purchase their supplies, putting a financial strain on teachers. We need more money in order to encourage student-centered and hands on learning so our money is being spent on school supplies for science and math manipulative instead of purchasing pencils and notebooks.

Emily Atkinson, Granite School District

Students are currently required to complete multiple test in which the teacher is held accountable for. This includes students that have behavior issues, SPED students that do not understand the information as the material is above their level of understanding, and those students that simply do not care to take the test. While I believe that teachers should be held accountable for the progress made by their students it should be the progress made by the student compared to the same student, not progress made compared to a student from a previous year or even a different student in the same year. Each child learns at their own pace and a teacher can and should help increase knowledge and therefore the student will progress, but compared to where they began.

Dawn Christensen, Granite School District

Teaching is so beneficial but it's also hard work. There are others influences on kids that affect their learning-the kids sensitivity issues when their socks bother them, teeth problems and parents unwilling to pay for dental care, custody issues and kids moving in and out of schools. I love teaching and I want the kids to love being in my class. I love doing stem projects and making learning hands on and fun, but that requires me to spend a lot of my own money in my classroom.

Barb Taylor, Granite School District

Every year I spend hundreds (and my first year I spent over $1000) of my own dollars to provide my class with items like: snacks, pencils, paper, science supplies, art materials, rewards/incentives, etc. I do this because my students come to school hungry, their parents don't have money for school supplies, and because I value imbedding learning into real-life, meaningful activities such as art and science. I have to spend my own money because $300 a year does not cover the cost of all of those items for 25+ students. I have taught for 5 years, and I have NEVER had fewer than 25 students. On average, I have 28. I do not make enough in salary to continue to spend my own money on my class. I am happy to do it, because I love these kids and want them to learn, but I should not have to. I am only a fifth year teacher, and I am burnt out. I do not intend to teach another year, and not because of the kids, but because of a combination of difficult situations that exist in the teaching profession. Here are a few of the situations that exist which make teaching an undesirable profession: lack of respect from the community, administration, and legislation; low pay (made even smaller because of the amount that I use to fund my own classroom), lack of funding and support from administration and legislation, and large classroom sizes.

Adree Fairbanks, Granite School District

I welcome legislators into my classroom so they can see how underfunded and unsupported teachers are with the expectations that are placed on us. We are willing to do the work, but it is impossible to make the gains they are expecting of us without more money for supplies, technology, and salaries of support staff.

Andrea Grant, Granite School District

I believe students learn by touching and manipulating things, you can't learn Science or Math unless you can touch it. I spend a lot of money every year buying supplies for my classroom so we can do experiments almost daily. I have created a wonder and love of Science. It can get expensive to teach this way so some teachers just use web quests, videos, etc. I believe we need more supply money each year so students can touch, manipulate, discover, and experiment their way to a more informed education.

Crystal L. Guy, Granite School District
As always, I spend hours of my time at school and at home filling in ridiculous objective, targets, lesson plan forms, collecting data, data, data, and more data etc... that does not support me in actual planning and teaching. It's like I have two jobs: 'professional educator' and glorious administrative/secretarial professional. They say, "When you plan your lessons"; when do you do that much less even look (and I mean look) at the next weeks materials. I work at a Title 1 school where most parents do not help their students. With free breakfast in the classroom, I've now lost 20-25 minutes of instruction time. I have to stand by the food (can't have a student do that now), log it, count it to make sure entrees match with fruit (if not, toss some fruit over to the sharing basket but in the lunch room you can't share???, listen to several students questions or problem, take tardy slips (don't lose those while you are at the back of the room serving breakfast), reminding them everyday to do the same routine we've been doing since August, go to my computer and log onto Gradebook to enter roll, keep telling students to eat instead of talk (those that have seconds (2 milks, 2 entrees need more time), tell them numerous times to begin their self-start; we don't begin 'school' until 9:20-9:25. And that's not to mention that on Mondays the Star Spangled Banner is played and we say the pledge. Oh, and add announcements in there somewhere. Breakfast needs to be in the cafeteria where students can eat and chit chat and learn to sit at a table and enjoy a meal. Not turned around in their seats, walking around the room, shoving food in their desks (yes, they have been told over 100 times/one time we had fruit flies for weeks until I found a rotten banana and rotting apples mushed in back of a student's desk), milk everywhere, smelling sink where the left over milk is emptied........ We waste 15 minutes during small group time by 15 students going next door to get a Chromebook from a cart that needs to be unlocked, walking back, students going to their group desk seat and logging on. That's one group time wasted. I asked Donor Choose for 15 Chromebooks but I haven't been lucky with that. Sorry for the run-on's and fragments.

Robin Harman, Granite School District

Educators are often expected to pay for their own training, or to sit through 'standardized' training at their schools that does not apply to their specialty/interests. This causes a feeling of disrespect for our time and creates friction between educators and administrators who have to 'provide' these trainings. We are professionals, and as such should be given opportunities to choose what we would like or 'need' to improve our teaching, not given a 'one size fits all' generalized 'workshop' with no paid time to use the information so that we can create something that would be used to better the education of our students. Also, changing the testing 'system' every few years is a disservice to both educators and students, as students are now focusing on navigating the 'system' rather than showing their knowledge on the content. Instead of spending time teaching the content, teachers must take time out to show students how to navigate the new 'system'.

Alisha Kerby, Granite School District

Use the science and real rational of the educating process to direct your decision making and money directions. Testing is not the solution to success of students. Neither is school grading. Class size affects student outcomes. Parents and communities need to be held accountable for their children not just an educator, their administration or the school. Where the money is spent needs to be directed to these issues not charter special interest groups.

Johanna McMullin, Granite School District

Fund education! Put students first. Support teachers and fund them also.

Jane Munson, Granite School District
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Well seasoned and experienced teacher here (19 yrs. public, 5 yrs. my own preschool) with serious requests for your
attention. 1. Please consider specific funding for paid personnel to cover morning/recesses/after school duties so that
teachers have time for further class prep, and TIME TO USE THE RESTROOM. (Having no a.m. recess or having
recess duties, makes it IMPOSSIBLE to maintain a healthy urinary tract system.) Specific improvements and an
increase in overseeing per grade level can happen, and happen more quickly if teachers were supported with paid
peer planning/consultation time.

Wendy Wright, Granite School District

I would like to share the multiple stories of really good teachers who come to me in tears because their health is
suffering, their families are suffering, and their students are suffering because they just don't have enough hours in
the day to do all that is needed.

Andrew W. Baggs, Jordan School District

Teachers shouldn't have to fund their own classrooms to do their jobs. I don't know a single teacher that doesn't use
personal funds to be able to do their job. Not just extra things but necessary school supplies and materials.

Susan Call, Jordan School District

Burnout

Tracy Castellanos, Jordan School District

I became a teacher because I wanted to help and teach children. Being able to achieve this goal is difficult when
there is not enough funding to provide teachers with the best resources and proper compensation.

Erin Gotay, Jordan School District

My husbands pay has continually dropped the 20 years in education due to insurance costs

Laura Hales, Jordan School District

Every year I have excellent students who opt out of taking year-end exams because of their parents’ political
reasons. Their absence distorts records of my performance and my school's performance which feeds the perception
that the education system doesn't merit respect. It also teaches students that if they don't agree with something, they
are not accountable for it, which any worker in any workplace knows is not how life works. The state's inability or
unwillingness to address this problem in a meaningful way is embarrassing.

Michael Henriken, Jordan School District

Help with stop demonizing teachers Less data collection for data collection sake think of education as an investment

Becca Kirkman, Jordan School District

Teaching can be a stressful, demanding profession, but one with many rewards. Having to fight for every dime of
compensation, year after year, instead of having those needs met just adds to that stress.

Shauna Robertson, Jordan School District

I have always been passionate about educating children and so when all of my children had grown I decided after
pondering the idea for many months that I would teach 5th grade. It is my first year teaching and I am turning 50 this
year so I have a different perspective than the average brand new teacher. I spent years helping in each of my four
children's classrooms, being a room mom, and always serving on the PTA. I worked as a substitute teacher, Reading
Tech at a Title One school, however, nothing prepared me for how difficult it would be teaching full time. I have been
blown away by the amount of time it takes to plan lessons for my students. The amount of time it takes to correct
papers, the amount of personal money I have had to spend to make sure great learning takes place in my classroom.
Teaching is exhausting when your students walk out the door, but then they are hours left in the day to plan lessons,
set up the lesson and find ways so that each child can learn something even though each student is uniquely
different. I had never fully appreciated how hard a teacher works until I became one myself. I didn't understand the
tremendous pressure they were under because of all of the tests that they need to administer to their students and how pretty much everything we do for each moment of the day is tied to a standard and is pertinent that each of our students learn and do well on their tests. It is challenging at best to teach students on grade level, but in my class, I have 6 students who go to Resource just in my class and I have students who range in grade level from 2 grade to 9th grade and they are all expected to take the same tests. I feel like it is expected to teach to my children so that they can do well on a test and not how they can best learn. Every student is learning different and at different grade levels though each student is required to take the same test. I don't understand how this even makes logical sense. I feel like my students are completely burned out based on how many tests that they have to take. I feel like the workload that is required for a teacher to be successful is placed way too high. I am a hard worker and I spend countless hours so my students can have the best opportunity to learn in a way that is both challenging and fun as I believe that learning can be fun. However, with all of the tests that a teacher needs to administer it certainly takes the fun out of learning and add unneeded stress to each student. I left a management job where I was being paid over 20 thousand more a year and I was not working any overtime and did this because of my love of teaching. Most people thought I was crazy but I wanted to do a job I was passionate about and that was teaching. I love helping children learn, but teaching should not require these many unpaid hours, and require that I spend my own personal money in order to ensure that my students have the best education. If it wasn't for my love of teaching I would immediately go back to my other job. I feel like teachers are not valued as they should be and are not given adequate compensation for all of the additional hours that they work. I can now understand why there is a teacher shortage and I realize this problem will continue to get worse unless we value educators much more and provide the additional resources they need to be successfully and so they don't have to break the bank.

Cami Vail, Jordan School District

Utah spends the least amount of money on their students. This must change if we want to keep up with the growth of Utah businesses.

Mathew Walker, Jordan School District

I love teaching! I am proud to be a Utah teacher and am happy with a lot of the progress made in recent years to improve education in Utah. I hope that legislators will continue to pursue a solution to compensating teachers who are doing a lot more than teaching-I personally mentor other teachers, run the school's ESL program to keep us in legal compliance, and advise the National Junior Honor's Society-these responsibilities are an enjoyable part of my job, but often require hours outside of my contract or for me to sacrifice my much needed prep period to things other than data analysis/curriculum development/grading. Compensating teachers, even minimally, for this work would go a long way. Thank you for fighting for us, and please continue to advocate for Utah teachers.

Alisha Wheeler, Jordan School District

Please do what you can to lower class sizes and increase teacher pay and benefits.

Amy Williams, Jordan School District

My personal success comes when my students succeed. I give 100% EVERY day. On block schedule I see 240 7/8 graders every two days. Grading NEVER ends--I spend 10-15 hours a week of my own time (totally uncompensated) preparing and grading. There is NO other profession where this is EXPECTED. I will be retiring early (age 60) in 2019 because I just can't continue to cope with anxiety and stress. Teachers can't and shouldn't be expected to continue to do more. The "badge of honor" that our legislature seems to equate with bottom of the barrel funding must stop. Compensate us for our outside of class hours, compensate us for REAL professional development. Encourage us rather than demean and belittle. Teaching is both a science (pedagogy) and and art (love of subject). It's time Utah recognized that. And my "favorite" Utahism...children are our most valuable resource. Sadly the legislature of this state fails to adequately fund education, wants to make USBE partisan, and believes that online and charter schools are somehow better equipped to educate that priceless resource. I think that truism is a lie.

Ann Peterson, Juab School District
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Something needs to be done in the community to help parents learn to support their children. Some of our students most likely will not go to college and would benefit from learning skills during high school that they can use to make a living. Change the graduation requirements or have two different diplomas so that learning a skill (mechanics, etc) would be enough to graduate or earn a diploma.

Juliann Bales, Logan City School District

Before they make all the rules and pass all the laws they should be required to be in the schools working with educators at least 50 hours a year.

C. Carrigan, Morgan School District

I teach English at an alternative high school that includes Youth-in-custody. We are working miracles with some students here, earning high school diplomas when there was no dream or hope to achieve one. Please come see us at Pleasant Creek High School in Mt. Pleasant, Utah.

Matthew Arnold, North Sanpete School District

Most teachers are very hard working and love their jobs. I take home school work every night, because it's important to me that my students succeed this year and have learned what they need to be successful in their next school year.

Susan Pratt, North Summit School District

We need more long-term solutions to solving problems in schools.

Joe Anson, Nebo School District

Often, I see educators leave teaching because they feel undervalued. They are able to get other jobs and opportunities that are rewarded monetarily. In order to have consistency and attract influential teachers, salaries need to be appealing. My 17 yrs. in education have continually required more of teachers without compensation. While teachers at heart want what's best for kids, they find themselves resentful of the work that takes them away from a more balanced life without compensation.

Kelly Taylor, Nebo School District

I serve as teacher in addition to two "stipend" jobs as well as numerous other responsibilities at school. I visibly/publicly work 60 hours during a week. That does not account for the late nights, when my family is in bed, I spend at my computer planning, studying, and grading. All of this with a Master's Degree, I do for 50k a year. This is just my school responsibilities. I also am a husband, a father, a son, a brother, a neighbor, a civic leader, and must attend to my financial responsibilities. Each year I ask myself more and more - How? Talk is out there about teachers need more pay, teachers need more respect. The talk has not helped my situation. Yet, the expectations are that I control/compartmentalize my stresses and give my best effort to my students and players. I need to accommodate 200+ kids and their parents. I need to meet endless rules and guidelines. Legislators, I could go on and on. We, in education, need your full respect, support, and action.

Lee Gillie, Nebo School District

I would want them to know how much money and time educators put into their classrooms.

Melody Green, Nebo School District

I often hear the argument that increasing funding has not been shown to improve student achievement. I disagree. I believe that an increase in funding can have a huge impact if that funding is allocated appropriately. For instance, additional teacher work days and lowering class size would be extremely beneficial to both students and teachers.

Jennifer James, Nebo School District
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I (we) as teachers are always going above and beyond the a call of duty to help and support our students succeed. It seems that the legislators and the public (vocal) minority want to demonize and degrade teachers for not being perfect. Give the teachers the pay and the support that is needed to push to higher standards. Don't just legislate and make it harder for teachers to do their already complicated job.

David Jones, Nebo School District

They always said education is their #1 priority but actions did not show it.

Mong-Hoa Le Bras, Nebo School District

Students are not numbers. We may have to work with numbers to help the masses, but individual students need the care and attention necessary to grow and function in society. Class sizes should be no more than 24 to a class if possible. There should not be a class with more than 30 students--that should be against school policy. Additionally, teachers are paid less than many jobs that require little to no experience, let alone a degree. Yes, teaching is very rewarding and intrinsically motivating and satisfying, but there comes a point when teachers get burned out because they are doing too much for too little and it's hard to live off of such a little salary. After getting multiple degrees a person shouldn't have to have a second job to support themselves and a family, especially when this type of job is life consuming. School work does not stay in the classroom. Teachers should be valued more than many of the high paying, shallow jobs of the world.

Kate Ormond, Nebo School District

We need smaller classes and higher pay to keep quality teachers. There are so many extra demands put on teachers too. It's hard to be a good spouse, parent, and teacher when all you do is go home and make sure everything is ready for school the next. There are way to many hoops to jump through. (Spend at least 2 hours a night thinking school) Trust us and let us do our job which is being the best teacher we can for our students.

LeighAnn Penrod, Nebo School District

I constantly hear or read that students love to come to school.

Ramon Saldivar, Nebo School District

Teachers continue to work for less. Administrations use too much money to pay unneeded admins. Give the money to teachers or technology Needs

Jeanette Taylor, Nebo School District

Please increase funding for public education.

Stephanie Truscott, Nebo School District

Teachers are over worked and under paid. Then on top of teachers being underpaid we tend to use our own money to buy supplies, and things we need for our classroom. Teachers often (typically every day for me) take work home, or we stay late to work, and do work when we are not being paid, because we have so much to do in not enough time. Standardized testing doesn't really measure how much the students are learning in class, because they aren't motivated to do the best they can. The tests also do not take into consideration how much they have grown as a person, (learning the life long skills they need to succeed as an adult).

Coy Taylor, Nebo School District

We are drowning over here. We are drowning in a workload that increases year to year without an increase in support or funding. We are drowning in disrespect from our communities, our parents, our supervisors, and our legislators. We are drowning in students who's needs increase every time we turn around. We are drowning in Charter schools, that bleed our funding dry.

Christina Charbonneau, Ogden School District
Overall Education Budget

Educating our children is the most important priority.

Earl Gardner, Ogden School District

Teachers work hard every day to ensure a quality education for our students. Properly compensating teachers for their hard work would be appreciated. Class sizes need to go down to give students the attention they need.

Bradi Holder, Ogden School District

Teachers are the future. Treat us with dignity and support us with all your might. We are teaching the people who will be running our cities, counties and country in a very short time. You get what you pay for. Maybe that is the main reason there is a tragic teacher shortage. WAKE UP!

Suiska Rhodes, Ogden School District

I currently have come back to teaching after taking a break to have a baby. As a new teacher I have loved working with our future generation to support them to grow and become critical thinkers. A few things to improve our situation is payment for teachers for planning. I spend so many hours out of contract time to plan and prepare. Also, it is becoming increasingly competitive to work in different districts. I love my district and want to stay, but I could be provide better for my family elsewhere. I would respectfully ask for an increase in teachers salaries and payment for planning and prep time. Lastly, my class is continually looking for opportunities for hands on learning. Through collaborating with other teachers we are able to pull in activities, but the budget to buy supplies is now. Budget for supplies is in dire need. Though I get some donations, it is still not enough to build a collection of STEAM and interactive activities. Please take into consideration teachers payment and teacher budgets.

Megan Anderson, Provo City School District

Recently one district stated, "When we pay teacher more they perform better." Please pay teachers a fair salary. I recently returned to teaching after being home for 16 years. The pay has not increased much since I left but the demands have and the cost of living. Please quit having the conversation on "how to retain great teachers" if you are unwilling to recognize the greatest problem, pay! Please let teachers feel they are important and doing an important job by compensating them fairly. A single person might be able to survive on a this salary but not with a family.

Tricia Biggs, Provo City School District

One of my classes loves to have science class parties. But, of course, I don't get a lot of money for additional supplies/materials. My kiddos love doing experiments and so any materials I need are purchased with my own money. One recent science lesson involved different experiments with salts. The kids come from backgrounds where they don't get to do a lot of these things at home and so it is doubly exciting for them. We experimented with make crystals grow on a cardboard tree and the kids were stoked. My message is this: Teachers are doing everything they can to make school exciting for their kiddos, even if it means money out of their own pocket. So, when teachers aren't paid enough or recognized for their efforts, it makes it difficult to come back, even though we love our kiddos.

Jennifer Delfin, Provo City School District

I really hope that funding for teacher's salaries increases. My fiance and I are both teachers. We would like to have kids, but it would mean one of us quitting our teaching job to raise the infant. We can live on both our salaries combined, but if we have kids, I will have to quit this job and find a better-paying one, which is really sad, because I LOVE my school and students.

Spencer Duncan, Provo City School District

Teaching is hard work. 99% of the teachers that I know are working really hard and educating our students because they love teaching and are committed to improving the lives of future voters and taxpayers. But I do feel like apologizing to my own childrens' teachers. As a taxpayer, I wish I could donate directly to their classroom. I know how much money they make, and I do feel guilty that we (as a community) can't find a way to pay them more. I think you need to listen to the people of Utah and improve educational spending or the people of Utah are going to go around the legislature and pass the educational funding through ballot initiatives. I'm not asking for Utah to spend as
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much as New York or Illinois. Let's just try to get out of last place for per pupil spending. Please! Also, don't forget about the special needs that so many schools are facing--special education students, students coming from poverty, and English as a second language students. They want to work hard and achieve their goals, but if they are in a class with more than 35 students, it becomes very difficult for the teacher to know their needs, let alone give them any extra support or help. When schools can provide paraprofessionals to translate and help teach, we can individualize instruction better and help more students learn. Feel free to come visit my classroom any time. Thank you, Julie Hagen

Julie Hagen, Provo City School District

Teachers work so hard. Well beyond a 40 hour work week. Yet are continually required to do more & more; without lessening the overflowing work load that already exists. If teachers are required to do more & have more responsibilities, then, something should be taken out of their present workload in order to make time for the new requirements. Also, most teachers spend a lot of time working & creating things for their classrooms during the summer & are not recognized for those efforts that go above & beyond their contracted time.

Paula Hatch, Provo City School District

Increase teacher pay, lower classroom sizes

Linda Threlfall, Provo City School District

I am a male teacher doing what I love. It is very hard to be the provider for my family on my wages alone. I have a summer job and my wife works in order to be financially stable. I would love for my wife to be able to stay at home if she chooses and not depend on a summer job to make ends meet.

Josh Sulser, Rich School District

Testing only gives a snapshot of how students perform. Teacher effectiveness can not be measured in student test performance.

Patricia Christensen, Salt Lake City School District

Why is Utah ranked so low in average spending per pupil and test scores? I have now taught 5th grade classes with 28, 37, 34, 30, 31 students in each of the past 5 years. How can I effectively teach with so many students in my class? How come charter schools receive money from the state, but they aren't held to the same standards as public schools?

Peter Haslam, Salt Lake City School District

I have been a teacher in Utah for 22 years, and I have watched students get lost in the huge classes for years. Utah has never made an honest effort to fund education the way it should be. My husband is also a teacher, and we pay everything we have to send our children to private school. It is a struggle, but we see first hand the underfunded schools. We grew up in NY state, and we both had very small classes. We know the advantages that an amazing education can bring, and we refuse to allow our own children to be in the huge and overcrowded schools of Utah. The teachers do everything they can, and are underpaid and overworked. Utah should do better. Family values are talked about, but not funded. I would love to see Utah put money into education that meets the needs of the amount of children that are in Utah.

Michelle Misco, Salt Lake City School District

More even funding dispersed between Title I and Non Title 1 schools within the state of Utah.

Molly Sprague, Salt Lake City School District

Rural education is continuing to be short changed, the WPU and Transportation budgets need to be increased.

Nathan Chamberlain, San Juan School District
Overall Education Budget

I am an Outreach Teacher of deaf children in five different school districts and I go to seventeen different schools at the present time. I see a variety of students with all kinds of special needs. There is so much that each one of them need in addition to their hearing loss concerns and I find myself buying things for them all of the time. I know that it isn't required but if some of these basic needs aren't met, then they don't progress in other areas. I wish so badly that I earned a little more so that I could help more. It is killing me as it is to buy things I do in order to help them. There is just no way that the districts or the School for the Deaf can finance extra things so I do what I can myself.

Peggy Perry, Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind

Go to schools - not the districts - to find out what is really going on - get your hands dirty

Dana McConnell, Washington County School District

As things become more expensive for school districts, more and more of the money is coming out of my pocket. This is the only professional occupation where teachers are not only expected to fund their classroom, but the also fund the classes that are needed for licensing and increased knowledge for our changing world. I would like to see more support in these two areas, along with salary increases and class size reduction for the intermediate, middle, and high school classrooms.

Rosemarie Olsen, Washington County School District

SAGE testing is a failure

Dan Zaleski, Washington County School District

First of all, I am concerned and frustrated with all the testing we have to administer to our students. We are testing more than we ever did. While collecting data is important, instruction is critical for the students to be successful with evaluations. Second: our supply money for ink, materials, etc. is insufficient for the needs of our students. If we continue to cut the budget, our students and their ability to progress will suffer, which means we will suffer in the long run. We must remember that these children will be our leaders of tomorrow.

Teresa Brewer, Weber School District

The maxim "You get what you pay for" is as true with education as it is with anything else.

Joseph Burke, Weber School District

Utah has always been way too cheap and I really doubt they could change

Jocelyn Cook, Weber School District

Our society puts money towards what they believe is valuable, except for paying teachers. If education is valuable then pay teachers accordingly.

Kaylene Astin, Weber School District

I have been teaching in the state of Utah for 23 years. My job has gotten harder and harder every year I teach. We are asked to do so much. I have a master's degree and four specialized endorsements on my teaching certificate yet my pay is at $65,000 a year. In any other career, with the same amount of education and experience my salary would be much higher. I did not choose to be a teacher for the money, and that is why I will always be a teacher, however, I am constantly told that I need to do more. Teachers are not the problem with education. You need to listen to what we are telling you. Lower class sizes, gives us time to plan and collaborate, support us with difficult students and parents, and quit blaming us when test scores are low. Stop tying our hands with so many controls and mandates. The last faculty meeting we had we were told we can't ask parents to donate tissues, paper towels and ziplock baggies, i.e. grocery items. These are things that I use in my classroom every day. Where am I supposed to get the money to buy these every year?? Come spend a day shadowing a teacher. It would really open your eyes as to what it is we face every day.

Adrianna Griffey, Weber School District
Overall Education Budget

Please fund education in Utah and get out of our way and let us teach.  

*Kim Irvine, Weber School District*

There is research evidence (Hattie) that proves teacher collaboration has one of the highest effects on student growth.  

*Laurie Key, Weber School District*

K-12 needs more funding, but K-3 teachers (even K-6) are inadequately represented in both major districts in which I have worked. My spouse is in secondary, and the discrepancy between funds/prep time/consideration is astonishing. Elementary teachers are “on stage” all day. In many districts, they get no duty-free afternoon recess. Can you “hold it” from 12:00-3:30. That’s what teachers must do every day. Yes, secondary classes are larger, however, many classes require little correcting or one-on-one instruction. Secondary prep time is incredibly unfairly distributed. The only “prep” time elementary gets is usually taken up with things other than prep: bus duty, parental issues, or required time in PLCs, with precious little time in their own classroom. The legislature needs to provide increased funding for ALL education K-12, but K-3, is in desperate need. Kinder teachers, especially, will leave the grade just for survival.  

*Patty Nielson, Weber School District*

Time commitments have increased due to additional responsibilities - flex time classes requiring preparation, referrals to special programs like homework lunch and academic support, increased expectations for remediation & retesting, increased quantity and variety of parental notification, teacher training on days that used to be preparation days. There has not been additional compensation for these extra responsibilities, thus restricting my availability for the second job that I need in order to support my family. Additionally, parents and administrators are quick to criticize any perceived shortcomings in any of these areas. On top of that is the constant push from state and district officials and policies to improve, putting more blame and responsibility on teachers instead of students.  

*Karl Powell, Weber School District*

This country needs better conditions for teachers. Teachers have created the past, constructed the present and they are ones helping to shape and secure our future. Without teachers, there is no Nation. We do not ask for anything out of this world, we are asking you to invest in the present and the future of our state and country.  

*Jose Garcia, Weber School District*

Get in the classroom, talk to educators  

*Anonymous, Weber School District*

Keep education as your first priority during the upcoming session.  

*Michael Yardley, Weber School District*

My school had 34 students in each fourth grade class. A majority of the students didn’t know their multiplication tables, and scored lower than any previous fourth grade year on their sage at the end of fourth grade. My principal had to fight to get the budget for a half time fourth grade teacher. We are a traditional school so we do not benefit from track time. The 1/2 time fourth grade addition has increased student performance more than 100% but I find it very upsetting and disappointing that our principal and fourth grade teachers had to fight so hard for something so beneficial to the students.  

*Brittney Bryan, Alpine School District*

Special education needs help. There are children with disabilities that are not receiving the help and services they need so desperately. They are being denied a chance to succeed in life. Public school is failing them by not paying special educators and their aides more. The teacher shortage is creating despairing issues. I was placed in a severe special education classroom this year as a first year teacher with 16 students. It was incredibly overwhelming to say the least.  

*Brynn Frazier, Alpine School District*
Overall Education Budget

My numbers in my classroom have been climbing steadily. I do not get funding for aides or any help. We should have an additional teacher, but do not have the FTE funding. I cannot get to all of them. Children are suffering. More than 20 students in a first grade classroom where we are trying to teach children how to read is nearly impossible with one teacher. I have close to 30. It is discouraging.

BetteJo McLelland, Alpine School District

I currently have classes with 36 plus students and I’m turning many away. These are students that need credits to graduate and students who simply want to take my classes for the sake of learning. We do not have enough room or enough teachers to teach our students and they are suffering because of it.

Marlayne Nye, Alpine School District

Public Education needs to be a priority above charter schools and online systems. 90 percent of our students attend public school. Support this. Quit taking away resources to fund personal interest businesses that are dressed in sheep’s clothing as educational improvements or online services i.e. Howard Stephenson and his money grab for his technology education business. Class size is too large to provide a nurturing experience while parents are continually too busy to help.

John Paynter, Alpine School District

Charter schools are receiving public funds but not being held to public standards. When a student moves from public to charter, the money doesn’t follow the student. If public schools are held to a high standard, anyone receiving public funds should be held to the same standard. Charter schools are stealing funds by taking public students and then handing them back to public after money has been taken. A loop hole has been provided and not fixed. Teachers leave public schools because it has been made harder then charter schools. Legislators do what they want and don’t listen to the people who put them in office.

Clint Sanderson, Alpine School District

Please take into consideration that public education is educating the future leaders and citizens of our state and country. The children are our future. They are the people who will be taking care of you when you are retired. We need to make education our top priority as it impacts all of society for good or bad! The children are our future!

Stacy Stevens, Alpine School District

Support new teachers financially. Reduce district office money. Greater evaluation to district office done by teachers, retired teachers and district office personnel.

Crystal Deatry, Box Elder School District

I ask for more balance in the system. If we hope to supply Utah with more skilled workers, we need to draw more elementary age students into education by helping them and their families to negotiate the system. Research demonstrates the need for early childhood intervention, and for trauma sensitive schools. Hill Walker demonstrated how these foci can alleviate the tax burden related to putting people in prison 20 years ago.

Jaynan Chancellor, Cache County School District

The teachers hired without certificates have not been successful in our school and in most of the schools in our district.

Marlene Barbano, Canyons School District

I spent thousands of dollars on my education and training. I spent hours and hours honing my craft. Because of administrators who are more interested in climbing the slippery pole than treating teachers as colleagues, I am no longer teaching in the subject area of my major. This is one example of many other teachers where we are not being treated as professionals. Yes, money is important. But as long as teachers are being treated without respect, the teacher shortage won’t be fixed.

Johnny Aird, Davis School District
Overall Education Budget

Please make education a priority for funding.  

Sonia Alberts, Davis School District

teacher shortage large class sizes tech in classrooms

Mindi Barnes, Davis School District

That I fully support and back the "Our Schools Now" initiative. This initiative would not be needed if you took education funding more seriously. I would hope that you, as a legislature will support and stand behind this measure and not try to stop or derail it in any way. Let the people of Utah make the choice on whether or not properly funding education is important to them.  

John Combe, Davis School District

Teaching children is one of society’s greatest duties. Remember that today’s children will affect the quality of life today’s adults will have in the future. Unprepared, unsuccessful people effect everyone negatively and burden society. We must do all we can to give every child the opportunity for a positive life by preparing them to function successfully.  

Mike Dennis, Davis School District

For far too long the legislature has focused on what parents and students want in education, not what is actually needed to make it work properly in the state of Utah. Now we find ourselves in a situation where test scores are dropping, charter schools are not fixing the problem, students are leaving high school unprepared, and the legislature continues to ignore the voices of those who know the solution because it is politically convenient.  

Dan Evans, Davis School District

One issue that has not been addressed is the lack of funding to repair older schools. We work in cold buildings without adequate insulation. In addition, student behavior is increasingly difficult to manage and we lack resources to place children in more appropriate settings so all children can learn. There is an increase in the lack of respect from parents towards teachers. We will continue to have teacher shortages if these things are not addressed.  

Jeni Halversen, Davis School District

So much of the money invested in education is not very helpful to improve student learning. Teachers are on the front lines and know what their students really need. Ask them!!!! There is Too Much Testing!!!!  

JoAnn Hanson, Davis School District

We work hard everyday to ensure a great education for our students. Legislators need to step up and support (including their financial duty) public education.  

Vonzaa Hewitt, Davis School District

I would like them to know how much our special education student count has increased over the last few years. These students are coming with more and more deficits and more and more intense behaviors. We have rooms the sizes of closets with an average of 11 to 14 students per group. Our small group instruction is a thing of the past. We have been very creative in making sure that all student needs are met but feel that we still fall short. We are told that there is not funding for additional support in our classrooms, we are told that the norm for special education student case load is 40 to 50 students per one teacher. We are the last group thought about when it comes to new technology. Between two full time special education teachers we share 11 ipads for 55 students. The technology we do have is usually the oldest in the school but we are grateful to have any! We constantly take on student teachers just to have additional bodies in the rooms for support. We have little to no prep time due to the amount of students needing to be seen and the services that need to be provided. The motto is do more with less and we magically make it work but only to the best of our abilities. Support public education but in doing so also support special education and realize that those students count too!  

Samantha Johnson, Davis School District
Overall Education Budget

We need to look at the teacher shortage in a serious way, no longer is it just a problem..it is an epidemic. I believe we can have an extremely high quality of education in Utah if we took the time and money to invest in it.  

_Alissa McManus, Davis School District_

A reduction in class size is the KEY! Whatever it takes. Outcomes for students will improve AND incentives to teach will increase!  

_Jayne Shaum, Davis School District_

Teachers could do more if class size was smaller.  

_Vicky Smith, Davis School District_

Something needs to be done with education. Too much is being put on teachers and the expectations keep getting higher. It's almost impossible to do what we need to do. I think we need more support for each student. We need more teachers. The students are getting harder and it's getting harder to reach each individual student. What if there were two teachers per classroom?  

_Fran Stoker, Davis School District_

Our district used to have 50 qualified people apply for every teaching position. Last year they had to hire 6 people who don't even have the needed education and get them to teach while they get qualified. (this is in a very small district -- only 150 teachers total)  

_Kim Player, Emery County School District_

Our state needs more students who are prepared for college or the workplace, and our educational system needs quality teachers coupled with the right technology to inspire and train those students. Our legislators who choose to not fully fund our education system are choosing to fail to invest in our future and the futures of the children we have promised to our care.  

_Nicholas Angell, Granite School District_

My class size keeps growing, I do not have enough supplies for all of the children and need to use my own money to purchase them. My students have very diverse needs and I feel like there is no way to meet all of their learning needs, let alone the social and emotional needs that must be met. Many of my students suffer from food insecurity, have parents working many jobs to survive, and struggle to stay on task and complete work. Growth of students is being emphasized in my District, but that is based solely on test scores, not on whether or not they can get along with others and be kind. I feel as if I were just starting out as a teacher I would leave the profession. The demands put on me to fix everything are ridiculous and take me away from my own family. I feel like I am failing at work and home.  

_Barbara Antonetti, Granite School District_

I have worked in the same school for 5 years and have had varying class sizes. I can personally attest to the learning and growth that takes place for all students when class size is low. This year I am overloaded with 32 students and feel extremely overwhelmed and guilty that I am not meeting all of their needs.  

_Mikelle Gordon, Granite School District_

Effective education can't happen in crowded classrooms. Our fourth grade classes have 34 in them. I have only 25 students--but am teaching both first and second grades (what's known as a split). If you want to increase student learning and success--put fewer students in a classroom.  

_Jackie Granger, Granite School District_

As dedicated as the teachers are at a school like mine (high poverty, refugees, violence/trauma/PTSD, not a neighborhood school, high stress/demands on teachers, etc), we are losing teachers every year because the work environment is not emotionally, mentally, and sometimes physically safe for teachers or students. We do not have the resources to help these students; we are teachers, not licensed social workers or psychologists. The climate of
this type of school, should be trauma sensitive, however, what ends up happening is that teachers are experiencing
tertiary, or second-hand trauma themselves. Affects of the trauma is absent-mindedness, being late, forgetfulness,
depression and anxiety, stress-related illness, weight gain, losing interest and not motivated in personal life activities,
mental health care and medications. We don't have the power or resources to support the teachers, or the students.
With larger class sizes, the situation has worsened 10-fold. This is one reason we are not able to keep teachers, or
attract new teachers.

Heidi Jensen, Granite School District

Utah Education needs more funding to lower class size, increase mental health services for students, and increase
teacher pay to be more competitive and retain good teachers. PLEASE do not rely on ARL programs to fix the
teacher shortage. ARL teachers are NOT prepared to teach a classroom full of students!

Milicent Larsen-Fogarty, Granite School District

I would like to share the message of how much we need to focus on the whole child. I have only worked in schools
that are ravished with poverty, english language learners, and unmet basic needs. Each year I have taught, at least
one student has had a primary caretaker die or face long term incarceration. This year, I have already had two
students with parents die. Let me tell you, that when a kid comes in and can only talk about how dad overdosed last
night, it changes your lesson plan. I'm tired of saying how "heartbreaking" these stories are. I'm tired of placating
emotions that do nothing to change the situation. Fund a full time social worker and psychologist in every building.
Encourage the creation of social emotional core standards so we can recognize schools aren't just reading writing
and arithmetic. Childhood trauma is real, and has significant effect on the brain. Give these kids the support they
need so they can make a better life for themselves.

Taylor Layton, Granite School District

My school has large class sizes and not enough paraeducators to help in these classes and in the Behavior Unit. I
have 6 students out of 29 in my class who are on behavior contracts (general education classroom). We need help
both in our school with more aides/paraeducators and PARENTS need help learning how to parent.

Karen Oliver, Granite School District

If given the resources schools and teachers would be able to meet the needs of the students we serve. Reduction in
class size would enable teachers to personalize the help for the students in their classroom. This would help the
overall budget spent on education in the long run because we wouldn't need to remediate as many students.

Tracy Rose, Granite School District

Education is significant to the future of our society! We need to respect the field and keep up, make changes when
needed to correspond to the needs and demands of society.

Amy Ross, Granite School District

I would like to share the challenge of my Special Needs unit being so grossly underfunded that we are unable to fully
staff our classroom or keep consistent staffing. I have seen a staffing turnover of 100% every year since I have been
teaching. I have several aggressive students and every time a staff member is changed their behavior gets worse. It
also takes time for me to train my staff to be consistent on Behavior Intervention Plans, which is critical to student
success and safety. Having sufficient aide support is what keeps talented Special Educators in the position more
than anything else. This job is stressful, and feeling as though you are left without the help you need is extremely
discouraging.

Elizabeth A. Spencer, Granite School District

Before any legislator is allowed a vote - 10 hours in an average school's average classroom

Julie D. Tarbet, Granite School District
Overall Education Budget

This year, our school lost $500,000. As a result, we lost 3 teachers. Our class sizes in 4,5,6 grades averaged 32 students at the beginning of the year. There have been no other changes in positive programming. As a result, our behavior has TRIPLED!!! Kiddos who fight to be noticed at home struggle when they have to fight to be noticed at school as well.

Amber Woodward, Granite School District

Teaching is rough. Teachers teach because they want to and not because they aren't educated enough to do something else with their education. Whenever you vote on anything that impacts education, think about if it will make life easier or more harder on teachers. If it will make it harder, then you will lose good teachers, bottom line. Don't use education as a way to get people to vote on more taxes. Look at programs you have going and say "is this more important than the nurse I have in 4 years knowing what they're doing?" or "would the state benefit more from this or from adults who know how to problem solve on their own?"

Jenna Meeks, Jordan School District

I think something needs to be done now in order for our children to be successful. Quality teachers needs to be a number one priority for our state. We won't be able to attract business without having an educated work force.

Sheri Sample, Jordan School District

Before you make more rules and regulations regarding education, do you best to actually go into schools and talk to teachers. If you want to improve the quality of education in Utah, you must invest in it. You need to invest in the quality and quantity of good teachers, you need to make sure they have the supplies and technology they need to teach and you need to fund education. We cannot expect to be able to compete with other states or internationally if we rank dead-last in student spending.

Kiera Beddes, Juab School District

That with the shortage of teachers we should be better supporting them. No new bills to make it tougher on new teachers. Ann Milners new law is a joke. Also the state school board needs to back off and start supporting teachers for a change.

Chad Staley, North Summit School District

My classes average 38 students.

John Lynn Taylor, Ogden School District

The present state of funding of education in Utah is appalling! It demeans teachers and also students, setting a standard for low expectations and low self esteem. This affects students all their lives.

Heather Dorrell, Other

Every student deserves to have a highly qualified academic counselor and a crisis interventionist available when they need a trained professional to talk to. We must invest in our children. It is time to adequately fund public education to give our kids the kind of support they need to help them navigate through divorce, a death in the family, terminal illness, depression, abuse, drug use, and all mental health issues. Provide the funding necessary to help our kids. Keeping our kids healthy and safe or lowering taxes? It's not really a choice. Do the right thing.

Renee Pinkney, Park City School District

We need to stop bragging about how much we get out of our education system given that we spend so little money on it (compared to other states). Good enough is the enemy of great.

Edward Potts, Park City School District

Make education--our students and teachers-- a priority in Utah!!!

Lara Rude, Park City School District
Overall Education Budget

As someone in the education system it feels like the people making decisions don't really understand what it is like to be at a title-1 institution or what teachers actually do. And I feel like they make uneducated decisions that don't directly affect them, and so they aren't changing or fixing the issues. They need to go visit a school and educate themselves.

Lauren Avelar, Salt Lake City School District

Teachers salaries in Utah are far below the national average. This will NEVER attract college students into the profession!!!!

Megan McGinley, Salt Lake City School District

Education is the most important investment our state can make. Why is this not the very top priority? I believe that teachers should have reasonably sized classes, be compensated fairly for their hard work, have opportunities and paid time to gain the expertise they need to serve ALL their students. And with all this in place I believe that teachers need to be held accountable for providing high quality, relevant instruction for all students as well as for creating and maintaining emotionally safe, positive learning communities within their classrooms.

Jennifer Newell, Salt Lake City School District

I hear of money getting to the districts but because it doesn't have specific earmarks it goes where the district sees fit, without any accountability. I disagree to all the trips to out of state place and single hotel accommodations and wasted expense.

Jennifer Chandler, Uintah School District

I am concerned about so much testing for the students. It takes a lot of time away from teaching. Also, I work with all the special ed teachers and they are buried in paperwork. One great teacher quit and went back into private practice because she missed spending time with the students. I am worried that many parents aren't teaching their children respect for education and teachers...which effects the classroom and society greatly.

Valerie K Thurnell, Wasatch County School District

Our students are our future. If we short change them, we are only short changing ourselves in the end.
Karen Eyre, Weber School District

1. I am a millennial teacher who loves her job. My passion effects students lives in a positive way every day. This passion is decimated by a culture that blames the teacher and school first. In fact, it makes me want to take my talents and passions somewhere else. Families and communities are are breaking down. Schools are not the only solution, and they need more support if we expect them to address these global issues. 2. Please continue trustland and teacher supply money funds. They make a huge difference in my school and classroom. A website celebrating the impact of trustland funds in my school: https://sites.google.com/wsdstudent.net/elawithaugustin/home/trust-lands-teacher-supply-mones?authuser=0

Jenna Augustin, Weber School District

If they want to improve the technology literacy in Utah they need to support CTE and Technology and Engineering.
Robert Aiman, Alpine School District

Please continue to support STEM and 21Century Learning by establishing Maker Spacer rooms- potables.
Caroline Ball, Alpine School District

Teachers are professionals, just as doctors and lawyers. We have to continuously maintain our credentials, just as they do. However, we are not seen in the same light as those careers. Many times we are called underpaid babysitters which is a belittling comment, to say the least. Few beginning teachers stay in the profession for more than 5 years because the stress and strain has already drained them, and they look for other options that will utilize their educational credentials. We, as educational professionals, need the public to recognize what we do. That
Overall Education Budget

without us, there is no future. There will be no doctors, lawyers, architects, or any other white collar workers, because we provide the basis for these professions. I hope that legislators stand by us and support us instead of hanging their heads and stripping us of our dignity. Please, pledge to promote our dedication to providing a better future for all of us.

Misty Beckstrom, Alpine School District

I teach kindergarten and it is becoming increasingly more difficult every year. We have more students than we have ever had before and there are more and more behavioral issues that we all deal with. These impact our ability to teach, which is not fair to the other students. Teacher morale is not as high as it once was with all that we deal with, along with the high emphasis on testing. I understand the importance of testing, but there are many factors that are not considered when children are tested. I have seen high ability children have an “off day” and perform poorly. Children who have speech issues and IEP’s are not given accommodations on the DIBELS test. Kindergartners are not required to be in school, but still count in how well our classes perform on the test, reflecting back on the teacher. I spend a great deal of my own money, which I know is my own choice. I am frustrated that we are no longer allowed to ask for class donations, but we are required to pay jr. high and high school fees. I truly love my job, but the concerns stated above are concerns that I have heard from many other teachers as well. Thank you for your attention.

Hayley Brown, Alpine School District

Every January the State Government announces their top priority is education. At the end of the legislative session it is announced that the most money is going to education. Then why in 15 years have I never seen money change anywhere in education????? So where is the money going?

Lesa Cox, Alpine School District

Our 3rd grade team is diving deep into data and increasing the rigor and student expectations. We need time to prepare and plan while we get paid. There is never enough time “on the clock” to get things accomplished. We work hard during our weekly 1 hour collaboration and regularly spend and extra 1-1 1/2 hours more each collaboration day, on our own time, to meet our own expectations to raise the bar. Also our 4 classes share a chrome book cart of 30 computers, which is more than some, is not realistic when it comes to the expectations that are placed on educators. Technology needs to be increased in ALL schools, not just the new builds, the wealthy schools, or even the most stricken schools. Those of us who work in the middle economic areas are suffering from lack of technology.

Katherine Ferre, Alpine School District

Those building new communities need to pay an impact fee to build the required new schools. I hear developers, etc., have too much clout to make that a reality. That’s the whole problem. We need more schools for more classrooms to reduce class sizes, then increase teacher pay. Paying me more does not increase the number of hours in the day and there’s only so much a teacher can do with 38 sixth graders. There is no time to prepare, to mentor, etc. Paying me more does not resolve that situation.

Helen Gurr, Alpine School District

I am in an older school and technology is not equal from school to school. We are charged with preparing students to go out and succeed but lack the technology to help them succeed in a world driven by technology.

Janys Hutchings, Alpine School District

I work at Frontier Middle School in Eagle Mountain. Our school was too small the second year after it was built. By the third year, we had portables out back. The wonderful outdoor basketball court the students used every day, especially at lunch, was commandeered to put four trailers with eight classrooms outside. Eight teachers and their classes were sent outside. I was one of those teachers. I came during the summer before classes began and painted the interior, added shutters that I made myself, as well as lace curtains I sewed, and painted the door a cheery robin’s egg blue. I called my new classroom a “learning cottage”. My students feel cozy and warm, but most kids and the teachers still refer to our portables as “trailers”. In fact, this year a big letter “T” was hammered onto the outside
Overall Education Budget

of all the portables. We had a nice new school but it became too small too soon with all the wonderful new students in a huge growth area. More schools are being built, but it is too late for our basketball court. One of my students slipped and fell on the ice that accumulates when the snow melts off the roof and puddles next to the stairs. It is a real hazard for students when it is icy but our wonderful custodial staff try their best to keep up with it. They are always spreading ice melt and shoveling snow. I love teaching and love my students. I have made a wonderful little classroom from an ugly very old trailer, at my own expense. My students are worth it. I want them to be eager to come to school each day. There are a few of my students who have told me they come to school because of my class. What I want you to know is that we who love to teach and love our students, want the best learning environment for them. Putting old buildings behind our new schools instead of planning better for the growth you know will happen by building the schools the right size in the first place is not a good use of our taxpayer dollars. These old trailers get moved from one school to another and take a beating by each move. I am one of the lucky ones. My heat and AC both work, the carpet was cleaned to get out the smell, and I was allowed to paint and decorate to make it charming for my students. Not all of our portables are like that. I still worry about students falling on the ice, so I watch and toss out ice melt myself in between when the custodians do so.

Mary McLerran, Alpine School District

Career and Technical Education and its role in APPLYING educational skills for students in real-life situations is important. Keep funding it!

Monica Milburn, Alpine School District

Come to my class of 36 kids, and teach for a week. See the whole week.

Traci Parkinson, Alpine School District

I would like to see Utah Schools update their playgrounds with accessible equipment for kids with disabilities. There are 18 swings on one playground at my school and not one of them are accessible to the students in my classroom for special needs.

Sandra Peppin, Alpine School District

The only hope we have of not creating an elitist, class society is to support public education so that the American Dream can stay alive for all children.

Jamie Riddle, Alpine School District

Class sizes need to be addressed, along with time to teach the standards deeper.

Emilie Whitehead, Alpine School District

I love teaching here in Utah. I understand that we do not have the funding other states do because of the number of children we have in the state. Please realize I am doing my best with the resources I am given.

Vicky Litchford, Box Elder School District

I would love to see members of the legislature be required to spend a large number of consecutive hours in schools in their districts (NOT just token visits). "Come, walk in our shoes", see and experience what we need instead of just hear about it. State and Local School Board Members should do the same.

Susan S. Petersen, Box Elder School District

I work with amazing people. My district is full of forward thinkers and is doing amazing things with minimal resources.

Kristina Brown, Cache County School District

Stop making decisions based on party....consider common sense legislation and get more teacher input.

Tamara Martin, Cache County School District
Overall Education Budget

The classroom size in a school does affect the learning environment. When class sizes are bigger, I, as a teacher, cannot effectively get around to each individual student.

Richard Rigby, Cache County School District

The economic, political, cultural, social and often emotional success of citizens, as well as the country/state as a whole, has largely been built upon and will continue to be built upon the effectiveness of our education system. It would be naive not to see the correlation between our country's accomplishments and its public school system. Similarly, the same is true for individuals. Much of the success of this system has been built on the backs of the sacrifice of educators' time and financial resources. A commitment to being a life-long teacher is synonymous with the life-long reality of financial stress. On top of this, teachers must deal with a culture that politicizes educational spending and curriculum. It is also part of our culture to reactively and unilaterally pass poorly thought out educational laws and requirements without enough data—or enough skill to correctly analyze data. Our education system isn't perfect; neither are teachers. But any improvement for the future depends on a true investment of our public and state's resources—one that actually matches the import of public education. This includes a plan to depoliticize educational policy, a recognition of the sacrifices of educators, an understanding that education cannot be judged as a business model, and a more educated/skilled and less biased approach in understanding and gathering data that could help form educational funding and policy. It also means that our legislature should look at educator as teammates—not adversaries.

Shannon Callister, Canyons School District

Please pay teachers what they are worth! We will not be respected as educated professionals until we are paid as much.

Amanda Kissell, Canyons School District

I am retiring after 31 years in the classroom and every legislative session of my career I have basically heard the same message. "We would like to do more for education but we can't this year because of....."

Todd Landeen, Canyons School District

Please fund early childhood education, especially full day kindergarten for all students. Please lower class sizes and fully fund salaries.

Susan Turpin, Canyons School District

I believe it is in the best interest of teachers and students alike to increase funding of our public schools.

Cheri Arrowsmith, Davis School District

After fourteen years as an elementary faculty/administrator, I have returned to full-time teaching sixth grade students. I am comfortable and confident in this decision and grateful to be a Utah educator. The past fourteen years has provided various experiences and opportunities to serve students and their families as a professional educator. Being in the classroom full-time this year, has reminded me of how critical the success of the first-year teacher is to public education. The time, effort, and resources required to prepare curricula, organize a classroom (physically, academically, emotionally, and mentally), coordinate learning with parents, collaborate with colleagues, and motivate students is exhausting, dynamic, demanding, challenging, enlightening, inspiring, and never-ending. Without tremendous support, encouragement, and insightful guidance, the first-year teacher will not celebrate a third, fourth, fifth, and so on, year in this profession. I have spent numerous days working nearly non-stop from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 a.m. the following morning to be prepared for my students and fulfill professional requirements of the school, district, and state. I have a tremendous vision and great expectations for my students. I perpetually look for ways to improve their effectiveness AND mine. I recruit families in this process and strive diligently to ensure that everything done in my classroom contributes to student learning. I refuse to surrender to the combined menaces of poverty, bureaucracy, and budgetary shortfalls. I frequently check for understanding of ALL parties involved in student success beginning with THE STUDENT, but not ending therein. I establish and follow clear procedures and routines to keep each student feeling safe and secure in my classroom and our school. We celebrate failure as an important
Overall Education Budget

step to success and we never give up. I receive smiles, tears of gratitude and sometimes frustration, handshakes, hugs, “high fives,” “thumbs-up,” notes, cards, emails, phone calls, and visits every day as feedback and insight to guide my teaching. The criticism and appreciation is generally heartfelt and constructive. I am grateful for both. As a Utah teacher, I thank you, the legislator, for your support both morally and financially so I can do the job that I love so very much! Every effort must be made by all of us to do what is best for Utah children, my students, my grandchildren, my youngest neighbors and friends, OUR SMALLEST CITIZENS.

Eve C. Bean, Davis School District

Think of some ways to hold parents accountable.

Nancy Bittner, Davis School District

I am a first grade teacher that has only taught in Title 1 schools. I have been at a school that funded all-day Kindergarten when money was plentiful, but couldn't continue when money was tight. I want the legislators to know that all-day Kindergarten makes a HUGE difference for students. They come to first grade much more prepared. Not only can they read better and have more developed Math skills, but they are better at things that are not measured by a test. They are better writers, they are better socially, and they are even better emotionally. With all the “new” tax money our county receives from the Farmington Station revenues, can't we find a way to do this for the kids?

Carrie Dean, Davis School District

Funding funding funding 20% increase in WPU! Aides in the classroom!

Sam Dixon, Davis School District

I am a first year teacher and I am doing my best to incorporate blended learning because studies have shown this helps create the most success for students. However, since not all of my students have access to technology in the classroom this process has been made quite difficult. It would be a huge help if there was an increase in funding to try and address this need.

Zak Erickson, Davis School District

One student that has major behavior issues can make the difference between whether the whole class learns or not. We need funding to address these issues.

Karen Faddis, Davis School District

Utah students deserve to have their education fully funded. In the past Utah has relied on parents to subsidize their schools and teachers. The system has also relied upon families with a stay at home parent who has time to prepare children for school and work with them on basic skills. As the demographics change for Utah there needs to be a recognition that all day Kindergarten needs to be the norm not the exception. If this is not addressed Utah's prized SAT scores will decline.

Deborah L. Golde, Davis School District

We need more technology in schools. I currently have access to computers that I have to share with 3 other teacher.

Nancy Goodsell, Davis School District

Stop legislating education until you've spent at least 4, one week (not consecutive) blocks of time in public schools in your area of representation. One week at should be spent at each level of public education and the final week as chosen by the legislator.

Barbara Hertig, Davis School District

Decision makers need to spend a day in a Utah classroom. Don't make unilateral decisions when you haven't been in a classroom in 40 years. You need to see how hard teachers work, who arrives everyday, what our limitations are, what the possibilities are..

ML Hill, Davis School District
Overall Education Budget

I love being a teacher. But I feel undervalued and unappreciated for the hard work I do. I do whatever it takes to do a good job and I don't always need compensation for what I do. But I want to know that my hard work is appreciated at the state level. Being a teacher is the hardest but best work you can do.

Nena Hill, Davis School District

The three computers we have for a small student lab in the classroom are old and not supported by the district. They are being taken away with nothing to take its place. The teacher is expected to do something like write grants to fix the problem.

Helena Langford, Davis School District

My grandchildren have to walk 2 miles to elementary school and the district said they can't afford buses to transport them. Class sizes at all levels are too large to get a quality education. I have seen good teachers leave, almost every year I have taught, for better paying jobs. Computers for every student aren't always the answer. There is far too much time spent on testing, not just at the end of the year but all throughout the year.

Julie LaRocco, Davis School District

We are expected to teach with technology in the classroom with 5 Chrome books available for 30 students. If we want more we are to write grants and try to get more for our classrooms. It just makes it hard when we are told we have to do something, but are not given the resources in order to do what our district/administrators are asking of us.

Peggy Lechman, Davis School District

Education funding will support our state now and in the future. We are working to support teaching and learning in the 21st century and we need resources to be successful.

Tiffany Midgley, Davis School District

Continue to reduce the emphasis on testing. Students, parents, and educators are tired of mandated testing that takes time away from instruction and learning. Time to teach and time to learn are vital to the educational growth of our students. School is not fun or engaging for students when we emphasize the test and not critical thinking and real life applications.

Don Paver, Davis School District

Although I work in a relatively affluent community in the Davis School District, our resources and technology are very limited. I realize that we are luckier than many schools in the state, but funding is still our main issue. I only have four computers in my classroom for students to use, which definitely is not enough for my classes of 32-35 students. We do have mobile labs we can use, but even once a week is not enough time with the lab, especially if we're working towards blended learning and relying on Canvas and other online resources to support our instruction.

Kyla Cannon, Davis School District

Every single day I worry about my 8th grade students that I teach. They have a lot going on in their young lives and not all of them get the attention they need. With my class sizes near 40 students in each class, I can't make the connection I would like to with each one. Making a positive adult connection is so important. Please make reducing class sizes a priority. There are many needs in public education. Please realize there are so many good teachers that want the best for their students. Lately I feel like my profession and public education is under attack and those that have negative feelings toward public education don't understand the pressures of teaching. I wish we could all focus on trying to fix and support our local public schools rather than take away funding. ALL students need to be a priority.

Holly Rogers, Davis School District

I have 28 students in my second grade classroom. I have 10 students with educational concerns. I need a smaller class size, so I can help fill in their educational gaps.

Melinda Smith, Davis School District
Overall Education Budget

Trust your teachers. So much money goes to curriculum development in the last few years. It is time to have the money go toward lowering class size and supplies and computer programs for the classroom.

Diane Walker, Davis School District

If you really want the students to have the technology skills to succeed in the world today, give us (teachers) the tools to teach the skills. One-to-one devices are really the only way to make sure we can integrate technology into everyday teaching in a meaningful way. If you expect them to excel on the end-of-level computer tests (SAGE) you must give us the tools to help them be comfortable working in a computerized environment.

Sara Weston, Davis School District

Increase Utah’s WPU to be competitive with other states.

Mike Estenson, Grand County School District

Find another way to get funding for schools other than using property taxes.

Sarah Ahlander, Granite School District

we do good things and some of the students do willingly and others kicking and screaming and some don't show up for the opportunity

Dave Ashton, Granite School District

Increased funding for all day Kindergarten and making Kindergarten mandatory in the state of Utah needs to be a priority. The expectations have increased in both Kindergarten and first grade. As a first grade teacher I have seen the struggle of students entering first grade who have not attended Kindergarten or those that had poor attendance and no consequences. Kindergarten needs to be fully funded and be equitable to other grades. Students who do not attend Kindergarten end up in first grade needing more resources to help them attain benchmarks. They often do not meet benchmarks and become frustrated and have a negative outlook on school. All students should be given a fair start.

Molly Bonthuis, Granite School District

If the legislators could increase funding for students in special circumstances, that would be awesome. I think most teachers agree that there are still some students who are not getting the educational opportunities they need to be successful.

Daniel Bracken, Granite School District

Teaching is much more complex than people outside of teaching realize. Standardized tests do very little to measure student knowledge and success.

Ben Breinholt, Granite School District

Not every teacher wants a bigger salary (although it doesn't hurt!). I want to have the resources, environment, and people in my school that I need to make it possible for me to help my students succeed. We need more funding and we need it structured in ways that make a difference for the conditions and needs of each individual school. When I can go home at night and know that giving my all (as I do every day) is helping my students be prepared for the future, that is when I love my job. The most likely reason I would consider leaving teaching is watching my best efforts not be enough because I don't have the time to prepare and analyze or the support personnel that could make the difference for struggling learners.

Erin Butler, Granite School District

Please communicate why it's not okay for our test scores to be high? The writing assessment just changed because our students are doing well with persuassive/argumentative writing so now the test has been changed to be more challenging. I don't understand it nor does the public!

Karen Congram, Granite School District
### Overall Education Budget

I teach at a turn around school. Our students eat most of their meals at school and for many, their teachers are the only adult they trust or have a relationship with. They love their teachers so much but they are spread so thin! On top of teaching the standards and expected to make the growth, we are teaching them basic skills that they don't get at home. We get very little support from outside the school.

_Amanda Cornwell, Granite School District_

Education deserves unbiased attention. Classroom demands are greater than ever. Students and teachers need systems of support (human, monetary, and time resources) to ensure success.

_Jen Ellsworth, Granite School District_

I taught first grade with 31 students, I am still surprised every day that I didn't quit. I now have 31 third graders, several of which are emotionally impaired and one that doesn't speak English. I have a very low class and feel that there isn't enough of me to go around.

_Kira Hurst, Granite School District_

Our future in Utah depends upon quality education for our children. Fund us adequately, please.

_Teri D. Jenkins, Granite School District_

Invest more in public school students and teachers. Reduce class sizes

_Erin Kirton, Granite School District_

Public education is assisting all of us to have a strong future as citizens. The more we fund the quality of future citizens are produced for society.

_Rebecca Parker, Granite School District_

I have taught for 33 years. I love teaching and have put up with a lot to make sure my students have the best education possible. It is getting so political now, it is hard to see how we are helping our students. Do the right thing, because it is the right thing to do, not because of personal gains.

_Cheryl Pietz, Granite School District_

My teacher supplies money that I receive does not even cover all the paper, pencils, and basic supply I need to teach. I spend my own money for some of these funds. This is not right.

_Terry Reynolds, Granite School District_

We need smaller class sizes and more funding. We need to differentiate and align tests with student level.

_Hilary Ruhling, Granite School District_

I work in a Title 1 school. Every year the demands on teachers, schools and districts grow without accompanying support. A new layer of expectation, policy or law is added every year. Meanwhile, the social issues that our students deal with are more difficult year by year and continue to affect more students. As a teacher, I feel stressed and pressured to figuratively (by myself) cure "cancer." There is no one in my classroom helping meet the social, behavioral and academic needs of my students besides me. Yes, other people can (and do!) help from time to time by offering suggestions or intervening in specific behavior related instances. However, teachers need more support. We need more daily hands-on help to share the burden and create more opportunities to meet the needs of these children. I believe in teaching to the needs of those I teach, but I am only one person. In my estimation, this is why retaining teachers is so hard. The disparity of the expectation versus the day to day reality is great. The stress, therefore, is often unbearable, flattening and morale killing. It is honestly why I am loosing my love of teaching and why I am currently looking to other career avenues.

_Kerri Rustad, Granite School District_
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When we give funds to public and private education, our future children have a better chance of staying out of poverty and have a hope of a brighter future. There would less crime in our cities and more opportunities for young people to good in this world. If they had access to quality education with before and after activities, art programs, etc.

Rebekah Spencer, Granite School District

I have had 32 second grade students in my class for 2 years in a row. I work in a school with a large at risk population. There is no way to deal with the problems associated with so many at risk students in such a large classroom. I spend so much of my day just managing behavior. I have taught for 36 years, and I have found, the larger the class size, the more behavior problems you deal with. On a positive note, we have had a technology grant that has provided our students with 1 to 1 Chrome books. This has helped our students so much because they also have access to Lexia reading and ST Math. They help each student get help on his or her level. Our test scores have really improved. Our ST Math grant will end next year, and it is very expensive. More funding for these programs would be wonderful.

Barbara Thornley, Granite School District

Their investment in education pays off dividends for a lifetime. Less folks needing public assistance, etc. down the line.

Sharon Jensen, Jordan School District

I am fortunate that I can teach for the joy of it (not for the money), but each year it gets harder and harder. Less support, more hoops, and huge classes make the job nearly impossible. If people in Utah want to support our children we need to be willing to pay for the education they need and deserve.

Kristine Marriott, Jordan School District

I teach fourth grade. I have a student that until this year, has never had positive contacts with his parents, was labeled a severe behavior problem, and was unsuccessful academically in many areas. In an attempt to help him, his parents enrolled him in a charter school during his third grade year. He was soon removed from that school. His parents tried to enroll him back at his neighborhood school, where the mother was told that there wasn't any room for this child. He then came to my school on special permit. He struggled in his classroom, and spent a large portion of his time in the principal's office, main office, or with the school counselor. This year is different. This child struggles with the physical motions of writing - forming letters and numbers. With a simple accommodation made, he was able to be successful on his vocabulary tests. When I contacted the mother to let her know, I could tell she was apprehensive about what I was going to tell her. When I let her know that her son was successful on these tests, she got emotional and told me it was the first positive phone she had ever gotten about her son. The change in this child has been evident. However, he stills struggles with formation of his letters, and anything that requires him to put answers on paper. With the help of an amazing special educator and a school psychologist, we have been able to try different things to help him be successful. Our biggest challenge, though, is getting the things that ca; most help him. We have tried using a computer with speech dictation, but the computer is too old to be really successful. It does not have a port for an attached microphone, so it picks up every little sound made in the classroom, in spite of how quiet 27 students are. This is frustrating as he is constantly having to start over. I am grateful for the financial help that in the past has been given schools, however, we need the funds to get up-to-date technology to help our students find success. Success breeds success. My student is more successful this year because of the success that he has had, but it is not enough.

Kristi Matthews, Jordan School District

Our students' futures impact the well-being of all Utahns. Please look at funding high-quality education for our children.

Andria Robb, Jordan School District
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It is unfair to hold teachers responsible for student scores, when you just got rid of laws for truancy. I have 3 students this year that miss literally 50% of school and I am still held responsible for their scores. It is so discouraging to work so hard and have your teachers scores published. Parents don't know if you have students that don't come to school, or a lot of resource students, or other factors that skew the scores. They only see your overall score and then we are judged on this. It is so stressful for teachers. This is a major reason teachers get discouraged and have threatened to quit.

Valerie Hathaway, Juab School District

I wish that your decisions would be based with the end of the line in mind. All I seem to hear is that, "We just gave the teachers this...", when in reality with all the other factors, sometimes teachers do not get that. Tell it for what it is. (Not popular, I know) For example, "we just gave the teachers 7%, but with the rising cost of insurance, and declining enrollment, teachers will probably not get any of it." I'm the one that has to tell the public the truth and we the teacher come over as whiners. Your truthful support would go a long way. Secondly, I am losing a lot of teaching time to accomplish every new mandate that comes down the pike. I'm feeling less and less like the teacher I was hired to be.

Chris Rasmussen, Logan City School District

Teachers need to be paid for the many extra hours it takes to meet the ever changing new curriculum demands for the technology classes, and also be provided adequate training.

Carol Meinhardt, Millard School District

Educators change lives; many students spend more time with their teachers than their parents. Respect for the hard-working educators in Utah must be increased. This starts at the top with our government leaders and the way they regard and speak about the profession. A funding increase would be helpful also.

Jackie Shiner, Millard School District

When children know that their community is refusing to fund their education, they begin to believe that their education must not be very important. There is hardly a less dangerous mentality about learning to cultivate in young minds.

Megan Denney, Murray City School District

For the past four years, I have not had a "normal" classroom environment due to not enough FTE funding from my district. One year, we had to have 2.5 teachers at my grade level with no other grade to "split" with. As a result, a 1/2 time teacher taught the 3rd group in the morning, and my colleague and I had to separate her kids and teach them in the afternoon. During that year I had 40 kids for half of each day in an elementary setting. It was miraculous that any learning went on at all. The next year presented the same funding problem and we tried having 2 part time aides share the third class for 1/3 of the day and rotated kids through as in middle school. It was a disaster in terms of classroom management for the aides, and that spilled over into the entire grade level. Once again, our test scores looked good, but we nearly made ourselves ill working as hard as we did to overcome the inherent problems that came with the model. This year, ONCE AGAIN, we didn't have enough FTE money to pay 3 teachers for 64 kids, so I have 32 6th graders (a group of struggling learners) and am barely keep my head (and theirs) above water. When is our state going to wake up to the fact that they can't keep working their most experienced and dedicated teachers to death and hope to retain them in the profession. Retirement is looking so nice right about now, and this is coming from a 29 year veteran teacher who had envisioned herself working another 5-6 years to help mold and change young lives for the better. Sigh. It is so very discouraging. Thanks.

Anne Renz, Murray City School District

Classroom money would be nice to see increased in order to buy supplies and resources the students and teachers need to implement and be successful with the plans and programs the legislature and the Utah Board of Education
Overall Education Budget

implement. Many times there are changes and new requirements, but the money to provide the resources for the new programs and changes is not there.

Rebecca S Anderson, North Sanpete School District

With the new students coming in being tech savvy and having to compete with their video game attention spans more funding for class size reduction would be great this will allow a more personal connection with students. Having nearly 180 students in a day it is difficult to build a connection with that many students.

Wayne Nielsen, North Sanpete School District

Stop gouging Utah citizens with increased taxes. Let's get rid of the waste in public education. More money does not seem to increase better grades.

Joni Cheney, Nebo School District

One local charter school has enough money to take their graduating class to Disneyland each year and we are struggling to have enough internet support or chrome books in each class to provide modern education. Why do Charter Schools have so much money? Why are we spending valuable time preparing the same thing as the old docters to prove we are teaching? Isn't a simple observation by the principal's sufficient to see who is really teaching and who needs help?

Kathryn Crandall, Nebo School District

We are being encouraged to help students to integrate new technology into their lives to help them prepare for the future. In my life, I have seen tech help students to be more job ready and college ready independent of their parents and socioeconomic status.

Jenna Fagergren, Nebo School District

I just returned to the classroom after being in administrative positions for 10 years and was overwhelmed with how many hoops teachers have to jump through on top of all their teaching responsibilities and the amount of time I was spending outside my contract hours to be ready to teach each day. Increasing our pay, lowering the class size and giving us more planning time would definitely help lighten this heavy load.

Camie Simpson, Nebo School District

While the amount of money I can deduct on taxes is decreasing, the personal cost of purchasing supplies is rising. Students come to school with less every year making it necessary to purchase items myself. This is not ideal for me or my family as that money should not have to be spent on pencils or paper. The stress teachers deal with is also increasing. With expectations rising, less parental support, not enough funds, the stress is making many of my colleagues have increased health issues, myself included, that stem from dealing with the stress.

Carrie Van Nosdoll, Nebo School District

That Utah teachers are overworked and underpaid...

Marianne Loertscher, Ogden School District

When Scott Howell was my state senator, I invited him to spend a day at my school. It was eye-opening for him. He told me that no one in corporate America would put up with the kind of conditions that teachers put up with. I'd like each legislator to spend one day in a school to see the great things that are happening with teachers who care and give their students what they need.

Linda Wills, Other

The lack of respect for the teaching profession is the root of the issue. When funding (ie. the legislature) supports teachers the community will support what we do.

Allison Atkin-Bagley, Park City School District
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Put education at the top of the priorities! We should not be last in the nation every year

Pat Drussel, Provo City School District

I work in a school building that is getting close to 100 years old. No earthquake proof. No sprinkling system. It is literally sinking into the ground. Yet the east side wealthy got priority (for the most part) with the last bond. The population of the school is 70% free and reduced lunch and bout 37% Hispanic. The political activity of senate leaders does not prioritize the citizens of my area. With the continual funding of charter schools our district has diverted money for years to fund its failed experiment. We perform well as a school with the population we serve. The charter school only takes the upper middle income indirectly segregating the cities population with the busing policy of the school. That sounds like segregation to me. Fund public schools in the districts and dissolve the charters into the districts to help districts diversify where the money goes and maybe equalize the monster that our state has created with charter schools. Senator Hatch has the idea as many of the other legislators that we take only the best and the brightest. "Part of what makes America so special is that we welcome the best and brightest in the world, regardless of their country of origin." Well guess what? We don't. We take every student that walks through our doors. Charter schools do not do this, they are selective and kick out those who don't fit. Public schools take everybody, regardless of being the best and the brightest. The state legislators need to get off of their elitist high horses and start thinking about everyone and how we can all make it work rather than segregating in charter school mentality.

Robert Lyman, Provo City School District

Public Education is under attack, nationally. Utah has been known for its support of community-strengthening organizations. Please put our resources in line with that! Also, the fine arts, health, and PE are just as ESSENTIAL as math, language arts, and science (maybe more).

Andrea Butterfield, Salt Lake City School District

Teachers work so hard just so we can jump through hoops. The Sage is not working. Help students to be successful and don't take away the arts, activities and other areas. Students need a well rounded education.

Kaylynn Dara, Salt Lake City School District

Our students often come to school with a view of the world that comes from news on Facebook. They need to be given time and opportunity to read and learn about the world around them. After school classes such as debate, mock trial, science fair, student government need to be funded so that students are learning about the world and how it works.

Lois Harris, Salt Lake City School District

Help us help the students of Utah!

Rett Neale, Salt Lake City School District

I would like the decisions my legislators make to have my students' best interest at heart. Teachers are continually doing more with less in an effort to meet the needs of very diverse classes. I want support in educating every student.

Amanda Roberson, Salt Lake City School District

We need to make education more important in Utah. Try to catch up with other states on funding for education.

Corey Morrison, Sevier School District

I don't even have enough space in my room to fit all the desks, it wasn't built for 29 1st graders. I also spend at least $1000 dollars a year of my own money for student supplies.

Kathryn Robinson, Sevier School District

Dear esteemed senators and representatives, in preparation for the coming 2018 legislative session, I invite you to come and spend an entire day at Mill Creek Elementary School in Granite School District (where I work as special
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education teacher) and do some or all of the following: (1) Observe a few teachers throughout the day and after hours until they go home (it's not uncommon for teachers at my school and elsewhere to stay after hours to grade papers and design lesson plans); (2) talk to teachers about challenges they face and their concerns for their students' learning and overall well being; (3) note classroom, library, technology and playground resources; (4) note classroom sizes, adult-to-student ratios, and one-on-one attention time for struggling students; (5) eat breakfast and school lunch, and observe the nutritional quality of the food; (6) eat breakfast with students in the cafeteria, eat lunch in the faculty room, and ask students and teachers questions; and finally, (7) talk to our amazing principal, Ann Kane, about the demographics, needs and accomplishments of our students, and about the commitment, skill and hard work of our teachers and staff. I know you have the best interests of the children of our state at heart. Please spend a day with some of the future parents, healthcare providers, leaders, clergy, entrepreneurs, artists, scientists, engineers, and teachers themselves of our state. I'm proud of our students; I want the best for every one of them; and yes, I worry for some of them, knowing the challenges they face in their lives. I think you'll feel the same way once you meet them, and I hope you'll share your insights with your fellow legislators. Sincerely, Helen Salas-McCarty

Helen Salas-McCarty, Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind

We want to keep up but rural school do not have the funding for technology that we need to keep up with the other schools

Lynne Cook, Washington County School District

The legislature as well as our local school boards should be our biggest and best advocates.

Lana Eldredge, Washington County School District

They need to spend time in public schools. Including Title 1 schools. More than one day.

Trista Miller, Washington County School District

The schools are educating the future generations. They need support and parents need to be held more accountable for their child's education.

Susan Roberts, Washington County School District

I am a mother of a child with special needs and a special education teacher. My child is considered a mild/moderate student. She struggles with school on a daily bases. There is rare chances for her to feel successful and enjoy school as she gets older. She is currently in 7th grade and she knows she is behind all the other students. She hides her school work from me because she does not understand it and feels embarrassed. She is not the only student who does this. I also run a parent support group monthly to talk about our students struggles and parents are feeling this across the board. In middle school they are expected to sit in a general education classroom for math and reading with peers who are a lot higher than them. They feel humiliated most of the time. Then instead of going to an elective class, which is a chance for them to feel successful, they are told they have to do ANOTHER math and reading class because they are too low and need the extra time. Why can't they have just a reading and math class that is geared toward the struggling students so they can not miss the one opportunity they have to feel successful. I am very frustrated and I speak on behalf of many, many parents and students. We need real solutions to meet or special education students. We need real testing solutions for them so they don't dread the test but feel excited to see themselves grow. We need real solutions so they don't drop out of school.

Jennifer Shepherd, Washington County School District

Every time a news story makes me sad about the future of our society, something good happens in my classroom. A student makes an observant comment, another one may be kind to someone struggling...lowering the priorities and the standards of our schools lets kids know that adults are only interested in themselves. It also means that the future is being influenced by people who know that they are unimportant in the "big picture". Is that what Utah needs? We need to be a better example by prioritizing education and the brighter future that is possible.

Krista White, Washington County School District
Overall Education Budget

I just want legislators to recognize all the good that is happening in the classrooms around the state. Stop focusing on the bad! Also, if you really want to know how and what I teach, come see me, don't listen to someone who wants to undermine my valuable work.

Nichol Stringham, Wayne School District

Teaching is my passion. I take it very seriously. I continually strive to keep my education current. Everyday I show up to my classroom with excitement for the day and stay energized and organized so that my students can be engaged and fully invested in their own education. I spend hundreds of dollars in my classroom on curriculum and incentives for my students. Most of the time my class has over 30 students. Frequently we have to share supplies or I need to buy them. I create my own social studies and science curriculum as I do not have the supplies and resources available to me. I work many hours overtime and many extra days as my planning time isn't efficient. I teach in a school with portable 7 full portable classrooms while the charter school down the road is building a new Jr. High. This charter school has a high turnover rate and I personally have taught several students that come back into my classroom. These students have a big learning curve as they adjust to our classroom (both behaviorally and academically). Every student I have had from there has been a couple or more grade levels behind. They are darling students just like all my students, but it takes more effort to teach them what they need to learn. The charter school's Sage test results are far below the other local public schools (by half or third). Every single student in my classroom grows. My low kids progress and so do my high kids. It's an environment of community, respect, and a growth mindset. Teaching students is an important job as it sets the future for all these incredible, brilliant children. Our students need more. They need a teacher that has time to adequately plan, a classroom size that is smaller so they can receive more attention, and rigorous programs and incentives.

Jenifer Allen, Weber School District

I watch very talented and experienced teachers do whatever it takes to help their students. Mostly using their own money and time.

Kathy Anderson, Weber School District

I love teaching, but I lack the access to technology that would benefit my students.

Holly Daines, Weber School District

There are many teachers that have a second and third job, because they can't support their family on a teacher salary. We need full day kindergarten. 20 out of 24 first grade students came to me this year not being able to read. We are starting our students off with a disadvantage. They need more time in kindergarten. We have reading intervention groups and they barely started their education.

Clorinda Galbraith, Weber School District

Come spend some time in public education classrooms and you will see just what we are dealing with!

Karen Gardner, Weber School District

When I was student teaching 2 years ago several teachers warned me to get out while I can. Others tried to make sure I knew how much work I was signing up for. Over all I think teachers are getting burned out by the amount of work that is required in teaching, classroom management, and all the side projects dictated by state and district leaders. They want to do what is best for students, although that is what we want teachers to do, that desire is diminished by other pressures.

Lauren Mkina, Weber School District

This year we have a situation in our 6th grade that makes it so that we have 3 classes of 24 kids in the morning. But, because we have only enough FTE for 2.5 full time positions, we have a teacher who only teaches half-time in the mornings. With this, I take 10 of her kids and the other afternoon teacher takes 11 of them. This makes it so that we have 34 and 35 kids each afternoon and all day every other Wednesday. (We started the year with 36 in each class) 34 may not seem like all that many, but it has been extremely difficult with coordinating schedules and being able to
Overall Education Budget

manage some behaviors. The kiddos from the morning teacher don't see us as their "real" teachers and their level of respect for us as well as their work completion is significantly lower. Although we have been managing as best as we can, having 34-35 6th graders is just a lot of chatty kids to have in one classroom for 2.5 hours a day. Our classrooms are pretty crowded with desks and that is just one more thing that makes keeping the kids on task and teaching effectively more difficult.

Madison Moore, Weber School District

Public schools are committed to helping every student succeed, regardless of their background, economic status, or learning level. Our state needs to ensure that it is doing everything it can to strengthen and support public education above any other educational institution. 12-k schools impact the majority of Utah's youth, if we as a state expect to have an educated, driven, and successful future we need to invest in the cornerstone of our society, public education.

Zachery Venstra, Weber School District

I would like them to understand that title one schools are not failing. The system fails us. Teachers are working harder in these schools than in any other schools. Threats of giving labels or transferring teachers are not helpful. Money and community support is what we need. I would like to propose that legislators should be required to spend time in title one schools and see what is really going on.

Melanie W Vigil, Weber School District

Please treat teachers like the professionals that we are!

Ryan Waite, Weber School District

Education should be our #1 priority and this state should fund it accordingly.

Crystal Woytko, Weber School District
Class Size

We appreciate any effort to aide in helping us teach our children. They will be our future leaders and should be prepared. Pour the funds and resources into having great teachers to be the guides for our students. You have to make education an attractive career choice for college students.

Lisa Aase, Alpine School District

I get tired of hearing how bad our education system is compared to testing of other countries when we test everyone, even student with accommodations where other countries filter out students before high school who have challenges and test the rest.

Kevin Aston, Alpine School District

Teachers work very hard and are not compensated for the hours that they are putting in beyond contract time to do their jobs well. I don't know very many other jobs where once the work day is over, work is taken home with them. It's set aside until the next day. Large class sizes (some over 42 in high schools) make it VERY difficult to give students one on one attention that they deserve. There are more requirements of us as teachers with evaluations etc. that take us away from designing and implementing fun, informative lesson plans. Burnout is high when you aren't appreciated or provided with resources.

Becky Bailey, Alpine School District

In our school our kindergarten class size is 26 children, which is 52 children with two sessions to progress monitor. The expectations for the teachers are to teach a 3 hour block of literacy that doesn't include time for recess, computers or math. It also doesn't allow for time to help connect with students, especially ones that have very little time with parents.

Lorri Case, Alpine School District

I think we need to stop saying we will just need to do more for less.

George Durfee, Alpine School District

I am an adapted physical educator. The high school I teach at has a Unified Sports program (peers and student athletes with disabilities learning, practicing and competing in tournaments together). This program is very successful as all of our students become so involved in activities both during school and after school hours. Cooperation, friendship and teamwork as well as sportsmanship during competition are emphasized. All students grow personally as well as physically.

Julie Hines, Alpine School District

the teacher shortage is caused because of lack of pay first and then because of lack of respect given to educators. Educators are on the bottom of the pyramid of respect. It starts with parents and then students and then administrators and teacher are left to the demands of the above three factors. Give teachers the ability to follow through with classroom policies and procedures without being overridden by threats from parents and students of being sued. Return respect and control to teachers.

Karen Finley, Alpine School District

Resources matter when trying to help students on an individual basis. As we have been mandated to help every student be successful, the difference between 25 and 35 students in a classroom becomes quite clear. It is impossible to effectively help every student in the way that they deserve when there is not enough time to talk to them. Make class sizes smaller by increasing the number of teachers. Increase the number of teachers by making this a profession that is respected and fairly compensated. Show the citizens of this wonderful state that you care enough about them to invest in their future.

Devin Fisher, Alpine School District
Class Size

When I first got into teaching, I thought having holidays off at the same time as my kids would be awesome. I didn't realize at the time that teaching requires so much more than that. We don't get overtime, 'cause if we did our school would run out of funding before we were even halfway done with the year! The amount we are paid is minuscule when compared to how many hours we spend to prepare our lessons. Add on top of that the high volume of students in each class, the lack of funding for science materials (I have to purchase what I do mostly out of my own pocket, which means I can't do as much as I would like), and the lack of classroom aids when they are really needed. I spend a lot of my "vacation time" either preparing for or finishing up things for my students. I've even had my family in helping, which, I can assure you, they weren't keen on doing for their vacation. And that doesn't even begin to address the teacher shortage (I totally understand how some could burn out!), the lack of respect we get from "choice" people (dare I put some partners in that mix?), and certain students, and you've got a recipe for a high-stress job with low pay and low morale. I'm not saying it isn't rewarding or that there is nothing but negative in this profession. I just wanted to get you in touch with our teacherly realities. Please don't forget us when the big guns roll in with their powerful allies and gung-ho ideas to use your influence for. We may not hold as much clout as they do, but we hold the hope of the future in our hands. Thank you.

Sharee Garcia, Alpine School District

Our teachers are among the lowest paid in the county and our class sizes are among the largest. When you increase teacher pay you attract more quality people to the profession. When you increase funding for public schools, you make an important investment in our children's and our state's future.

Mark Gatto, Alpine School District

We need to address teacher shortage, teacher morale and that teachers should be respected for being professionals.

Patrick Gleaves, Alpine School District

Education is the future; with poorly funded education comes ill-prepared citizens.

Kristin Greer, Alpine School District

In order for students to succeed there needs to be more adults per student. The only way a class of 30 students with one teacher works is if every student has the same needs and that will never be a reality.

Kristen Amber Holladay, Alpine School District

If we expect our students to be successful and for the school systems to improve so that each generation can progress, we need better teachers who are more committed. Teachers should have a better salary which would be based off of fitting requirements, such as Bachelor's Degree, to prove dedication to the profession.

Alexa Martin, Alpine School District

Class sizes just continue to increase as our state is growing. Students miss something without the individual interaction with a class and teacher that online classes do not provide. Smaller classes and more teachers are needed to connect the students with a teacher who can help them to learn.

Albert McFerson, Alpine School District

Teachers and students have been waiting for many, many years to have a legislative strategic plan for education including class size reduction, increase in salaries and benefits, money for supplies and a respectful attitude toward teachers. Our students deserve the best education we can give them. And that costs money.

Phyllis Sorensen, Alpine School District

If you truly want to know what is happening in classrooms/schools each of you need to sub for a week in a classroom to really find out what teaching is like. Then you may have some different opinions and willing to start doing the job you were voted in to do!

Kriss Spencer, Alpine School District
Class Size

Allocate more money to pay teachers so we retain them and reduce class sizes.

Janel Tuckett, Alpine School District

I think teachers also need to be able to talk to parents about disabilities that they see within students.

Alene Weakley, Alpine School District

First of all, I would like to thank our legislators for the important role that they play in our democratic process. Without your service I could not do my job. As a public servant I would like to see teaching become as important as any other public servant's job. I am willing to sacrifice if I know it has merit but sacrifice without merit is useless and drains me as a teacher. When I feel that I am getting the support for my students that I need to teach, i.e. an aide in the classroom, technology, supplies, etc. I can teach much more effectively and feel that I can truly do what I intended to do when I became a teacher, Be a Change Agent! I hope that as this legislative session begins you will take into account that I might only have 28 students but half of those students need some kind of intervention. The other half might suffer if I can't get to them in a timely manner without support staff that I need. When I can have just one more body in the room I could possibly make the change for your student that would not otherwise be possible. Please help me teach the children in this state what they need to learn to carry on our democracy!

Karen Webb, Alpine School District

Education = economic growth

Kelland Willis, Alpine School District

I and many of my colleagues feel strained with the increase of class sizes and the low incomes that cause us to look for supplemental incomes.

Clark Funk, Box Elder School District

People on the hill decide what happens in the classroom without full understanding of what happens. I would like to see more legislators have round table talks with actual classroom teachers.

Nancy Ulsh, Box Elder School District

Please listen to what we are saying to you. We are in the "trenches" everyday and can see what is needed in our schools for our students to succeed.

Barbara Warburton, Box Elder School District

I stopped teaching when I stopped getting the support needed from administrators (who were too over-pressured by those above them) to maintain a classroom where students were not held accountable for poor behavior. It was a unique year when we had many transitory students who came from self-destructive homes. Those kinds of students need support before and after school so they can succeed in the high pressure environment of today's schools. We will never succeed with students whose everyday needs are not being met either because of poverty or lack of adequate supervision in the home.

Anita Price, Cache County School District

Being a teacher in public schools since I began my career in 1987 has been an amazing and difficult and wonderful experience. It's an honor to lead youth, to help them grow, and to hopefully be a positive impact in their lives. The challenges today are more difficult because we are required to do so much more, with so much less money, and the support from parents and society in general is just not what it used to be. The respect for the profession has diminished. This is partially due to the level of professionalism displayed by teachers. I don't want to sound like a complainer, but you get what you pay for. A lot of my sharpest students would never consider teaching as a profession. Some of the student teachers I have mentored through the years did not demonstrate passion for teaching or for the youth. Let's make teaching a highly respected and sought after career again! Put a high value on amazing educators! Find a way to attract the best and retain them with fair salaries and fair expectations, lots of
Class Size

support and Utah Schools will continue to be excellent. If not, the only ones you'll get to do this job will be desperate, unmotivated people who are only in it because they think they get their summer off.

Kimberly Sorensen, Cache County School District

The class sizes are too large to teach what is expected.

Suzanne Mackey, Canyons School District

Students are our future and they deserve the best teachers possible. To attract and maintain the best teachers they need to be paid more and have more time to plan.

Donna Anderson, Davis School District

If education is as important as people think it is, there should be more money allotted to make class sizes smaller and pay educators more money to keep good teachers around. I spend at least 10 hours each day at my school, then I spend about 2-4 hours more, each night, working on school things. It's exhausting and I'm burnt out! This is my 23rd year of teaching, and it's not getting any easier. Although I put a lot of pressure on myself, it seems like educators are being required to do more and more every year.

Jodi Andre, Davis School District

Education has to be something you are willing to invest significant money into. Without the profession being something that will pay enough for a family to survive on, there will be a serious teacher shortage. It has to be a viable option for new college graduates to choose.

Corine Barney, Davis School District

Please support our teachers and children through the necessary measures of financial funding and meaningful supports. We need more qualified teachers to support the growing population and class size epidemic teachers are facing and we need to support current teachers so that they stay in this amazing profession and do some of the most important work.

Karly Bates, Davis School District

This is about our community and funding education funds the future. The us vs. them idea needs to end.

Alyn Bone, Davis School District

Our classes are overloaded! I spend $2500 or more each year to buy supplies and technology to help my students. I am getting out of this profession and do not advise any one to enter it. We are micromanaged to the point that apathy has set in among the majority of teachers.

Sharlene Bremer, Davis School District

Dear Legislators, As a veteran teacher, I have watched our profession dramatically suffer in the past ten years. Not only do we have teachers that do not want to stay in our profession, they are running from it. Young people are discouraged from seeking this career path—-not without reason. Teaching is arguably the hardest career and one of the most disrespected. If I were to average out my salary over the true number of hours that I work, I would be making much less than the minimum wage. I knew that teaching wouldn't be lucrative when I came into the profession. Money wasn't the reason I chose to work in education. What I did not know was the true lack of support and respect teachers receive. I currently teach in a classroom with 32 third grade students. There is not space in my classroom to accommodate them. My classroom budget was made for a class size of twenty-six students. That means that all of the supplies for six more students come out of my pocket. That's on top of what I already spend to enhance my curriculum. My school email inbox currently has 53 unread emails, most of which are complaints about one thing or another, that I have not had time to read due to my other responsibilities. I arrive at school no later than 7:00, and rarely leave earlier than 6:00. I still take work home every night. I take grading with me on vacation and feel guilty if I don't work it out after my family has gone to sleep. I am asked to create trackers for multiple students. I try to stay on top of everything that I am asked to do, and if I drop one of the forty balls that I am juggling, I am belittled.
Class Size

The “fun” has been sucked out of my classroom. I am moving through curriculum at a break neck pace, attempting to prepare my students for “The Test” at the end of the year. There is little to no time for slowing down to make snowflakes or, more importantly, teach about character, citizenship, and friendship. There is a disconnect between administration and the classroom. We are constantly being asked to do “little things.” However, when you have a list of twenty little things that each take a few minutes, it adds up. I’ve always known that I was meant to be a teacher. I know that I make a difference in the lives of others every day. I’ve seen positive differences happen in amazing ways. However, it’s getting harder to see that silver lining amongst all of the dark clouds. We need your help and support. Our profession, our students, and the future of our state depend on it.

Katie Brown, Davis School District

This world we live in is a difficult one. Students come to school less prepared, with less support from home, and many behavior issues. Instead of helping teachers confront these issues, or provide incentive to feel valued, teachers are constantly asked to jump through hoops, fix things that are not really broken, and implement gee whiz programs at the whim of people who are out of touch with the classroom. The sooner teachers are looked upon as professionals equivalent to those with equal education, the sooner the public will stand behind teachers and education as well. Set the example, actions speak louder than words!

Cori Burns, Davis School District

Special education teachers are overworked and underpaid.

Tanielle Carter, Davis School District

All students can learn! Teaching is an important! We need to provide teachers with additional preparation time and exposure to quality PD so that they can improve their craft and thus outcomes for students. Are special education teachers are dealing with more difficult student behavior and more challenging parents. On top of paperwork, their workloads are mounting with no relief in sight.

Kathy Chisholm, Davis School District

Teaching is a huge job that few realize how involved and draining it can be. We have to figure out a way to make teachers want to stick it out and stay with it!

Maureen Clark, Davis School District

District oversight is top heavy, money does not reach the classroom

Kristen Davidson, Davis School District

Education isn't cheaper by the dozen.

Eileen Dempsey, Davis School District

Grading schools for test scores is not OK!

Allison Downs, Davis School District

How hard it is to teach without feeling valued.

Erin Fuller, Davis School District

In my experience, teachers work very hard, and are very dedicated and give many hours beyond what is expected. It would be nice to be appreciated more.

Robin Harris, Davis School District

Now is the time to stop messing around with teachers: let them do their jobs, pay them as professionals, back off with needless testing, stop treating educators as over-educated peasants.

Richard Heath, Davis School District
Class Size

I love teaching, I love working with students. But, I wish it was that easy. I work very hard to plan and make sure all their needs are met. I put in two extra hours of my own, unpaid time, everyday. Plus, I take work home over the weekend and I still feel like I can't get it all done. I have used a lot of my own money and resources on my classroom and students. I have a lot of behavior problems with students stemming from home or parental problems. I spend so much time disciplining and parenting students, that I can't get any instruction time in. I have 4 students that have already had over 14 absences and it's just the second term. It gets really depressing when I see other professions (same amount of education) put in less time and less stress and get paid a lot more. It's no wonder teachers are leaving the profession. Our brains tell us it is not worth it, but our hearts tell us the students are worth it. It's an internal battle that each teacher has to face and make decisions. It's a slap in the face when they hire people without teaching degrees, and I'm expected to teach and help them without any extra pay. I have been observed during snack time when I taught Kindergarten, and got marked down for not using technology. I have been marked down for not having my daily objectives listed, when in reality they were on the white board behind my principal giving the observation. I have been observed during a Valentines party and got marked down for not assessing and explicitly teaching. I got marked down for having garbage on the floor on another observation, and the students were cutting out word sorts. There is no place for the educator to write their thoughts or opinions, or defend what was really going on. We just get marked down and it makes our averages drop. There are a lot of things they can do differently on the observations to make them more valid and fair.

Susan Horning, Davis School District

My students are the future and they will be taking care of us one day, lets make sure they are getting a good education and support.

Margaret Jensen, Davis School District

You're not listening to the people who voted you in. You come in with your own agendas. Our state's growth in family sizes that affect schools and quality education can be the last thing funded. You can't squeeze anymore blood out of the turnip you've squeezed over the past decade. Wake up and make a significant difference in the lives of people.

C. Kirkham, Davis School District

Special Education has been on the back burner long enough.

Kathleen Lamborn, Davis School District

You make decisions thinking you know what's best for all the schools, students and teachers and you never even set foot in an actual classroom. You're looking at raw, often times incomplete data. Would you for one second think like educators instead of businessmen? Come and observe classes, think about everything you put on the shoulders of teachers and try to teach something rather than making laws and rules based on what you think is best?

Maria Lee, Davis School District

The public school system is so broken. So much expected of teachers and we are expected to work for free so much it is no wonder we have a shortage of teachers!

Jennifer Louder, Davis School District

Come to my classroom. See what I do.

Carol Madsen, Davis School District

Class size does matter!

Anjanette McNeely, Davis School District

Teacher shortage is effecting student learning.

Lisa Menlove, Davis School District
Class Size

My students enjoy that I do not have them do their assignments using laptops or computers. They would rather do worksheets, assignments from the book, or hands-on activities. I am telling you this because the big push is for one-to-one technology in the classroom and the kids do not really like learning that way.

Troy Murray, Davis School District

We need to show how much being an educator is valued by respecting teacher demands.

Megan Porer, Davis School District

It is time for you to start treating educators as professionals and to stop creating mandates and programs for us to follow. Get out of our classrooms and allow us to do what we have trained and qualified to do -- teach! We appreciate financial support, but the constant meddling in our profession has destroyed any incentive we have to creatively solve the problems that we face. You do not over-regulate any other profession and you do not have the training and experience to micromanage us. We invite you to actually sit in classrooms and try to manage them, rather than attend the dog and pony shows that you typically see in the schools. We love our students and we are deeply invested in their success. Please allow us to do the jobs for which we were hired.

Debbie Quigley, Davis School District

I am a teacher and I love my job. I love the students and want the best for them. My parents and both my brothers have been or are currently educators. So I come from a long line of educators. However, Raising kids on a teacher salary has its challenges and when I was a single mom, there were times we could barely make ends meet. I was offered another job and would have made more money although it was a job that didn't require a degree. After talking to my children, they knew I wouldn't be happy doing anything but teaching. They were willing to sacrifice so I could continue in the profession I love. As a kid, I always knew I wanted to be a teacher. I am so glad I am still a teacher and wish more good people would join the profession but I hear all the time I wouldn't make enough money. Just for instance I have two grown sons who now make more then I do without a degree and I have a masters degree. This gives children the idea education isn't important. I would love to see teachers paid more so we can get more people interested in being a teacher.

Natalie Roach, Davis School District

We are in this profession because of our love of children and teaching. Over the last 10 years our workload has increased significantly, while support has not. Please consider that the policies you make regarding teachers also affects the education of the children of Utah.

Gloria Smith, Davis School District

Why I teach and why I feel it is not possible to do so at this time. Too many demands with large classes and no time

Donna L. Trease, Davis School District

Teachers are overworked, under paid and under appreciated. Expectations for teachers are too much, and if things don't change, teachers will quit. Teachers should have a life outside of school, but we don't. Teachers' own kids need to be their priority, but as it stands, teachers' families are sacrificing more than they should have to.

Heather Jacobson, Duchesne County School District

As a technology teacher who supports the entire staff and teaches all grade level classes I see the many needs of the students and teachers. We need to lower class sizes for teachers. Having a class of 37 fifth grades is unacceptable and detrimental to student learning. We also need to increase teacher salary to recruit the most talented and committed educators to provide the rigorous and high quality education that our students deserve.

Rebecca Baggett, Granite School District

Teachers are the solution to education not the problem.

Diann Bowles, Granite School District
Class Size

If I was to ever leave teaching it would be because of the ridiculous expectations I am held to and the lack of support from legislators dealing with difficult parents and students. I should not be the enemy.

Alexia Crandall, Granite School District

We would greatly appreciate being viewed as professionals and trusted to do the job that we have been trained to do.

Brooke Deardorff, Granite School District

First, I feel there is a definite need for more full time professionals to be positioned at one home school, which are trained to deal with mental health and wellness. In addition, Special Educators are being inundated with so many referrals it takes months of tracking data and testing and then those special education teachers are not full time at one school because they are so far and few between. This, in my personal opinion, creates a lack of consistency. Camaraderie between general education and special education teachers plays a key role in student gains when collaboration and consistency are prevalent. Full time teachers are not equipped or trained to deal with the rising amount of children experiencing adverse childhood experiences. It is extremely difficult to teach and learn with so many outside obstacles and emotional barriers. In many cases, the heightened demand on teachers and school communities to help students rise to academic achievement becomes an unattainable accomplishment for not only students but all stakeholders. i.e. teachers, parents, administrators, districts because of these influences. In turn, both students and teachers taste the bitterness of defeat and failure. We are trying everything to overcome so many of the hardships students face but it is a daunting task - but done with love and trust. However, it is exhausting! Often, as an educational cohort, we look at the academic aspect of children, but it seems as though we forget to ascertain whether or not our students are in a healthy socio-emotionally stable frame of mind to learn what we as educators are trying to teach them. Sure we can do clubs, and have an open door/open teacher-parent dialogue, have food pantries, wash clothes, give children gloves, talk to them when they have a rough day, and deal with the overwhelming effects of poverty on their brains and physical toll of their body, but then am I educating them academically or mentally and emotionally? Why isn't there an assessment that asks about the whole child, not just the academic child. This MAY or may not have an impact on their successes in other areas of instruction and curriculum. Secondly, teachers should be treated with respect as professionals and many in society forget the life-long impact of fabulous teachers. I still have not come to any sure conclusions as to why such a huge shift has happened ultimately giving teachers a bad reputation, but even as a first year teacher I feel the affects of this from districts, administration, parents, legislative decisions made on our behalf, and all of these people’s views trickle down through student points of view. How do we change this?

Kim Dillingham, Granite School District

Education needs to be the number one priority on every citizen's mind. We can't afford to put it anywhere but first.

Aubrey Dillman, Granite School District

Not all schools have the same supplies or opportunities and the legislators need to make sure all schools are on equal footing.

Sonya Dollins-Colton, Granite School District

The number of mandates elementary is receiving is becoming a huge over load.

Jay Graft, Granite School District

Story #1--Before our recent pay raise, I was living from check to check. Now, I am able to put money into a savings and am able to buy a home. Story #2--There must be a way teachers can have smaller class sizes. There needs to be a way teachers are not teaching 20 students in one class then 39 in another class.

LaDonna Gustafson, Granite School District

That Teachers are treated not very fair!

David Head, Granite School District
Class Size

There are a lot of talented special education teachers. The students in special education classrooms might not score the highest on testing, but there is a lot of amazing progress that takes place in self contained special education classrooms. These teachers and students work very hard and should not be forgotten, set aside or told to work harder to get the students up to grade level. It is our intent to work with our students to their own unique abilities and to celebrate their successes no matter how small.

Heidi Henderson, Granite School District

Homeless youth prevention. Teacher Salary vs. Administrative Salary. A voice for teachers

Patricia Honey, Granite School District

I need smaller class sizes. 20 kids per class would be perfect!...or I need more funding for more aids in my class. I am a 5th year teacher and I am exhausted. I can't keep up with all the small groups, differentiation, language support, resource referrals, and interventions I am expected to do. I am worn out and ready to quit.

Michelle Hortin, Granite School District

The frustration of testing. All students shouldn't be tested only on paper, but through observations and real life situations. Preparing for the real world requires time, patience, consistency and a knowledge of their needs individually. Allow teachers to all be paid equally from K -12. We should only be required to specialize in 1 to 2 areas to be proficient at what we teach and not make Elementary specialize is 6 + areas while Jr. High and High school teachers need one area of expertise. There are many areas of relevant that are indicators of what makes a successful student successful through the support of their teachers. Teachers in elementary are require to be experts in more areas of studies than most people who work in other fields. That is not reasonable to ask. Our pay and hours we put in are not indicators that the future leaders of our country are important, when not enough funds are put into pay or funding needs of public schools. It's frustrating to keep loving and sharing your passion for education when teachers are force to work more with less everyday.

Sandy Thuy Jensen, Granite School District

Class sizes are way too large. Anything above 28 becomes crowd control, not teaching.

EllenMae Johnson, Granite School District

It is time to fund education. Education powers our economy, helps children climb out of poverty, and enriches our cultural environment. Please, let now be the time to fund education in Utah.

Susan Jones, Granite School District

Teachers are not being supported in the classroom.

Mackenzie Kemp, Granite School District

I recently read an article about the best high school in every state in the United States. Each one had very small class sizes. Class size does make a difference in teaching ability. You can't have your class sizes unless you have more teachers. You can't have more teachers unless you offer a better salary and benefits than other places.

Paul McClatchy, Granite School District

We have kids with high needs (regular ed and special ed) who are sharing their teacher with 34 other kids, and we can't fill the aide positions. We need smaller class sizes, and better pay and benefits for teachers' aides.

Michael McDonough, Granite School District

Feeling supported and safe should be the right of every teacher in the classroom. It is sadly getting to the point that every teacher I know is planning their exit, whether leaving the profession or counting down to retirement. It is becoming a burden that we don't know if we can bear any longer.

Jenny Morris, Granite School District
Class Size

It's time to put children first. They are our future. We need quality teachers, smaller classrooms, more support from our legislators. Testing has taken over teaching.

*Cindy Moyle, Granite School District*

Most of us have had to work 2 or 3 jobs while teaching to support our families. That decreases the time that we can spend planning, but it is the only way to pay bills for children. You took away the pension when times were rough, but we still make much less than others with Bachelor's degrees or Master's. Gangs are increasing again and the behavior makes it harder to teach.

*Jane Myers, Granite School District*

Students deserve to have veteran teachers instruct them in a smaller class size, up-to-date materials and technology. I have 39 students in a class, no new textbooks, and not enough time in the day to grade papers, build my curriculum, consult with teachers from my department, mentor new teachers, and write emails, or make phone calls home. I have been teaching for over two decades and have worked with about 25 new teachers in my field. This revolving door in our profession only harms students and puts such burdens on the teachers that continue year after year. Please consider lowering our class sizes, give us up-to-date materials, pay teachers or give bonus money to those outstanding in our field, and stop giving the Public Education money to Charter Schools that do not have the same strict guidelines to follow. Thank you.

*Susie Myers, Granite School District*

Class sizes are problematic, especially with the younger children. Grade schools needs smaller class sizes, and educated teachers with twenty first century skills. Education should be a high priority, and our world is dependent on our children.

*Kelly Price, Granite School District*

Education of our children should be one of the top priorities, not something that is taken care of among the last priorities.

*Karen Reynolds, Granite School District*

Every child in Utah should have a safe, public school in his neighborhood he can walk to. Parents should send their children to the child's neighborhood school, a public school, which has a solid basic educational curriculum - even though they feel the school is not good enough for their child. If improvements are needed they should work together with other parents in their neighborhood, at the school level, to insist the school to become "good enough" and thereby help their community and all children. The legislature can work toward the goal of a safe, appropriate neighborhood school for all children. (This can also have the added bonus of reducing car emissions to clean the air around us.)

*Kathleen Rice, Granite School District*

I teach kindergarten and I had very large classes last year, 28 in the morning and 29 in the afternoon. This year I have 24 students in the morning and 25 in the afternoon. Even just having 4-5 fewer kids in the class has made a huge difference and I feel like I can better serve my students this year. I am more aware of their individual needs, I can work with students in smaller groups and give them more of the attention they need, and I have more time for planning because I have less grading, copying, etc. I think I would be able to do an even better job if my class sizes continued to decrease in the future. I would love to see more teachers hired to reduce class sizes and that is the most important issue for me. I also would love to have more funding for classroom aides to help with the workload and student support and have them be more fairly compensated (I have had a couple really great aides who have had to quit because they didn't make enough money), more money for classroom supplies, and increased salary/compensation for classroom teachers.

*Rebecca Riley, Granite School District*
Class Size

Something needs to be done to help increase teacher morale. Teachers are very highly educated, yet are treated like we are uneducated. Society cannot function without teachers, and they need to be treated that way. This would do a lot to help with the teacher shortage that we are dealing with. Privatizing education or giving more money towards charter schools is not the answer. The education budget needs to be spent on finding the most qualified teachers who have a passion for education and who are willing to stay in the profession. Public school teachers are teaching the future leaders of this state and country. Supports are needed in classrooms, not just in increased funding and decreased class sizes, but also with increased funding for classroom aides.

*Emily Saltas, Granite School District*

Teachers work hard and long to assure their students succeed. When there are more than 25 students in an elementary classroom a teacher spends most of the time disciplining and managing the class. Everything is not within a teacher's control, parents should be held accountable. I see and hear stories of parents blaming teachers for their child's poor grades or behavior. Many things begin at home. Misbehaving students in elementary schools is a real problem and must be addressed. Teacher burn out with these students is overwhelmingly high.

*Becky Schaap, Granite School District*

The demands on teachers today are outrageous! No one can possibly do all that teachers are asked to do. It is not humanly possible. No wonder teachers are getting burned out and are leaving the profession. Make fewer demands, and allow us to simply teach.

*Joan Thompson-Harris, Granite School District*

Teachers are passionate about their careers, but without adequate living wages, small class sizes, nor supplies to be successful within the classroom, there isn't an incentive to stay in the field, let alone to encourage others to enter the field.

*Joanna Timothy, Granite School District*

Teachers have more demands placed on them then ever before. The teacher shortage will only increase if we don't start addressing class size, teacher salary, and if we don't start finding ways to boost teacher morale. This all starts with funding, but also coming straight to the source -- THE TEACHERS, before making new laws and decisions that will directly affect students and teachers.

*Rebecca Vala, Granite School District*

I am a Dual Language Immersion Chinese teacher who grew up in China and have been to graduate school in the US. I have taught both in Hong Kong and the US at tertiary, secondary and elementary level. Three biggest structural impediment to improving student learning are: 1. Multiple preps. Currently, I have four preps (beyond contract stipulation), two of which are brand new curriculum and two are a couple years old. Having these many preps make it impossible for me to fine tune my courses. I also have many great ideas that I do not have time to implement. If I spend too much time on one class, my other classes suffer. Consequently, no classes become as better as I'd like. 2. Lack of unstructured planning time. Growing up as a student in China, I got feedback from teacher on my assignment the same day I handed them in. That loop of practice and feedback is important for both the educators and the students to monitor learning. Lack of planning time makes individual feedback impossible. Also, having to teach 6 out of 7 periods in a day makes collaboration a luxury. 3. Students need recess. Students need unstructured free time to socialize, relax and go to the restroom. Few adults can function effectively having to go through 7 periods a day with only 4 min in transition and a 30-min lunch break. Many students, afraid of being tardy, simply do not go to the restroom in that 4-min transition time. Instead, they miss part of the class to go to bathroom. Giving students regular break will significantly help with classroom management and engagement.

*Mengqi Wang, Granite School District*

I would like to challenge all of the legislators to go to a school and sub for a day. It would be the administrators choice which classroom they subbed in. They should work with the teacher to see what goes into planning for a day and then stay and teach for all that day. It would be even better if they went for 3 days. I know that they have other jobs,
Class Size

but let them take the subs salary for that day or days. Let them work with some of our challenging students, or students who have left for Mexico for three weeks, or who come to school ill, etc, etc. I think that this should be a requirement to be a legislator that they sub at least one day a year.

Janet Wellman, Granite School District

I love my job and I love teaching the kids. Even with the low income, I am willing to be a teacher. Saying that, for how much we work, and plan outside of our contract hours so we can find the best ways to teach our kids, we're not getting paid enough. I also think the other faculty members such as the lunch ladies and janitors should earn more as well. They work hard and are a big part of our team at school. Also having a smaller class size would be amazing. That would give us teachers more time to focus more on the kids one on one. I think tests scores would go up much higher. With test scores as well, you need to think about each school and the environment. The school I'm working at is a title 1 school with over 30 different languages. You can't possibly think that these kids who can't speak English very well or at all can meet the state standard scores?! Now that doesn't mean they don't learn anything. If you actually looked more at growth, you can see how much these students have learned which I think is a lot more important than seeing if they met the scores that should have been reached. How would you feel if you took a test in a language you don't understand well and expect to get a high score. You will feel pretty lousy. Another huge problem I don't agree with is that anyone who has a bachelor degree can become teachers. I think teachers should have a degree in education. First, it's not fair to those who worked hard in school to get their teaching degree. Second, the state shouldn't be so desperate for teachers that they will hire anyone that has any degree. If you want good quality teachers, hire teachers that went to school in that field. If you need more teachers, maybe think about actually paying us better and that would probably be a huge help on not having a shortage on teachers. Also, I don't think teachers need to take the praxis tests to get their license. We already went to school for at least 4 years, why do we need to take a stupid test that we don't actually need because we don't really teach that to the kids. These tests are college level tests that the kids don't ever learn. I would think having a degree in education would be good enough. I know for me, I have major testing anxiety and science and social studies are subjects I have a hard time learning. The praxis content tests almost made me not be a teacher. I had to retake those tests several times in order for me to finally pass them, plus pay so much money! If you need good quality teachers, pay us more, have smaller classrooms, and don't require us to do more testing to have our license when we have our degree in education. Believe we can do our jobs without having to take these tests.

Tarikua Whatcott, Granite School District

UEA is not a liberal organization. It exists only to fight for the rights and benefits of teachers, and for practices that are best for students in Utah

Fred Ash, Jordan School District

More money=better education.

Brett Freeman, Jordan School District

Some of our public schools are getting many monolingual students and English is NOT that language. We need more assistance in working with these students.

Bev Griffith, Jordan School District

Education is one of the most important things you are addressing this year. Please take time to look at this fact: teacher shortage. People are not wanting to enter into the teaching profession due to government micro management vs autonomy. Professionalism should be valued and encouraged. Why are we not giving trust to a teacher to reach her/his students needs with an educated accountability and not just a check off sheet that we need to account to an administrator who is accounting a check off sheet to a district ... etc. with so many requirements and restrictions that it takes more time doing that than it does teaching our students ... not to mention the stress and worry if we are doing it exactly the way it is required by our administrators (and it seems to change a bit every year just to cause more stress)? Money is not the biggest issue for most teachers ... please take the outside testing "stress" away, all the testing accountability that we have to "report" and let us teach not just account. Teachers need
Class Size

support. We have parent support... we need legislator support! Please... keep class size small, support full-day kindergarten (as it is really first grade as compared to when you were in school), give compensation to teachers who are willing to do extras, reduce testing accountability, and give us our autonomy to do what we know how to do, namely, TEACH.

Vivian Gubler, Jordan School District

Stop requiring teachers to do more with less! Also, quit requiring so many tests (probably more from the district) to where we feel like we are always testing.

Liz Halloran, Jordan School District

I began my teaching career in a Title I school in Granite District as a classroom aide, then became a certified preschool teacher, and finally became a certified elementary teacher. I am in my 21st year of service in a classroom, and my 13th year as a certified kindergarten teacher. I currently teach in Jordan School District. I am a teacher because I absolutely love working with, and teaching children. During the past 20 years I have seen many changes in education. One of the things that impacts my ability to teach the most is class size. My classes are usually smaller because I teach in kindergarten, but many of my colleagues do not have room for all the children's desks, and their class sizes continue to grow. Teachers in our school are told that we need to be creative and figure out ways to deal with the ever growing class sizes. My classes are usually 5 or 6 children over the optimum student to teacher ratio for kindergarten, but I feel lucky as many other kindergarten teachers have over 7 to 9 children more than is best in an early childhood classroom. I feel my love for children and teaching is used against me. I will do my job for less pay, little to no recognition for a job well done, less than desirable classroom supplies and conditions, and constant pressure to do more with less. Over the past twenty years the testing requirements have become outrageous and I am now spending so much time assessing my kindergarten students, I hardly have time to teach the required curriculum. I am a good teacher, I am always learning and perfecting my teaching skills, I have received awards for my teaching, I have taught and mentored other teachers. I will never quit my job or let my students down, they receive my best every day. The people making decisions about my students and my classroom have no idea how things work in a classroom and all the things I do each day. We need the people making the decisions to be more involved in education. Come into my classroom and my colleagues classrooms, see how we make a difference in our student's lives each day, and see the things we do with so little. Please make decisions based on actual knowledge of the issues, get involved and listen those of us who are in the trenches each day trying to make a difference in our corner of the world!

Kerry Hoffmann, Jordan School District

I am a retired educator. It is sad to see that the education needs in Utah are still the same needs that were there in 1979.

Ann Hollowell, Jordan School District

Fund education.

Terry Huff, Jordan School District

Stop with the testing and really look into the impact teachers are having

Robyn Kabwere, Jordan School District

Utah cannot afford to continue to be last in education funding in the country if you hope to attract big tech firms to locate in Utah.

Megan McCormick, Jordan School District

Students today have higher anxiety about school, including high stakes testing, than ever before. The measures legislators pass for teacher accountability and student performance are negatively impacting students and preventing them from being successful.

Sara Susov, Jordan School District
Class Size

Before I went into education, without a degree, I was taking home, after taxes, 100K per year. I have four degrees and went into education, not to make money but to help kids, so they might have a brighter and better future. However, it took me 30 years to go from a beginning salary of 28K to 50K. We live in a very sad and disrespectful state of how our legislators treat our teachers..., those on the front line, in the trenches.

Max Weiss, Jordan School District

We work hard, and do our very best. Please don't portray us as not trying to do our best.

Donna Allred, Juab School District

Special Education is under funded and has high burnout. Aides are not paid enough and are not given adequate training. We also lack good curriculum and technology to help students with disabilities.

Pat Black, Logan City School District

Teachers don't feel that they are respected. Teachers have the summer off and they get alot of vacation time in between. They don't realize what it is like being in the classroom.

George Duersch, Logan City School District

Teachers are the life blood of of our nation's future. Second to only the family.

Kirtt Myers, Millard School District

There is such a disconnect between how they perceive the school and the reality of it. I want legislators to spend at least a week in schools with different SES, get to know students on individual basis, talk with teachers about their concerns and take them in considerations during the legislative sessions. They need to be realistic when it comes to the achievement expected outcomes of students with disabilities. They all make progress but it depends greatly on their cognitive issues, which need to be taking in consideration. One major benefit that decreases the gap between abled and disable students are the accommodations the IEP team decides the students need in the Gen Ed classroom. For example, if a student has difficulty with short term memory and recall of information, a calculator will help the student with math computation. If they understand specific math concepts, but never get the answer correct because they can't recall multiplication facts, they should be allowed to use the calculator during assessments. We are in the technology era, with any restrictions. Why can't these students use them? Why can't we do all we can to help them experience success? They spend so many hours practicing math facts, when they could participate in the learning process with their peers and feel successful. Great special education teachers and teachers in general leave the profession due to the pressure and high expectation mandated by our legislature, with minimal support coming from them.

Kathy Hanks, Murray City School District

Our daily demands. All the moving parts that go into teaching students, people, on a daily basis. The demands are increasing, but also the demands for mental health and emotional intelligence. Our students come hungry, stressed, abused more and more every year. We need smaller class sizes to support these students as well as intervention systems. Basically money for new programs and more teachers. We are here for students. We are not whining entitled people. We just want to do our jobs well.

Jennie LaFortune, Murray City School District

Need to pay enough money to attract quality teachers and have them remain in the profession.

LaDell Gillman, Nebo School District

The students are coming harder and harder to teach. For what teachers are asked to do and what they get paid to do it, teaching is becoming a less and less desirable job.

Heidi Hall, Nebo School District
Class Size

Please come spend a week in any classroom. Please come see the day-to-day intricacies of our day and then see how it compares to what you felt before. See how many of our students depend on school for a hot meal, for TLC, and for so many other critical survival components on top of the educational ones we also provide. Please spend more than an hour or even a day. Then go back and decide how best to serve our student populations and our future caretakers.

Sarai T Memmott, Nebo School District

We are losing good teacher because of low pay and lack of support. Teacher can not live on their salary alone!!!

Callie Naccarato, Nebo School District

What do you think the kids of Utah are worth? Do you really think the majority of teachers aren't doing the best they can?

David Rencher, Nebo School District

My classroom is unbearably cold Nov. -Mar & unbearably hot Aug., Sept & sometimes May. Help! High-stakes yearly testing is ruining education. Kids & teachers are totally stressed oit. It doesn't help guide teacher instruction.

Cindy Sumsion, Nebo School District

You need to address accountability for district administrators and principals: They cannot be given carte blanche to make "progressive" changes to school systems, holding teachers in check with punitive evaluation measures. Sop worrying about teacher accountability and start focusing on too many administrators (who themselves can't teach) spending money on new methods that don't work. We know what works: caring, committed teachers and small classes. No more tests. No more progressive programs. Back to basics. Kids need to read and write, speak and listen, learn and communicate. Let good teachers do their jobs!

Michael Thompson, Nebo School District

What's more important, student education or your special interest friends?

Chris Vest, Nebo School District

Last year I had a class with 29 1st graders. That's too many!

Rachel Wigginton, Nebo School District

I feel that teachers are overworked, with unreasonable expectations. There are many expectations with very few monetary rewards.

Shea Wimmer, Nebo School District

In the community I teach in...(inner city schools) we are the life line for their total education...You can hardly put a price on that...but good teachers are leaving because they can't meet their own financial obligations. So much pressure is put on them with no financial reward...it has to be a given.

Suzanne Williams Dennison, Ogden School District

I retired from the classroom four years ago after devoting more than forty years to the profession. I experienced many changes and shifts in the educational system during those years. But one thing has never changed. Every student deserves a well trained, qualified, caring teacher.

Trudy Henderson, Other

How they are making TEACHING even more difficult than it already is by not understanding OR even acknowledging the efforts the majority of teachers make on behalf of their students.

Brenda Bensch, Park City School District
Class Size

Teachers and quality schools are vital to the success of our community as a whole. Please provide us with the support we need to best do our jobs.

Joanna Hammel, Park City School District

Growth in funding for public education in Utah began falling behind the rest of the Country decades ago but the resulting decay of services was largely kept hidden from the public for two reasons. Utah possessed some of the most dedicated hard working teachers and Utah students were largely from stable supportive homes. Those teachers are now retiring and the current work conditions are so poor that few college graduates view a career in Utah public education as a viable option. Schools are now forced to serve ever expanding social roles with students because fewer and fewer of Utah children have the stable supportive home life. Utah can no longer hide its failure to adequately fund public education. The crisis is no longer in the future. The future is now.

Charlie Matthews, Park City School District

Utah has the opportunity to become one of the top states for education in the country. We do an amazing job on a limited budget, just imagine what we could accomplish if we were anywhere close to other states in funding.

Melanie Rice Moffat, Park City School District

I invite each member of the legislature to come substitute in any classroom for one week, including planning lessons. (You only need a high-school diploma to apply as a substitute.) When you have walked in our shoes for a week, go back and write the laws you wish you had in place. It will change your whole world. We need legislators who understand what teaching really means. We need legislators who understand what it is like to manage a class of 27 ten year olds or 44 high-schoolers. We need legislators who care that Utah spends the LEAST of any state on their students, and whose teachers are paid less than most other states. We need legislators who care as much as the students in the desks what will happen to them. We need you.

Mariel Boone, Provo City School District

I believe in elementary schools one-to-one devices are not the answer to higher test results, etc. Elementary students need paper and pencil practice to learn the basics that will help them to understand apps and programs as they move on to higher grades. If devices are available to elementary students, they should be taught coding rather than just using them for app practice. The state of Utah also needs to pass an education budget that will attract and keep quality teachers in the field. Not only do salaries need to be increased, but other compensations to make teaching more inviting should be addressed: smaller class size, better insurance options, and respect for the teaching profession. The teacher shortage needs our attention now for long-term solutions which should not include allowing under qualified applicants to teach in the classrooms. Another issue I believe is a great concern is the general lack of respect for educators which directly affects teacher morale and longevity in the profession.

Sharron Bird, South Sanpete School District

Focus on the key issues that teachers support, rather than political agendas that sound good to the public.

Darren Mecham, South Sanpete School District

Human social issues

Chelsie Acosta, Salt Lake City School District

There is a huge teacher shortage in Utah right now that needs to be addressed not by lowering standards and expectations for teachers, but by making teacher education more accessible and affordable, and by making the position more attractive to potential candidates.

Brittany Armstrong, Salt Lake City School District

Listen to our educators needs for their students.

Harriet Arreola, Salt Lake City School District
Class Size

The legislator should be ashamed of themselves. knowing that the teachers in Utah are the lowest paid in the nation and we have a rainy day fund. That could pay off the national debt!!!!!!! And what happened to the day that teachers taught. learning was fun and everyone got along. This consent use of testing is useless What a joke.

Federica Gallegos, Salt Lake City School District

It is important for us to attract and retain good teachers. I have friends who have quit teaching because, though they love the profession, they feel that they can no longer afford the luxury of serving our students. Not only is it a matter of salary, but of health care benefits also need to be improved. Too much of my salary is simply handed over to my health care providers -- I have less "available" money now than I did five years ago due to my increased health care and prescription costs. One co-pay for a life-saving medication that I have to take is over $400.00 on my current health care plan, which is the best plan available in my district. Last year the co-pay for this same medication was $150.00 under the same plan, while the previous year, it was $75.00. The pharmacists actually apologize to me when I get the prescription for this medication filled, explaining that my school district's health care plan has the highest co-pay for this particular medication that they have ever seen. Something has to change!

Victoria Muehlberger, Salt Lake City School District

Unfortunately, teachers responsibilities currently include parenting students. Because parents are often unable or unskilled at assisting students at home, teachers have assumed the responsibility for not only the academic success of their students, but teachers also must include ethics and behavior training. Additionally, students level of engagement has decreased due to their generations addiction to social media and technology We must find methods and pedagogy to counter the lack of parental support and student interest in academics and future success.

Anonymous, Salt Lake City School District

If they need questions answered about education, ask the experts that are in the trenches everyday. If not, they should have to spend a week doing the complete job of a teacher before they run for office so that they can understand the complexities of being an educator and the changes laws that have an affect on education without understanding the impact that they have on teachers and students.

George O. Judd, Sevier School District

Public Education is more and more demanding on teachers. Pressure from administrators, right up to superintendents is ever more stressful. There is a lack of help with problem students from administrators. Parents are often given more respect than the classroom teacher. Sage testing, in a big way, is as much about manipulating the computer and writing equations than about asking questions and having students show their knowledge. The i-Ready Computer Program used at our school could easily replace the Sage Testing. We get the needed data to help students progress and we wouldn't have to spend the money on SAGE and take time out of our schedule to do all the testing. Also, with i-Ready, parents would have a better idea of what the testing is about and how to help their student progress. In our school, we test SAGE three times a year. That is a a lot of time taken away from classroom teaching. It is disheartening to listen to teachers and feel their frustrations, knowing that things could be much better. So, besides the lower salaries of teaching, we seem to be asking people to enter a profession in which they will not be receiving a very high salary, but also, a profession in which you will have frustration after frustration thrown at you. Why work so hard in education when it would be easier to earn more money and have an easier work load in another profession?

Kraig Nilsson, Sevier School District

If you want better teachers, increase their pay. If you want students to learn more easily, decrease the class size.

William Sullivan, Tooele County School District

I am a professional in education because I want to live in a better world. I am training that “better” world. Many of the rules and policies you create make it hard for me to be successful. Filling my classroom and tying my hands when it comes to discipline turns me into an inexpensive babysitter. Please value me and my time by providing the money to
Class Size

purchase supplies instead of having to create them myself. When a profession is valued, there aren't shortages in that area.

        Angela T. Hansen, Uintah School District

I have 27 first-graders in my class and an autistic boy!! Too many very young students per teacher ratio!! Please, lower classroom

        Tanna White, Uintah School District

Help me, help you, to help them, so they can help us

        Lori Ruth, Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind

More funding is needed.

        Kimberly Niday, Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind

How ridiculous the evaluation tools they are using to evaluate educators. Also that the Sage test is not an accurate way to assess school performance.

        Steve Marsing, Wasatch County School District

Education is the key to a productive citizen. Make it a priority.

        Joseph Mellen, Wasatch County School District

Same thing I say each year. Watching you guys. Smaller class sizes is must. When caseloads/classes are too big, teachers are overworked, and students don't receive the needed attention and support. Putting more educators in schools to share the load will better help retain educators. Don't burn out educators.

        Bret Morley, Washington County School District

It really bothers me that an educators wages aren't enough to support a family. What happened to the time when an individual could go to work and know that their family would be taken care of with the wages they earned. Now I am at the time of life where retirement is around the corner. I have saved my entire adult life so I can retire some day and now I am worried that I haven't done enough. It has put a strain on my finances over the years to prepare for the time I can retire.

        Kathryn Parry, Washington County School District

Utah has good public schools and teachers. Compare the data in an objective way, with same comparisons to charter, public school before making decisions. Use data, rather than articulate lobbyists

        Lorene A Sorensen, Washington County School District

Teachers are the professionals, yet legislators, administrators and parents (who believe the quick-fix ideas of legislators), are often the ones who determine how and what we teach. This is counterproductive. I believe that students would benefit if teachers were given much more discretion in the classroom, standardized testing was drastically reduced or eliminated, and pay throughout educators (including administration) was much more equitably distributed.

        Kerrie Anderson, Weber School District

I would love for any legislator to come walk in our shoes for a day. Melissa Beyer (1st Grade) 801-698-2721

        Melissa Beyer, Weber School District

Make students a priority! Make Education a priority. There's a reason we can't keep teachers and they go to other states to teach. We are burning out. Wake up!

        Marie Christensen, Weber School District
I believe that teachers salaries and benefits need to be improved to hold and retain quality teachers. Make sure that all administrators are education experienced and qualified to be in an education management position.

Paul Fawson Jr., Weber School District

My legislators in North Ogden, Senator Christensen and Rep. Fawson, are continually on the wrong side of history by voting against educational funding and voting for red tape like SB 220 last year- to just name one bill among many. Utah is dead last in WPU funding-no excuse for that! They always quote the same argument "That Utah puts more money from budget towards education than any other state." That's like saying I have a really small apple pie...but I'm giving you a big piece! Its the smallest piece (WPU) in the nation, it's not enough, and I see the results first hand of Utah grossly under funding education for all these years. How they treat me as a teacher is a clear reflection of how they treat students. Not very good.

Paul Pontius, Weber School District

I believe in the power and responsibility that teachers have to influence students for good. However, we need support, compensation, and respect from our legislators and the public to best help these students succeed. Teachers work far more hours than many realize and our wages are not competitive in comparison to others with the same amount of education and training in other industries. In order to attract and retain quality teachers, increasing teacher salaries and benefits must be a priority. In addition, in order to prevent burnout, teachers need more paid time to plan and prepare for high-quality instruction. With the amount of growth we are experiencing in many parts of Utah and in order to reduce class sizes, we'll need more teachers. Increasing salary and giving teachers more paid time to do what they need to do are two essential things for our students' futures. Also, teachers should be able to focus less on end-of-level testing proficiency percentages and more on growth of the WHOLE student--academic and otherwise. I think sometimes we feel pressured to cram the core into the kids' heads when really what they need is to learn life skills (diligence, kindness, organization, respecting for self and others, working as a team, etc.) first, and then they will be able to succeed academically. In order to be able to focus on the whole child, less pressure must be put on educators' test scores. Yes, there needs to be accountability for teachers, students, and schools, but testing is not the only way to do that—student surveys, parent surveys, administrator evaluations, student growth, self-evaluations, etc. could all be helpful ways of showing accountability. Finally, at my school (and many others) we have many students whose problems are beyond what we, as regular education teachers, have the training to sufficiently support. We need more resources available to help those students who need more mental and emotional support than we are able to give. Thank you for your time.

Abbie Twingstrom, Weber School District

Maintaining quality teachers will REQUIRE the state to seriously increase the salary of all teachers, within all districts equally. Allowing districts to allocate the funds tends to allow them to reallocate it elsewhere. Many teachers leave the state or leave the profession entirely because of the lack of importance to be compensated or even trusted at times to be able to manage their own time when given time to plan meaningful and engaging experiences in the classroom. Much time is wasted in just filling the need to have committees and going through the motions of unnecessary programs felt beneficial by those who have never taught or haven't been in a classroom setting for many years. Also, in my experience, the best administrators are those who have taught a minimum of 10 years in a classroom, and just by obtaining a degree online shouldn't be the sole reason for advancing any individual. Much is learned after many years in a classroom that can't be taught by only reading a book or attending a class. Public opinion needs to change as well, that teachers are solely responsible for a child's education. True parent involvement is needed. We are educators, yes... we are caregivers as well, but much of what happens at school is first taught in the home. Public awareness may transmit to a higher respect of teachers. I know this is a difficult task, and I know most all teachers rather give up personal time and personal funds to help a child succeed, but this needs to stop. Stop relying on the individuals that entered this profession as a personal call to help others by continuing to have them make the only sacrifices.

David Van Eerden, Weber School District
Class Size

I really am doing the best I can. I am not sure why you are telling me how to do my job or how I am doing it. Please come visit my class and see what we are doing instead of just giving a grade.

Michael Yamashita, Weber School District

I am lucky in my building because as a High School Teacher I only have 184 students this year. Most of my colleagues have over 200. In most of my classes I have 35 students. Sometimes I think about how hard it is for parents to teach 3 or 4 or 5 or even 6 of their own children at a time, yet we are required to give 35 students individual attention during class when we only see them for 1 hour every other day. It is really crazy when you think about it. It is unrealistic to give students the time and energy that they need when we have so many students in a class. We need more funding to reduce class sizes. We need to recognize and compensate teachers for the impossible task we have given them.

Kara Allen, Alpine School District

We care and we are trying so hard! It takes real champions to do this job with so much pressure and responsibility, and so many obstacles to work around.

Chelsea Alley, Alpine School District

There's a reason we have a teacher shortage: compensation and budgets

Frank Bramall, Alpine School District

I have been teaching for six years and I have loved what I do. However, this year, I have wanted to quit many times. I have a hard class with 26 students. I don’t have sufficient technology and I took a pay cut moving districts. I have to mentor new teachers on my own time and that cuts into my own planning time. I have a Masters Degree and I’m barely paying my rent. I have many other skills where I could be making double what I make as a teacher. We need more money and more respect as teachers.

Aubri Elder, Alpine School District

I love being a teacher! We as teachers can always use more resources to reach every child.

Jacqueline Hull, Alpine School District

Teachers are not receiving fair monetary compensation for the many hours of time they put into educating children in our state. It is difficult to keep giving away extra hours outside of instruction time to attend trainings and meetings, prepare materials, grade papers, and donate time to extracurricular activities. Teachers don't get to leave their jobs at the office.

Cindy Jovet, Alpine School District

Have you ever been a teacher in a classroom? The training that we go through and the paperwork and meetings that we are required to do, all the while testing and teaching massive class sizes and expecting the students to show growth, and yet, we are one of the lowest paid professions. I think that our salaries should reflect the worth of the work that we do in the walls of our classroom to raise your children and grandchildren. Think about a teacher that impacted your life. Imagine what your life would have been without that teacher. We perform miracles in the classroom with VERY little funds and TONS of students. It is time for everyone to stand behind educators and make it happen!

Anabis McGill, Alpine School District

Teachers are overworked and underpaid. Simple as that. Stop putting extra work on top of them and let them teach. Most people who teach love their jobs, but usually because of pay and/or all of the extra political agendas, they leave the profession. Put yourself in their shoes. Go into their classrooms and see what they are doing. When you actually take a minute to see what they do on a daily or weekly basis, you will be surprised at the dedication they have for their job and you will see where you need to help. Fix the education in Utah.

Ashley Oney, Alpine School District
Class Size

Teachers are not the enemy - lack of student and parent commitment to education is undermining all of our efforts to make a difference. Our morale is in the toilet - that's why I would not encourage anyone to go into education for a career at this point. It's not worth it! Something has to change and targeting teachers is not the answer. WE are doing the impossible in Utah with NOTHING!

Josette Pitardi, Alpine School District

Teachers are here to help students. Give us the tools we need through funding to do that!

Cherie Tobler, Alpine School District

Studies have shown that the larger the class size, the less effective the teacher. This is so true. In our day where teachers are being blamed, or held accountable for students learning and test scores, class size has to be taken into account and dealt with. A teacher can hardly maintain control in a class of more than 25 students, and it is very, very difficult to meet the needs of all those students, to help them learn to read, write, and do math on grade level, when there are so many students and so many needs. I think legislators need to spend time in classrooms to see the conditions, the job teachers are trying to do, and what the struggles and conditions they are working under are, to see what and why they need to make changes to the education in our state. I have taught school for 12 years and do not recall ever seeing a legislator in the school I work at. There needs to be many changes made to education to improve it, but reducing class size would be a first step in the right direction.

Gina Baird, Box Elder School District

Class sizes are simply too big. Over 50% of my students are below grade level. They don't get the help they need. The kids who are on grade level don't get what they need because I am trying to help the kids who are behind. None of us gets what we need.

Lynette Burrell, Box Elder School District

Standards for teachers regarding becoming certified and re-certifying are extremely high, and we have to pay those ourselves, yet anyone who is "highly qualified" can teach due to teacher shortage. These requirements are unfair to teachers--we need more consistency. When was the last time legislators spent SEVERAL days in a classroom to get a feel for the amount of work, etc. piled on us, besides having to meets stipulations that we can't teach without taking classes, etc. to re-certify.

Darlee Dyer, Cache County School District

I teach at an elementary school. I have many bright talented students who could use more creative ways to think. I work more than my contracted time just doing my daily tasks to keep up with what needs to be done. If I want to create really great lesson plans that engage the students each and every day I work much more than my contract time. Teachers need smaller classes and more planning time. Most of all teachers need to be paid for the hours they work!! I'm sure you are all paid for the hours that you work.

Suzanne Malloy, Canyons School District

Unless you make education a priority and back it with money you will continue to struggle with finding quality teachers.

Julie McFarland, Canyons School District

I have been a teacher for 14 years in Jordan and Canyons districts. As a single person with no spouse's salary contributing to my household, in addition to taking care of my elderly parents, it is really hard to make ends meet on this salary. My friends and relatives in other states have been teaching for many less years, and some make double my salary. The cost of living in Utah has risen sharply since I was in college, but my salary has not kept up with inflation. I teach AP Art History and college Humanities (through SLCC), and the state and districts always claim to have class sizes around 28. As far as I can tell, that class size only applies to elementary classes. I think this is false advertising. We all know that high school/secondary classes are much larger than this and I don't think it's fair to pretend that number is true. Secondary schools are allowed FTE based on a number that is inaccurate, and that
Class Size

makes all of us have larger class sizes. My AP Art History classes always have 35-40, while my colleagues in every other state are able to teach classes of 15-20. When my AP pass rates are lower than theirs I am told I’m not a highly qualified teacher, or that it would disqualify me for merit pay. At my age and years of teaching I am committed to teaching until retirement, but it is demoralizing when new teachers this year are making what it took me 10 years to make, with a master’s degree.

Wendi Miller, Canyons School District

As a speech-language pathologist who gets paid on the teacher salary schedule, I help recruit and train new speech-language pathologists. When I speak to graduate students at the University of Utah, they express the difficulty of paying their student loans on a teacher salary. They can make more money working for a medical provider or opening a private practice. As a first year Speech-Language Pathologist, they can make twice as much money providing home health therapy than working in a school. This makes it very difficult to recruit and maintain speech-language pathologists in the schools. I have worked in several elementary schools with very large class sizes, especially in the upper grades. It is not uncommon to see 5th and 6th grade classes with 35 students. The saddest situation was when a student with Cerebral Palsy could only enter the first 10 feet of her classroom because her wheel chair would not fit between the 36 desks that were crammed into her 6th grade classroom. Student learning and growth is difficult when students cannot move around to fully participate and access the curriculum.

Joelle Rasmussen, Canyons School District

Come and try teaching in my shoes for a week.

Carol Wheatley, Canyons School District

Come spend a day in my classroom. I would love to have a representative shadow me for a day. See how hard most of us work, the effort and time we spend with your children. Maybe then, you would be willing to support us better, respect us as Educators.

Kelly Avalos, Davis School District

Teachers are hard working educated people who deserve to be respected and compensated for the endless hours they give in behalf of children.

C. Braegger, Davis School District

I teach 2nd grade in the regular education side of a dual immersion school. Each year about 50% of my students are below grade level in reading. In order to better meet the growing numbers of struggling readers in my classroom, I have spent the last two years of my own time and financial resources to work towards earning the extra credential of a reading endorsement. I spend time outside of my contract hours planning Tier 2 reading interventions for all of my below level readers, as well as interpreting the data of their progress. Much of my time and energy is focused on these struggling students with very minimal support from parent volunteers or even classroom aides in the school. I would like to think that I’m doing everything possible to help these struggling learners grow. It’s one thing to boast about what we do as teachers, schools, districts or the state for our highest achieving students, but we must always have the question foremost in our minds, “What are we doing for the students who struggle most?” As a legislature, I would ask you the same question. What are you doing for the students who struggle most?

Kynda Farrell, Davis School District

Before you write and pass a bill into law affecting education, spend significant time in the classroom teaching and working with children with the ideas in the bill. Use and test your ideas in the classroom before writing them into a bill. Write your bills with significant teaching experience, not your own student experience. Learning and teaching are night and day different. You need to know what teaching children today is like in Utah to be able to craft effective bills to help children learn and teachers to be able to help children learn. Law like the Sage test burden our children and teachers with a wasted and poor use of time. Let’s empower, not burden.

Bryan Jenkins, Davis School District
Class Size

Teachers are burning out. New mandates are thrown at us frequently with new training to attend and evidence of practice to provide. All of these equal less time for actual lesson prep and reflection of teaching. I am in an inclusive gifted classroom with 29 students. One third are typically twice exceptional and have behavior issues. I have no support to help these students because special ed is not the appropriate place for them. I can't get to my highly gifted students because my time is spent managing the many fires in the classroom due to the behavioral issues. Gifted students require twice the prep, twice the lessons, and twice the resources than regular ed because they excel so quickly. Plus we have twice the meetings....a set for the school and a set for the district gifted program. Yet, my prep time is the same as other teachers and I have the same pay. I am tired and burned out, yet my passion is gifted kids. We need help and it can only come financially so that classes in this population of students can be lowered, aids can be added, and our overtime compensated. It is these students who drive the high test scores and they need the resources to keep excelling.

Karen Long, Davis School District

COME SEE FOR YOURSELF...ALL DEMOGRAPHICS IN THE STATE.

Camille Meriwether, Davis School District

We are being spread too thin. We are faced with large classes, increasing responsibilities to meet the needs of struggling students, and fewer resources. we are not paid for the extra time all of this takes. It is my job and career which I love, but more and more it is becoming my life and taking away from family and other pursuits.

Tamra Owens, Davis School District

Being a teacher is a very important job. It takes a lot of time and effort to make sure every child is learning. I feel that I am accountable for too many students and feel that classroom sizes should be decreased in order to be an effective teacher. I spend most of time devoted to getting lesson plans ready, correcting papers and time away from my family for the interest of my students. I also feel that I am spending more than I should out my own pocket monies to make my lessons engaging and helpful for students to do well on year end testing. There is so much pressure put on teachers to plan effective lesson, use resources that are not supported by the state or district and classroom sizes are too large.

Sonja Aoki, Granite School District

Depending on the area I am teaching in students either have school supplies or they do not because there is not enough money for me to spend as a teacher on my students supplies. I have 31 students in my classroom and in order for them to be successful and keep up with the curriculum and testing required of them, they need certain supplies. It is very expensive for me, on my own, to buy supplies for 31 students. I am lucky enough that my students parents are able to purchase their childs' supplies. Whereas other schools families are unable to purchase their supplies, putting a financial strain on teachers. We need more money in order to encourage student-centered and hands on learning so our money is being spent on school supplies for science and math manipulative instead of purchasing pencils and notebooks.

Emily Atkinson, Granite School District

Every year I spend hundreds (and my first year I spent over $1000) of my own dollars to provide my class with items like: snacks, pencils, paper, science supplies, art materials, rewards/incentives, etc. I do this because my students come to school hungry, their parents don't have money for school supplies, and because I value imbedding learning into real-life, meaningful activities such as art and science. I have to spend my own money because $300 a year does not cover the cost of all of those items for 25+ students. I have taught for 5 years, and I have NEVER had fewer than 25 students. On average, I have 28. I do not make enough in salary to continue to spend my own money on my class. I am happy to do it, because I love these kids and want them to learn, but I should not have to. I am only a fifth year teacher, and I am burnt out. I do not intend to teach another year, and not because of the kids, but because of a combination of difficult situations that exist in the teaching profession. Here are a few of the situations that exist which make teaching an undesirable profession: lack of respect from the community, administration, and legislation; low
Class Size

pay (made even smaller because of the amount that I use to fund my own classroom), lack of funding and support from administration and legislation, and large classroom sizes.

Adree Fairbanks, Granite School District

As always, I spend hours of my time at school and at home filling in ridiculous objective, targets, lesson plan forms, collecting data, data, data, and more data etc... that does not support me in actual planning and teaching. It's like I have two jobs: 'professional educator' and glorious administrative/secretarial professional. They say, "When you plan your lessons"; when do you do that much less even look (and I mean look) at the next weeks materials. I work at a Title 1 school where most parents do not help their students. With free breakfast in the classroom, I've now lost 20-25 minutes of instruction time. I have to stand by the food (can't have a student do that now), log it, count it to make sure entrees match with fruit (if not, toss some fruit over to the sharing basket/but in the lunch room you can't share??), listen to several students questions or problem, take tardy slips (don't lose those while you are at the back of the room serving breakfast), reminding them everyday to do the same routine we've been doing since August, go to my computer and log onto Gradebook to enter roll, keep telling students to eat instead of talk (those that have seconds (2 milks, 2 entrees need more time), tell them numerous times to begin their self-start; we don't begin 'school' until 9:20-9:25. And that's not to mention that on Mondays the Star Spangled Banner is played and we say the pledge. Oh, and add announcements in there somewhere. Breakfast needs to be in the cafeteria where students can eat and chit chat and learn to sit at a table and enjoy a meal. Not turned around in their seats, walking around the room, shoving food in their desks (yes, they have been told over 100 times/one time we had fruit flies for weeks until I found a rotten banana and rotting apples mushed in back of a student's desk), milk everywhere, smelling sink where the left over milk is emptied....... We waste 15 minutes during small group time by 15 students going next door to get a Chromebook from a cart that needs to be unlocked, walking back, students going to their group desk seat and logging on. That's one group time wasted. I asked Donor Choose for 15 Chromebooks but I haven't been lucky with that. Sorry for the run-on's and fragments.

Robin Harman, Granite School District

Use the science and real rational of the educating process to direct your decision making and money directions. Testing is not the solution to success of students. Neither is school grading. Class size affects student outcomes. Parents and communities need to be held accountable for their children not just an educator, their administration or the school. Where the money is spent needs to be directed to these issues not charter special interest groups.

Johanna McMullin, Granite School District

Fund education! Put students first. Support teachers and fund them also.

Jane Munson, Granite School District

Teacher burn out is real. After 8 years of teaching I'm considering finding a new job. I love to teach and love working with my students but the new demands each year with little to no compensation isn't worth it anymore. Teachers feel unsupported at all levels and criticized daily. We are not paid for the time we spend. Our class sizes are getting bigger each year, but our budget stays the same, or in some cases, gets lower. I have to begged parents to donate to my class in order to have paper and pencils throughout the year. How are we expected to reach our goals with no supplies to do it?

Carly Walkenhorst, Granite School District

Burnout

Tracy Castellanos, Jordan School District

Please do what you can to lower class sizes and increase teacher pay and benefits.

Amy Williams, Jordan School District
Class Size

Most teachers are very hard working and love their jobs. I take home school work every night, because it's important to me that my students succeed this year and have learned what they need to be successful in their next school year.

Susan Pratt, North Summit School District

I would want them to know how much money and time educators put into their classrooms.

Melody Green, Nebo School District

I often hear the argument that increasing funding has not been shown to improve student achievement. I disagree. I believe that an increase in funding can have a huge impact if that funding is allocated appropriately. For instance, additional teacher work days and lowering class size would be extremely beneficial to both students and teachers.

Jennifer James, Nebo School District

I (we) as teachers are always going above and beyond the a call of duty to help and support our students succeed. It seems that the legislators and the public (vocal) minority want to demonize and degrade teachers for not being perfect. Give the teachers the pay and the support that is needed to push to higher standards. Don't just legislate and make it harder for teachers to do their already complicated job.

David Jones, Nebo School District

Students are not numbers. We may have to work with numbers to help the masses, but individual students need the care and attention necessary to grow and function in society. Class sizes should be no more than 24 to a class if possible. There should not be a class with more than 30 students--that should be against school policy. Additionally, teachers are payed less than many jobs that require little to no experience, let alone a degree. Yes, teaching is very rewarding and intrinsically motivating and satisfying, but there comes a point when teachers get burned out because they are doing too much for too little and it's hard to live off of such a little salary. After getting multiple degrees a person shouldn't have to have a second job to support themselves and a family, especially when this type of job is life consuming. School work does not stay in the classroom. Teachers should be valued more than many of the high paying, shallow jobs of the world.

Kate Ormond, Nebo School District

We need smaller classes and higher pay to keep quality teachers. There are so many extra demands put on teachers too. It's hard to be a good spouse, parent, and teacher when all you do is go home and make sure everything is ready for school the next. There are way to many hoops to jump through. (Spend at least 2 hours a night thinking school) Trust us and let us do our job which is being the best teacher we can for our students.

LeighAnn Penrod, Nebo School District

I constantly hear or read that students love to come to school.

Ramon Saldivar, Nebo School District

Please increase funding for public education.

Stephanie Truscott, Nebo School District

Educating our children is the most important priority.

Earl Gardner, Ogden School District

Teachers work hard every day to ensure a quality education for our students. Properly compensating teachers for their hard work would be appreciated. Class sizes need to go down to give students the attention they need.

Bradi Holder, Ogden School District

Teachers work so hard. Well beyond a 40 hour work week. Yet are continually required to do more & more; without lessening the overflowing work load that already exists. If teachers are required to do more & have more responsibilities, then, something should be taken out of their present workload in order to make time for the new
Class Size

requirements. Also, most teachers spend a lot of time working & creating things for their classrooms during the summer & are not recognized for those efforts that go above & beyond their contracted time.

Paula Hatch, Provo City School District

We need more money for the specialist areas.

Jay Griffin, South Summit School District

Testing only gives a snapshot of how students perform. Teacher effectiveness can not be measured in student test performance.

Patricia Christensen, Salt Lake City School District

Why is Utah ranked so low in average spending per pupil and test scores? I have now taught 5th grade classes with 28, 37, 34, 30, 31 students in each of the past 5 years. How can I effectively teach with so many students in my class? How come charter schools receive money from the state, but they aren't held to the same standards as public schools?

Peter Haslam, Salt Lake City School District

I have been a teacher in Utah for 22 years, and I have watched students get lost in the huge classes for years. Utah has never made an honest effort to fund education the way it should be. My husband is also a teacher, and we pay everything we have to send our children to private school. It is a struggle, but we see first hand the underfunded schools. We grew up in NY state, and we both had very small classes. We know the advantages that an amazing education can bring, and we refuse to allow our own children to be in the huge and overcrowded schools of Utah. The teachers do everything they can, and are underpaid and overworked. Utah should do better. Family values are talked about, but not funded. I would love to see Utah put money into education that meets the needs of the amount of children that are in Utah.

Michelle Misco, Salt Lake City School District

As things become more expensive for school districts, more and more of the money is coming out of my pocket. This is the only professional occupation where teachers are not only expected to fund their classroom, but the also fund the classes that are needed for licensing and increased knowledge for our changing world. I would like to see more support in these two areas, along with salary increases and class size reduction for the intermediate, middle, and high school classrooms.

Rosemarie Olsen, Washington County School District

I have been teaching in the state of Utah for 23 years. My job has gotten harder and harder every year I teach. We are asked to do so much. I have a master's degree and four specialized endorsements on my teaching certificate yet my pay is at $65,000 a year. In any other career, with the same amount of education and experience my salary would be much higher. I did not choose to be a teacher for the money, and that is why I will always be a teacher, however, I am constantly told that I need to do more. Teachers are not the problem with education. You need to listen to what we are telling you. Lower class sizes, gives us time to plan and collaborate, support us with difficult students and parents, and quit blaming us when test scores are low. Stop tying our hands with so many controls and mandates. The last faculty meeting we had we were told we can't ask parents to donate tissues, paper towels and ziplock baggies, i.e. grocery items. These are things that I use in my classroom every day. Where am I supposed to get the money to buy these every year??? Come spend a day shadowing a teacher. It would really open your eyes as to what it is we face every day.

Adrianna Griffey, Weber School District

K-12 needs more funding, but K-3 teachers (even K-6) are inadequately represented in both major districts in which I have worked. My spouse is in secondary, and the discrepancy between funds/prep time/consideration is astonishing. Elementary teachers are "on stage" all day. In many districts, they get no duty-free afternoon recess. Can you "hold it" from 12:00-3:30. That's what teachers must do every day. Yes, secondary classes are larger, however, many
class Size
class require little correcting or one-on-one instruction. Secondary prep time is incredibly unfairly distributed. The only "prep" time elementary gets is usually taken up with things other than prep: bus duty, parental issues, or required time in PLCs, with precious little time in their own classroom. The legislature needs to provide increased funding for ALL education K-12, but K-3, is in desperate need. Kinder teachers, especially, will leave the grade just for survival.

Patty Nielson, Weber School District

Time commitments have increased due to additional responsibilities - flex time classes requiring preparation, referrals to special programs like homework lunch and academic support, increased expectations for remediation & retesting, increased quantity and variety of parental notification, teacher training on days that used to be preparation days. There has not been additional compensation for these extra responsibilities, thus restricting my availability for the second job that I need in order to support my family. Additionally, parents and administrators are quick to criticize any perceived shortcomings in any of these areas. On top of that is the constant push from state and district officials and policies to improve, putting more blame and responsibility on teachers instead of students.

Karl Powell, Weber School District

This country needs better conditions for teachers. Teachers have created the past, constructed the present and they are ones helping to shape and secure our future. Without teachers, there is no Nation. We do not ask for anything out of this world, we are asking you to invest in the present and the future of our state and country.

Jose Garcia, Weber School District

Keep education as your first priority during the upcoming session.

Michael Yardley, Weber School District

My school had 34 students in each fourth grade class. A majority of the students didn't know their multiplication tables, and scored lower than any previous fourth grade year on their sage at the end of fourth grade. My principal had to fight to get the budget for a half time fourth grade teacher. We are a traditional school so we do not benefit from track time. The 1/2 time fourth grade addition has increased student performance more than 100% but I find it very upsetting and disappointing that our principal and fourth grade teachers had to fight so hard for something so beneficial to the students.

Brittney Bryan, Alpine School District

Special education needs help. There are children with disabilities that are not receiving the help and services they need so desperately. They are being denied a chance to succeed in life. Public school is failing them by not paying special educators and their aides more. The teacher shortage is creating despairing issues. I was placed in a severe special education classroom this year as a first year teacher with 16 students. It was incredibly overwhelming to say the least.

Brynn Frazier, Alpine School District

My numbers in my classroom have been climbing steadily. I do not get funding for aides or any help. We should have an additional teacher, but do not have the FTE funding. I cannot get to all of them. Children are suffering. More than 20 students in a first grade classroom where we are trying to teach children how to read is nearly impossible with one teacher. I have close to 30. It is discouraging.

BetteJo McLellalnd, Alpine School District

I currently have classes with 36 plus students and I'm turning many away. These are students that need credits to graduate and students who simply want to take my classes for the sake of learning. We do not have enough room or enough teachers to teach our students and they are suffering because of it.

Marlayne Nye, Alpine School District
Class Size

Public Education needs to be a priority above charter schools and online systems. 90 percent of our students attend public school. Support this. Quit taking away resources to fund personal interest businesses that are dressed in sheep's clothing as educational improvements or online services i.e. Howard Stephenson and his money grab for his technology education business. Class size is too large to provide a nurturing experience while parents are continually too busy to help.

John Paynter, Alpine School District

Please take into consideration that public education is educating the future leaders and citizens of our state and country. The children are our future. They are the people who will be taking care of you when you are retired. We need to make education our top priority as it impacts all of society for good or bad! The children are our future!

Stacy Stevens, Alpine School District

I ask for more balance in the system. If we hope to supply Utah with more skilled workers, we need to draw more elementary age students into education by helping them and their families to negotiate the system. Research demonstrates the need for early childhood intervention, and for trauma sensitive schools. Hill Walker demonstrated how these foci can alleviate the tax burden related to putting people in prison 20 years ago.

Jaynan Chancellor, Cache County School District

I spent thousands of dollars on my education and training. I spent hours and hours honing my craft. Because of administrators who are more interested in climbing the slippery pole than treating teachers as colleagues, I am no longer teaching in the subject area of my major. This is one example of many other teachers where we are not being treated as professionals. Yes, money is important. But as long as teachers are being treated without respect, the teacher shortage won't be fixed.

Johnny Aird, Davis School District

teacher shortage large class sizes tech in classrooms

Mindi Barnes, Davis School District

I fully support and back the "Our Schools Now" initiative. This initiative would not be needed if you took education funding more seriously. I would hope that you, as a legislature will support and stand behind this measure and not try to stop or derail it in any way. Let the people of Utah make the choice on whether or not properly funding education is important to them.

John Combe, Davis School District

So much of the money invested in education is not very helpful to improve student learning. Teachers are on the front lines and know what their students really need. Ask them!!!! There is Too Much Testing!!!!

JoAnn Hanson, Davis School District

We work hard everyday to ensure a great education for our students.Legislators need to step up and support (including their financial duty) public education.

Vonzaa Hewitt, Davis School District

I would like them to know how much our special education student count has increased over the last few years. These students are coming with more and more deficits and more and more intense behaviors. We have rooms the sizes of closets with an average of 11 to 14 students per group. Our small group instruction is a thing of the past. We have been very creative in making sure that all student needs are met but feel that we still fall short. We are told that there is not funding for additional support in our classrooms, we are told that the norm for special education student case load is 40 to 50 students per one teacher. We are the last group thought about when it comes to new technology. Between two full time special education teachers we share 11 ipads for 55 students. The technology we do have is usually the oldest in the school but we are grateful to have any! We constantly take on student teachers just to have additional bodies in the rooms for support. We have little to no prep time due to the amount of students
Class Size

needing to be seen and the services that need to be provided. The motto is do more with less and we magically make it work but only to the best of our abilities. Support public education but in doing so also support special education and realize that those students count too!

Samantha Johnson, Davis School District

A reduction in class size is the KEY! Whatever it takes. Outcomes for students will improve AND incentives to teach will increase!

Jayne Shaum, Davis School District

Teachers could do more if class size was smaller.

Vicky Smith, Davis School District

Something needs to be done with education. Too much is being put on teachers and the expectations keep getting higher. It's almost impossible to do what we need to do. I think we need more support for each student. We need more teachers. The students are getting harder and it's getting harder to reach each individual student. What if there were two teachers per classroom?

Fran Stoker, Davis School District

My class size keeps growing, I do not have enough supplies for all of the children and need to use my own money to purchase them. My students have very diverse needs and I feel like there is no way to meet all of their learning needs, let alone the social and emotional needs that must be met. Many of my students suffer from food insecurity, have parents working many jobs to survive, and struggle to stay on task and complete work. Growth of students is being emphasized in my District, but that is based solely on test scores, not on whether or not they can get along with others and be kind. I feel as if I were just starting out as a teacher I would leave the profession. The demands put on me to fix everything are ridiculous and take me away from my own family. I feel like I am failing at work and home.

Barbara Antonetti, Granite School District

I have worked in the same school for 5 years and have had varying class sizes. I can personally attest to the learning and growth that takes place for all students when class size is low. This year I am overloaded with 32 students and feel extremely overwhelmed and guilty that I am not meeting all of their needs.

Mikelle Gordon, Granite School District

Effective education can't happen in crowded classrooms. Our fourth grade classes have 34 in them. I have only 25 students--but am teaching both first and second grades (what's known as a split). If you want to increase student learning and success--put fewer students in a classroom.

Jackie Granger, Granite School District

As dedicated as the teachers are at a school like mine (high poverty, refugees, violence/trauma/PTSD, not a neighborhood school, high stress/demands on teachers, etc), we are losing teachers every year because the work environment is not emotionally, mentally, and sometimes physically safe for teachers or students. We do not have the resources to help these students; we are teachers, not licensed social workers or psychologists. The climate of this type of school, should be trauma sensitive, however, what ends up happening is that teachers are experiencing tertiary, or second-hand trauma themselves. Affects of the trauma is absent-mindedness, being late, forgetfulness, depression and anxiety, stress-related illness, weight gain, losing interest and not motivated in personal life activities, mental health care and medications. We don't have the power or resources to support the teachers, or the students. With larger class sizes, the situation has worsened 10-fold. This is one reason we are not able to keep teachers, or attract new teachers.

Heidi Jensen, Granite School District
Class Size

Utah Education needs more funding to lower class size, increase mental health services for students, and increase teacher pay to be more competitive and retain good teachers. PLEASE do not rely on ARL programs to fix the teacher shortage. ARL teachers are NOT prepared to teach a classroom full of students!

Milicent Larsen-Fogarty, Granite School District

My school has large class sizes and not enough para educators to help in these classes and in the Behavior Unit. I have 6 students out of 29 in my class who are on behavior contracts (general education classroom). We need help both in our school with more aides/para educators and PARENTS need help learning how to parent.

Karen Oliver, Granite School District

If given the resources schools and teachers would be able to meet the needs of the students we serve. Reduction in class size would enable teachers to personalize the help for the students in their classroom. This would help the overall budget spent on education in the long run because we wouldn't need to remediate as many students.

Tracy Rose, Granite School District

Education is significant to the future of our society! We need to respect the field and keep up, make changes when needed to correspond to the needs and demands of society.

Amy Ross, Granite School District

I believe we need more funding for our schools.

Lonee, Granite School District

Before any legislator is allowed a vote - 10 hours in an average school's average classroom

Julie D. Tarbet, Granite School District

This year, our school lost $500,000. As a result, we lost 3 teachers. Our class sizes in 4,5,6 grades averaged 32 students at the beginning of the year. There have been no other changes in positive programming. As a result, our behavior has TRIPLED!!! Kiddos who fight to be noticed at home struggle when they have to fight to be noticed at school as well.

Amber Woodward, Granite School District

Teaching is rough. Teachers teach because they want to and not because they aren't educated enough to do something else with their education. Whenever you vote on anything that impacts education, think about if it will make life easier or more harder on teachers. If it will make it harder, then you will lose good teachers, bottom line. Don't use education as a way to get people to vote on more taxes. Look at programs you have going and say "is this more important than the nurse I have in 4 years knowing what they're doing?" or "would the state benefit more from this or from adults who know how to problem solve on their own?"

Jenna Meeks, Jordan School District

That with the shortage of teachers we should be better supporting them. No new bills to make it tougher on new teachers. Ann Millners new law is a joke. Also the state school board needs to back off and start supporting teachers for a change.

Chad Staley, North Summit School District

My classes average 38 students.

John Lynn Taylor, Ogden School District

The present state of funding of education in Utah is appalling! It demeans teachers and also students, setting a standard for low expectations and low self esteem. This affects students all their lives.

Heather Dorrell, Other
Class Size

We need to stop bragging about how much we get out of our education system given that we spend so little money on it (compared to other states). Good enough is the enemy of great.

Edward Potts, Park City School District

Teachers salaries in Utah are far below the national average. This will NEVER attract college students into the profession!!!!

Megan McGinley, Salt Lake City School District

Education is the most important investment our state can make. Why is this not the very top priority? I believe that teachers should have reasonably sized classes, be compensated fairly for their hard work, have opportunities and paid time to gain the expertise they need to serve ALL their students. And with all this in place I believe that teachers need to be held accountable for providing high quality, relevant instruction for all students as well as for creating and maintaining emotionally safe, positive learning communities within their classrooms.

Jennifer Newell, Salt Lake City School District

I hear of money getting to the districts but because it doesn't have specific earmarks it goes where the district sees fit, without any accountability. I disagree to all the trips to out of state place and single hotel accomidations and wasted expense.

Jennifer Chandler, Uintah School District

I am concerned about so much testing for the students. It takes a lot of time away from teaching. Also, I work with all the special ed teachers and they are buried in paperwork. One great teacher quit and went back into private practice because she missed spending time with the students. I am worried that many parents aren't teaching their children respect for education and teachers...which effects the classroom and society greatly.

Valerie K Thurnell, Wasatch County School District

Our students are our future. If we short change them, we are only short changing ourselves in the end.

Karen Eyre, Weber School District

Teachers are professionals, just as doctors and lawyers. We have to continuously maintain our credentials, just as they do. However, we are not seen in the same light as those careers. Many times we are called underpaid babysitters which is a belittling comment, to say the least. Few beginning teachers stay in the profession for more than 5 years because the stress and strain has already drained them, and they look for other options that will utilize their educational credentials. We, as educational professionals, need the public to recognize what we do. That without us, there is no future. There will be no doctors, lawyers, architects, or any other white collar workers, because we provide the basis for these professions. I hope that legislators stand by us and support us instead of hanging their heads and stripping us of our dignity. Please, pledge to promote our dedication to providing a better future for all of us.

Misty Beckstrom, Alpine School District

I teach kindergarten and it is becoming increasingly more difficult every year. We have more students than we have ever had before and there are more and more behavioral issues that we all deal with. These impact our ability to teach, which is not fair to the other students. Teacher morale is not as high as it once was with all that we deal with, along with the high emphasis on testing. I understand the importance of testing, I have seen high ability children have an "off day" and perform poorly. Children who have speech issues and IEP's are not given accommodations on the DIBELS test. Kindergartners are not required to be in school, but still count in how well our classes perform on the test, reflecting back on the teacher. I spend a great deal of my own money, which I know is my own choice. I am frustrated that we are no longer allowed to ask for class donations, but we are required to pay jr. high and high school fees. I truly love my job, but the concerns stated above are concerns that I have heard from many other teachers as well. Thank you for your attention.

Hayley Brown, Alpine School District
Class Size

Those building new communities need to pay an impact fee to build the required new schools. I hear developers, etc., have too much clout to make that a reality. That's the whole problem. We need more schools for more classrooms to reduce class sizes, then increase teacher pay. Paying me more does not increase the number of hours in the day and there's only so much a teacher can do with 38 sixth graders. There is no time to prepare, to mentor, etc. Paying me more does not resolve that situation.

Helen Gurr, Alpine School District

Come to my class of 36 kids, and teach for a week. See the whole week.

Traci Parkinson, Alpine School District

Class sizes need to be addressed, along with time to teach the standards deeper.

Emilie Whitehead, Alpine School District

In the classrooms that are smaller, 32 or so, I have a lot better success rate with my students. I feel like I have more one-on-one time with them. It is also important that property taxes are increased some to pay for additional costs. Utah's property taxes are one of the lowest in the country, yet our average household size is one of the largest.

Drusilla Willhite, Alpine School District

I love teaching here in Utah. I understand that we do not have the funding other states do because of the number of children we have in the state. Please realize I am doing my best with the resources I am given.

Vicky Litchford, Box Elder School District

I would love to see members of the legislature be required to spend a large number of consecutive hours in schools in their districts (NOT just token visits). "Come, walk in our shoes", see and experience what we need instead of just hear about it. State and Local School Board Members should do the same.

Susan S. Petersen, Box Elder School District

The classroom size in a school does affect the learning environment. When class sizes are bigger I, as a teacher, cannot effectively get around to each individual student.

Richard Rigby, Cache County School District

Please fund early childhood education, especially full day kindergarten for all students. Please lower class sizes and fully fund salaries.

Susan Turpin, Canyons School District

Funding funding funding 20% increase in WPU! Aides in the classroom!

Sam Dixon, Davis School District

Decision makers need to spend a day in a Utah classroom. Don't make unilateral decisions when you haven't been in a classroom. You need to see how hard teachers work, what our limitations are, what the possibilities are.

ML Hill, Davis School District

I love being a teacher. But I feel undervalued and unappreciated for the hard work I do. I do whatever it takes to do a good job and I don't always need compensation for what I do. But I want to know that my hard work is appreciated at the state level. Being a teacher is the hardest but best work you can do.

Nena Hill, Davis School District

The three computers we have for a small student lab in the classroom are old and not supported by the district. They are being taken away with nothing to take its place. The teacher is expected to do something like write grants to fix the problem.

Helena Langford, Davis School District
Class Size

My grandchildren have to walk 2 miles to elementary school and the district said they can’t afford buses to transport them. Class sizes at all levels are too large to get a quality education. I have seen good teachers leave, almost every year I have taught, for better paying jobs. Computers for every student aren’t always the answer. There is far too much time spent on testing, not just at the end of the year but all throughout the year.

Julie LaRocco, Davis School District

We are expected to teach with technology in the classroom with 5 Chrome books available for 30 students. If we want more we are to write grants and try to get more for our classrooms. It just makes it hard when we are told we have to do something, but are not given the resources in order to do what our district/administrators are asking of us.

Peggy Lechman, Davis School District

Although I work in a relatively affluent community in the Davis School District, our resources and technology are very limited. I realize that we are luckier than many schools in the state, but funding is still our main issue. I only have four computers in my classroom for students to use, which definitely is not enough for my classes of 32-35 students. We do have mobile labs we can use, but even once a week is not enough time with the lab, especially if we’re working towards blended learning and relying on Canvas and other online resources to support our instruction.

Kyla Cannon, Davis School District

Every single day I worry about my 8th grade students that I teach. They have a lot going on in their young lives and not all of them get the attention they need. With my class sizes near 40 students in each class, I can’t make the connection I would like to with each one. Making a positive adult connection is so important. Please make reducing class sizes a priority. There are many needs in public education. Please realize there are so many good teachers that want the best for their students. Lately I feel like my profession and public education is under attack and those that have negative feelings toward public education don’t understand the pressures of teaching. I wish we could all focus on trying to fix and support our local public schools rather than take away funding. ALL students need to be a priority.

Holly Rogers, Davis School District

I have 28 students in my second grade classroom. I have 10 students with educational concerns. I need a smaller class size, so I can help fill in their educational gaps.

Melinda Smith, Davis School District

Trust your teachers. So much money goes to curriculum development in the last few years. It is time to have the money go toward lowering class size and supplies and computer programs for the classroom.

Diane Walker, Davis School District

If you really want the students to have the technology skills to succeed in the world today, give us (teachers) the tools to teach the skills. One-to-one devices are really the only way to make sure we can integrate technology into everyday teaching in a meaningful way. If you expect them to excel on the end-of-level computer tests (SAGE) you must give us the tools to help them be comfortable working in a computerized environment.

Sara Weston, Davis School District

Please communicate why it’s not okay for our test scores to be high? The writing assessment just changed because our students are doing well with persuasive/argumentative writing so now the test has been changed to be more challenging. I don’t understand it nor does the public!

Karen Congram, Granite School District

Education deserves unbiased attention. Classroom demands are greater than ever. Students and teachers need systems of support (human, monetary, and time resources) to ensure success.

Jen Ellsworth, Granite School District
Class Size

I taught first grade with 31 students, I am still surprised every day that I didn't quit. I now have 31 third graders, several of which are emotionally impaired and one that doesn't speak English. I have a very low class and feel that there isn't enough of me to go around.

Kira Hurst, Granite School District

Our future in Utah depends upon quality education for our children. Fund us adequately, please.

Teri D. Jenkins, Granite School District

Invest more in public school students and teachers. Reduce class sizes

Erin Kirton, Granite School District

We need smaller class sizes and more funding. We need to differentiate and align tests with student level.

Hilary Ruhling, Granite School District

When we give funds to public and private education, our future children have a better chance of staying out of poverty and have a hope of a brighter future. There would less crime in our cities and more opportunities for young people to good in this world. If they had access to quality education with before and after activities, art programs, etc.

Rebekah Spencer, Granite School District

I have had 32 second grade students in my class for 2 years in a row. I work in a school with a large at risk population. There is no way to deal with the problems associated with so many at risk students in such a large classroom. I spend so much of my day just managing behavior. I have taught for 36 years, and I have found, the larger the class size, the more behavior problems you deal with. On a positive note, we have had a technology grant that has provided our students with 1 to 1 Chrome books. This has helped our students so much because they also have access to Lexia reading and ST Math. They help each student get help on his or her level. Our test scores have really improved. Our ST Math grant will end next year, and it is very expensive. More funding for these programs would be wonderful.

Barbara Thornley, Granite School District

I am fortunate that I can teach for the joy of it (not for the money), but each year it gets harder and harder. Less support, more hoops, and huge classes make the job nearly impossible. If people in Utah want to support our children we need to be willing to pay for the education they need and deserve.

Kristine Marriott, Jordan School District

It is unfair to hold teachers responsible for student scores, when you just got rid of laws for truancy. I have 3 students this year that miss literally 50% of school and I am still held responsible for their scores. It is so discouraging to work so hard and have your teachers scores published. Parents don't know if you have students that don't come to school, or a lot of resource students, or other factors that skew the scores. They only see your overall score and then we are judged on this. It is so stressful for teachers. This is a major reason teachers get discouraged and have threatened to quit.

Valerie Hathaway, Juab School District

Educators change lives; many students spend more time with their teachers than their parents. Respect for the hard-working educators in Utah must be increased. This starts at the top with our government leaders and the way they regard and speak about the profession. A funding increase would be helpful also.

Jackie Shiner, Millard School District

For the past four years, I have not had a "normal" classroom environment due to not enough FTE funding from my district. One year, we had to have 2.5 teachers at my grade level with no other grade to "split" with. As a result, a 1/2 time teacher taught the 3rd group in the morning, and my colleague and I had to separate her kids and teach them in the afternoon. During that year I had 40 kids for half of each day in an elementary setting. It was miraculous that any
Class Size

learning went on at all. The next year presented the same funding problem and we tried having 2 part time aides share the third class for 1/3 of the day and rotated kids through as in middle school. It was a disaster in terms of classroom management for the aides, and that spilled over into the entire grade level. Once again, our test scores looked good, but we nearly made ourselves ill working as hard as we did to overcome the inherent problems that came with the model. This year, ONCE AGAIN, we didn't have enough FTE money to pay 3 teachers for 64 kids, so I have 32 6th graders (a group of struggling learners) and am barely keep my head (and theirs) above water. When is our state going to wake up to the fact that they can't keep working their most experienced and dedicated teachers to death and hope to retain them in the profession. Retirement is looking so nice right about now, and this is coming from a 29 year veteran teacher who had envisioned herself working another 5-6 years to help mold and change young lives for the better. Sigh. It is so very discouraging. Thanks.

Anne Renz, Murray City School District

With the new students coming in being tech savy and having to compete with their video game attention spans more funding for class size reduction would be great this will allow a more personal connection with students. Having nearly 180 students in a day it is difficult to build a connection with that many students.

Wayne Nielson, North Sanpete School District

In years past, my class size has been 30-31 students. I felt like I could manage that with time, teaching with depth and still have life outside of the classroom. Last year, I had 34 students in my 4th grade class. I feel like I am a pretty good teacher and I can do a balancing act, but it's amazing what a difference it makes with 3-4 more students in a class. Seating is cramped, teaching with depth is limited, and grading takes much longer. Not to mention management and behavior issues. This year I have 24 students and it is astounding what a class size does to teaching and the students learning! Please, if at all possible, keep class size under 30 students. Student learning is more effective and teacher motivation improves. That would help keep teachers in this profession and keep them motivated to want to become a better educator.

Denise Ray, Nebo School District

When Scott Howell was my state senator, I invited him to spend a day at my school. It was eye-opening for him. He told me that no one in corporate America would put up with the kind of conditions that teachers put up with. I'd like each legislator to spend one day in a school to see the great things that are happening with teachers who care and give their students what they need.

Linda Wills, Other

Help us help the students of Utah!

Rett Neale, Salt Lake City School District

I would like the decisions my legislators make to have my students' best interest at heart. Teachers are continually doing more with less in an effort to meet the needs of very diverse classes. I want support in educating every student.

Amanda Roberson, Salt Lake City School District

Dear esteemed senators and representatives, In preparation for the coming 2018 legislative session, I invite you to come and spend an entire day at Mill Creek Elementary School in Granite School District (where I work as special education teacher) and do some or all of the following: (1) Observe a few teachers throughout the day and after hours until they go home (it's not uncommon for teachers at my school and elsewhere to stay after hours to grade papers and design lesson plans); (2) talk to teachers about challenges they face and their concerns for their students' learning and overall well being; (3) note classroom, library, technology and playground resources; (4) note classroom sizes, adult-to-student ratios, and one-on-one attention time for struggling students; (5) eat breakfast and school lunch, and observe the nutritional quality of the food; (6) eat breakfast with students in the cafeteria, eat lunch in the faculty room, and ask students and teachers questions; and finally, (7) talk to our amazing principal, Ann Kane, about the demographics, needs and accomplishments of our students, and about the commitment, skill and hard work of our teachers and staff. I know you have the best interests of the children of our state at heart. Please spend a day
Class Size

with some of the future parents, healthcare providers, leaders, clergy, entrepreneurs, artists, scientists, engineers, and teachers themselves of our state. I'm proud of our students; I want the best for every one of them; and yes, I worry for some of them, knowing the challenges they face in their lives. I think you'll feel the same way once you meet them, and I hope you'll share your insights with your fellow legislators. Sincerely, Helen Salas-McCarty

Listening & Spoken Language Teacher Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind helens@usdb.org 801-792-6539

Helen Salas-McCarty, Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind

The schools are educating the future generations. They need support and parents need to be held more accountable for their child's education.

Susan Roberts, Washington County School District

Teaching is my passion. I take it very seriously. I continually strive to keep my education current. Everyday I show up to my classroom with excitement for the day and stay energized and organized so that my students can be engaged and fully invested in their own education. I spend hundreds of dollars in my classroom on curriculum and incentives for my students. Most of the time my class has over 30 students. Frequently we have to share supplies or I need to buy them. I create my own social studies and science curriculum as I do not have the supplies and resources available to me. I work many hours overtime and many extra days as my planning time isn't efficient. I teach in a school with portable 7 full portable classrooms while the charter school down the road is building a new Jr. High. This charter school has a high turnover rate and I personally have taught several students that come back into my classroom. These students have a big learning curve as they adjust to our classroom (both behaviorally and academically). Every student I have had from there has been a couple or more grade levels behind. They are darling students just like all my students, but it takes more effort to teach them what they need to learn. The charter school's Sage test results are far below the other local public schools (by half or third). Every single student in my classroom grows. My low kids progress and so do my high kids. It's an environment of community, respect, and a growth mindset. Teaching students is an important job as it sets the future for all these incredible, brilliant children. Our students need more. They need a teacher that has time to adequately plan, a classroom size that is smaller so they can receive more attention, and rigorous programs and incentives.

Jenifer Allen, Weber School District

This year we have a situation in our 6th grade that makes it so that we have 3 classes of 24 kids in the morning. But, because we have only enough FTE for 2.5 full time positions, we have a teacher who only teaches half-time in the mornings. With this, I take 10 of her kids and the other afternoon teacher takes 11 of them. This makes it so that we have 34 and 35 kids each afternoon and all day every other Wednesday. (We started the year with 36 in each class) 34 may not seem like all that many, but it has been extremely difficult with coordinating schedules and being able to manage some behaviors. The kiddos from the morning teacher don't see us as their "real" teachers and their level of respect for us as well as their work completion is significantly lower. Although we have been managing as best as we can, having 34-35 6th graders is just a lot of chatty kids to have in one classroom for 2.5 hours a day. Our classrooms are pretty crowded with desks and that is just one more thing that makes keeping the kids on task and teaching effectively more difficult.

Madison Moore, Weber School District

Please treat teachers like the professionals that we are!

Ryan Waite, Weber School District

I am an educator with both regular education certification and Special Ed certification. I currently have a caseload of 47 students. My group sizes are NOT small group. I am not taking a lunch so that the students have smaller group sizes and I still have 12-14 in a group. It is not as effective as having a smaller caseload and more individualized services for these students who need the extra help. I have a great supporting staff and they are hesitant to refer students who need help because of my caseload. We need to do what is the best interest of the children we are serving.

Melvina Austin, Alpine School District
Class Size

I am a special education teacher. I love my students but it is getting harder and harder every year to give them what they need in order to be successful. The amount of paperwork is overwhelming and my group sizes just keep growing because there is not a cap on how large a resource class can be. When my class gets larger I do get more aide time, but that doesn't help with the amount of paperwork and prep time required to give adequate services to my growing number of students.

Mickelle Bowling, Alpine School District

I have worked for over 21 years in the public school serving children/students with various disabilities. There have been years where my caseload has been upwards of 90 students. Somedays, to say this job is difficult would be an understatement. I receive legislative funding, which I am grateful for, but my district does not give any additional funding. In order to “qualify” for an aide, I have to prove how overwhelmed I am, which makes me feel incompetent. I am currently working in a special needs preschool setting where four classrooms range from 12-17 children with only one or two "model" children. The rest of them have an IEP, which requires specialized services. In one classroom there is a student with Downs Syndrome, five with Autism, and two others with lesser known diagnoses, and most are non-verbal. Few of these children are potty trained, almost all have mild to severe behaviors that have to be handled, and the manpower and salary is not near enough for the job that is required of me, the teacher, and of her aides. We love the children, and that’s why we power through and come to work everyday. However, your consideration regarding salary, teacher shortages, and funding would be greatly appreciated. Thank you for your time.

Kimberly Budge, Alpine School District

Stop decreasing teacher pay and benefits while pretending to give increases to teacher pay and benefits. If you want to recruit and retain teachers, you need to compensate them with pay and an environment conducive to teaching and learning.

Mark Burton, Alpine School District

Teachers work hard and truly care about the success of students. We do all we can with large classroom sizes, limited resources, and low pay. Students deserve to have more quality time to learn in a smaller group setting. They deserve to have all of the supplies needed for academic success. Teachers deserve to be paid for their hard, heartfelt work, and this would put an end to the teacher shortage as well. Many people can't afford to teach, and that is tragic.

Tiffany Coles, Alpine School District

The teaching profession is not treated with respect. We are licensed professionals, yet we are micromanaged by the public and asked to do more and more with less time, less money, and increased class sizes. The problems in the educational system are being placed squarely on the shoulders of the over-worked, unappreciated, and disrespected educators who are doing all they can to help kids succeed. However, no one can compensate fully for the lack of parental/home support and a student who is willing and actively participating in his/her learning.

Kristie Curtis, Alpine School District

It’s time to look at the size of classroom and raising the teachers salaries!!

Darold Henry, Alpine School District

If we could have more planning time, especially with the new Science SEEd Standards and have smaller classes as we find for more and better teachers, then retention of educators and engagement in the classroom would drastically increase is my hypothesis!

Nathalie Hernandez, Alpine School District

Teachers are hard working professionals with education. We need to be compensated as such. We need to have some incentive to stay and deal with the growing needs of this generation.

Jami Houle, Alpine School District
Class Size

This isn’t just a job to me. I care about my students and want them succeed in school and their other endeavors. Reducing class sizes and modernizing schools technology will help me be able to reach more of my students in a meaningful way. Increasing pay and benefits to teachers will help me be able to remain a teacher and will help attract good colleges who are committed to students just as I am.

Jared McBride, Alpine School District

Let us teach, not be governed

Ryan Newman, Alpine School District

Time is essential to plan effective lessons. There is not enough paid time to do so. Teachers work extra unpaid hours. We need a better salary.

Janeth Paredes, Alpine School District

Teaching is a wonderful profession that changes lives. But those lives can be best affected with personal and individual relationships with teachers. That is much easily accomplished in smaller class sizes. Providing funding to reduce class size and increase compensation for teachers (NOT administrators) is one of the best ways to find and keep great teachers.

Scotten Whaley, Alpine School District

Providing teacher merit-pay by increasing the accountability for high end-of-level students scores without being able to control what happens in a child’s life outside of school is like expecting a dentist to get paid only if all of his patients have no cavities, regardless of how well they brush their teeth at home, and how strong their teeth naturally are as a result of their genetics. Most teachers work harder than other professions, but get the bad rap due to things completely out of their control. It is a highly stressful job and continues to become increasingly more stressful because of the demands imposed upon them from the public and legislators.

Sharon Cook, Box Elder School District

I have been teaching for a few years. In this time I have seen many great teachers quit because their needs were not meet. Instead of lowering the standards to become a teacher, the state should focus on keeping the teachers they have. The reasons teachers quit include: too many students, not enough pay, lack of supplies, and too much accountability for student achievement (at some point parents need to be held accountable too).

Tralyn DeBres, Box Elder School District

That when schools have the funding needed to hire additional teachers so that their is a reasonable amount of students being taught. When they fund for para to help with small group instruction in reading and math. We can accomplish the goals that you have set for us.

Robyn Smith, Box Elder School District

Teachers work VERY hard to meet the needs of our students. We are tired of being disregarded, and having people treat teaching like running a business. We are dealing with variables that we CANNOT control (actual little human, and their lifestyles etc). You cannot run teaching like a regular business. Give us some credit for knowing what we are doing, and being competent to do our jobs. Compensate us fairly for the work we do and help us be able to support a family on our wages. Presently we CANNOT support a family on a teacher's salary!!!

Virginia Spenst, Box Elder School District

In the state of Utah, we have so many children, and we need to make education their first priority. Utah should be leading the nation in producing students who are capable and innovative thinkers. We need to rethink priorities and put all kids first. The “magic bullet” is lower class sizes, support for teachers, both mentoring and professional development as well as high salaries. We should be able to choose from the best of the best teachers, not be scrambling to put bodies in front of students. Please put education first. It will pay off! Thank you.

Theresa Stanton, Cache County School District
Class Size

The morale of teachers is ever decreasing. Teachers need support from legislators to help them stay successful in teaching!

Holly Stuart, Cache County School District

I love my job. I think everyone knows there is a teacher shortage. There is no need to belabor the point that classroom sizes are notable. I will love my job whether or not any changes we ask for happen. But it would be nice for kids and adults if some things I've ranked as important such as increased pay or reduced class size come to pass.

Brenda Jean Anderson, Canyons School District

Teachers need to be paid more to retain them, also, studies show that class size really does not have a significant effect on students. That may be the case, however, it does significantly impact the teacher, and the teacher is the one teaching the students.

Jennifer Asay, Canyons School District

High teacher attrition is due to newer teachers feeling that maybe they can do better for themselves and society by doing something else. check out 80000 hrs and why they say not to become a teacher.

Josh Dimick, Canyons School District

Visit classrooms personally before making more “rules”.

Alzina Barnhill, Davis School District

I believe providing up to date technology in school is important. The problem comes in that technology needs to be replaced. If it is used how we should use it, then we are going to need replacement within 5 years. This is never written into budgets and is very frustrating to many of us when we go to use the technology and it doesn't work. There are days when the only thing that works in my room is my white board. That is right, not my smart board but my white board. I just ask that while getting technology into the classroom is important, it is just as important to update it periodically.

Lori Burnett, Davis School District

Please give teachers the needed tools to do their jobs well.

Karen Cheney, Davis School District

That early intervention is critical in helping students progress and get to an age appropriate level.

Carey Cornejo, Davis School District

That teachers need more respect and support. Not just more hoops to jump through.

Corinne Eliason, Davis School District

I have been teaching for ten year and each year my class size has gone up. I am up to 28 kindergartners per class. TWENTY EIGHT! I know that other kindergartner teachers have more than me. This is a problem all across elementary and secondary levels. Who wants to come into the teaching profession where you get paid very little (can't be a one income family) and have extremely large class sizes! Things need to change.

Kristine Guest, Davis School District

We are doing our best! Please support us. We are not the problem.

John Hill, Davis School District

Teachers need to be payed more. There is so much that is required of us and we don't get payed enough that is why teachers leave the profession.

Suelen Housley, Davis School District
Class Size

I went to school to help students to be better. Not just academically, but socially and behaviorally. It has been hard. With all the high stake testing, data collecting so that others outside of the profession can check up on me, and disrespect for teachers everywhere. Teachers are often thought up as baby sitters for their children and hopefully the student learns something. This is wrong. We have 4 year degrees and are dictated to continue our education. We are paid minimally and treated as to our pay. Parents and government do not treat us as professionals who went to school to learn how to teach. They think they know best. Behavior in the classroom has decreased over the year partly because of this disrespect. Why should the students listen, when lawmakers and parents are putting down the teacher? Skilled teachers are leaving the profession because they cannot support their own families on the pay that is offered them. I once heard in one of my college classes "I might as well try teaching, I failed my other classes". Is this the attitude we want our teachers in your child's school?

Linda Hunzeker, Davis School District

Teachers are leaving the profession. We need to stop great teachers leaving the profession. We need to make it a profession people fight to be in .. not get out.

Tonya Hyatt, Davis School District

Qualified teachers are an asset to education. It's unfortunate for educators to rely on unqualified teachers (or substitutes) when they have conferences or any type of leave at school. I absolutely love what I do. I teach my students everyday and look at them and wonder what career choice they will have. I see doctors, teachers, engineers, and many more. It does get harder to teach when we have 30+ students: Getting their attention, correcting, conferencing, one-on-one interventions or even small group.

Esthephnie Maiava, Davis School District

I am a special education teacher with 14 years of experience multiple awards including the CARE Award and the Special Education Teacher for Davis School District. Two years ago I completely burned out - anxious, exhausted, sick. My caseload was too high and the students I work with are very difficult. I contacted the superintendent and my special education bosses and fortunately was able to get the extra help I needed, so I am still teaching. We cannot afford to burn out teachers, because we can no longer replace them. Even though I love teaching, I warned each of my 8 children not to pursue teaching, because it is too little money to deal with exploding class sizes. I hope the legislators can do something to entice people to teach.

Jill Major, Davis School District

I am the only Kindergarten teacher at my school, and I have 55 students. I don't have the time, materials, and energy to help all of my students master the skills for Kindergarten. There needs to be a limit with how many students can be in a classroom to ensure each student to be successful.

Jennifer McIlrath, Davis School District

If education is really a priority, put money there. Money speaks. Let us use End of Level Testing as part of the final Grade. Motivation. Standards based grading.

Carleen McNees, Davis School District

Depression and anxiety is on the rise among our students. We have too many students in our classes to be able to really know them, let alone notice who among them is struggling and contemplating suicide. They just get lost in the shuffle. I am teaching 38 students in AP BC Calculus, this class should be capped at 30 so that I can provide the help and support that they really need.

Tracey Meade, Davis School District

The more we prioritize standardized testing, the more we will facilitate a generation of great standardized test-takers who accomplish little else. It's not a coincidence that many great leaders were not stellar on their standardized test scores. We ought to get the idea: there are other things that are much, MUCH more important. But as long as we act like the test is most important, the harder it is for teachers to prioritize what really matters. We also need to take a
Class Size

look at Google and other companies: technology skills are not nearly as important as so called “soft” skills that are harder to quantify: communication, teamwork, persistence, grit, creativity, enthusiasm. THESE are what matters. And yet the money keeps going to standardized testing (and the parts of subjects that happen to be easy to create data from) and technology. It is so frustrating to be told to do things that are not in my students' best interests. It is so frustrating to see the money go to what doesn’t matter.

Jon Midget, Davis School District

We have some amazing teachers in our schools that we are losing to other fields because they are simply not paid enough for all of the work they do. You cannot support a family just on a teachers salary. So in turn we are losing some fabulous teachers to other professions, or teachers are having to work several jobs.

Jessica Olsen, Davis School District

Special education teachers can’t teach the students because there is to much paper work. Most special education teachers, don’t have time to teach.

Curtis Page, Davis School District

Education should be a priority. This is the future that we are taking care of and teaching. These are the people who will grow up and take our places in life. We need good people in education who are valued, trained, and supported so that the impact that they have on these kids will make a difference. This world is changing at such a rapid pace and the educational system we have in place is not keeping up. The salaries, training, and support are not there, the educational community is not valued and many of the best teachers are leaving.

Suzy Price, Davis School District

I have been teaching Junior High and High school for 17 years, all in Utah. Teacher moral is a steadily decreasing from the added responsibilities and decreasing focus on a positive work environment. Classes sizes are too large for effective teaching, and the demands for performance are increasing. Any business would say this is a bad model to follow for success. Teaching is a very rewarding experience, but I have a hard time recommending this profession to others as work environment and incentives to teach are being eroded.

Bradley Shafer, Davis School District

Teaching is hard and stressful, but so important. It is a professional position that needs to be funded as such.

Kathryn Sorte, Davis School District

Please come sit in our classrooms and see how much time we spend on student behavior, parent communication, and monitoring asthma and allergy issues. See how spending time to catch students up who have been absent takes time away from other students. See how much of a difference could be made in EACH child’s education (accelerating or remediating) if there were fewer students in each class.

Kathy Sutherland, Davis School District

Please increase teacher salaries! This alone will draw more capable people to consider this amazing occupation.

Karen Sutherland, Davis School District

I am really concerned with the continuing teacher shortage, and especially the fact that it is getting worse, not better. I don’t claim to know the answer, but putting undertrained teachers in the classroom is NOT the answer. This does a disservice to the children who need an education. I believe that raising teacher pay and reducing class sizes and providing consistent, quality mentoring for new teachers are probably some of the best ways to attract and retain teachers. I am close to the end of my career, and I am concerned about who will teach my cute little neighbors and my grandchildren.

Marcia Thompson, Davis School District
Class Size

The primary reason we have a teacher shortage in Utah is due to the high demands - not enough prep time (which leads to planning after hours), high class sizes, finding our own curriculum for some subjects, continuously adding new paperwork and requirements to our daily schedule - coupled with low pay. If teachers were paid for the amount of work they do, there wouldn't be a shortage.

Sara Wilson, Davis School District

We spend so much time testing we don't have time to teach. A lot of that is Davis School District requirements.

Kristy Young, Davis School District

The role of an educator has been overwhelmingly modified in the past several years. Today's teacher in the public schools must prepare several lessons for the same classroom of students. My daughter is a high school teacher. She is often very overwhelmed preparing her lessons for an AP history class. Her classrooms have close to, or over, 30 students each. The students in each class include: IEP, 504, Foreign Exchange, ELL, along with a few high achieving. She has to prepare four lessons, in order to reach each students needs, for each class period. She also has to deal with lazy students, unreasonable parents, and members of the faculty who are so burned out they no longer participate in extracurricular clubs and coaching. She could have pursued many careers but she wanted to teach secondary public education. She had some wonderful teachers who inspired her and she longs to do the same for others. She is single and has no social life because so much time is spent writing lessons, helping students individually, and coaching. She is a GREAT teacher exhibited by the number of students who want HER as a teacher! But she is honestly questioning if she made the right career choice. She loves her students and hopes she is inspiring them through her lessons. She is a real teacher! But she is wondering about exploring other options.

Darline DeBry, Emery County School District

I have been teaching over 18 years and finally feel appreciated with our pay raise. It does help a little. I love my job and the colleagues I work with. This job, however, takes a lot out of a person, especially when you have 30 or more students in your classroom. It should be mandated teachers should only have 25 students in their classroom. There is a difference when you have 5 - 7 more students. It is difficult to reach all students! Also, you need to keep teachers in the field by funding a merit pay bonus system. Keep good teachers!!!!

Kimberlee Affleck, Granite School District

We are doing the entire school system a great disservice and cheating students of a quality education when we do not give them well paid, qualified teachers and do not hold charter schools accountable for test results.

Tracy Bell, Granite School District

I volunteer 2 hours of my time at school planning, meetings, etc. and numerous hours at home doing school related activities. I'm under valued and over-worked! I appreciate the salary increase, but when will the extra hours be addressed?

Trinda Carlson, Granite School District

As a first year teacher, I feel overwhelmed with the variety of requirements for maintaining my teaching license. The same is true of testing and curriculum for the classroom. I don’t see how any 1 person can possibly have the time to address all these requirements properly. It is no wonder that most teachers quit within the first 3 years. It requires about 10-20 hours a week more than the allotted contract time. A reduction in class sizes would help a lot, or part-time assistant teachers to help with things like differentiation. The process of “educating” a student has become overly complicated, and it shows in teacher retention rates, student performance, career readiness. More and more it seems like public education has become a bloated institution whose hidden purpose is to funnel more tax dollars and community donations to private corporations who “support” and supply our schools with an increasing number of throwaway products.

Charles Christopher Elrod, Granite School District
Class Size

I would like to see those who vote on educational issues substitute in three different educational settings. Then I feel they would see how much more support teachers need today in classrooms. As a teacher, when I get the support I need, I have more confidence in myself and the energy to do my best.

Susan Gunn, Granite School District

The biggest challenge I think that students and teachers face is the overcrowding of classrooms. I have had the great opportunity to have a 3rd grade classroom with only 22 students in it. My students made a lot of progress and it showed on their end of year tests. The next year I had 30 students. I did not have as much time to address learning difficulties with students because there were just too many of them. I noticed that as a whole my class did not progress as much and it showed on their end of year tests. It was so frustrating to know there were holes of understanding in some students and simply not have enough time to fill them all. Likewise this year when I first started teaching half day kindergarten I had 32 in my class. This was so difficult! It was harder to maintain order and it was hard to teach routines to so many and trying to assess and do groups was just insane. When we were fortunate enough to add another class and my class was reduced to 19, the difference was amazing. Things were calmer and more productive. I felt that I could cover twice as much material. I also can keep small group sizes low enough to actually have them be more effective and I can meet with my groups more often because there are not as many of them. In my personal opinion, reducing class size would be the number one action that would really increase student growth and learning. A teacher cannot be expected to give personalized education to such large class sizes. It is also very taxing to do the amount of grading required by a large class. Class sizes have been increased, but the money and time given to teachers to do all the grading, planning, preparation and paperwork associated with those extra students has not been increased. It is time to start to invest in and trust teachers.

Katy Halliday, Granite School District

In my half day Kindergarten classes, I am expected to teach a full day of curriculum, while doing a great deal on one-on-one testing. I need more time to work with struggling and advanced students. Look at giving us full-time aides, decreasing testing, or making our day an hour longer!

Karen Haslam, Granite School District

Your votes regarding education speak directly to your priorities, and while there are certainly exceptions to this rule, by and large the Utah legislature has been far too slow to react to desperate needs in Utah’s education system for far too long, oftentimes implementing “solutions” that are woefully weak and ineffective. What this conveys to teachers with whom I work is that the Utah legislature only cares about solving issues within education when they are faced with no other option than to act, and the consequent “action” taken by legislators is done only to put a faux-feather in their political cap so that they can say they’ve accomplished something substantive without actually having done so. We are facing a teacher shortage and yet there are people trying to make it harder for educated, experienced people that could be amazing educators to get certified? Utah crams more children into the average classroom than almost anyone and yet spends among the least per pupil annually: aren’t they worth more than that? There are a long list of oft-discussed issues in education, both within Utah exclusively as well as nationally, but the bottom line is this: as teachers, we are aware that an inherent responsibility of our career is doing more with less, and if the message that the Utah legislature is sending us as educators continues to be that we need to continue to do even more with far less than anyone else, not only will Utah see a sharp decline in their impressive quality of education, but we as educators will send you the same hollow, ostensible support on the voting ballot.

Macord Johnson, Granite School District

The difficulties teachers address in the classroom in title 1.

Kerry Lee, Granite School District

The teacher shortage is real and getting worse. We need to make teaching a respected and well paid profession if we are going to attract and retain high quality teachers. I have had two student teachers recently that quit education after they were finished student teaching because the pay wasn't worth the about of work and emotion they put in.

Denice Long, Granite School District
Class Size

Teachers need a professional salary and lower class sizes

Lisa McAfee, Granite School District

We can't adequately meet the needs of our diverse learners with so many students in our classroom. Raise teacher pay, if you wish to increase teacher retention rates.

Nicole McCrea, Granite School District

I have always wanted to teach but because of family constraints I was unable to finish my education until later in life. I amassed a great deal of student loans to get my teaching certification and was so excited to begin my career. For the first few years of teaching I was enthusiastic and happy, however, slowly year by year my satisfaction with my job has declined. Every year we come back to school to new requirements, new rules and regulations that are redundant and unnecessary. I feel very micromanaged by the District and the Legislature. I feel disrespected and devalued more and more each year. Teaching is incredibly difficult and it seems as if those in the Legislature think we are just babysitting. I would really love to teach. I spend so much time in meetings, duties, and trainings that are completely redundant, that by the time I am in front of the class or are planning for class I am overwhelmed and exhausted. Teaching is not babysitting. it is one of the hardest and most challenging thing I have ever done in my life, but it is also very rewarding. I want to continue to teach in Utah, but it is getting harder and harder to deal with the disrespect and disdain those outside of education have for teachers. I wish that every legislator that anything to do with creating laws for education would go into an elementary classroom and teach for two weeks without the teachers help, and sit in while the students take their standardized tests. If they did, I guarantee they would walk away with a different understanding of what we do for the children of our state every day.

Leslie Morley, Granite School District

Please listen to the suggestions that educators give. We know what we need better than anyone else.

Shaina Runolfson, Granite School District

Teachers are poor, overworked and given little respect as professionals. Address those issues and you will attract and retain quality teachers.

Denice Smith, Granite School District

Increasing access to technology equipment without support in training teachers and students to integrate the equipment is futile.

Debra Springer, Granite School District

As it currently stands, teaching is a very demoralizing profession. We are here because we want to be a force for good in our communities, but are being treated poorly by governmental officials, parents, students and occasionally administrators. It has an effect on how effective we can be as teachers.

Caitlin Thomas, Granite School District

I was a thirty-four year career educator. Although I received supply money (about $250), it was definitely not enough to provide supplies for each of my students. It amounted to less than $1 per year per student. I taught every 8th grade student in the school, had about 450 kids per year, and class sizes sometimes as high as 40 kids. We had a student body of 1400 at Hunter Jr. High. Although my supply money was never enough, that amount definitely was not enough for teachers who were in their first years of teaching. I spent upwards of $1200 dollars per year. New teachers don't even have enough money to pay their bills, let alone spend that kind of money in order to do their job. That's definitely a reason for new teachers to leave the profession.

Penney Tyree, Granite School District

Teachers deserve MORE. We work with some of the toughest issues for very little pay. We are bursting at the seams with class sizes of 36. We have both parents and students screaming in our faces and treating us with disrespect and we can't do anything about it. Not only that, but there is absolutely no regard or respect for educators. Enough is
Class Size

eough. Soon, no one is going to want to do this job. Changes must be made. Every day I hear quality educators talking about leaving the profession because there are too many problems and they just can't take any more. It is a real shame to see some of the best teachers out there wanting to leave their jobs.

Ashley Vierig, Granite School District

We are so grateful for the increase made last session to improve teacher salaries. This is a huge step in the right direction for drawing quality educators to the profession and keeping them here. I am concerned about the lowering of required qualifications for those newly hired teachers and the overall morale of teachers in general. When qualification requirements are lowered, it sends a clear message to those of us with Masters degrees and endorsements. It tells us none of that matters. "Anyone" can teach! We know this is absolutely NOT true. Just ask someone who has made the attempt and left. It is the most difficult job. A job we do every day with little to no support, no accolades, and mounting class sizes. The demands on teachers is growing every day. Teachers are asked to handle special education students that are not well served in the regular education classroom. This leads to very big issues. The message that teachers don't matter and don't do their jobs is loud and clear. We have to change this! Smaller class sizes, more pay at the starting levels, greater support and more training (not OFF contract time) is vital. Please help us change the perception of this profession. We are desperate and our students' futures depend on these changes. Thank you.

Jaime Woolley, Granite School District

My 26 year old son told me recently, "Mom, seeing how hard you work and what you go through, I don't see why anyone would want to become a teacher for the amount of compensation and problems you experience." My answer, "No one would do it for any other reason except that they love kids and want to help them." I think this is true of A LOT of Utah educators.

Rachelle Spencer, Iron County School District

As an educator I could not afford to buy a house. I went to a government program called the good neighbor program to be able to make it possible to afford a house. In order to afford a house I had to be willing to live in a rough rough neighborhood where drug deals happen in front of my house, where fights happen in the street, and where people pull out guns as a solution to their problems. I have had to have the police search my house once for an intruder. I have had to hide in my basement while guns and a fight were going on outside, while we had guests at our home. Is this the kind of places and situation you want you teachers who have 4+ year degrees to have to live. The first 5-10 years of a teachers career are the most low paid and most vulnerable to leave the profession. This is more likely to happen when they are not paid well and they are overworked. With the rising cost of our medical coverage and little increase in pay it has become harder and harder for new teachers to have the desire to stay with the profession.

Pam Bryson, Jordan School District

When I went into teaching, I went into it knowing I would not make a lot of money. However, I was allowed autonomy to design curriculum for my individual students. Now, I am spending hours preparing students for a lot of standardized tests (SAGE, SLO, District reading and writing benchmarks). I am also spending hours preparing portfolios to prove I am a qualified teacher. All this time not spent on my students is drawing my attention more to my low salary and huge class sizes. Teachers are getting burned out and that is what is causing the huge shortage.

Tami Ewell, Jordan School District

Get out in the schools and sub in a class. See what is happening before you make any decision.

Kim Howard, Jordan School District

Teaching is more difficult than the average person understands. We are met with so many challenges, but are expected to meet very rigorous testing and expectations. We need to be valued by our legislators and we need to be valued by society so that we can be giving our students the best education. Investing in teachers means investing in our future!

Christar Krans, Jordan School District


**Class Size**

I work with special education students. I know I make a difference and help the students improve their skills. Many students that I have worked with have returned to regular ed placement because of the hard work of the student, teacher, parent and myself. I have been in the classroom for over 30 years and am too young to retire (age 52). I am overwhelmed with the responsibilities that seem to be added to my plate each year. My contract time ends at 3:30 but I do not leave the school until 5:00 and often have work to do at home. I love my job and the contact I have with colleagues, parents and students. I can’t keep giving more. I know what my students need but do not have the time to meet their needs because of the number of students I services (45, while the recommendation is 35). We need to be compensated for the time we are spending preparing for our classes. I don’t need technology, I need man power. I need additional aide support or additional teachers to help with the demands. The regular ed teachers would be able to do more in the classrooms if there were fewer kids in there classes. That could cut down on the number of students qualifying for special education services. I need your help. I don’t believe money is the answer to everything. But money is needed for more resources (people). I love technology and use it in my classroom. But that can not take the place of the student reading directly to an adult. Or the time needed to teach a student a math skill. I have 12 students in a 5th grade math group. I spend 20 minutes reteaching core 5th grade concepts and 25 minutes working on individual skills that they are deficit in. If they miss a problem they have to fix it with me. As you can well imagine, 1:12 ratio makes this difficult. I have been fortunate and have had 2 high school students volunteering in my class for the last 4 weeks (an assignment from their language arts class). Today as they were asking who needed help I did not have any corrections that needed to be done. For the first time this year I was caught up! One of the students will complete his volunteer hours in two days. The other student will continue to come for the remainder of January. Then I am on my own again. I cannot express enough how much they have helped the students and me. Imagine what kind of progress could be made with another adult in the class. That is what man power can do. The data shows that the students have made progress in these few weeks. Please consider the needs of each individual student. They need you to do your job so that we can do ours.

Rochelle Manglinong, Jordan School District

I wish so badly that I had a TA or smaller class sizes. I teach English and I spend HOURS upon HOURS giving individual feedback on student writing. My students make significant improvement the more individualized feedback they receive and the sooner they get it. It just isn’t possible to do with 35-40 students in each class. Imagine 240 essays that are 5-6 pages long on top of lesson planning, meetings, differentiated teaching, etc. NOT POSSIBLE.

Megan Murdock, Jordan School District

Older schools need to be updated with technology and are just as important as new schools!

Belynda Paxton, Jordan School District

We need higher salaries to retain qualified teachers

Kim Peterson, Jordan School District

I have great students and I believe all students can learn, but I have students that don’t attend or when they do they have their hoodies on and earphones in. When we as teachers try to address the behavior or address any school challenge, we get bullied to keep our opinions to our self’s. It never use to be that way it started when school grades were implemented.

Dave Anderson, Logan City School District

Look at all schools and not just Salt Lake area.

Jolene Herzog, Logan City School District

Again focus on teachers and their concerns. We should and do focus on the students, but teachers and pay seem to not be addressed. Lots of talk but no action.

Derek Hoskins, Logan City School District
Class Size

You cannot keep adding requirements in our teaching without supporting us in them. We are lacking pay, people, and parent support.

Canisha Harrison, Millard School District

I currently have 40 students in each English 11 class. I have a total of 210 students in MHS with many individual needs: SPED, 504s, and ESL/ELL needs. I am trying to prepare these students to take the ACT and do well. It is an impossible task.

Crystal Spackman, Murray City School District

I would like to let them know that teachers work very hard, and most teachers take their work home with them and work for hours every night. Many teachers get burned out within the first few years of teaching. My school has lost many teachers due to this, and I feel like higher salaries would help.

Nicollette Anderson, Nebo School District

Students need to be in class to learn. We need more support for attendance policies that still allow parent autonomy but also communicate the importance of quality education for youth. Utah seems to have a negative perception towards public education. We need our legislators to prioritize it and speak positively about it to help the culture of learning together as a community.

Becky Beckstead, Nebo School District

I love teaching and I am a natural. I teach elementary school and know I make a big, positive impact on the lives of my students. I love them and they feel it. How do I know? I am invited to mission farewells, homecomings and weddings and am frequently greeted in public places with big hugs from former students. I become friends with many of their parents who seek out advice many years after I have taught their child. My test scores are good, I am beloved and I love teaching. I am also counting down the years (five first days left) until I retire. I always imagined age-related health issues would force me to retire, but I am in great health. I plan to leave teaching because the stress, needs & demands of teachers and students are too many. The expectations of a child have become too much for many of them to bear. My eight and nine year old students cry during testing because they do not understand what is expected or are unable to figure out how to use the mouse to accomplish the assigned task (click on, drag and drop dots and lines to demonstrate they understand perimeter or area.) Their little hands struggle to type essays, often about topics they do not fully comprehend like arboretums, culture museums or NASA careers. They have completed the 3rd grade Keyboarding curriculum and even spent many extra hours practicing, but they still have a hard time remembering how to capitalize letters or the difference between the available punctuation marks. They hunt for the letters asking, “Why aren't they in order?” They struggle to write using evidence from the articles provided without actually using the exact words. That is a lot to expect of an eight year old. Testing is too intense, too confusing and too overwhelming for too many of my students. I feel like I spend the entire year building relationships of trust and then end the year by subjecting them to hours of torture. I have eight-year-olds taking TUMS to survive the stomachache of testing. That is wrong. Third grade students need paper and pencil tests. The questions need to be more direct and age appropriate. We must reduce the hours spent on testing. Our current method of testing is killing their joy for learning and many teachers joy for teaching. Maybe with small classes and adequate support for the ever-increasing numbers of special needs students, the job would be “do-able.” Right now, it is not. I am doing all that I can to make it possible for my students to succeed, but cannot keep up. The hours and expectations never fail to increase or intensify. I am one of your best teachers and am so worn out, I no longer WANT to teach. Who will replace me? The pay and benefits have never drawn people to teaching, but good retirement and health insurance benefits and “mom-friendly” hours helped compensate. Teachers could be home soon after their children returned from school, a draw for many women. Not anymore. Teaching is a full-time job with impossible demands and inadequate compensation. Multi-generational teacher families are telling their children not to teach. The decreased number of students entering education programs should tell you that society also views teaching as an undesirable profession. What are we going to do when the demands are so high, no one qualified will do it?

Michael-Ann McAfee, Nebo School District
Class Size

Increase pay, or good luck finding teachers. Many of the teachers today are eligible for retirement within a couple of years

Scot Moldenhauer, Nebo School District

Teachers are over worked, have too large of classes, underpaid, and have horrible benefits. I am also very frustrated with the low quality of teacher that is coming into the field. I worked hard to earn my qualifications as a teacher, so it is really hard to watch others being hired with no teaching experience or qualifications.

Josie Reynaud, Nebo School District

Teachers want to be excellent. We work extra hours to create interesting lessons, grade the rigorous assignments we assign, and find new materials. We love our content and we enjoy working with students and helping them learn and grow. But we have many factors working against us. 1) Class sizes are so large, it is hard to meet the needs of individual learners. 2) Teacher pay does not adequately compensate teachers for all the extra hours that are spent, and teachers quickly realize it is VERY DIFFICULT to support a family on the amount they earn. (Have you seen home prices?) 3) Legislation is passed without teacher input that adds to a teacher's responsibilities but doesn't help student learning. For example: sage testing was required, but students opt out or race through it just to be done, and then schools/teachers receive a poor “school grade.”

Lori Zaremba, Nebo School District

As a teacher, there are some things that scare me about our current education system and the direction that we are headed. These concerns include 1. Teacher Shortage 2. Class sizes 3. High stakes testing requirements from the federal and state government 4. Teacher morale I watch my colleagues go home every night overworked, and underpaid. If we do not address our teachers and their support system I do not believe we can maintain a high standard of learning in Utah.

Ashley Davis, Ogden School District

Attract and RETAIN quality teachers.

David Bettinson, Other

Placing ELL students in already-overcrowded mainstream classrooms has been very counterproductive. Bring back LEP sheltered classes for ELL students.

Warren Brodhead, Other

Most of my mediocre paycheck goes to pay for the majority of lessons and units that I do to help the students become engaged in learning with hands-on and interactive lessons. But also having to pay for all relicensing and assessments to become a highly qualified teacher takes a big chunk too. Then you have those people who decide they want to teach and they have fewer mandates put on them and fewer fees. But if I want to change to a different subject matter which should require less time then those off the street with no experience I'm being told it requires 8 classes that will take approx two years.

Drew Wright, Other

We need qualified teachers in Our classrooms! And we need to raise teacher pay to be able to retain new teachers so they stay in the profession.

Kathleen Anderson, Park City School District

I am a 29 year veteran teacher of secondary mathematics. I am a teacher leader in my school and district. My students score well on any state mandated tests, and overall, my students show progress each year. By all measures, I am effective. But I am burning out. Increasingly, I am having to make up for the lack of quality in hiring for new teachers, and I am being told more and more paperwork is the answer to show that I am an effective educator. Do I have room to improve? Yes. Do I want to collaborate? Of course. But for me to have to train teachers with little or no educational background on the pedagogy of how to run a classroom year after year is not fair to me or
Class Size

my students—or the students in the class where the new teacher tries to learn as they go. I am training these under-qualified hires on things that I learned when I was in school, in essence, giving away the education I had to pay for. Why is it not important to hold every educator to a high standard of pedagogy knowledge? And more often than not, these are also people who do not know the math well enough to teach it to high school students. They struggle from the first day of class, and students try to bail on them as soon as they figure that out. That makes class loads for competent teachers skyrocket, making the division of labor so skewed it becomes almost comical. This past year, we lost 3 highly qualified candidates for an open position to other districts because of the lower pay in our district. Our district could not compete with others close to us in the amount of raises that were offered. The state base is so low, teachers must consider those kinds of things. So now we have an under-qualified teacher who struggles every day, but was available and cheap a week before school started. And I have to try to make up for that through collaboration, mentoring and an increased student load. It is burning me out. I am hoping that the state will recognize that funding for teachers has not increased in so long that they will take action this session--both in actual salary and class sizes. I am hoping that we can attract and retain a higher quality of person into the profession. If that happens, I will be able to learn from others and improve my own practice, instead of always being the one asked to train under-qualified hires to just make it through the year.

Carla Johnson, Provo City School District

Over the past 10 years since I’ve become a teacher, I have seen the expectations placed upon teachers increase significantly to the point that each year, I see many of my colleagues in the profession leave the teaching profession to pursue other career paths. They have no choice but to do so after being pushed to teacher burnout trying to keep up with daily responsibilities as a teacher and attend more meetings serving on at least one school committee or being asked to create curriculum notebooks with no more pay. I, myself contemplate this action on a daily basis due to the added expectations teachers are asked to complete each year with meager salaries that can barely support ourselves and/or our families especially if we own our homes or cars. In addition, class sizes in public schools are way too big to effectively teach our students. For example, in classes that require a lot of writing from our students, it is almost impossible to give immediate, quality feedback to our students if we want to also meet the demands of our personal lives. It feels like the golden age of teaching has passed where we were trusted to do our jobs, catering to the various learning styles of students is completely ignored by being required to give them more and more standardized tests that reflect badly on the teachers if they do not do well. For many teachers, their love and passion of teaching is getting outweighed by the increased burdens placed on teaching each year. Please do something to ease our burdens as soon as possible. We are losing wonderful teachers each year for these reasons and more.

Nathalie LeBras, Provo City School District

Teachers are doing their best under trying conditions. I'm a veteran teacher concerned with teacher turnover. Younger teachers aren't making it too long and teacher turnover is hurting our schools and children. Retired teachers might want to come back if some restrictions on pensions and "sitting out a year" were changed. Teachers care about their students.

Brian Preece, Provo City School District

Teachers need more support in the classroom.

Malia Siufanua, Provo City School District

Teachers deserve a livable salary and students deserve more one on one time

Elyse Garrison, Salt Lake City School District

The lack of qualified teachers is distressing. I believe that teaching is profession and a hard profession. You wouldn't want a doctor that was learning the job as he/she goes and hope that the other doctors in the office are there to support them. It is important to get qualified, skilled teachers- our students are too important to hand over to just anyone off the street. If you believe that teaching isn't a profession or that anyone off the street can do it then I put a challenge to the legislators. Come to any school: 1. agree to spend a week in a classroom as the teacher 2. make the lesson plans, prepare everything, etc 3. pick a subject area to really focus on and teach a unit 4. test the students at
Class Size

the end of the week and be judged on your teaching ability. This small experience would be eye opening into a
difficult but rewarding profession.

Amy Nelson, Salt Lake City School District

The students are being tested to death! Let us get back to teaching!

Mary Beth Sheppard, Salt Lake City School District

I take students on trips and they learn so much more on those trips. Part of the reason is the size. I will have a 10 to
1 student teacher ratio or less and students get time to connect with the teacher and ask questions. Smaller class
sizes result in more effective learning.

Jacob Taber, Salt Lake City School District

I would like to share the realities of the work load including the emotional burnout

Aaryn Birchell, Uintah School District

Please visit schools be in the schools see what we are doing before you decide what is best for us.

Shanalee Madsen, Uintah School District

The need to drastically improve salaries and realize the rise in duties and expectations has increased. Class sizes
are rising. I love what I do but it gets harder and harder to do. I would also like to see funding to support suicide
awareness and teach coping skills for anxiety and depression at each and every classroom in the state. We must be
cutting edge on this. We are losing too many of our precious children.

Sheila Johnston, Wasatch County School District

Working as a professional teacher for over 25 years, I can see that threatening tactics are non-productive such as
merit pay of testing outcomes. To help students and teachers, make sure the salaries are adequate and the money is
used for the schools students, not programs, or new promises. Get the money to the students.

Kimala Bosh, Washington County School District

Class sizes are way too big; I have 230 students. It's really hard to provide individualized help with over 40+ students
in a class. Not to mention grading all their work, prep and planning. I've been teaching for 15 years, but I'm really
wondering there is a better career out there for me because I feel so overworked, underpaid, and underappreciated. I
would discourage a young person from going into teaching.

Sara Sisam, Washington County School District

Please put students and teachers first in everything you do. Out students deserve more!

Karyn Wilson, Washington County School District

I work hard every day trying to make a difference in student's lives. I would appreciate it if some of the legislators
would acknowledge that we do hard things every day under tough circumstances. We need more help with difficult
kids. We need more help in the classroom with either more aide time or smaller class sizes.

Lynne Graves, Weber School District

Teachers put in so much time and effort to be the best that they can be. They put in time to prep for lessons, correct
student work, enter grades, read about current research and best practices, and think about what will help students
achieve in all areas. Much of this time is outside of the contract hours. This is outside of contract hours because
during the day, teachers are already running a marathon, so to speak, to make the most of the time that is with
students. Teachers try to maximize all learning/teaching time with the students. It would be nice to see that teachers
are compensated for their time and efforts. I can see that in the time that I have put in through the past year and a
half that I have been teaching, that there is so much work to be done from the moment I get to the school building to
the moment that I leave. I am here before and after contract hours. I work these long hours alongside my colleagues.
We all want the best for our students because we care. It would just be nice to be compensated for what we do for our students, who will be contributing members of society and future. We also want future educators that could be amazing in this career field to not be steered away just because they are not recognized or compensated for the work that is done in a school.

*Lexus Monroe, Weber School District*

The fact that people can be hired as teachers without a degree in education.

*Duren Montgomery, Weber School District*

The teacher shortage is a direct result of the legislature's unwillingness to increase teacher pay and decrease class size. The deceptive accounting for the WPU makes it so that the average class size on paper is far smaller than the actual average class size. If they want to do something about the teacher shortage, they need have reasonable class size to promote learning and salaries to make it worth while for teachers to stay in the profession and attract new teachers.

*Keith Quigley, Weber School District*

They need to spend more time in public schools before they make the "rules" for student testing and success measurement.

*Tina Thompson, Weber School District*

Less testing and more teaching time

*Sandra C. Toone, Weber School District*

Increase teacher salaries, lower class size. I would like our legislators visit a classroom for a week. Every day come in and see what educators do on a day-to-day basis. It has to be all day for at least 5 days in a row.

*Apryl A Beck, Alpine School District*

Pay raises that do not get drained into admin over teachers.

*Keith Flood, Alpine School District*

5 out of my 7 classes have 40 or more students. I have had to reduce labs, assessments, and student feedback to keep myself from working to much outside of my contract time. I have been considering returning to industry since the pay is better and I could possibly have a bigger impact with less stress.

*John Hamilton, Alpine School District*

Being a teacher is hard on marriages and family life. In order to be the kind of teacher that you, parents, and I expect of myself, I am ALWAYS working extra time. My husband strongly disapproves of my doing that. You need to please pay teachers more for time worked so that we are not getting pennies on the dollar. Bonus pay may be the answer, but I am not sure yet. A huge help would be smaller class sizes.

*Cindy Hansen, Alpine School District*

As teachers we work hard and put forth our time and energy and are paid little. Every year I wonder if it is worth it. There is SO much required of me and there are times its too much. Grades, core curriculum, assessments, standards, documentation, effective teaching, supplies (I spent $2500 of my own money last year), taking classes to relicense (my early childhood endorsement from another state is not accepted so I have to pay and retake classes I have already taken), and class sizes are getting larger and larger (29 kids in Kindergarten is way to much and add 2 sessions that's 60 kids I need to teach a full day curriculum in half the day and report cards and parent teacher conferences). The list goes on. Every year I look at other careers to see what options I have as I'm spent. Please see teachers load is great.

*Lois Hardy, Alpine School District*
Class Size

Our students deserve the very best we have to offer. After all, the kids I work with are only 9 and 10 years old. There have been so many things added to our plates, that it's no fun being a teacher anymore. Adults have polluted our schools, and ultimately it's our students who pay the price. I used to love being a teacher. I would wake up every morning looking forward to going to work. I'll continue to do my very best, because that's what my students deserve. However, I look forward to the day I can leave the profession. Hopefully legislatures will make decisions with our students in mind.

*Steve Herrman, Alpine School District*

The "30 kids in a classroom" days are over in my area. It's 40 kids in a class now, and we don't have the supplies or technology to ensure adequate access for all students. We also don't have appropriate planning time because so much time has to be devoted to grading when there is such a high quantity of students.

*Jessica Low, Alpine School District*

All students deserve a quality education that meets their individual needs.

*Mark Milne, Alpine School District*

Place more value on the education of our children by paying teachers more and lowering class size in elementary school.

*Vickie Richey, Alpine School District*

My two main concerns are class size and teacher pay. I currently have 34 students in my class and everyday I worry about how I'm going to meet all of their needs. I work past my contract hours to meet the demands of my large class size and yet my pay continues to be minimal. I just wonder when teachers are going to be truly valued for the endless hours they put into educating young minds.

*Kelly Robbins, Alpine School District*

Educators are leaving teaching because of poor pay, curriculum always changing (6th grade science), and class sizes are too high.

*Kelley Tenney, Alpine School District*

I love what I do. I love working with students and seeing their progress. I appreciate the support that allows me to work with students.

*Kristi Tonga, Alpine School District*

I have taught Kindergarten or Preschool for 21 years. The teachers I've collaborated with over the years are amazing but so much is being required with so little being given back that most are ready to quit or move to another state. We are now required to take so many children with serious behavior issues... YES, even at 4 and 5 years old many children already have been abused or neglected to the point that they are violent, depressed, and discouraged with low self esteem or pressured by perfection driven parents that they can have ulcers, anxiety or distructive tendencies. We have many success stories, in fact MOST of my preschool children learn ALL of the letters and sounds and can count to 20 or beyond by the end of the year, but in preschool we only have 14 children in each class with a full time aide. The poor Kindergarten teachers are the ones that suffer. PLEASE HELP THEM!!

*Irene Lynn Wilkerson, Alpine School District*

A change in standards issued by the state with no funds for training or curriculum supplies available without writing our own grants. Increased workload due to the standard change without extra funding for meeting a working together to create new curriculum. Workload is already to large with each class having between 30-35 students in them.

*Heidi Heil, Box Elder School District*
Class Size

We are passionate, caring, professionals who love our students and the opportunity to give them a brighter future. We work much more than our contract time preparing to make each day as meaningful as possible. We teach the individuals, and monitor and assess everyone’s growth. As teachers we push our selves to utilize best practices. Most of us take classes, and earn certificates well beyond what is needed for relicensure. Through out the summer I will take classes as well go in at least once a week to prepared, adjust, or improve curriculm. I am not only not paid, but I still pay for day care. It is important to me to continually improve even in my twelfth year of teaching and implement best practices I am learning or ways to deepen understanding. I come in early and stay late to help individuals that struggle with concepts. We spend much more than we are compensated for on supplies, rewards, or things that make our lessons more meaning. I’ve done this for over crowded classrooms. I’ve had up to 32 third graders in class and 30 second graders. I care too much about the kids each year not to contact each family individually with a positive phone call through out the year and individual attention and praise. I can not do this when in my contract hours or with the legislative money allotted. I sacrifice my family time and money to help support these kids knowing I may be the only praise and love they get some days. Knowing they may not get support with reading or homework at home. As educators we do all these things because we care. Please support us support the wonderful children of Utah.

Alisa Olsen, Cache County School District

I'm a 30 year professional with a masters degree. I make a fraction of what other professionals make with similar education. Everyone talks that there is nothing more important than education, educating our children, no more noble calling than teaching. If that is true, look at how teachers are paid and treated.

Rob Stewart, Cache County School District

If we could lower class sizes, increase teacher pay based on growth performance of students rather than benchmark, or provide more classroom support- I believe that every student would benefit immensely.

Whitney Tibbitts, Cache County School District

Please come into our classrooms before making legislative choices.

Wendy Western, Cache County School District

Cost of living vs. Teacher pay in the State of Utah. Look at housing market for a reasonable house payment is close to have of a monthly check

Brandon Cornaby, Canyons School District

The unpaid time and overall commitment that I give to my job that goes unrecognized and uncompensated.

Jennifer Mattson, Canyons School District

I currently have two 8th grade science classes with 40+ students in a high impact school. The majority of those students fall into some at-risk category; they are in transition, ELL, have an IEP, long running list of behavior issues, attendance issue, etc. In a class of 40 I cannot support these students. I have been made into a baby sitter. I believe ALL kids can be successful but we are creating an environment where we are not giving students the kind of support they need by simply cramming as many of them as possible into a room. It is near impossible for me to get around to each student in any significant way. I also do not enough lab equipment/consumables to support that many kids at one time. I have had many of the students in those classes come up to me and tell me they HATE my class because of all the kids that are not paying attention, being loud, being disrespectful, etc. I do not have poor classroom management or a difficult time creating relationships; My yearly evaluations show that. There is simply TOO many at once. I have had simple requests like, "Please take out a pencil" rebuffed with derogatory comments. I feel that I do not get paid enough to have to deal with situations like this.

Robert Violano, Canyons School District
Class Size

Talk to teachers in real classrooms about their needs and thoughts on education rather than listening to outsiders - outside of the teaching/education field

Laurie Brown, Davis School District

I'm trying my hardest, but I am sometimes overwhelmed with everything I have to do. I could really use more prep. time or fewer students.

Susan Callister, Davis School District

We're overworked and exhausted. Many of us are tired of having to work on school things evenings and weekends just to try to keep up. We are being held accountable for things we have no control over. Parents and students don't have any accountability unless they choose to. We are expected to do more than 1 person can possibly do and are criticized when we can't do it. We are professionals. We work in education every day and we should be making educational decisions for our students. We have too many students with many different needs and we can't help all of them. Our curriculum is more than we can teach in one year. We've had many things added to the curriculum, but very few things taken out. We're stressed because of testing and observations and evaluations and so many other things expected of us. Valuable learning time is spent testing and practicing for tests. Tired, stressed out teachers don't make better teachers or enhance relationships with students and it does not improve education. If I were choosing a career today, I definitely would not choose education because of the stress and my own time and money that goes into it.

Susan Carter, Davis School District

I just finished my degree in Elementary Education. I certainly didn't do it because of the money, but after doing my student teaching it has opened my eyes to how much teachers truly do! It feels like a slap in the face how little teachers get paid, for how much they do. I also have a 4th grader and his class has 33 students. The teacher is amazing and I love the school but the district won't approve another teacher for next year. It's a problem.

Magali Cromar, Davis School District

No matter how many hours I put in or how hard I try, it's never enough. The district just keeps handing down more and more that they expect me to accomplish in the same amount of time each day. They open the buildings on Saturdays so that we can donate even more time. Every day I think to myself, "This is why no one is going into education."

Lisa Gehmlich, Davis School District

Don't mix public and private education. Get rid of SAGE testing - it is almost meaningless. Since students know the tests are meaningless to their grades - they simply don't care/the 'opt out/or they deliberately 'throw' the exams to punish teachers they don't like. They do NOT do what educators seem to think they do (rating schools/teachers). Just admit that if you don't have student accountability (grades)...you don't have a viable test.

Daniel Glad, Davis School District

Children learn from their parents. If the parents don't value education they won't help their children to improve and value learning. Get the parents off "free money" and get them working for what they receive to help them understand that education and working are the way to provide for your family.

ReNae Jackson, Davis School District

It is sad that after 23 years of teaching, I can't hardly afford a decent apartment without the help of a second job.

Pam Martinez, Davis School District

What teachers are expected to do keeps increasing and changing and they aren't adequately compensated for this extra burden it puts on them

Lesley Mason, Davis School District
Class Size

Kids need dedicated teachers to be successful. Teachers need to feel valued to continue giving what students need. We all need community support.

Sara McKay, Davis School District

The quality of my own children and my students’ education has continued to decline drastically. Very few children want to go into the teaching profession. Those who do - leave, and they leave quickly! It is an overwhelming job that is absolutely impossible to do properly within the contract time we are given. The pay is downright pathetic, especially when you consider the higher-level education and hoops we must jump through to get our jobs. Public respect towards teachers is at an all-time low. Money is put into the wrong places to supposedly create a quick-fix. I am truly scared for the future as I've watched these kids move on into life less prepared than ever. It's time to quit looking for a magical program or the fluffy words to make it appear that we are doing okay. Education is an incredibly broken system. Smaller class sizes would immediately increase student learning! Please DO SOMETHING!!

Kris Orton, Davis School District

I teach at a large elementary school. We service over 1,000 students. Our class sizes are inconsistently reduced. Some classes are at 25 students while third grade has over 30 students in a class. The toll on students and educators is unfair. There are space issues of safety within the class and on the playground. In addition, the stress level on these educators is significantly greater.

Stacey Osborne, Davis School District

Please don't make any more big changes to education before allowing us time to implement all of the previous changes. Also, please don't add more things to do without taking things away first. I already work 11-12 hours every day just to keep my head above water. Good teachers are feeling like bad teachers because the work load has become impossible for us to meet. We love helping kids, but more and more of what is being required of us takes us away from our students and they are where the focus really should be. Thanks for listening.

Lisa Prochet, Davis School District

Our class sizes are too big.

Melanie Reeves, Davis School District

One of my science classes contains 35 students, and I only have 34 chairs in my room. Even though I teach at a Junior High, some of my students are reading at a 1st grade level. How am I supposed to diversify my lessons so that the low students are given the time and resources that they need, while the gifted students are challenged to their full potential? With a class of 35 it is impossible for me to give every student the learning experience that they deserve.

Amanda Shea, Davis School District

Help make teaching a profession that would make it so teachers would encourage our own children to become teachers. At this point very few would ever encourage our own children to follow in our footsteps.

Todd Street, Davis School District

As an educator, I work hard to ensure that my students are learning and are successful. The biggest challenge in teaching is not the students, it is the lack of support from the community and government. We have such an important task, we are educating children. Educators need to be valued and respected. We need smaller classrooms to help each child succeed. Educators also need wages that reflect the amount of education and experience they have.

Becky Tatum, Davis School District

Teachers should be valued, respected and compensated for all their time and effort

Celeste Watkins, Davis School District
**Class Size**

Keep good teachers who are committed to good teaching  
*Lisa Wright, Davis School District*

Refugee students learning English and contributing to our state.  
*Renate Brunsvik, Granite School District*

My kids are disrespectful and their major behavioral issues cut into teaching time EVERY DAY for 10-30 minutes daily. We need aides (who get paid decent money) to help govern so we can teach. Also, we need paid time to plan, grade, and learn curriculum/standards without kids and without professional development sucking up our time so we can meet the goals set for us.  
*Ali Brusa, Granite School District*

Leave me alone to teach.  
*Stacey Chappell, Granite School District*

Don't dismiss the will of UEA as you have tended to do in the past.  
*Travis Dahl, Granite School District*

The classes are too large for students to learn easily; also, teachers are not paid enough.  
*Susan Dyer, Granite School District*

We are all trying to do the best we know how. Students coming into schools now have been raised by the internet and coming less mature, lower academically, and with more behavior problems than ever. We need more support and funding.  
*Elizabeth Gifford, Granite School District*

How unfair many teachers are treated.  
*Michele Hart, Granite School District*

They are making very important decisions, that unfortunately many of them do not have enough information or experience to address. I want them to spend some considerable time in the classroom teaching, and experiencing a classroom situation in Utah before they start deciding what is important and what is not.  
*Gloria Holmstead, Granite School District*

What skills do you wish you had learned before attending college? Why do you think that you did not learn them?  
*Deborah Kesner-Steinberg, Granite School District*

I appreciate how my local legislators support education and make a difference for myself and the families they serve. Patrice Arent, Jani Iwamoto from my school area. Marie Poulsen, Brian Shiozawa (until he just left) from my home area. They are all great supporters or education and I appreciate them!  
*Kelly Kline, Granite School District*

Additional funding needs to be provided to either lower class sizes or hire intervention teachers to help academically at risk students become proficient in reading and math. Based on the current FTE Class size of 27.5, it is difficult for a classroom teacher to meet the individual needs of every student; especially with the large number of economically disadvantaged and English Language Learner students found in many schools within Granite School district.  
*Janet Nerdin, Granite School District*

Teaching is hard and should be respected. Improved pay and much more support is needed if teachers are to be retained.  
*Robert Osborne, Granite School District*
Class Size

It's time to really look at class size. I taught in a junior high and my class loads ranged from 30 to 40 students. That is not what the legislature sees.

Louise Rounds, Granite School District

My bachelors degree is in Mathematics and Statistics. I have a background in programming and can program in several computer languages. I am bilingual. My wife wanted me to pursue other higher paying careers such as actuary (which I have the education for). Such a career would have tripled the starting pay I received as a teacher. I chose teaching because I am passionate about it. However, I now have children of my own to worry about. I am the sole income provider for my family. It is tough to make it work financially when my skills are so easily marketed elsewhere. With high class sizes the benefits of teaching are decreased. I spend less time helping students and more time with classroom management and grading. The larger my class sizes are the more I need to resort to a lecture style of teaching. It is ineffective but I cannot provide the more individualized education the students deserve when I am responsible for so many.

Matthew Shepherd, Granite School District

I have only been teaching for 2 years and I have notice my class sizes go up, the demands go up, and the students motivation at home decrease, and a slight increase in salary. I do not believe students need iPads in second grade they need to learn to read, cut, and color, and how to communicate. They spend way to much time playing video games anyway. Students in grade school need to learn to socialize and not be on a computer. Other issues are my students are tested to death they are to young for all the testing.

Christina Torres, Granite School District

It is really hard to get to ALL students and meet their needs when you have more than 25 students in your class. What would they do if they had 25 children to look after? Resources are important because so many of us use our own money to accommodate those needs.

Wendy Wagstaff, Granite School District

I work with all day Kindergarten classes. I see a lot of growth for those students. They get the instruction they need, and they are absent less than half day peers. Teachers are burning out with the workload they have. Students have great emotional and behavioral needs, and smaller classes will help teachers meet intervention needs as well as better manage increasingly difficult behavior.

Marla Ward, Granite School District

Salary

Marla Greenfield, Iron County School District

For the past 3 years I've had over 30 students in my classroom, one year 36. It is impossible to meet the needs of students academically with that many kids in the classroom. There is not enough text books, technology or time to even come close to meeting their needs. Teaching today is different than 20 years ago. Every year I have many students facing problems of homelessness, a parent in jail/prison, mental illness, abuse, suicide and often my main job is keeping these kids safe and help them navigate through very difficult circumstances. My frustration is that I am constantly barraged with mandates that make it almost impossible to teach. I spend more time testing, collecting data, retesting, trying to reach 33 students that I have no time to TEACH or plan effective instruction. In my current school the majority of teachers are burned out and do not enjoy coming to work, this is a sad state of affairs because these people are phenomenal teachers who have been overworked, underpaid, and undervalued. There is no other occupation where so much is given beyond what is required with little or no recognition. In fact, it's almost to the point where it is expected. We do what we do because we want to help students, however, at some point enough is enough.

Cindy Anderson, Jordan School District
Class Size

I have taught for over 22 years, and throughout that time I have spent a very large amount of personal money on my classroom. This money has gone towards activities which enhance learning and education. I believe this is very important to help deepen understanding of the standards to my students. I am willing to pay for it, but would like the support of our government to help fund these activities. I also believe that lowering the class-size is essential to the quality of education and learning process of children. By supporting teachers financially to help run their classroom and lowering class-size will make a impact on students in the 21st-century.

_Ami Anderson, Jordan School District_

As a teacher, I am overwhelmed and it only gets worse every year. I have no time to teach my students, standards increase and support from the state decreases. We don't have the capacity to continue to take care of these children, educate them, and fully take care of ourselves and our families. If you paid us more, and gave us more help, we would be better equipped to handle the increasing workload that is given to us. We love this job, but the overwhelming downsides sometimes outweigh that. Take care of your teachers, and you'll see better results. Keep standards high, and have our pay match those standards. Stop disrespecting the work and knowledge of college educated teachers by hiring random uneducated people in the community to do their work. It all starts with the teachers. What you give to teachers, you'll see an equal improvement in the students.

_Kasey Chambers, Jordan School District_

Reduce testing so teachers have more time to teach.

_Laurie Hamblin, Jordan School District_

Teaching has changed so we are not only teaching but expected to entertain as well. This takes time and research and technology is moving so fast it takes time to learn. I feel that we need to decrease class sizes, increase preparation time, make sure we have quality teachers by paying more and holding them to a high standard which means giving them support in terms of continuing education, etc. I need to stay current in my subject area as well as in teaching methodologies.

_Angie Pommerening, Jordan School District_

your children are being hurt because the teachers feel under appreciated....morale is way low in most cases and 90% have other jobs just to make things work....wondering how many other jobs have people who have to work a 2nd job?

_Rand Rasmussen, Jordan School District_

Please just let me teach! Forget DATA!!!! My students are not just numbers on a wall. Reduce standardized testing! I have had to cut out so much of my fun lessons because there is no time for them anymore. Treat us like professionals because we are. Don't tell us we're doing great when we have so little. Give us more and let us do more. Keep class sizes low and add aides to every room! Thank us with words, but also with bonuses. Give elementary teachers that teach all subjects those same STEM based bonuses that secondary teachers get. Come walk in my shoes for a few days and see what teaching is really all about!

_Lynece Rowntree, Jordan School District_

Increase pay!

_Sydney Robinson, Logan City School District_

Long hours, chasing down supplies to purchase, more and more and more required teaching items with less and less curriculum provided. If you require me to teach something provide me with the curriculum, training, and prep time to teach it.

_Wendy Jensen, Morgan School District_
They have already heard all the stories - we need districts to step up and put money into keeping and retaining quality teachers and staff. Legislators do put money into education, but it doesn't ever make it to the teachers. District Admin use most of it. So I would like the legislators to earmark the money for teacher salaries and other support staff/stipends.

*Brad Burtenshaw, Nebo School District*

I am grateful for those legislators who truly are friends of public education and public educators. I recognize the daunting challenge of funding the education of our children in this state, but our mainstream public schools must remain the main focus. I need small class sizes to be able to get around to all my students. I never came into this profession to get rich, but I need funding to continue to at least match the rise in health care for my family. And I need legislators who do their best to collaborate with me and my professional association and not work against us. We have to keep building bridges, not tear them down. Thank you, Perry Ewell 28 year veteran Public School Teacher

*Perry Ewell, Nebo School District*

Each child in my classroom has a story. The children that we are teaching today are suffering more and have more challenges than a child used to. Each year is less and less parent support. Not only is our student population becoming more difficult to help and teach, but the load we are receiving is more and more heavy. I have students who at 6 years old have already had a parent pass away. One student even commented in the middle of a lesson, "If my mom dies, I will be an orphan." That is what was on their mind...not the reading lesson I was teaching. Students whose parents won't help them do their homework or even let them have books to borrow because mom and dad don't want the responsibility of a lost or damaged book. This child is low in all areas and doesn't have a reason to learn because parents aren't invested in them. These kids are our future doctors, teachers, pilots, managers, cooks, etc. Invest today, for a better tomorrow. We need respect for our teachers. They need more compensation for their time. We need smaller class sizes to help these kids who their teacher is the only one who is helping them with their education. To give extra love and attention to those kids who have hard lives. We need a lighter workload to spend our time on things that are of more importance.

*Brooke Vaquerano, Nebo School District*

My job, my passion for everything it entails doesn't end. There is an unwritten expectation that as a professional I am "on call" all the time looking out for the needs of my students inside and outside the school walls. I wish better pay was given for the demands this amazing job requires. I am a dedicated teacher and love what I do but having a Masters +30 seems like more pay should be extended. I am worth it.

*Tracy Warenski, Nebo School District*

I teach special education- resource- in an elementary school. I have students in grades K-6. I have to be aware of curriculum for every grade. I have 34 students on my case load. I am responsible for all the federal paperwork for these students along with teaching them. IEP meetings take 30 minutes to an hour or more. I have mainly students who have learning disabilities, however I also have a blind student, a student with Down Syndrome, students with autism, a few who are intellectually disabled, and behavior disorders. I have a half day aide. I would not be able to serve my students without the aide. However it also makes more work for me as I have to plan the groups she teaches. So on top of teaching, and planning my own groups, I am planning hers, and instructing her on how to teach. I have too many students for her to just be an aide. I also maintain all the IEP files- federal paperwork. Some of my files are in binders of 4+ inches. I am regularly at school long after my contract time of 3:45. I rarely in 20 years have been able to actually schedule in the planning time I am supposed to have due to the high number of students. I would have to have groups of over 10 students to do that. There needs to be more help in special education.

*Christine Wilkinson, Nebo School District*

Teacher salaries are low for the rigorous job we have. There is not enough technology for each student to be successful in a technologically progressive society. Too many charter schools are taking funding and students from public schools. Class sizes are difficult to organize, and makes it harder to differentiate instruction.

*Sharon Emmert, Ogden School District*
Many classrooms are becoming very crowded because of the lack of teachers. The lack of teachers is most likely because the pay they are receiving is not enough compared to the amount of work that is being asked of them. If you want better higher quality teachers and students to do better on tests and in their academic classes we need to higher more qualified teachers which means we need to look at compensations.

Allison Gorringe, Park City School District

Teacher morale is low. Our class sizes are huge. We need more paid planning time in the summer. We need a raise.

Suzanne Parker, Provo City School District

Education needs to be top priority! Class sizes are too high. We either need smaller class sizes or funding for aides in every classroom to assist with the demands of various abilities of children. Additionally, we are one of the lowest paid/funded in the nation and with the demands of educating students, teachers are getting burned out or leaving the profession because of too much stress and not enough pay to compensate the numerous hours (beyond contract time) that educators are spending on preparation and professional development.

Michelle Peterson, Rich School District

I feel that having severe SpEd students who continuously wander the halls creating distractions and disruptions for the main stream students should be addressed. We have three students that walk the halls ALL day long with aids because their disability is too severe for them to remain in a classroom. These students run in and out of classrooms, we have one who is a male student that keeps running into the girls locker room while girls are getting dressed. This student has injured teachers and aids because of his behavioral issues. The three of the students create major distractions and disruptions in ALL other classes throughout the day. Why do we not have a school specifically for their needs. We have to put the classes, office and bathrooms on lockdown because one of these students is out of control. Why should the entire school be locked down for one student who is out of control. The safety of other students and faculty is compromised because of these students.

Denise Howard, Salt Lake City School District

I think increased pay would help teachers be teachers and not hold a summer job as well. I also think districts should honor step changes. Example: I had 18 years in a previous district. I wanted to move closer to my aging parents and my new district will only acknowledge 8 years. It equaled a 20k pay reduction. Ouch. However, it was necessary. Now I am teaching over 250 students on 40k.

Cassy Moon, Sevier School District

This is the first year I have had less than 24 students in my Full Day Kindergarten class. We have been able to accomplish more with our writing, STEM activities, and intervention groups because of the manageable number of students. If you really want to put the Child First, Utah needs to lower the class size teacher-student ratio.

Maureen Erickson, Tooele County School District

Teaching takes more time than we are paid for especially when you have muliple classes of 35-40 sixth graders.

Rebecca Rich, Uintah School District

6th Grade Core Class sizes of 41 kids!

Kevin Brindle, Wasatch County School District

Teachers work hard every day to do their best; provide them the tools to succeed.

Christine B. Garloch, Wasatch County School District

I really enjoy teaching students and making a difference in their school day. On the other hand, the way things are in education today, i would not encourage anyone to go into teaching. That is not an easy thing to say as i come from a family of a lot of educators.

Dan Hill, Wasatch County School District
## Class Size

Teachers are overworked and underpaid.

*Melinda Korologos, Wasatch County School District*

The biggest battle I fight is getting parents to be supportive and involved in their child's education. I want there to be more accountability on the part of parents and students. The demands for my accountability has tripled since I have been teaching and there is no accountability on the part of parents and students. They can come every day and do nothing and they know that they will move on to the next grade and parents know that there is no consequence as well. However, if that child doesn't test well at the end of the year it is my fault! There is nothing by that child's name that says they missed 1/3 of the year, or that they never came prepared to school with anything, or that they took the end-of-year test in 5 minutes because they just guessed. I have 30 students in my 4th grade classroom and there is 1 of me. It is extremely difficult for me to be successful with that many students without extra support from home. There has to be a way to get parents to buy into the importance of an education! Our future depends on it.

*Kristie Herzog, Weber School District*

Make teachers and educators a top priority AND give them the pay and benefits they so deserve which is way long over due!

*Connie Hunter, Weber School District*

So many good things happen when we are allowed to do them

*Shannon Iseminger, Weber School District*

Students are becoming increasingly more difficult to teach and we need more resources available to access not punishment or testing incentives.

*Tracie Jackson, Weber School District*

I feel that students are being short changed by my large class sizes, the average size is 34.

*Wendi Jorgensen, Weber School District*

Teaching is a difficult job. I always spend at least 10 hours beyond my contract hours making sure that my students are given the best that I can offer. Please reduce class sizes or find a way to pay teachers for the hours that they work beyond regular contract hours. More preparation time is needed to be an effective teacher that is able to do their job during regular contract hours.

*Matthew LeDuc, Weber School District*

There are more demands and less time. Students are coming with more social and emotional issues that have to be addressed along with additional educational needs.

*Kim Vorwaller, Weber School District*

We need schools out here in Eagle Mountain. Our city is growing extremely rapidly, and we need more classrooms and more teachers to keep class sizes down and ensure quality instruction for the kids here.

*Rachel Ferguson, Alpine School District*

Please think through long term consequences of your measures that you pass. An example of this is last year when you passed the bill that took the court system out of attendance. Attendance has dropped significantly. Especially for the minority and low income families. They do not often see the benefits their child can receive through education or do not have the skills to get their child to school daily. The choice you made to include that piece in your bill will affect Utah's poor and minority students for generations.

*Mary Gale, Alpine School District*

Higher pay for educators will attract more top students to education.

*Cindy H. Garrett, Alpine School District*
### Class Size

We are no longer able to load up our classrooms with lots of students when so many of our students have special needs from Language, Speech, Resource, Etc. We need smaller class sizes so that we can give these students the attention they need. We also need to realize that the Arts and Sciences need to be integrated into our curriculum. I have participated in the Opera By Children program for 2 years and my students love this opportunity. Please fund training and opportunities such as this mentoring opportunity that helps a teacher learn how to put the Arts in their classes.

*Elizabeth Hart, Alpine School District*

How often I worry about my students getting what they need from me. Reduced class sizes would help in that pressure to provide for every student.

*Sarah Jacobsen, Alpine School District*

Last year I had 32 third graders in my classroom. This year I have 25 because the principal was able to hire another teacher. It has been amazing giving my students more one-on-one time to help them excel. I have been able to work more with struggling students as well as challenge other students. They are all making huge strides in their academic understanding. It also has been a less stressful year. With seven fewer students, I also have fewer behavioral challenges.

*Laura Laycock, Alpine School District*

You are welcome anytime to come and see what we are doing in our classrooms. Please come and see what Utah students are learning first hand.

*Jean Manuela, Alpine School District*

Step into a teacher’s shoes before you make any decision.

*Lisa McMullin, Alpine School District*

No all children are equally privileged. Get out into the schools and talk to us (teachers)!

*Moani Revoir, Alpine School District*

Teaching is an art- Many legislators have multiple children and understand that a standard ‘do XYZ and you’ll have the result you want’ approach doesn’t work for parenting like it does in manufacturing because children are people. Most people can remember a person or two that was able to give them a little extra attention and it was a game changer for them. As a teacher, I have 274 students this year and I do my best, but my time is so spread out that giving the kids the individual attention that really makes a difference is increasingly difficult. I still make a difference with a 1:274 ratio, but not what I could if it were 1:200 or even 1:150 ratio. We have been out of state to look at other, fantastically performing schools. None of them has ever had a teacher with more than 125 students to care for. If you could help work toward that, or at least give us props for doing what we do with double+ that number, it would go a long way. Thanks!

*Bryce Shelley, Alpine School District*

It is difficult to make a difference in a students life when the class sizes in Elementary are 29-31 students. A few years ago I had a class that had 22 students in it. Every single student was proficient on the math SAGE and almost every student on the language arts SAGE. I even had resource students who were able to be proficient. I was able to spend the time with each student that they needed. Last year I had 31 students. This class has had that many students since 1st grade. They were difficult to reach as well as teach because their whole elementary career they were in huge classes with difficult behavior problems. Class size makes a difference!

*Rebecca Wilding, Box Elder School District*

Classrooms that have more than 24 students defeats the purpose of education. One-on-one time is diminished which means those who struggle are getting a majority of a teacher’s time. The student who needs to be challenged is missing opportunities because a teachers is interacting with the lower students. How do I give equal time to each
Class Size

student? Small group instruction usually means dividing up time in the day, but most of that time is for those who struggle, which means leaving other groups to work independently. There are students in the middle who much of time will get off task. Classroom reduction is essential for a learning environment. I’ve had as many as 37 students crammed into a room designed to hold about 24. All my time was spent determining who received most of my attention and at the end of the day I would go home and wonder who I hadn’t interacted with.

Nick Cornwell, Cache County School District

I think the teacher shortage we are seeing in Utah is due to two key components. 1, we are one of the lowest paying states in the US when it comes to teacher salary. 2, we are class sizes that are almost unbearable. I do not think that any teacher should have more than 25 students in their classroom.

Krista White, Cache County School District

This year our district has struggled with the placement of high risk students. Because the district has been unable to attract teachers to the special education field we have experienced a shortage of qualified teachers to work in special classrooms for these students. Because of the shortage and lack of experience we have actually had adults hospitalized with injuries inflicted by elementary students. It is our job to ensure that all students are educated. I believe that, but we also need to stand up, open our eyes and acknowledge that not all students can benefit with these super violent students in the general population. Please become aware. Please allocate more money into the special education departments throughout the state. The money is needed to entice qualified experienced teachers, to hire more instructional aides in order to give the needed teacher/student ratio for success. This is a crisis situation. Please don't wait for the lawsuit that will force this to happen. Be proactive with this issue.

Dana W. Crosby, Canyons School District

Some kids will succeed no matter what. We need to direct resources toward getting kids caught up. I have a student who was “home-schooled” and is now suddenly entering the public school in 10th grade. He cannot write. He forms letters like a third grader. He needs one on one help and he’s in a class of 35 that also includes students who have special needs and English Language Learners. This child is not a waste of money!

Karla Moosman, Canyons School District

I began my career in education as a detour from a career in the business field. I have never been happier! I joined this field of excellent men and women in the hopes of bettering the future and helping students to reach their full potential. There are times when this is very difficult. When students don't have access to the supplies/tools they need to learn, when my class size is over 30 (out of my 13 years teaching, I have had a class under 30 only once), and when my opinions and needs are not respected as a professional by others. I feel that there are numerous times when a teachers opinion is ignored to save money or to make things easier for state/country leadership. I understand that the needs of those in the field of education are many, but THERE IS NO OTHER AREA THAT IS MORE IMPORTANT. If children are not built up at a young age, you will only see negative consequences as adults. "It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men." –Frederick Douglass

Christine Anderson, Davis School District

The school system is breaking and almost broken. I have been a teacher is Davis district for 27 years. The decline has been massive!

Kayloa Anderson, Davis School District

I am a 2nd grade teacher in Davis district. This year I have 32 students in my class. Our 3rd grade has 36, 5th grade has 35. There are huge problems associated with such large classes. Increasing behavior issues, less time to work with high need students, less time to enrich student learning. It isn't fair to the students or the teacher in this situation.

Vonnie Buttars, Davis School District
Class Size

Legislators need to be in the schools and in the classrooms of their constituents! Policies are being made by people who have NO IDEA what the day to day is like in Utah schools. Problems won't be solved until there are conversations with people in the trenches of education. We have many ideas for you from how to address the teacher shortage, to class sizes, to testing concerns.

Ellen Cox, Davis School District

Small class size in the younger grades makes teaching more effective

Kelly Foster, Davis School District

I have 40 students with IEP's. Each has been diagnosed with either a learning disability, autism, other health impairment (medical or psychological). That means I alone must plan curriculum for 40 IEP's, teach my 40 students, progress monitor in math, reading, writing, social skills, use trackers for behavior monitoring, plan, develop, schedule and attend 40 IEP meetings and parent/teacher conferences, evaluate and collaborate with sp ed team for students who move in with IEP's, I love what I do, but 40 students at one time is too many students, especially those who qualify for special ed services. There needs to be a limit of the amount of students each mild-to-moderate (resource teacher) special ed teacher should have. I want to do my best find it hard to do so with so many students.

Jan Green, Davis School District

Giving timely and detailed feedback to students is one of the best ways for students to receive correction and improve. Getting to know each and every child to help them learn is also very important. However, doing this with student loads of over 238 students is unrealistic without spending nights and time on the weekends to make this happen. If we don't reduce class sizes in our schools, we are just cheating our youth out of their deserved education.

Cassie Grether, Davis School District

Lack of quality teachers/class sizes is impacting the future of our students.

Anita Hallows, Davis School District

I work as a special education resource teacher. The added paperwork involved is already a known, challenging factor. However, my greatest concern is the shortage of teachers we have to provide "specialized teaching". We have 2 full time teachers and 1 aide to spread over 52+ students with learning disabilities and/or behavior concerns. I would like the legislators to imagine meeting with a group of 6-7 peers and having the following occur during the first 30 minutes: 1- peer comes in defiant and unwilling to participate in group except for calling out off topic remarks, 2-peer begins crying that another peer is looking at him, 3- peer does not understand topic and is unwilling to listen long enough for the speaker to explain it, 4- peer makes silly remarks trying to disrupt group...and etc. The only way to address this is to have more support/aides to squelch the tiny issue before it becomes full blown and the learning stops. My point is smaller classes allow teachers to address individual needs more appropriately and quicker.

Janet Hilton, Davis School District

I have had 30 students in my 1st grade classroom for at least 5 years now. More and more expectations are placed upon our shoulders as teachers and with that the tools necessary are not provided. We are exhausted and need advocates who will help and assist and not just tell us what to do! There is a big piece missing in all of the questions and items on the agenda and that is of the human side. We are working with children who need to feel safe, loved, listened to and not assigned as a number and put on a machine to learn.

Brenda Lanham, Davis School District

I have taught for 8 years and almost all of those years were in the elementary grades of 1st through 3rd. My first 7 years of teaching, the classes have been upwards of 25 to 28 students. Those days were long and hard as I tried to provide for every student the best that I could. This year my school's principal took into account our numbers and worked to provided our grade level with another teacher. I now teach 21 second graders and what a difference it has made for me and my students. I am able to provide more of my time to each of them in a one on one fashion during practice time or in small groups or even one on one. This number is still not as perfect as it could be and you may
Class Size

think that lowering a class by 3 or 4 students would make that much of an impact but it does, I can testify to it. My students are able to learn deeper within the content, they are also less stressed out than prior years and I have even less students acting out than in prior years. I am providing more individualized help to more students during their practice time. I, as a teacher, am less stressed and more confident in teaching this group then I had been with the larger groups in previous years. I think that the ideal size would be more around 18-20 students maximum in classrooms at the k-3 grade levels. In hose grades are the ages most critical in developing the child cognitively, educationally, and socially. It is the best time to catch and correct learning behaviors, reading interventions and mathematical concepts. These class sizes would entice licensed professional teachers to stay within the profession. These class sizes would reduce stress, increase productivity and provide more data on each student as we are able to follow through with each student on a more regular basis instead of every once in a long while. It will reduce the behavior problems we deal with as we will be able to work with more students to provide for their needs. The larger class sizes do not give teachers this kind of ability in their classrooms. Legislators, I plead with you to increase the WPU and provide for a more manageable number of students within classrooms so teachers can properly manage students needs. I plead with you to ask us, those who work directly with students and their education, about the issues we are facing in our schools, but also how your legislation will impact our students and us as professionals. Each of you are welcome in my classroom anytime and I would be happy to take the time to talk with you and answer questions you have. Please consider the future and provide for the best education our students should receive.

Anna Larsen, Davis School District

Reduced class sizes would reduce many problems in public education such as academic progress and teacher retention.

Kirsten Mele, Davis School District

Come see what it's really like in a Title One school.

Krista Nielsen, Davis School District

As an elementary school counselor and a former classroom teacher, I have found that over the years both children and teachers have lost some of the joy or education. Standards are needed and help to create goals but when there is no time to savor the moment and create "joy in the journey", as well as reinforcing social-emotional skills, because of the academic pressures it is not as healthy an experience as it should be.

Kristine Pritchett, Davis School District

Classrooms have changed significantly. Teachers are expected to meet all student needs and constantly raise increase what students need to be taught without additional help. When we have students with additional challenges such as behavioral issues, mental health issues, home issues and no additional help it is extremely difficult to reach all student needs. Decreased class sized and/or additional teacher aid times would make all the difference in reaching individual students.

Kallie Read, Davis School District

How changes in community values and priorities have impacted expectations placed on educators.

Brett L. Taylor, Davis School District

I teach Resource and have mostly Applied Skills classes where we work with kids to reteach skills and make sure they are passing classes. I always have at least 14 kids in a Skills class with 2-4 who need specific individual help. It is difficult to focus on them one at a time and still manage and encourage the rest of the class. It is a sad situation and very frustrating as I know I could provide help to increase skills if I could just have a class the size that the feds mandate.

C. Tingey, Davis School District
Class Size

The needs of my students continue to increase while class sizes are large. I currently have 27 second graders and meeting all their needs is impossible. It would be helpful if there was a class size cap at 20-22 in K-2. This is a time when individual attention is imperative so that children are learning to read and learning foundation skills. Please look for ways to reward teachers that are currently doing amazing things in classrooms. Retention of teachers is a vital solution to the teacher shortage. Allowing individuals with little or no training to enter classroom is a disservice to those individuals because they are ill prepared. The burden actually lies on current teachers and is a disservice to the students.

*Denise Willmore, Davis School District*

Having prep. time is highly important. It will definitely benefit the students when teachers are prepared.

*Gerlit Buffington, Grand County School District*

Class sizes are too large, we need more instructors. I can work with, give more attention to and achieve better learning outcomes for a class of 25 versus a class of 40. If not more instructors, at least aides. I come from a family of teachers, out of state. In their contracts (out of state) aides are required once the number of students in a class exceeds a particular number.

*Ben Boeve, Granite School District*

Teachers are professionals who, for the most part, really do know what they are doing and are trained for their profession. Don't believe that an untrained and inexperienced person can step in and teach a class flawlessly. It takes more skill than most of our legislators realize.

*Emily Box, Granite School District*

I believe teachers want to be successful at their jobs. They care for their students and work incredibly hard, but it is becoming increasingly impossible to meet the demands of teaching. In addition, to district and state mandates, there are more and more students with extreme behavioral issues. It is often beneficial for these students to be in a neighborhood school but we have not changed the way we do business. Schools are severely understaffed in the area of psychologists and social workers so general education teachers and special education teachers are expected to take care of behavior problems often at the expense of other students. Add to this constantly changing curriculum and programs, too much information to teach and test, too large of class size, and inadequate planning and paperwork time and you can see the reason for teachers leaving the profession.

*Shanan DeVries, Granite School District*

Our classrooms have too many students. Many of the behavior problems and challenges with teachers not staying in education could be eliminated by having smaller class sizes.

*LuJean Eldredge, Granite School District*

I think the legislators need to talk with educators before passing legislation. Educators have first hand experience with working with students. Our experiences and knowledge need to be valued more.

*Tammy Giles, Granite School District*

There is too much testing. Ideally, we test only every few years at the elementary level. Our student populations are challenging and a class size over 22-25 in elementary, with those challenges affects student learning and teacher retention.

*Karen Grim, Granite School District*

We have committed teachers working hard every day. We need to find ways to support them and help make the job easier instead of harder. We are chasing people away from teaching with high stakes testing, large class sizes, increased responsibilities, and lack of a livable wage.

*Tracy Hansen, Granite School District*
Class Size

There is a huge disparity of resources, teacher training, and needs amongst the schools in Utah. Rather than focusing on test scores and school grades that label minorities and economically disadvantaged students, and therefore the teachers of these students, as "failing", use the data that you have collected to provide resources to teach life skills and sociable behaviors to students in need. Stop building the school to prison pipeline. Start caring about the people in need, they are part of your community no matter how high on the hill you build your house.

Nichole Hillburn, Granite School District

Teacher morale is at an all-time low. More is expected every year without additional support. In fact, most years we have lost support or funding that we had previously had. Students with serious issues are not getting help because schools "over qualify" students. I don't feel that it is ethical to base student support on a bell curve. If a student needs help, they should be able to receive services regardless of how many other students at that school are also receiving services. Class sizes are too large for the amount of behavior problems prevalent, making it impossible to effectively teach the content required. This is leading teachers to leave the profession altogether. It is not a matter of east side/west side schools, it is a problem everywhere. Too much emphasis is placed on testing at the end of the year. Tests are only one measure for student achievement, yet everything counts on it. It affects students and teachers alike. This is the only thing that isn't being changed about the school system, but it needs to be changed the most. There is no reason to base the accountability of an entire year on a single test.

Elaine Johnson, Granite School District

Emphasis on testing, CFAs, and benchmarks is hurting the performance and creative mastery of teachers, turning them into assembly-line employees.

Mark Marsing, Granite School District

I came to Utah from a state where all teachers are required to have a Master's degree to teach. I notice a significant difference in the respect and general teacher morale here in Utah, which I believe is partly due to the idea that teaching in Utah can be seen as a second class career or one that is just temporary until an individual finds a better position or quits working outside the home to support her or his family. I think the problem of morale and respect goes deeper than teacher compensation.

Rachel McKeen, Granite School District

Teachers are incredibly devalued in Utah. We need people who will actually take the time to understand what it means to be an educator and what it takes to educate, to represent us. Legislators should not be making decisions without getting input from most teachers. There isn't near enough done in our state for education. The reason why no one wants to be a teacher is because you get treated so horribly for such little pay. We get more and more demanded of us with less and less support and resources.

Deborah Pryor, Granite School District

Please spend a day in the title one schools of your district.

Janet Sharp, Granite School District

It is amazing the progress that my students make when their class size is smaller. I can focus on areas of needs, greater challenge activities, and truly build the whole student instead of just feeling like I'm surviving. I have seen teacher moral as well as student success improve when class sizes are smaller!

Audrey Sill, Granite School District

One year a teacher at my school had a smaller class than she had ever had. She said that she couldn't believe how well the kids did that year with her being able to spend more time with each student. I told her she should tell the legislature about it, but she said she was afraid if she did our school would lose a teacher because the enrollment was too small. Isn't that messed up? Shouldn't we be able to give examples of things that work without being punished for it?

Shauna Tanner, Granite School District
Class Size

Last year my class of Kindergarten was 29. I had two classes of 29 students. It was the hardest year of my life. I felt that most of my efforts were spent managing the class, instead of actually instructing and learning and discovering. This year one of my classes is 23. The decreased class size has made a world of difference. My test scores are already SIGNIFICANTLY higher than the previous year. It may not be right for all class sizes to be smaller, but in the younger grades where we are learning more than just reading, the class sizes NEED to be smaller. We are learning how to move in a group, how to sit, how to hold scissors and a pencil, how to follow rules, how to listen to an adult and to a peer, etc. There are so many “soft” skills that we tackle in the lower grades.

Kara Telford, Granite School District

Fund public schools properly by reducing classroom size and providing a quality educated teacher for every classroom.

Valerie Turner, Granite School District

I taught at a Utah charter school for four years and now I am at a traditional high school in Granite. The biggest reason why the Charter school was successful (mixed success) was the size of the school and the size of the classes. In a smaller school we got to know all the kids and we got to know the parents and that was immensely effective. At my high school now the teachers and students are the same but now I teach 250 kids instead of 150 and the result is that I simply don’t have enough time to provide quality feedback on assignments or to forge deeper relationships with the students that are vital for their success.

David Veenstra, Granite School District

The story is simply too complicated...Everyone wants to blame the teachers when the test scores are low, when the failing rates are high, when attendance is bad. Everyone blames the teacher because it is the only person in the equation that can be controlled. It's to dangerous and political to hold parents accountable. It's not “fair” to hold the students accountable. It's never a problem with the curriculum or the class size...How many meetings I have been in where I am told a good teacher can teach any size class. So, the teacher gets blamed. We have communities in this state that are at risk. Schools in which 70% of the teenagers are reading at a 4th grade level. Entire buildings of students who are so depressed and anxious that learning is virtually impossible. But, it is the teacher that is blamed. We are told to collect more data. We are told to put our lessons into templates. We are told to only teach that which can be tested. And, therefore, teachers burn out and leave the profession. Teaching is a hard job on the best of days, but when you are constantly blamed for every single failure in the system, the job is unbearable. The real solution to these problems is for everyone to take a step back and look at the whole forest. The trees are dying.

Mary Ward, Granite School District

So far all the paid time that has been added for teacher preparation has been programmed. We don't have enough time to thoughtfully plan lessons that meet the state’s objectives or to provide one-to-one feedback to students in over-crowded classrooms. For improved education of students teachers need UNSTRUCTURED time to do what we already know we should be doing to reach students who are struggling in overcrowded classrooms with over-worked teachers.

Milton Watts, Granite School District

Preschool and Full Day Kindergarten need to have more attention. A computer program can not fully meet the needs of children who need social interaction.

Colleen Willardson, Granite School District

Teaching is not easy. Consider supporting what we need in the classroom (supplies and staff support) and you might not have such a teacher shortage because burnout would be less frequent.

Heidi Wright, Granite School District
Class Size

Students need to be the focus of all concerned and involved with education. Politics and test scores are driving everything and kids are being forgotten. Assessment and instruction needs to be driven by student needs and be developmentally appropriate. Standardized testing, constant data meetings and testing, and a lack of the "basics" are taking away from what elementary students truly need to be successful...a firm and solid foundation. We don't teach a grade level such as 2nd or 5th. Instead, we teach an age group that has all levels crammed into it: from from beginning readers all the way up to high-school level readers because there is no accountability on students and parents to make education a priority. High stakes testing has created a host of issues for parents, students, and teachers such as anxiety, stress, cheating, etc.

Tricia Adams, Iron County School District

Every year the classrooms get more crowded. Every year teachers burnout because of the load and lack of mentoring. Our new teachers don't get what they need and then don't get their contracts renewed because they aren't up to standard. No wonder we have a teacher shortage.

Connie Wallace, Iron County School District

Utah is getting RIDICULOUS...... Do not let people teach the children without a CORRECT Teaching degree... NO RLI or Other degrees in to teach... Also, Get a raise out there for teachers NOT District people. 34 6th graders in ONE tiny room is HORRIBLE.... Don't go and add or subtract teachers or classrooms during a year do it in the summer breaks... all decisions FINAL

Halceyn Fobert, Jordan School District

It is a great day to be a Mustang!!! You are invited to Herriman High to talk to our students, sit in our classrooms and see how much is being done to ensure that our kids are going out into the world prepared for whatever comes next!

Kim Searle, Jordan School District

Class size does make a huge difference

Amy Patterson, Murray City School District

Class size really matters. I've had smaller classes the past two years due to enrollment lowering - its amazing what I can do with less students. Having para professionals in the classroom to help is a huge help - we can give the students more one-on-one help they need with smaller numbers and extra helping hands.

Darle Taylor, Murray City School District

We need to see how we can help people be teachers, they get to the end and all those Praxis test seem to be the stopping point when they can't pass. Some say its not worth it to them to throw all of that money away when the test is so hard.

Des Dyches, North Sanpete School District

We need to supply students with a very high quality of education that will help the students in their field of employment and ability to function in society. We are not in the business of replacing parental responsibility and individual accountability.

Thomas Hawks, Nebo School District

Teachers are leaving the profession from being overburdened. Smaller classes and time to prepare would help keep more teachers in the field.

Melissa Page, Nebo School District

They need to personally visit classrooms...specifically elementary classrooms. (I am not an elementary teacher...)

NataLei Terry, Nebo School District
Class Size

Teachers are not the enemy.  

*Melissa Brock, Ogden School District*

In my smaller classes my students usually score 2-4% higher than my other classes. Class size has been shown to improve quality of instruction, and can also reduce the stress of educators. It is easier to focus on individual students when you don't have 40 per class.  

*Heidi Schlegel, Ogden School District*

Talk with teachers not just "representatives"

*Tom Matlock, Other*

Newcomer English language learner students need more support and more time to learn English and the school system before they are required to meet standards expected for proficiency on standard tests  

*Margo Harpster, Salt Lake City School District*

Put children first.  

*Peggy L Twitchell, Sevier School District*

If a teacher shortage is a concern, improving the teaching conditions will be the best way to combat it  

*Russell Lebaron, Washington County School District*

The suicide rate is consistently increasing for adolescents...we need more awareness among teachers to look for preventative interceptions  

*Brenda Cook, Weber School District*

Many teachers are quitting because of students with severe behavior challenges. There is little to no support  

*Rachel Hughes, Weber School District*

With the human development needing different attentions in different areas at different times with each individual, expecting the same outcome for all is unrealistic. Until class sizes are reduced and non-educator legislators research the effects their mandates and decisions have on human development, we are not going to advance well as humans or a state. The overload of work to teach so many students with a lack of resources and support staff continues to burn out educators, hence a teacher shortage. If we, as a state, don't show that we value education by putting forth the necessary funding, see what happens when you lower the tax rate, and value teaching as a profession, we all will lose.  

*Marjean Wayment, Weber School District*

For me, class size is paramount. I have two classes, morning and afternoon of first graders. They each have 32 students. I have never had so many students in all my 21 years, and will not return next year. I know a third grade teacher at my school with 36 students. This is not right. I'm not sure how this can be legal. Some classes at our school have way less, so maybe it averages out, but I would like to see a cap on numbers in an actual class.  

*DeAnna Ball, Alpine School District*

I desperately care about my students. I care about their success and progress. However, my class size is 30 first graders. There are public schools who have even more students. With this many students in a class, there is no way to give each student what they need individually. It breaks my heart.  

*Traci Barker, Alpine School District*

The need to lower class sizes or increase funding for aid support  

*Jacque Beers, Alpine School District*
Class Size

In order for me to be a successful math teacher, I need to have the ability to reach each of my individual students and recognize their unique needs. It is very difficult to do this in a classroom of nearly 40 students. Especially in a math classroom, students need the additional support. We need to hire more math teachers so that the math classroom size can be much smaller. If we were to do this, many more of our students would be able to learn the skills necessary to be contributing adult members of society when they graduate.

Stephanie Brunner, Alpine School District

I feel as a teacher I can have a more positive impact on students if class sizes were reduced.

Ashley Campbell, Alpine School District

Scores on tests do not accurately show what students have learned. There are so many things that can affect scores. Not feeling well, upset, hungry, tired etc.

Cindy Childs, Alpine School District

I really feel with large class sizes and more and more being put on my plate from the district/state it is getting harder for me to address the basic needs of my students. I feel I have to teach everyone with the same cookie cutter mold because I am lacking time to work with smaller groups or individuals as much as I would like to.

Nicole Craig, Alpine School District

This year in third grade we have been able to have a smaller class. The last three years I have been teaching here I have had a class of 31 or more. This makes it hard to help all the students that need my extra attention. This year I have 26 in my class and it has been wonderful. I also have 4 students that attend special education. I have been able to do so much more one on one with these students and others who have needed it. Class size does make a difference!!!

Raquel Dibb, Alpine School District

Thank you for supporting us in the classroom!

Jeanie Earl, Alpine School District

I have too many students. I also do not have the technology or equipment I need to provide a quality education so the students have the skills they need to succeed in higher education.

Jalayne Engberg, Alpine School District

I am a current 2nd grade teacher and have 34 students in my class. Second grade is still a crucial stage in learning and filling gaps. A class size in the younger grades should not exceed more than 25. The progress that I have had in past years have not been seen this year due to the huge and unacceptable class sizes.

Kelsey Hansen, Alpine School District

I know that research says that lower class sizes doesn't affect teaching, but I think that is a very careful choice of words. A few years ago I had the biggest class size I had every had in my career, the very next year I had the smallest class size I had every had. This experience allowed me to see, very clearly, what difference it made in my teaching. While I agree that good teachers will always be good teachers, no matter the size of their class, it definitely affects management! There is a huge difference in managing 33 students and 22 students! It affects everything from walking down the hall, to stretching out supplies and materials, to how much space is left in a classroom after all of the desks are in it to accommodate those students, etc. To say otherwise is either coming from inexperience or willful ignorance. A good teacher will make it work, because they are passionate about what they do and they will do their best to not show their stress, but it makes an already tough job SO much harder!

Rachel Hill, Alpine School District
**Class Size**

I teach 3rd grade and have had 34 kids in a class and feel like I am not reaching all my students like we should because I have too many!

*Amanda Hodges, Alpine School District*

An overall message of the workload. I spend 2-3 hours every day beyond my paid time trying to keep my head above water. One year, I documented time that equaled 3 extra months that I worked for free.

*Lisa Jolley, Alpine School District*

Give me time to teach!

*Connie Kawala, Alpine School District*

I am a first year teacher. I come from a family of educators, so I understand the struggles and challenges of the education profession. But, I also understand the importance of education and personal sacrifice that is required in order to do a good job. I have 34 students in my elementary school classroom. That is 34 pencils, 34 markers, 68 notebooks, 34 glue sticks, etc. that I have to provide quite often as they seem to be used up or misplaced almost as soon as they are handed out. This also means that I have 34 individual children, with individual needs. They are only in my classroom for about 5 1/2 hours a day when you take away recess and lunch. Then I'm left with less than 10 minutes to spend on each student. But of course time is spent teaching the whole class and the students don't end up getting that individual time. This breaks my heart as a teacher. This is why I feel that one of the biggest struggles with teachers is class sizes. If you teach in another state they would say over 20 is a huge class size. But in Utah you don't even get extra aid hours until your class is over 35 students. That is not fair for the students here.

*Mallory Latimer, Alpine School District*

PLEASE - consider kindergarten when you are planning state tests. If you are requiring state testing for kindergarten, then we need support --- small class sizes (30 SHOULD NEVER BE ALLOWED - I HAVE HAD 33 IN A CLASSROOM BEFORE ------- THAT JUST BECOMES CROWD CONTROL AND BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT EVERY DAY). We need all day kindergarten and teacher aides. If they want us to meet all the standards that are required, WE NEED THE SUPPORT.

*Denise Lindberg, Alpine School District*

I love what I do and I wouldn't still be teaching if I didn't have a love for education and the children I teach.

*Phyllis McIntyre, Alpine School District*

Class sizes in PE are way too huge. Students in classes of 40+ are missing out on opportunities and physical activity because of shortage of equipment, space, and teacher:student ratio.

*Emily Moon, Alpine School District*

Smaller class sizes MATTER! I have been teaching for 20 years. I have had both, and the amount of teaching that can happen in a smaller class size is remarkable! Less management issues = more teaching

*Gina Morgan, Alpine School District*

Class size in elementary schools is really causing many children not to get the one-on-one that they need. The struggling students need more help, but as a teacher I can't give them what they need. I'm spread too thin.

*Nerese Nielsen, Alpine School District*

I currently teach at a very large school where each third grade class has 33 or 34 students. We share a computer cart among 6 classes. There is not enough computers for us to use them very often. It would be nice to have more computers available for daily use instead of weekly use. Also, with the class size being so large, some activities are difficult to teach to so many students. Teaching 1:33 is ridiculous! I rarely have enough time for individualized instruction. Smaller class size is critical!

*Nicole Park, Alpine School District*
Class Size

Come spend three full days in my public school classroom, from the beginning of class until classes end, including lunch. After about three full days, you as a legislator will be have a better understanding of the educational process!

Christine Redford, Alpine School District

Class sizes NEED to be reduced. I teach high school. My smallest class is 39 students. Each year I'm responsible for over 200 students. That is too much to be effective.

Miriam A. Robertson, Alpine School District

I have no problem with end of year testing. As an educator, I am able to learn a lot from end of year tests. The issue I have is there is accountability for the teacher (evaluation) and school (school grading), but the students don't have any accountability with the test. I am unable to hold them accountable for their results and they know it. I have had students tell me they struggled on one of the first problems and so they decided it wasn't worth it. They finished the test in about 5 or 10 minutes. By not holding students accountable, it is hard to get good reliable feedback from the end of year tests. Also, parents are able to "opt out" their students. This also makes the information received from these tests skewed and not a true reflection on the school or teacher. If the school is held responsible for the data then the data needs to be a true reflection on what is going on inside the doors.

Kyle Sanderson, Alpine School District

I am at a Title 1 school with 35 kids in my classroom. I have no room in my classroom to even walk around it.

Miranda Savage, Alpine School District

I need smaller classes to better reach the students who are in my classes.

Morgan Summers, Alpine School District

Keep elementary class sizes at 15 students and secondary at 20.

Charlotte Touati, Alpine School District

I am a 5th grade teacher. I have 32 students in my class. Last year, I started with 26 and ended with 28. I can tell a huge difference. Just the time it takes to transition from subject to subject, or get everyone quiet to walk down the hall takes extra time. When people criticize parents who "home school", my response it....if I had 10 students, I could cover in 3 hours what it takes me all day to cover with 30. In my opinion, this is the single most important thing we could do to increase learning in Utah. I know that is a huge undertaking, and it includes more classrooms, teachers, supplies, literally more of everything. But, a lot of discipline problems could be solved simply by reducing the amount of students. I feel like I have great classroom management, but there are still days where I feel like I spend more time taking care of non-learning issues than I do teaching.

Kim VanAusdal, Alpine School District

Large class sizes is the #1 reason for the "dumbing down of America." High achieving students are ignored by teachers who are trying to keep students safe. Teacher morale is at an all-time low.

Marla Wait, Alpine School District

The state law recently passed giving parents full control of whether or not their child attends school is causing an increase in school truancy. Students who skip school usually do so because the parents do not place importance on education. If we want an educated populace who can get and maintain adequate employment, parents must be help accountable for their child's education. If a child does not attend a public school, legislation needs to be passed requiring parents show their child is receiving an education at home or in a private setting. Parents with truant students need to be fined.

Vanessa White, Alpine School District
Class Size

I have taught for 22 years with class sizes ranging from 21 students to 40 students. It is my personal experience that a smaller class size benefits student academic growth. When the ratio of students: teachers increases, so do the problems of reaching all student needs. Please, please vote for more money to reduce class sizes!

KJ Williams, Alpine School District

The amount of oversight and lack of respect is disheartening. We are trained, dedicated professionals -- treat us as such. We are given too many kids and expected to work miracles. We are only capable of so much and to be constantly berated is so discouraging. I grieve for what I cannot do for each of my kids with the time I have with them. Accept that we can't fix everything and we do the very best we can for all of our children. We want all our children to grow during the year, but realize that each child grows at their own rate/potential. To expect every child to "pass" at a certain rate is a disservice to the children who do the very best they can but don't quite make the cut. Celebrate the growth they've made instead of criticizing them as not good enough.

Kimberly Hawvermale, Alpine School District

Smaller class sizes has an effect on all students. It is of significance importance when you see that groups of higher class sizes always have lower scores than those of smaller class sizes. Larger class sizes also have greater behavior issues and less one on one time with the teacher. Also, I would discuss end of year testing. The tests are not appropriate for elementary students. The math especially is not a test of math knowledge but a series of brain teasers that cause anxiety and tears for young students. Also, allowing a test given to an eight or nine year to be the main source of grading a teacher's ability does not allow for the actual benefits that teacher brings to a classroom.

Vickie Burt, Box Elder School District

I am a 6th grade math teacher. My students are not Honors students, but students who for the most part want to do well and learn. In classes of 31-33 students it is impossible to give everyone the attention he/she deserves. My room is not large enough to accommodate stations and group seating for that many students. I put them in groups of three to give them a little support, and I've set up a conference area where I can meet with individual students. I try to circulate and help out my strugglers, but each day I feel guilty that I don't have enough time to push the students who are moving at a more rapid pace, and remediate all students who are struggling. In an ideal classroom I would be able to check in with every student daily. Large class sizes are the single most frustrating thing to me as a teacher. It may surprise you that pay is way down the list from class size, for what concerns me.

Denise Diehl, Box Elder School District

With the way the word is changing, it is becoming harder and harder to feel like a successful teacher. It doesn't feel great to feel unappreciated or like we make very much money, but most importantly, if I felt supported by my government and was given realistic expectations, the lack of pay would be in the back of my mind. Right now, we are being demanded of even more than ever and feel as if no one is willing to help us our, but instead give us more to do and deal with. Decreasing class sizes would be a great start to allowing us to feel like we can successfully do our job each day.

Josselyn Draper, Box Elder School District

All three of our first grade classes have 28 students. Our classrooms are packed, we barely have enough room to move around. We also barely have enough supplies. Our new reading program only came with 22 books per classroom. For the first couple months of the school year we had to share books to make sure each child could practice reading. First grade students learn best in small groups and hands on activities. With such large class sizes it is impossible to find the time to work with every student in a small group. Instead I have to choose which students get extra help. I have noticed vast improvements in those I am able to individually help. One student has moved from an A reading level to an E. He is now reading on grade level for the middle of the year. We need smaller class sizes to help the students achieve the most growth.

Ashley Hyde, Box Elder School District
Class Size

I have seen reports that indicate a reduction in class size has no impact on student achievement. I believe this is true only because teachers will just work themselves even harder to reach every student. Lowering class size is a way to lower stress in the work place, increase job satisfaction and to retain quality teachers.

Lynette Tervort, Box Elder School District

Class size matters! Currently, if I only spend 2 minutes a day with each of my students, that’s 56 minutes I don’t have. I’m there to make a difference. It’s about quality instruction not quantity.

Brynn Dutson, Cache County School District

Far too often studies are done about class size and the determination is made that class size does not effect student learning. These studies clearly have not looked at a real classroom. In a real classroom you have a student who has been diagnosed with obsessive defiant disorder (which is even more difficult to deal with than it sounds), 3 students who have been diagnosed with ADHD (and several who have not yet been diagnosed), 2 students who are performing at least 2 grade levels below the grade that they are presently in, and several students who steal, lie, cheat, and/or bully. Each of these students require double the time and effort to teach. So while on paper a teacher may show 25 students, in reality it feels more like 35. And precious time is being taken away from helping all students in the classroom to learn.

Sharon Grimnes, Cache County School District

Decrease class size. Students need teachers who have time and energy for them.

Shalon Hansen, Cache County School District

Large class sizes, along with the increased demands/expectations on teachers cause burnout for teachers! That is the biggest reason there is a shortage of teachers!

Kerry Harris, Cache County School District

If their continued employment/probation/interventions were based on a written test, how would they feel about it and what would they do about it . . .

Chad Hawkes, Cache County School District

When I started teaching history, we had class sizes around 26-28. We had 3 trimesters (180 days) to teach our students about US history. We were able to include fun activities and tell stories to bring history alive. Now in the Cache district, one school has reduced US History to 2 trimesters (120 days) and Utah History to 1 trimester (60 days). We barely have time to get through the basics in US History and only about half in Utah. History is a core class, but is being treated like an elective or an expendable course of study. We want to hold our students accountable for their knowledge of our history and government, yet we are reducing our teaching of the subject. Also with the reduced number of sections being taught our class sizes are averaging 36-38. Kind of a mixed or contradictory message.

W. Kyle Stolworthy, Cache County School District

How tough and mentally challenging it is to teach 30 fifth graders; to meet all of their needs. I would like the legislators to spend a week teaching school to see how teaching really is.

Sherrie Andrizzi, Canyons School District

Teachers are overwhelmed with the expectations to plan and prepare whole group and differentiated lesson plans, to track, perform weekly progress monitoring and create documentation for low-performing and behaviorally challenging students, to attend meetings 2 or more times a week, to fulfill CTESS requirements, to grade papers, to fill out report cards and parent-teacher conference forms, to keep in contact with parents, to deal with students’ daily emotional, social and physical needs on top of teaching the state and district standards to an unlimited number of students. We are held responsible for our students’ performance on district and state testing, yet get little to no state or district support with regards to student attendance or student behavioral issues. I personally, spend on average 18 -20 hours
of my own time (off-contract time) weekly to keep up with the demands of my job because of the lack of paid planning time and the amount of on-contract time I have to spend doing after school duty and attending meetings. I believe most teachers would prefer to have more uninterrupted, self-directed on-contract time to meet all of the requirements of our job and to collaborate with each other, than to have any other kind of compensation. We want to do a great job educating and building positive relationships with our students but the current lack of preparation time and the unreasonable list of expectations on us make it impossible.

Kay Bailey, Canyons School District

With a reduction in class sizes, teachers can better reach both students needing extra support and students needing enrichment.

Jackie M Marquez, Canyons School District

I have class sizes of 40 students. Add in that one of these 40 students classes has and adult aid in the class for a student with a 504. When they are packed in this tight, its hard for them to concentrate, they wait a long time to get questions answered because there are so many other students in the class all vying for one person's attention. At my previous position it was a similar problem. The largest classes are Co-taught classes. The ratio's aren't right with the research. A co-taught class should have 5-7 IEP students in a general ed class. But instead they have 15, and to make the "ratio" better they pack the class to capacity. This does NOT help IEP students, rather it makes the learning environment in a co-taught class harder than any other class.

Holly Mumford, Canyons School District

The fact that Arizona ranks higher than Utah, and yet Utah piles more responsibilities and higher expectations on teachers, speaks volumes. How about we go back to basics for what a teacher is expected to do, and hire specialists to deal with behaviors, data collecting, and interventions for severe academic needs? And instead of piling as many students as can fit into a classroom, let's get smaller class sizes so students each benefit from more one-on-one interaction with their teacher? We have forgotten how badly teachers are taken for granted, but even more just how much impact a teacher can have, given the right circumstances.

Keith Piccolo, Canyons School District

Class size makes a huge difference in student learning.

Caroline Barrington, Carbon School District

It is hard to give each student in class some quality one on one time to help them to gain the understanding of the concepts being taught in class when classes are so big that you have no room to really move or do anything.

Nancy Livingston, Carbon School District

Reduce class size!

Karie Brand, Davis School District

I think legislators should go out to the school and volunteer for 1 day a year.

Barbara Bushnell, Davis School District

We can't think of schools as a business; children are not commodities

Debra Carter, Davis School District

Let me tell you about Johnny. He struggles to read, and write and takes a long time to process information. However, with the help of technology in the schools he is able to access Google Read and Write. With this program he is able to understand the assignments given to him by teachers and gives him a chance to get the ideas in his mind, down on paper. He is finally feeling success. Unfortunately, this program is only available on computers which are not available in all his classes. I struggle to teach him all the tools that can help him because classes are overloaded with students. His general education teachers struggle to give them the extra support needed because of the huge class
Class Size

sizes. 36-38 students. Teachers are sharing the I pad labs and not being able to use them as much as they would like. We live in an age where technology is critical for student learning and changing so fast we can not keep up. It is imperative that teachers are trained and students are learning through these resources. Thank you so much for helping us .. help our youth! Pamela Child, Special Education Teacher, Davis School District.

Pamela Child, Davis School District

Please lower class sizes for the benefit of individual students. I have taught first or second grade for 35 years. I have taught classes that had 19 students up to classes with 29 students. Class size makes a difference on what can be accomplished in a classroom. Behavior problems increase when there are large class sizes. I have found that children want to be noticed and if misbehaving gets them the attention they want, that's what they'll do. It disrupts the learning of every other child in the classroom and takes the teacher's focus away from the majority of the children. Please help the children of Utah get the individual attention they need. Come up with a formula for class sizes. Lower grades need class sizes below 20. Upper grades need class sizes below 25. Talk to the secondary teachers to find out what works well for their students. Get rid of the phrase “when funding is available.” I have spent thousands of dollars supplementing the education of children in my classroom. I never had children of my own. I've paid taxes and used my own money to pay for other people's children to have a quality education. I am willing to have my taxes increased for the benefit of public education.

Shirley Coy, Davis School District

As a first grade teacher, I must address the class census. I have had as many as 30 six year-olds in my class. It is like herding cats. I spent more time dealing with classroom management than teaching. Small groups became difficult to manage and 1 to 1 attention nearly impossible. Students at this age are just learning how to self regulate. They need extra individual and small group time to access the curriculum. We really handicap the children when their are so many in the classroom. In addition this places a larger strain on my time. It takes longer to complete the necessary paperwork for a class and to prepare for class. Differentiation becomes a burden. Often, this requires that a teacher has to research ideas for the varying needs of the classroom. The more students there are the greater this becomes. My job is like holding two full-time positions at once. The first job is to deliver the curriculum. The second job is data input, record keeping, planning and preparing. And yes it does take around 80 hours a week. This creates an unhappy balance between work and home.

Anna Davis, Davis School District

They really should come and spend some time doing what we do. It isn't as easy as they think! Schools can't be run like businesses. They need to listen to those of us doing the job!

Kim Dennis, Davis School District

I would really like for legislators to understand how difficult and under-appreciated teaching really is. I have 200 8th grade students (about 35 per class) this year. Dozens of them have accommodations through IEP's or 504's, and I am held responsible for the individualized instruction of 200 students whose reading abilities range from a 1st grade level to college level. When you make standardized testing mandatory for teachers, but not students, you send the message that teachers are to be judged solely on test scores and that teachers are to blame for low test scores. What about student, parent, and community responsibility? If our focus on test scores is going to continue, those tests must be mandatory and must come with some sort of accountability on the part of students. The second issue I would like to address is the huge push to focus on IT education and future careers. I would ask that we keep in mind the fact that the job market shifts and fluctuates. IT jobs are not the only jobs out there, and we would be remiss in any effort to focus too strongly on STEM-only curriculum. Utah students deserve a well-rounded education that opens their eyes to possibility and gives them a chance to choose their own path. Finally, I ask that you consider the state of "compulsory education" and attendance in Utah. Now that the courts systems will not deal with attendance issues, we can not say that education in Utah is compulsory. Essentially, a child can drop out of school at any age that their parent/guardian begins letting them stay home. Parents should be held legally accountable for providing an education to their children. If they wish to homeschool, they should provide evidence of homeschooling. A free public
education is something that all children deserve. Utah should do its part to show that we value education by once again enforcing attendance laws.

Chera Fernelius, Davis School District

I currently have 60 students in a classroom designed to hold 12. I want legislators to consider how to reduce class sizes for Early Childhood Special Education.

Nathan Fidler, Davis School District

I want legislators to realize that teachers ARE doing everything they can for children. I feel that they treat educators as "the enemy", when we are the exact opposite. There are excellent teachers out there, but because of test scores and school grades, educators are blamed for problems that are not in their control. The classes are huge, as educators, we take that on and do everything we can for each child.

Franki Galbraith, Davis School District

I work in a high Title I school in Davis District. Our school is second in the district for the growth of DIBELs scores. We are successful at increasing reading abilities. However, the way we are doing this is by decreasing the sizes of our classroom, especially k-3 grade to a manageable range, and by the way in which we use Title 1 tutors. It is not difficult to teach 28 students when they have the support of their parents at home, and are come to school with positive, successful background. But in a school where there is no support, and the students are starting at a disadvantage, it becomes a challenge. We, at our school, try very hard to get every student on reading level, and are showing success. But the cost is sometimes high. Pay for a teacher rather than the technology up grades. I wish that the legislature would stop thinking that what the Federal Govt. gives is enough to make the Title I schools equal to the non Title I schools. We need State support too.

Cathleen Gilbertson, Davis School District

The legislature is out of touch with what they feel is important to mandate teachers to do with their accountability. I am an early childhood teacher who is very sad at the lack of "play" time children have. I feel like over my years of teaching I am holding these little ones to what I taught in first grade with only two and a half hours. We are programing child to not have opportunities to explore their would and make real life connections.

Patrice Holbrook, Davis School District

I love teaching and can't see myself ever doing anything else. It is hard to reach students when you have 42 students in a classroom especially students who struggle with math. You want teachers and students to be successful but you don't provide the environment for this to happen.

Heather Holty, Davis School District

Stop putting so much emphasis on testing and test scores. We need to return to developmentally appropriate practices and curriculum. Put some responsibility back on to the parents. The school system can not do it all. Reduce class sizes and treat teachers with respect. We are college educated professionals and should be treated as such.

Emily Jensen, Davis School District

With 22 years of teaching experience, this year will stand out because I have the lowest number of students in each of my two Kindergarten classes that I've ever had (and the number is still above the national average). I am able to spend more one-on-one time with students to address their individual needs, we are able to cover more of the curriculum and to go more in depth as we do so, and I am able to really know these students as individuals rather than as a group. My students will leave my classroom in June more prepared for the academic and social rigors that they need to be successful in their future years of school

Kayla Jessee, Davis School District
Class Size

Look at the load you are putting on teachers! If we are to be successful in all the areas we need fewer students! I work in a title 1 elementary school. My students need to learn the basics with their teacher. The teacher is often their only appropriate interaction during the day. Since so much responsibility has been taken away from parents teachers teach many of the social and early childhood skills throughout elementary school. So many of our students do not see print before they enter school. Children do not have piggy banks to learn counting, they do not cook from scratch or build. We have to build background as well as teach concepts. These students know how to play with devices but not how to interact with each other or adults. Put finding into smaller class sizes and not technology especially in elementary schools!

Kathy Johnson, Davis School District

When students are not at school I can't do my job, More help for dysfunctional families

Julie Johnson, Davis School District

Teachers are so disheartened. The evaluation system is discouraging at best and fails to motivate improvement. There are so many "new programs and techniques" being thrown at us monthly that we have no time to master any of it. I feel like a juggler who has new balls thrown in to my act every few minutes. I can't keep up, nor can my students. Soon the balls will all fall! Our time is micromanaged and our professionalism is minimized. How can we inspire students to be their best when we are devalued by so many sources, especially administration?

Patricia Knavel, Davis School District

Utah has quality students and teachers. There comes a point where class size reaches "critical mass" - a level that no education takes place.

Amy Lake, Davis School District

Thank you so much for your concerns regarding improving public education in Utah. I have been a teacher for 13 years. It has been a wonderful career choice for me because of all the amazing students and their families, and fellow educators who have influenced me in a remarkable way. However, because my class sizes are so large (28 kindergarten students per class), I struggle with feelings of exhaustion and burn out. I would love to make it 17 more years until retirement because I am really good at what I do, but some days I don't know if I will make it. What carries me through it all is the positive relationships I have with my students and their families. I know how much they care for me and appreciate what I have done for their children. I would love to continue providing that service to my community.

Valerie Lindeman, Davis School District

This school year I had a much smaller class than I have in the past several years. It has made such a difference in student learning. I am able to spend more one on one time or small group time with my students. Smaller class sizes do make a difference.

Donna Madsen, Davis School District

Any increase in technology needs to be paired with training for the teachers and mentor support or the money is just wasted. Class sizes are important if you want to reach all children and keep up teacher morale.

Robin Marble, Davis School District

Teachers have no rights, the administration is given all the power, they have no checks and balances, this promotes corruption

Kristie McLeod, Davis School District

Class size matters!

Josie Nielsen, Davis School District
Class Size

I team teach in English 8 and have 43 students in my class. It is almost impossible to be effective with a class size of 43.

Susan Pearson, Davis School District

Appreciation for past efforts, but the key to success in any facet of life is education! Knowledge is POWER! Our future depends on it!

Dr. Norma Jean Remington, Davis School District

Class size is of great concern to me. I normally have around 30 fifth-graders in my class. This year I started with 25, but now have 22. I have noticed a difference. I am better able to respond to my students' work with fewer students. I am less tired at the end of the day. I am better at getting all my students to participate in class discussions.

Heather Richards, Davis School District

I am a second grade teacher who started the year with 28 students. I have five students who have been diagnosed, or who exhibit autistic tendencies. I also have five different students with life-threatening health conditions. Many of my other students struggle with both behavior and academics concerns. All of the other second grade classes at my school have a similar class make-up. Our grade-level focus has been on strengthening their behavior through a well-structured classroom environment and growing their academics by focusing on reading and math. At the beginning of the school year, I tested my lowest readers and pin-pointed specific phonics and fluency skills that they needed. Due to the sheer number of students needing help, only six of my students have the opportunity for "small group time." This is a special 30 minutes four times a week where I can work with my most challenged students while an aid takes the rest of my class. My school does not have any leveled reading books to help them with those reading skills. The last thing a struggling reader wants to read is a boring story. In order to better serve my struggling students, I bought myself a license to a website that specializes in leveled readers with targeted phonics and comprehension skills. My students like to read these stories because they are on-level, they practice the specific skill we learned in small group, and the stories are engaging. How is it that if I need reading books to help struggling students, that I have to spend my own money to get them? I realize that I could have written a grant, but those can take months to get, and I needed them right at the beginning of the year. Why can't I get necessities right when I need them? There is a saying about the Utah education system that feels true: Stack 'em deep and teach 'em cheap. That's a poor legacy for our future.

Kathy Ritchie, Davis School District

Class sizes continue to be a challenge in meeting the needs of all students. Even in our Title I elementary school, we have classes larger than 30. In other states that I've taught in there were caps like 18 with an aid in K, 21 in grades 1-3, and 28 in grades 4-6. It is very hard to differentiate and deal with the range of behaviors, attention disorders, academic gaps, and special education with such large class sizes.

Jennifer Roberts, Davis School District

Teachers impact all people's lives through the process of helping children learn how to read and write.

Karen F. Sheets, Davis School District

I think that to attract and retain quality teachers we need to pay them well and give them class sizes that enable their very best teaching. Smaller class sizes lead to more individual attention and intervention time. Often, we are told about a new teaching strategy or management tool that is working somewhere else. We then watch the video and see how amazing the tool is. Then, we count the children in the master teachers class. Typically they have 18-22 students maximum. I have been teaching third grade for 20 years in Davis District and have 28-32 students each year. I think smaller class sizes would cause teachers in Utah to be more successful. Meaning, we would feel that we are really able to reach every student with what they need. This leads to job satisfaction and coupled with a salary that supports our families we would be fulfilled, driven, content, excited employees. This is the best profession there is! Now pay us enough and set us up for success. We are ready to shape the future. Help us, and it will be beautiful.

Deborah Sheffield, Davis School District
Class Size

Almost each one of the legislators, if they are long time Utah residents went through the Utah Education system and they have done fine. Let the teachers teach without interference.

Adam Shumway, Davis School District

As a public school teacher, I spend many hours of my own time correcting papers, giving feedback, working on lesson plans, and preparing for our after-school robotics club. It would not take nearly as much of my own personal time away from my family, away from my sleep, etc. if I had fewer students in my class. I could give each child more individual attention, addressing his or her learning needs, if I had fewer students in my class. At the elementary level, the workload is overwhelming. I work hard to help every child succeed, but that is a difficult never ending job when there are rows upon rows of desks in my room. It is exhausting and takes way more than 40 hours a week. Please help teachers succeed at helping Utah children succeed. We need your help. Reducing class sizes would really alleviate the overwhelming workload.

Lynette Shupe, Davis School District

"stack them deep and teach them cheap" has got to end! That is nothing to be proud of.

Rebecca Smith, Davis School District

Having more than 20 students in junior high math classes creates an environment where students cannot get the help they need to succeed in math which impacts their GPAs, graduation from high school, and college opportunities. Please reduce the number of students in all classes, but especially math classes.

Cindy Smith, Davis School District

As an educator, my priority is student learning and growth. I wish that the legislative priorities matched ours, instead of the bottom line, dollars and cents.

Melanie Tanner, Davis School District

Many teachers are discouraged with the teaching profession. Between increased behavior problems, learning issues, lack of responsibility from students and parents, constant changing of curriculum, entitlement, class sizes, etc., it is a hard profession. Even though, we put our heart and soul into teaching.

Terri Wall, Davis School District

First, I want to thank legislators who have funded my opportunities to get an Elementary STEM Endorsement and become a Leading EDGeteacher. These programs have changed the way I teach for the better. My students are becoming amazing problem solvers and thinkers. Secondly, the biggest obstacle to my teaching by far is large classroom sizes. It is not possible for me to teach a class of 34 students. There is not room to physically move around with 34 large desks taking up every inch of space, let a lone get into the center of the class to check on the students there. There is not time to connect with each student to make sure their learning and emotional needs are being addressed. There is not time to keep up with the additional planning and grading this requires. There is not time to teach with all of the added social and behavioral problems that have to be addressed. The idea that an additional few students doesn't make any difference is COMPLETELY FALSE. I have been a teacher for many years. Those years that I have had more than 28 kids were a disservice to those students. They are not getting the education they deserve.

Liz Wiser, Davis School District

Reduce class sizes. That's the cure, the life-saving surgery, the Holy Grail of education. Reducing class sizes always works. Anything else we do, from the teaching side or the administrative side, is woefully cosmetic, until the issue of class sizes is solved. We're reaching a generational point where the excuse of "It costs too much to bring down class sizes" will be what's written on our collective educational tombstone. Our state legislators will feel the effect of that epitaph in ten years, when all the good teachers have fled, and they're left with a brooding, despondent, under-qualified work force of worksheet-correcters. Our teachers and union leaders will feel that weight if they use up all their energy and negotiating capital by fighting battles for aging veterans, complainers, malcontents, or disciplinary.
outcasts (sorry, but it's true). You want personalized instruction? Bring down class sizes. You want to move beyond standardized tests? Bring down class sizes. You want your kids to come home excited about what they learned today? Bring down class sizes. You want more opportunities with more focus instruction? Bring down class sizes. You want more of those middle-achievers' problems targeted by teachers who care they showed up? Bring down class sizes. You want efficient, immediate student feedback? Bring down class sizes. You want more high school graduates? Bring down class sizes. You want to attract more young people into the teaching profession? Bring down class sizes. You want to keep the teachers you have? Bring down class sizes. You want to solve behavioral issues, attendance issues, and apathy issues? Bring down class sizes. You want to fix the youth mental health crisis, the obesity epidemic, and the college readiness gap? Bring down class sizes. We all know what works. Elementary classes should max out at 15 kids; secondary core classes should be capped at 25. That's what works. That solves all our other problems (or at least 95% of them). I know that no one gets elected on a twenty-year solution, but we need our legislators and union leaders to be invested in the long term well-being of our state's children. Reducing class sizes would be the best way to demonstrate the reverence for that investment. This should be a singular priority for teachers and legislators. It's the common ground. It's what makes sense, and the only thing in the way is money.

Kory Scott Wood, Davis School District

Early childhood education is critical- a policy to address truancy and absenteeism
Louise Jorgensen, Duchesne County School District

I teach 7th and 8th grade math. I have 35 students per class, including students with learning disabilities. I have a paraeducator in only one of my classes. I can't get to every student to give them the help they need. Last year I spent over $1600 on my classroom. I haven't totaled my receipts this year, but I know I have spent over $1000. The supply budget of $150 isn't nearly enough. Not even close. In our district, teachers have very little freedom. I am a creative person with a Masters degree working a factory job. I am handed a curriculum map created by the district personnel (who haven't been in the classroom for over ten years) for every single day of the year. I am told exactly when and how to give feedback, what I need to focus on in my teaching (which is the same for everyone, not tailored to me or my students), exactly how to grade, which tests to give and when, and the district chooses which textbook we use and how often it's replaced. I wish the district's power could be limited so that I had time and freedom to teach.

Shallin Squire, Duchesne County School District

Abnormally disruptive students continue to be one of the biggest challenges that prevent other students from being able to stay focused. When you have 5 adults dealing with one student throughout the day, there's one in every other class throughout the school, then something isn't working.

Marianne Amatangelo, Granite School District

I am very frustrated with how much time it takes to get help for students with special needs. I feel like if they received the help right from the very beginning that many of them would be more successful in school.

Shelly Anglin, Granite School District

I think that it is important that aides in the schools be paid more. They are a very important part of the schools and it is difficult to find people to do this job because of poor pay and no time to instruct them how to work with children with specific needs. Or class sizes are to large and it is difficult to teach when we are required to do so much testing. Teachers need to teach more and test less. We need more social workers in our schools to help address behavior problems. Our class sizes are overwhelming. a

Leslie Archer, Granite School District

I've noticed with smaller classes (25-30), I can talk to each student every day. When my classes are large (40 or more), I don't get to have the one-on-one interaction that I feel helps students be successful. Larger classes also have more discipline problems.

Valerie Aubrey, Granite School District
Class Size

Smaller class sizes. I'm serving 27 kids in third grade. Three kids speak no English. 7 more kids are ESL... New to the country in the last four years. I have one student reading at an eighth grade level. I serve the gifted children, 6 of which are reading above a third grade level. Try serving all of those children appropriately in ONE class with no aides, just an untrained 93 year old volunteer.

Katie Bates, Granite School District

Students are the most important part of public education but it is nice to be validated as a teacher. I would like to be regarded as the professional that I am. I think that if teachers were held in higher esteem, there wouldn't be such a teacher shortage. It's the most difficult job I've ever had. (I did other things before becoming a teacher.)

Kim Best, Granite School District

I love being a teacher. I love that my job helps people everyday. However, it is becoming harder and harder to feel/be successful with the current system in place. Time is a huge factor. I need more time built into my day/week/year to be able to plan, collaborate, document, grade, communicate with parents, etc. I never feel like I am doing "enough" and that is hard to deal with when you work your hardest to be enough for the students you love.

Erin Bitner, Granite School District

It is heartbreaking that my class of 30 students is so large that I don't get one on one time with them. I am not able to do intensive writing with them or provide the needed support to teach them the skills that they will need for success in the future.

Becky Bryner Lane, Granite School District

Class size does matter, SES of the school does matter. Teachers know better than legislators.

Emily Christensen, Granite School District

I have 28 first graders in my class. Thirteen of them are reading below grade level. I cannot help them all!

Barbara Coffman, Granite School District

Teacher respect is an issue. If we respect our students and their families by giving them the best we have to offer as we prepare them to become hard-working citizens in whatever occupation they choose, we should also be respected by legislators who make important decisions that affect all of our futures.

Toni Cook, Granite School District

I would like to invite any legislator to prepare, plan, grade, and teach my class for a day or a week. Oh...and hold SEP conferences all evening after a Valentine party with sprinkles! PLEASE lower class sizes AND don't count Special Ed, aides, counselors, etc. as teachers per students.

Lynda Davis, Granite School District

Disruptive students/unstable families make it increasingly more difficult to teach when resources aren't there to help students adjust/learn coping skills. We had to share our psychologist with THREE other schools last year and this year WE DON'T HAVE ONE AT ALL! No social workers two days a week and when do you think kids flip out/run away etc? Its when nobody is around to help. Teaching isn't possible when these situations arise.

Julie Down, Granite School District

Teachers do so much more than just teach. Each year we are seeing more and more difficult behaviors in the class. Superman would have a hard time keeping up with a good teacher. We need to get class size more manageable and more support for teachers in general. Going to the bathroom is difficult. All schools are not created equal, having worked at several schools in my job. A hard class in a affluent school is not the same as a hard school in an impoverished area, nor is the parent support.

Sabrina Felsted, Granite School District
Class Size

I teach at an "at risk" school. We are on turn around alert. The teachers at my school go above and beyond what is required for their classes. We appreciate the money the legislature gives us, but I am still spending hundreds of dollars of my own like all teachers. Our kids don't have a lot of parental support to encourage them to read and parents are so busy making ends meet that the student's school experience suffers. It is no fault of the student's, but they are the ones being punished when schools are graded on test results. We all love our students, or we would not be in this line of work. We want them to succeed, but expectations are so high and we're teaching so much to the academic core, that the student is not being taught to make them a more rounded individual.

Kris Fisher, Granite School District

Students are entering kindergarten with lower skills than we even saw 4 or 5 years ago, so we are having to bring them up farther. This is really hard to do when you have 30 students in an elementary classroom. Smaller class sizes would make it easier to help students go further.

Kim Gardner, Granite School District

I invite legislators to come to my school to truly see the population that our Title 1 school serves and to observe the vast and diverse needs these students have beyond academic skills acquisition.

Victoria Gorman, Granite School District

I think class size and respect for educators needs to be addressed as the top priorities.

Gina Graham, Granite School District

The impact of having a full-time aide in my All-day, Title I kindergarten class.

Patrice Hafen, Granite School District

Come to one classroom for the day & teach without lesson plans!

Bonnie Hall, Granite School District

After 26 years of teaching, I believe two factors are extremely important for student success. The first is small class sizes. Teaching math to a high school class with over 35 is virtually impossible. Other states have limits on class sizes around 25. If class sizes can't be limited because of the teacher shortage, maybe we could increase funding for part time aides to assist in large classes. The second issue that would help students is increased planning time for teachers. We now have a lot of professional development, but absolutely no time to develop lessons to implement what we learn and turn them into good lessons. We just want some uninterrupted time to work on our lesson plans and prepare materials for class. Thanks for your concern.

Shannon Hanks, Granite School District

When there are no consequences for students who don't try and parents who don't help, when can we hold them accountable? If they are an equal stakeholder in the education process, they too should be held accountable. Why not take away their child tax credit. Education is a cultural importance and there are too many who do not value it. If there was a monetary consequence, there would be some value given.

Sage Harmsen, Granite School District

I'm still a provisional teacher, so I don't have a wealth of stories just yet. But what I do see in my schools are teachers who are giving up on students just a few months into the year because they're not equipped to give that student the work they need. They have 30+ other students they have to ensure meet certain benchmarks, and they're unsure of how to deal with certain behaviors so those students who need the most care and extra help get tossed to the SpEd teachers and generally forgotten. That's something that needs to change. Children shouldn't be falling through the cracks.

Maren Holmes, Granite School District
Class Size

A lot of students get stressed out with large class sizes.  
Cheri Jacobson, Granite School District

Class sizes matter  
Cami Jennings, Granite School District

Teachers are constantly asked to do more and more without the tools, or time to implement the new requirements.  
Too much instructional time is taken with the testing we’re required to do. Elementary classrooms with near thirty students add to the stress.  
Janet Juengel, Granite School District

Smaller class sizes make a difference.  
Melissa Klenk, Granite School District

My first two years with Granite we had 4 teachers in grade 3. With the current way that the numbers are used to figure out how many teachers a school is allowed to have teach, we lost one of our teachers. This year we are down to only 3 teachers. Two of the teachers have 30 students and right now I have 29. However there is construction of new homes happening in the school boundaries so we are expecting our class sizes to grow even more. With 3rd grade being the pivotal year to get kids reading on grade level we are not able to focus on those students that need the help because there are so many with such a large class.  
Karen Kuhn, Granite School District

I think it is the same thing you hear over and over again, teachers are held accountable for so much but given less resources. We are also dealing with an increasing number of disrespectful students and parents. I would love to see some sort of parent accountability for their own child's success.  
Leonora McCarrey, Granite School District

Since I began teaching, when everyone was talking about how class sizes were too large, and was even featured in a local news story back then about the class size issue, class sizes have still steadily increased. Students are being cheated out of the quality of education that they deserve.  
Sutton Morgan, Granite School District

With increased class sizes, students are not being given the support that they need. Last year I had a class of 32 first graders, with one having extreme behaviors. I left school frustrated and exhausted. It was the first year that I really had the idea that any other job would be easier than this and I wondered why I was putting myself through that every day. This year I have 32 sixth graders, and while that is more manageable, I feel like I can't give the time and attention that they each need during this critical time in their life. We have the chance to touch their lives and make a difference but that is extremely hard to do with such large class sizes and other demands of testing and teacher accountability.  
Amber Parry, Granite School District

Teachers need support and students also need some degree of accountability. My third issue is that students need more mental health supports and enough counselors and social workers to meet the needs of students.  
Laura Pratt, Granite School District

I have a student who repeatedly threatens teachers, students, anyone in his way though vulgarity and insults daily. He writes kill lists and tells students he has guns and is going to kill other students. He affects every ones teaching time daily through his daily issues. But, there is nothing we can do, because he is in special aid. He screaming for help, but the district won’t listen. Something bad is going to happen and I am very worried for my students and yet the district won’t listen. My school isn't the only school dealing with this. Schools need more support with disciplinary issues. I am doing everything I can. We have a social worker that comes to our elementary school twice a week. We
Class Size

need more support. I have been teaching for 15 years and the amount of social issues has increased exponentially. Please help.

Celeste Ratto, Granite School District

I've been an educator in Jordan and Granite School Districts for 42 years and this will be my last year. I love my profession, but worry about what I see on the horizon. Wonderful, qualified teachers are leaving the classroom because so much is demanded of them. We need parental involvement and holding parents accountable if we are to make a difference. We need to not put so much on the plates of these teachers that they don't have time or energy to TEACH!

Lanea Sampson, Granite School District

We need more support with behavior and low students. Placements that meet their needs. The regular classroom is not the right fit for every student. It should not be so difficult to get students the help they need to be successful at school.

Konae Schlappi, Granite School District

Reduce class sizes and give us the respect we deserve. Trying to teach 36 + students in a class is more babysitting and crowd control. The Student needs to be held accountable for his/her behavior and learning.

Kerry Selk, Granite School District

We must reverse the trend to hire as few teachers as possible, and figure out ways to hire MORE qualified teachers per student.

Colin Smith, Granite School District

Reduce class size!

Heather Sorensen, Granite School District

I am an extraordinary and well-respected career educator with 18 years on the job, but doing well at my job pushes me to the absolute limit of my physical (and sometimes mental & emotional) capabilities. I love everything about teaching, but there is too much of it--240 students and all their issues and paperwork! I have stress-related irritable bowel syndrome, inflammation on the bottoms of my feet, occasional anxiety chest pain and stiff muscles. And I’m tired. Chronically tired. Getting through May is like ending a marathon--I get so tired I forget student names, lose my keys, leave my car running while pumping gas, etc. Excelling at this job is not a healthy, balanced way to live. Oh, and by the way, I can't recall one thing my district has done to reduce my workload in 15 years; instead top-down mandates seem increasingly punitive and disconnected with reality.

Lisa Thornbrue, Granite School District

People say class size does not matter, but I beg to differ. In my 2nd grade classroom I had 6 students that came to 2nd grade not knowing all their letters and sounds. I had 18 students. I was able to meet all the needs of the students and give much needed attention to those struggling students as well as provide enrichment for my gifted students (I am the gifted teacher in my grade level as well). In October we had to surplus a teacher and I received 6 more students. Just adding those 6 students has taken away from the other students. In our school we are not only teaching academic subjects but we are teaching these students to get along and play nice, social skills that they are lacking. Class size matters to me and these 25 angels that I now have.

Jill Vantrease, Granite School District

Reducing class size should be a priority for legislators. The large class sizes that we are dealing with are negatively affecting our students' learning. It is hard to provide individualized instruction to meet the needs of our diverse learners when class sizes are large. Also, educators need to feel valued and respected by legislators. They should take the time to visit schools and talk with teachers in order to learn more about the issues they are deciding upon.

Karen Vasquez, Granite School District
Class Size

We need support for teachers with children with mental health issues. I have seen dedicated teachers forced out of the profession due not having the proper training for how to handle a physically aggressive student or one that is very defiant. These were excellent teachers who cared about their students.

Dawn Wasden, Granite School District

We need smaller class sizes.

Wayne Watts, Granite School District

Class sizes are the one of the biggest impacts on learning for students. It is hard as a teacher to get to every student when there are 50+ students in a class. a lot of students get left out and there is not enough time or planning to reach them all.

Rodny Wells, Granite School District

I have 31 students in my class. Their abilities range from 1st grade to 5th grade reading levels. Half of my class are ESL students. With 31 students it is impossible to give each of my students the attention they need and deserve.

Tammy Wilson, Granite School District

Put the money that is necessary into education to bring the average spent per child to at least the national average.

Stacy Wood, Granite School District

This year I have 31 students in my 5th grade class, 8 of which are resource students. With this number of students in my class these students do not get the attention they need and can't make the progress needed to reach grade level.

Jason Woodhead, Granite School District

Teaching children is getting harder every year. So many of our students struggle to get to school and focus on learning because of problems at home. Is there a way we can be a better support to parents so they can better parent their own children?

Loma Young, Granite School District

Stated earlier....It is becoming more difficult to accomplish all that is required with the amount of time we have to teach. Lengthening the day would be enriching for students. Pay us extra to have PLC’s after school, then we can continue to teach our students. The time is short - we need to be wise in how it is used.

Katharine June Bolliger, Jordan School District

We need smaller class sizes to better help each individual student!

Alisha Chase, Jordan School District

Teachers need to feel they are supported by legislators. The bar on classroom and student growth has risen to an almost unattainable level. Consider our students: some are homeless, receive no parental support, are hungry, have moved several times a year, have disabilities, etc. Our students cannot fit into a common goal. And teachers should not be considered failures if students cannot reach the state expectation. Please consider the individuality of all children in our state, in our schools.

Lori Gray, Jordan School District

I am into my 25th year of teaching, and this is one of the hardest years I've ever had. Our school is so overcrowded that the halls are on the edge of dangerous, and our administrators can't keep up with the issues that cross their desks. My largest class is 37, and I had to have additional desks brought into my room. I'm an English teacher, and every time I assign a piece of writing, even just a single paragraph, I have about six hours of correcting ahead of me. I'm getting quickly burned out, and I know my teammates are too.

Patti Hendricks, Jordan School District
Class Size

My classroom size is small with too many students. There is no classroom space. Students fall through the cracks because it's difficult to attend to them all.

Raina Lingmann, Jordan School District

At the High School I work at, the Math 2 classes were big with 35 or so students. (This is really the norm for most classes.) At least half or more of each class was failing. My principal was able to find some funds to increase the teachers in the math department and decrease the Math 2 classes to around 20. Now the majority of the students are able to get the attention and help they need in order to be successful and to pass the class. Smaller classes do help the students to do better in class and be better prepared for college.

Emily Maddocks, Jordan School District

As a teacher, we are expected to come up with a plan of action for each student to make sure they are making adequate growth. When you have 28-36 student in each class, teachers cannot do that. We cannot reach each child's need in our classes when we have 25 or more students. As an upper elementary teacher I rejoiced when I only had 28 students. Class size is a major issue that needs to be addressed. The children in our state are not receiving the education they deserve because instead of having 18 students each class has 30 or more students.

Tiffany Martinez, Jordan School District

Something needs to be done about defiant children that will not behave. There needs to be more qualified rooms, schools, places to put children who do not fit into general education classroom. Demands are too high for many of these students to succeed.

Amanda McCullough, Jordan School District

I would like to invite them to work with me for a day! I think all of them would have a very different perspective if they spent a day in the classroom!

Ashley Raines-Parshall, Jordan School District

I wish that our legislator would come in the classroom to teach a lesson to the students so they could see what it is like to be a teacher.

Kerri Reyes, Jordan School District

I have had large classes (27-31) for several years now in my favorite class of 5th grade. There is so much required of me that is extra stressful because of being responsible for so many students.

Cathy Sandberg, Jordan School District

We need smaller class sizes to be more effective.

Matt Smith, Jordan School District

Teachers moral is low. Counselors and teachers are overworked and underpaid. reduce class sizes and counselor student ratios 1/250

Linda Tranter, Jordan School District

I have 34 8th grade students in an English class. I can't get to all of them to help them with their writing. It takes about 2-3 weeks to meet with each student individually to conference about their writing. Frustrating...

Denise Park, Juab School District

We know that adult relationships and ratios impact students the most so we should put more money into class size reduction or additional staffing rather than so much into technology which takes away from the relationships that students develop. Technology is necessary and needs to be funded but it is not the answer to our educational problems and should not be funded like it is the answer. It should support teachers, not replace them.

Marcia Austin, Logan City School District
Class Size

I work at a pretty low income school. Almost all students here qualify for free or reduced lunch and breakfast. There are many that don't have a parent home or awake when they wake up for school or get home- they (sometimes even in first grade) are left to completely take care of themselves and their education. And, because they are such amazing young minds, they do. There are so many fantastic, bright, young minds, and they just want to learn and grow- even with the craziness that is their home lives. But, because there are so many in a class, it is almost impossible to give them the extra attention that they need and deserve in order to be where they need to be.

Samantha Hercules, Logan City School District

I have been fortunate as an educator to have smaller class sizes this school year. My student's have had better results because of this. I see a direct correlation with the impact I am able to have with them as a smaller group and the success they have in their learning.

Debbie Kent, Logan City School District

Students deserve highly qualified teachers, small class sizes to meet individual students needs, that if it's not broken don't fix it. Students need a variety of classes and for students to be college ready they need to have a full schedule of credits all 4 years and middle school curriculum needs to continue to have a rigor to prepare them for high school.

Denise Dewsnup, Millard School District

There are too many stories to tell. I would rather invite them to spend a day in my classroom.

Stephanie Strader, Murray City School District

This year has been the most frustrating year for me. I feel like have no support from parents (they are unable to be reached or working 2 1/2 jobs and can't be contacted to talk them about their student), if I send a student to the office they return to me (issue solved for a minute). I'm told by administrators their hands are tied as there is no attendance court/rules anymore. I have students that are constantly tardy and interrupting my lessons. I go home feeling beat up emotionally and mentally daily. I've taught 22 years. If someone asked me if they should teach...I would answer no! We have no support, no help, and no appreciation. Why? I do appreciate the raise we got last year. It was great!!! There is more to our job than teaching. We are parents, cops, counselors, life coaches, care givers, planners, and the list goes on....thanks for listening.

Shellie Anderson, Nebo School District

I barely have time to fill out this survey because of planning and other assignments related to a new term beginning.

Kaye Brockbank, Nebo School District

Smaller class size makes a difference.

Laura Elzinga, Nebo School District

I have 24 first graders. This winter we have had a lot of kids absent due to sickness, and whenever we have fewer than 20 kids, there is such a big difference in how much I can help individual students. I think that lowering the class size would help dramatically in how much teachers are able to help students with their individual needs.

Amanda Flake, Nebo School District

Every child has their strengths and weaknesses. Not every child is stellar, but as we work hard and treat each child as an individual and celebrate their progress, whether it be great or small, we will build a community of successful people. We need to remember that there is a place for everyone in our world. We need janitors, as well as teachers. We need garbage collectors as well as law makers, etc. Everyone has a talent in something. Not every child has to be stellar to be important and do “important” things. Each job is important!

Eileen Lisonbee, Nebo School District

Find something other than Common Core to hold students accountable

Sheri Rivera, Nebo School District
Class Size

I have been a full day kindergarten teacher for four years. I have had classes well over 20 students. In these classes I have had MAJOR behavior problems. Sometimes up to three students. These students take all of the teacher time. I did not feel that I was teaching, I felt that I was managing a terrible situation all day, every day. I had little support from my administration (who didn't want to be the bad guys). I know I am not alone in these types of situations. It is ridiculous that there is no support. Parents want it to be our problem, not theirs. But the other students in the class are the ones who suffer. Why would I want to stay teaching? I often feel that there are better things out there, even though I love the kids, and I love teaching.

Jennifer Prince, Nebo School District

I have a classroom of 35 kids with all sorts of needs - special and emotional and behavioral. I do the best I can, but there are not enough hours or energy to do all that needs to be done for these kids. And in order to help them, their academics can't always come first! But if you saw their struggles and how far they have come in just these few months with the uphill battles they've been climbing, you would NOT call them unsuccessful - no matter what the tests scores say!

Stephanie Brandner, Ogden School District

Class sizes are large. Reducing the class sizes or having more staff assistants would greatly increase the amount of time and attention that each student gets. Increasing student success.

Crystal Buck, Ogden School District

We need to think of the children. We need to reduce class sizes and give teachers a better environment to do what we do best, teach.

Jessica DeBoer, Ogden School District

Increase test score through smaller class sizes. Charter schools are trying but they lack the resources or direction to provide quality training. They have too many responsibilities to meet all their needs. A school district is much more organized and manages the needs of the students much better than a charter school. I know because I have worked in both settings.

Lisa Scheid, Ogden School District

Class size truly makes a difference in student learning. In years that I have had over 30 students in my 6th grade class, my SAGE performance has been significantly lower than when I had less students. Raising the teacher salary would be nice, but I would much rather sacrifice a raise in order to have smaller class sizes so that I can be a more effective teacher.

Meghan Stanger, Ogden School District

Teachers deserve to be paid a lot more and small class sizes improves performance of students!

Joan Mills, Other

I feel that I don't have enough time in a day to address the needs of each of my students. Also, there is much anxiety due to testing.

Bernard Rizzotto, Park City School District

Utah has a very large, very young population. We cannot continue to educate our population, with the standards and levels necessary to compete in a global economy at the level at which we are currently working. The public must understand that if they want their children educated, then the legislators need to raise taxes or cut the tax exempt status for larger families.

Annie Wallace, Park City School District
Class Size

That Utah schools lack appropriate funding for the number of kids we are serving. Additionally, we need to recognize that the majority of teachers are giving their best to students. Class sizes need to be capped at 25, dependent upon school population and number of BD cases. Lastly, collaboration and quality PD or PLC time for educators is key to build professional capital in each educator and in return we will see a narrowing of the achievement gap.

Alice Correa, Salt Lake City School District

More focus on the whole child and not on testing.

Olynn Elliot, Salt Lake City School District

Classroom size in Kindergarten and First grade has the greatest impact on student success. Last year 22 students and this year 28.

Kim Gianelo, Salt Lake City School District

Teachers are overworked with the class sizes, and the amount of testing overwhelming the teaching. It takes the brain time to put concepts into long-term memory, and students are suffering with over-testing and not enough time to learn. The teachers I work with are always talking about another mandatory test coming up. It's taking away from the kids. In the last 7 years of teaching, I have seen many classes over 30. And to be realistic, anything over 25 students at once is not teaching, just managing the load. Students learn better when there is a tight sense of community--much harder to do in a class over 25.

Erica Hammon, Salt Lake City School District

Teaching is a profession that deserves the highest commitment from all involved, teachers, students, parents, administration, school districts and the legislature. What we are doing now directly impacts Utah's future. We are so far behind many states and are doing many injustices to all of our students. Teachers, who haven't given up, are exhausted. Large class sizes do not make it easy for all students to get what they need. Behavior problems are showing up earlier and earlier. Students have much more to contend with every year. Teaching is the hardest job I've ever had. I have worked in business, retail, and non-profits and this, by far, is the most intense job I've ever had, with the most to lose. Please respect us and the children of our state. It feels like we are an afterthought in so many ways.

Lesley Jones, Salt Lake City School District

I taught in Tooele city for 17 years with class sizes at or above 26 students. I have just started teaching in SLC and my class size is under 20. I find that I am able to better meet the individual needs of my students now that I have fewer in the classroom.

Mike Lloyd, Salt Lake City School District

Quit mandating curriculum for public schools because they don't have a clue. Teachers have to fix the problems the mandated curriculum cause.

Jeff Marston, Salt Lake City School District

If we really, truly want to improve public education, we need to start with drastically reducing elementary class sizes, and hire more reading specialists for 1st through third grade. I would also require parent "classes" to educate them on the importance of supporting their students however they can, and attempt to empower them.

Jennifer McCoy, Salt Lake City School District

I have been teaching over twenty years. This year I only have 19 students and it makes the biggest difference!

LOWER CLASS SIZES!

Ann Melville, Salt Lake City School District

We need more resources for our west side schools. We need smaller class sizes and more behavioral support for students that struggle.

Amy Milenski, Salt Lake City School District
Class Size

More student and parent accountability for poor attendance.  
Joann Orr, Salt Lake City School District

I do not feel respected and valued as a professional.  
Janine Parker, Salt Lake City School District

This year I've had a smaller class size of 16 students and it has been my favorite year of teaching. It's like a dream come true. While there are still challenges it is nothing like years before. If there is anything that can be done to recreate this situation teachers everywhere will be dramatically satisfied with teaching conditions.  
Jeremy Reynoso, Salt Lake City School District

I waste more time getting students on task than actually teaching, as well as explaining rules.  
Reeve, David, San Juan School District

Teachers are not given support. Administrators cater to students and parents before they listen to the teacher. Money will not replace the respect teachers need from the community and the students in their classrooms.  
Kayleen Lyman, Sevier School District

The best thing I can do for students is to provide individual feedback on their successes and areas of need. This means less students or more staff in my classroom. When students experience success so do teachers.  
Dana Emery, Tooele County School District

My biggest concern as an educator are the students who come through my classroom door already tired, stressed and upset because of their home life. Their needs are not being met and with such large class sizes I'm supposed to somehow motivate them to "let it go" and focus on learning. Then when that doesn't really work I am graded on their ability to test well regardless of their circumstances and that they are over tested. I'd like my legislators to work in a title I school for 6 weeks, and their pay, insurance and overall job rating be based on a test that would sum up everything they taught those little 10 year old kids in ONLY six weeks. Schools and teachers cannot control the minds of others, not even the precious little people we teach. It is hard to stay motivated when your own professional ability lies in the hands of a child. We do not feel you can control the factors or outcomes. What keeps me going is not pay, not the incredibly long, in depth evaluation sheet. I keep going for the kids I know may not remember how to turn a mixed number into a improper fraction. I hope they will remember feeling important, smart and know someone believes in them.  
Vivian Rose, Tooele County School District

Our 5th grade classes have 32-34 students. The middle schools are 35 or more. My daughters are in big classes and teachers can't get things graded quick enough due to the larger numbers. Individual help is not able to be given because of the large class sizes. Please find this.  
Valerie Bobo, Uintah School District

Class sizes need to be addressed in order to better teaching principles.  
Jared Hendry, Wasatch County School District

Many of the recent legislative decisions have simply taken all decision making, and power away from schools, principals and, most significantly teachers, and put in the hands of parents.  
Summer Cornelius, Washington County School District

As an elementary educator, WE NEED MORE HELP!!!! I need money for a teacher assistant to enter data, help with testing, making copies, etc.  
Claudia Empey, Washington County School District
Class Size

I have a class of 21 students this year and because of that I have been able to address their academic needs vs. a school year when my class size is larger by 4 or more students. Class size does matter! I-pads have made a positive impact on the Language Arts skills of my students. Thank you for funding Imagine Learning!

Donna Bolton, Weber School District

Teachers with really hard to ensure all students in their classroom are educated. Teachers deserve respect from legislators NOT empty promises or criticism.

Hope Bruggink, Weber School District

There has been an increase in demands in education over the past 15 years. These changes have been for the good but need additional supports. At the same time students needs and gaps have become harder and more diverse. We need training, resources, staff, and professionals to help meet the needs of these students.

Julianne Christensen, Weber School District

Please give us the freedom to teach in our classes. I feel like things are becoming so mandated and new things are being given to us all the time that it is hard to be an individual. I feel like everyone is supposed to teach the same thing the same day and there is becoming less individuality.

Kimberlee Endicott, Weber School District

Because my classroom sizes are so large it makes it difficult for a teacher to create a safe and inviting space where student enjoy learning.

Jaisha Gull, Weber School District

I have 29 students in a first grade class. Not only is it hard to make sure that each child is learning what they are required to learn, but it also presents more behavior problems! We need smaller class sizes. The academics are getting more rigorous for these little ones and it seems like each year they are needing more one-in-one intervention time.

Nancy Hale, Weber School District

Support our public schools

Nikki Hill, Weber School District

I have taught first grade for 32 years. I am continually working to increase student learning in my classroom. As more and more demands are placed upon my time, I find it increasingly difficult to meet the needs of all my students when I have 25 first graders in my class. That number does not sound very big to someone who hasn't been in a first grade classroom, but the needs of a six year old are many, and they are expected to learn so much more than when I began teaching in 1983. On a typical day, I arrive at school at 7:45 and leave at 5:45 because there is so much preparation for each day of school. I am not alone in spending 10 hours at school each day. My first grade team is here with me. We are committed to these children and their learning. Please help us by limiting first grade classes to 20 students. Thank you.

Laurie Kite, Weber School District

I have a student in a motorized wheelchair, on a ventilator, and accompanied by a nurse at all times. The large class sizes severely restrict his ability to move freely around the classroom. My school has already kept my student numbers lower than those of my fellow grade-level teachers to try to help with the situation, but there is only so much that can be done with this many students in one room.

Hillary Lundgreen, Weber School District

Class size needs to be reduced!!

Helen Marble, Weber School District
Class Size

Teaching is a challenging profession. Half the teachers in my school teach Chinese immersion classes, which are often smaller than the grade-level limit, while the other half teach classes significantly larger than this limit. Yet somehow, this continues, year after year, because the average class size is all that is considered. This is not right.

*Amy Matheson, Weber School District*

Merit Pay would not be benefit students, it would just create difficulties with the teachers not sharing, and teaching should foremost be a sharing environment to benefit all of the students. Paying teachers for students doing well on tests is not helpful. Take the merit pay money and put it towards professional development for teachers to attend such as ideas of how to improve their teaching and intervention strategies that would work to help students would be more beneficial to students and teachers.

*Nicole Neal, Weber School District*

Teaching in today's classroom is darn hard work. There are so many kids with needs that are hard for one person to fulfill. Class size is too large. I spend way too much of my personal time (evenings/weekends) doing my job. Reduction is class size would help.

*Kristin Teller, Weber School District*

Class size does affect student learning outcomes

*Olga Thompson, Weber School District*
School and Educator Accountability

I get tired of hearing how bad our education system is compared to testing of other countries when we test everyone, even student with accommodations where other countries filter out students before high school who have challenges and test the rest.

Kevin Aston, Alpine School District

In our school our kindergarten class size is 26 children, which is 52 children with two sessions to progress monitor. The expectations for the teachers are to teach a 3 hour block of literacy that doesn't include time for recess, computers or math. It also doesn't allow for time to help connect with students, especially ones that have very little time with parents.

Lorri Case, Alpine School District

I am an adapted physical educator. The high school I teach at has a Unified Sports program (peers and student athletes with disabilities learning, practicing and competing in tournaments together). This program is very successful as all of our students become so involved in activities both during school and after school hours. Cooperation, friendship and teamwork as well as sportsmanship during competition are emphasized. All students grow personally as well as physically.

Julie Hines, Alpine School District

If we expect our students to be successful and for the school systems to improve so that each generation can progress, we need better teachers who are more committed. Teachers should have a better salary which would be based off of fitting requirments, such as Bachelor's Degree, to prove dedication to the profession.

Alexa Martin, Alpine School District

If you truly want to know what is happening in classrooms/schools each of you need to sub for a week in a classroom to really find out what teaching is like. Then you may have some different opinions and willing to start doing the job you were voted in to do!

Kriss Spencer, Alpine School District

First of all, I would like to thank our legislators for the important role that they play in our democratic process. Without your service I could not do my job. As a public servant I would like to see teaching become as important as any other public servant's job. I am willing to sacrifice if I know it has merit but sacrifice without merit is useless and drains me as a teacher. When I feel that I am getting the support for my students that I need to teach, i.e. an aide in the classroom, technology, supplies, ect. I can teach much more effectively and feel that I can truly do what I intended to do when I became a teacher, Be a Change Agent! I hope that as this legislative session begins you will take into account that I might only have 28 students but half of those students need some kind of intervention. The other half might suffer if I can't get to them in a timely manner without support staff that I need. When I can have just one more body in the room I could possibly make the change for your student that would not otherwise be possible. Please help me teach the children in this state what they need to learn to carry on our democracy!

Karen Webb, Alpine School District

I stopped teaching when I stopped getting the support needed from administrators (who were too over-pressured by those above them) to maintain a classroom where students were not held accountable for poor behavior. It was a unique year when we had many transitory students who came from self-destructive homes. Those kinds of students need support before and after school so they can succeed in the high pressure environment of today's schools. We will never succeed with students whose everyday needs are not being met either because of poverty or lack of adequate supervision in the home.

Anita Price, Cache County School District

Being a teacher in public schools since I began my career in 1987 has been an amazing and difficult and wonderful experience. It’s an honor to lead youth, to help them grow, and to hopefully be a positive impact in their lives. The challenges today are more difficult because we are required to do so much more, with so much less money, and the
support from parents and society in general is just not what it used to be. The respect for the profession has diminshed. This is partially due to the level of professionalism displayed by teachers. I don't want to sound like a complainer, but you get what you pay for. A lot of my sharpest students would never consider teaching as a profession. Some of the student teachers I have mentored through the years did not demonstrate passion for teaching or for the youth. Let's make teaching a highly respected and sought after career again! Put a high value on amazing educators! Find a way to attract the best and retain them with fair salaries and fair expectations, lots of support and Utah Schools will continue to be excellent. If not, the only ones you'll get to do this job will be desperate, unmotivated people who are only in it because they think they get their summer off.

Kimberly Sorensen, Cache County School District

If education is as important as people think it is, there should be more money allotted to make class sizes smaller and pay educators more money to keep good teachers around. I spend at least 10 hours each day at my school, then I spend about 2-4 hours more, each night, working on school things. It's exhausting and I'm burnt out! This is my 23rd year of teaching, and it's not getting any easier. Although I put a lot of pressure on myself, it seems like educators are being required to do more and more every year.

Jodi Andre, Davis School District

Dear Legislators, As a veteran teacher, I have watched our profession dramatically suffer in the past ten years. Not only do we have teachers that do not want to stay in our profession, they are running from it. Young people are discouraged from seeking this career path--not without reason. Teaching is arguably the hardest career and one of the most disrespected. If I were to average out my salary over the true number of hours that I work, I would be making much less than the minimum wage. I knew that teaching wouldn't be lucrative when I came into the profession. Money wasn't the reason I chose to work in education. What I did not know was the true lack of support and respect teachers receive. I currently teach in a classroom with 32 third grade students. There is not space in my classroom to accommodate them. My classroom budget was made for a class size of twenty-six students. That means that all of the supplies for six more students come out of my pocket. That's on top of what I already spend to enhance my curriculum. My school email inbox currently has 53 unread emails, most of which are complaints about one thing or another, that I have not had time to read due to my other responsibilities. I arrive at school no later than 7:00, and rarely leave earlier than 6:00. I still take work home every night. I take grading with me on vacation and feel guilty if I don't work on it after my family has gone to sleep. I am asked to create trackers for multiple students. I try to stay on top of everything that I am asked to do, and if I drop one of the forty balls that I am juggling, I am belittled. The "fun" has been sucked out of my classroom. I am moving through curriculum at a break neck pace, attempting to prepare my students for "The Test" at the end of the year. There is little to no time for slowing down to make snowflakes or, more importantly, teach about character, citizenship, and friendship. There is a disconnect between administration and the classroom. We are constantly being asked to do "little things." However, when you have a list of twenty little things that each take a few minutes, it adds up. I've always known that I was meant to be a teacher. I know that I make a difference in the lives of others every day. I've seen positive differences happen in amazing ways. However, it's getting harder to see that silver lining amongst all of the dark clouds. We need your help and support. Our profession, our students, and the future of our state depend on it.

Katie Brown, Davis School District

Now is the time to stop messing around with teachers: let them do their jobs, pay them as professionals, back off with needless testing, stop treating educators as over-educated peasants.

Richard Heath, Davis School District

I love teaching, I love working with students. But, I wish it was that easy. I work very hard to plan and make sure all their needs are met. I put in two extra hours of my own, unpaid time, everyday. Plus, I take work home over the weekend and I still feel like I can't get it all done. I have used a lot of my own money and resources on my classroom and students. I have a lot of behavior problems with students stemming from home or parental problems. I spend so much time disciplining and parenting students, that I can't get any instruction time in. I have 4 students that have already had over 14 absences and it's just the second term. It gets really depressing went I see other professions
School and Educator Accountability

(same amount of education) put in less time and less stress and get paid a lot more. It's no wonder teachers are leaving the profession. Our brains tell us it is not worth it, but our hearts tell us the students are worth it. It's an internal battle that each teacher has to face and make decisions. It's a slap in the face when they hire people without teaching degrees, and I'm expected to teach and help them without any extra pay. I have been observed during snack time when I taught Kindergarten, and got marked down for not using technology. I have been marked down for not having my daily objectives listed, when in reality they were on the white board behind my principal giving the observation. I have been observed during a Valentines party and got marked down for not assessing and explicitly teaching. I got marked down for having garbage on the floor on another observation, and the students were cutting out word sorts. There is no place for the educator to write their thoughts or opinions, or defend what was really going on. We just get marked down and it makes our averages drop. There are a lot of things they can do differently on the observations to make them more valid and fair.

Susan Horning, Davis School District

Teacher shortage is affecting student learning.

Lisa Menlove, Davis School District

We need to show how much being an educator is valued by respecting teacher demands.

Megan Porer, Davis School District

Why I teach and why I feel it is not possible to do so at this time. Too many demands with large classes and no time

Donna L. Trease, Davis School District

If I was to ever leave teaching it would be because of the ridiculous expectations I am held to and the lack of support from legislators dealing with difficult parents and students. I should not be the enemy.

Alexia Crandall, Granite School District

We would greatly appreciate being viewed as professionals and trusted to do the job that we have been trained to do.

Brooke Deardorff, Granite School District

First, I feel there is a definite need for more full time professionals to be positioned at one home school, which are trained to deal with mental health and wellness. In addition, Special Educators are being inundated with so many referrals it takes months of tracking data and testing and then those special education teachers are not full time at one school because they are so far and few between. This, in my personal opinion, creates a lack of consistency. Camaraderie between general education and special education teachers plays a key role in student gains when collaboration and consistency are prevalent. Full time teachers are not equipped or trained to deal with the rising amount of children experiencing adverse childhood experiences. It is extremely difficult to teach and learn with so many outside obstacles and emotional barriers. In many cases, the heightened demand on teachers and school communities to help students rise to academic achievement becomes an unattainable accomplishment for not only students but all stakeholders. i.e. teachers, parents, administrators, districts because of these influences. In turn, both students and teachers taste the bitterness of defeat and failure. We are trying everything to overcome so many of the hardships students face but it is a daunting task - but done with love and trust. However, it is exhausting!

Often, as an educational cohort, we look at the academic aspect of children, but it seems as though we forget to ascertain whether or not our students are in a healthy socio-emotionally stable frame of mind to learn what we as educators are trying to teach them. Sure we can do clubs, and have an open door/open teacher-parent dialogue, have food pantries, wash clothes, give children gloves, talk to them when they have a rough day, and deal with the overwhelming effects of poverty on their brains and physical toll of their body, but then am I educating them academically or mentally and emotionally? Why isn’t there an assessment that asks about the whole child, not just the academic child. This MAY or may not have an impact on their successes in other areas of instruction and curriculum. Secondly, teachers should be treated with respect as professionals and many in society forget the life-long impact of fabulous teachers. I still have not come to any sure conclusions as to why such a huge shift has happened ultimately giving teachers a bad reputation, but even as a first year teacher I feel the affects of this from
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districts, administration, parents, legislative decisions made on our behalf, and all of these people's views trickle down through student points of view. How do we change this?

*Kim Dillingham, Granite School District*

Education needs to be the number one priority on every citizen's mind. We can't afford to put it anywhere but first.

*Aubrey Dillman, Granite School District*

Not all schools have the same supplies or opportunities and the legislators need to make sure all schools are on equal footing

*Sonya Dollins-Colton, Granite School District*

That Teachers are treated not very fair!

*David Head, Granite School District*

There are a lot of talented special education teachers. The students in special education classrooms might not score the highest on testing, but there is a lot of amazing progress that takes place in self contained special education classrooms. These teachers and students work very hard and should not be forgotten, set aside or told to work harder to get the students up to grade level. It is our intent to work with our students to their own unique abilities and to celebrate their successes no matter how small.

*Heidi Henderson, Granite School District*

Homeless youth prevention. Teacher Salary vs. Administrative Salary. A voice for teachers

*Patricia Honey, Granite School District*

The frustration of testing. All students shouldn't be tested only on paper, but through observations and real life situations. Preparing for the real world requires time, patience, consistency and a knowledge of their needs individually. Allow teachers to all be paid equally from K -12. We should only be required to specialize in 1 to 2 areas to be proficient at what we teach and not make Elementary specialize is 6 + areas while Jr. High and High school teachers need one area of expertise. There are many areas of relevant that are indicators of what makes a successful student successful through the support of their teachers. Teachers in elementary are require to be experts in more areas of studies than most people who work in other fields. That is not reasonable to ask. Our pay and hours we put in are not indicators that the future leaders of our country are important, when not enough funds are put into pay or funding needs of public schools. It's frustrating to keep loving and sharing your passion for education when teachers are force to work more with less everyday.

*Sandy Thuy Jensen, Granite School District*

It is time to fund education. Education powers our economy, helps children climb out of poverty, and enriches our cultural environment. Please, let now be the time to fund education in Utah.

*Susan Jones, Granite School District*

Teachers are not being supported in the classroom.

*Mackenzie Kemp, Granite School District*

Feeling supported and safe should be the right of every teacher in the classroom. It is sadly getting to the point that every teacher I know is planning their exit, whether leaving the profession or counting down to retirement. It is becoming a burden that we don't know if we can bear any longer.

*Jenny Morris, Granite School District*

It's time to put of children first. They are our future. We need quality teachers, smaller classrooms, more support from our legislators. Testing has taken over teaching.

*Cindy Moyle, Granite School District*
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Students deserve to have veteran teachers instruct them in a smaller class size, up-to-date materials and technology. I have 39 students in a class, no new textbooks, and not enough time in the day to grade papers, build my curriculum, consult with teachers from my department, mentor new teachers, and write emails, or make phone calls home. I have been teaching for over two decades and have worked with about 25 new teachers in my field. This revolving door in our profession only harms students and puts such burdens on the teachers that continue year after year. Please consider lowering our class sizes, give us up-to-date materials, pay teachers or give bonus money to those outstanding in our field, and stop giving the Public Education money to Charter Schools that do not have the same strict guidelines to follow. Thank you.

Susie Myers, Granite School District

Class sizes are problematic, especially with the younger children. Grade schools needs smaller class sizes, and educated teachers with twenty first century skills. Education should be a high priority, and our world is dependent on our children.

Kelly Price, Granite School District

Something needs to be done to help increase teacher morale. Teachers are very highly educated, yet are treated like we are uneducated. Society cannot function without teachers, and they need to be treated that way. This would do a lot to help with the teacher shortage that we are dealing with. Privatizing education or giving more money towards charter schools is not the answer. The education budget needs to be spent on finding the most qualified teachers who have a passion for education and who are willing to stay in the profession. Public school teachers are teaching the future leaders of this state and country. Supports are needed in classrooms, not just in increased funding and decreased class sizes, but also with increased funding for classroom aides.

Emily Saltas, Granite School District

The demands on teachers today are outrageous! No one can possibly do all that teachers are asked to do. It is not humanly possible. No wonder teachers are getting burned out and are leaving the profession. Make fewer demands, and allow us to simply teach.

Joan Thompson-Harris, Granite School District

Teachers have more demands placed on them then ever before. The teacher shortage will only increase if we don't start addressing class size, teacher salary, and if we don't start finding ways to boost teacher morale. This all starts with funding, but also coming straight to the source -- THE TEACHERS, before making new laws and decisions that will directly affect students and teachers.

Rebecca Vala, Granite School District

Some of our public schools are getting many monolingual students and English is NOT that language. We need more assistance in working with these students.

Bev Griffith, Jordan School District

Education is one of the most important things you are addressing this year. Please take time to look at this fact: teacher shortage. People are not wanting to enter into the teaching profession due to government micro management vs autonomy. Professionalism should be valued and encouraged. Why are we not giving trust to a teacher to reach her/his students needs with an educated accountability and not just a check off sheet that we need to account to an administrator who is accounting a check off sheet to a district ... etc. with so many requirements and restrictions that it takes more time doing that than it does teaching our students ... not to mention the stress and worry if we are doing it exactly the way it is required by our administrators (and it seems to change a bit every year just to cause more stress)? Money is not the biggest issue for most teachers ... please take the outside testing "stress" away, all the testing accountability that we have to "report" and let us teach not just account. Teachers need support. We have parent support... we need legislator support! Please... keep class size small, support full-day kindergarten (as it is really first grade as compared to when you were in school), give compensation to teachers who
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are willing to do extras, reduce testing accountability, and give us our autonomy to do what we know how to do, namely, TEACH.

Vivian Gubler, Jordan School District

I began my teaching career in a Title I school in Granite District as a classroom aide, then became a certified preschool teacher, and finally became a certified elementary teacher. I am in my 21st year of service in a classroom, and my 13th year as a certified kindergarten teacher. I currently teach in Jordan School District. I am a teacher because I absolutely love working with, and teaching children. During the past 20 years I have seen many changes in education. One of the things that impacts my ability to teach the most is class size. My classes are usually smaller because I teach in kindergarten, but many of my colleagues do not have room for all the children's desks, and their class sizes continue to grow. Teachers in our school are told that we need to be creative and figure out ways to deal with the ever growing class sizes. My classes are usually 5 or 6 children over the optimum student to teacher ratio for kindergarten, but I feel lucky as many other kindergarten teachers have over 7 to 9 children more than is best in an early childhood classroom. I feel my love for children and teaching is used against me. I will do my job for less pay, little to no recognition for a job well done, less than desirable classroom supplies and conditions, and constant pressure to do more with less. Over the past twenty years the testing requirements have become outrageous and I am now spending so much time assessing my kindergarten students, I hardly have time to teach the required curriculum. I am a good teacher, I am always learning and perfecting my teaching skills, I have received awards for my teaching, I have taught and mentored other teachers. I will never quit my job or let my students down, they receive my best every day. The people making decisions about my students and my classroom have no idea how things work in a classroom and all the things I do each day. We need the people making the decisions to be more involved in education. Come into my classroom and my colleagues classrooms, see how we make a difference in our student's lives each day, and see the things we do with so little. Please make decisions based on actual knowledge of the issues, get involved and listen those of us who are in the trenches each day trying to make a difference in our corner of the world!

Kerry Hoffmann, Jordan School District

Before I went into education, without a degree, I was taking home, after taxes, 100K per year. I have four degrees and went into education, not to make money but to help kids, so they might have a brighter and better future. However, it took me 30 years to go from a beginning salary of 28K to 50K. We live in a very sad and disrespectful state of how our legislators treat our teachers...., those on the front line, in the trenches.

Max Weiss, Jordan School District

The students are coming harder and harder to teach. For what teachers are asked to do and what they get paid to do it, teaching is becoming a less and less desirable job.

Heidi Hall, Nebo School District

Please come spend a week in any classroom. Please come see the day-to-day intricacies of our day and then see how it compares to what you felt before. See how many of our students depend on school for a hot meal, for TLC, and for so many other critical survival components on top of the educational ones we also provide. Please spend more than an hour or even a day. Then go back and decide how best to serve our student populations and our future caretakers.

Sarai T Memmott, Nebo School District

You need to address accountability for district administrators and principals: They cannot be given carte blanche to make "progressive" changes to school systems, holding teachers in check with punitive evaluation measures. Sop worrying about teacher accountability and start focusing on too many administrators (who themselves can't teach) spending money on new methods that don't work. We know what works: caring, committed teachersand small classes. No more tests. No more progressive programs. Back to basics. Kids need to read and write, speak and listen, learn and communicate. Let good teachers do their jobs!

Michael Thompson, Nebo School District
School and Educator Accountability

In the community I teach in...(inner city schools) we are the life line for their total education...You can hardly put a price on that...but good teachers are leaving because they can't meet their own financial obligations. So much pressure is put on them with no financial reward...it has to be a given.

Suzanne Williams Dennison, Ogden School District

I retired from the classroom four years ago after devoting more than forty years to the profession. I experienced many changes and shifts in the educational system during those years. But one thing has never changed. Every student deserves a well trained, qualified, caring teacher.

Trudy Henderson, Other

Teachers and quality schools are vital to the success of our community as a whole. Please provide us with the support we need to best do our jobs.

Joanna Hammel, Park City School District

Growth in funding for public education in Utah began falling behind the rest of the Country decades ago but the resulting decay of services was largely kept hidden from the public for two reasons. Utah possessed some of the most dedicated hard working teachers and Utah students were largely from stable supportive homes. Those teachers are now retiring and the current work conditions are so poor that few college graduates view a career in Utah public education as a viable option. Schools are now forced to serve ever expanding social roles with students because fewer and fewer of Utah children have the stable supportive home life. Utah can no longer hide its failure to adequately fund public education. The crisis is no longer in the future. The future is now.

Charlie Matthews, Park City School District

Utah has the opportunity to become one of the top states for education in the country. We do an amazing job on a limited budget, just imagine what we could accomplish if we were anywhere close to other states in funding.

Melanie Rice Moffat, Park City School District

There is a huge teacher shortage in Utah right now that needs to be addressed not by lowering standards and expectations for teachers, but by making teacher education more accessible and affordable, and by making the position more attractive to potential candidates.

Brittany Armstrong, Salt Lake City School District

The legislator should be ashamed of themselves. knowing that the teachers in Utah are the lowest paid in the nation and we have a rainy day fund. That could pay off the national debt!!!!!!!! And what happened to the day that teachers taught. learning was fun and everyone got along. This consent use of testing is useless What a joke..

Federica Gallegos, Salt Lake City School District

It is important for us to attract and retain good teachers. I have friends who have quit teaching because, though they love the profession, they feel that they can no longer afford the luxury of serving our students. Not only is it a matter of salary, but of health care benefits also need to be improved. Too much of my salary is simply handed over to my health care providers -- I have less "available" money now than I did five years ago due to my increased health care and prescription costs. One co-pay for a life-saving medication that I have to take is over $400.00 on my current health care plan, which is the best plan available in my district. Last year the co-pay for this same medication was $150.00 under the same plan, while the previous year, it was $75.00. The pharmacists actually apologize to me when I get the prescription for this medication filled, explaining that my school district's health care plan has the highest co-pay for this particular medication that they have ever seen. Something has to change!

Victoria Muehlberger, Salt Lake City School District
School and Educator Accountability

Unfortunately, teachers responsibilities currently include parenting students. Because parents are often unable or unskilled at assisting students at home, teachers have assumed the responsibility for not only the academic success of their students, but teachers also must include ethics and behavior training. Additionally, students level of engagement has decreased due to their generations addiction to social media and technology We must find methods and pedagogy to counter the lack of parental support and student interest in academics and future success.

Anonymous, Salt Lake City School District

If they need questions answered about education, ask the experts that are in the trenches everyday. If not, they should have to spend a week doing the complete job of a teacher before they run for office so that they can understand the complexities of being an educator and the changes laws that have an effect on education without understanding the impact that they have on teachers and students.

George O. Judd, Sevier School District

Public Education is more and more demanding on teachers. Pressure from administrators, right up to superintendents is ever more stressful. There is a lack of help with problem students from administrators. Parents are often given more respect than the classroom teacher. Sage testing, in a big way, is as much about manipulating the computer and writing equations than about asking questions and having students show their knowledge. The i-Ready Computer Program used at our school could easily replace the Sage Testing. We get the needed data to help students progress and we wouldn't have to spend the money on SAGE and take time out of our schedule to do all the testing. Also, with i-Ready, parents would have a better idea of what the testing is about and how to help their student progress. In our school, we test SAGE three times a year. That is a lot of time taken away from classroom teaching. It is disheartening to listen to teachers and feel their frustrations, knowing that things could be much better. So, besides the lower salaries of teaching, we seem to be asking people to enter a profession in which they will not be receiving a very high salary, but also, a profession in which you will have frustration after frustration thrown at you. Why work so hard in education when it would be easier to earn more money and have an easier work load in another profession?

Kraig Nilsson, Sevier School District

I have 27 first-graders in my class and an autistic boy!! Too many very young students per teacher ratio!! Please, lower classroom size.

Tanna White, Uintah School District

Help me, help you, to help them, so they can help us

Lori Ruth, Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind

How ridiculous the evaluation tools they are using to evaluate educators. Also that the Sage test is not an accurate way to assess school performance.

Steve Marsing, Wasatch County School District

Education is the key to a productive citizen. Make it a priority.

Joseph Mellen, Wasatch County School District

It really bothers me that an educators wages aren't enough to support a family. What happened to the time when an individual could go to work and know that their family would be taken care of with the wages they earned. Now I am at the time of life where retirement is around the corner. I have saved my entire adult life so I can retire some day and now I am worried that I haven't done enough. It has put a strain on my finances over the years to prepare for the time I can retire.

Kathryn Parry, Washington County School District
School and Educator Accountability

I believe that teachers salaries and benefits need to be improved to hold and retain quality teachers. Make sure that all administrators are education experienced and qualified to be in an education management position.

Paul Fawson Jr., Weber School District

I believe in the power and responsibility that teachers have to influence students for good. However, we need support, compensation, and respect from our legislators and the public to best help these students succeed. Teachers work far more hours than many realize and our wages are not competitive in comparison to others with the same amount of education and training in other industries. In order to attract and retain quality teachers, increasing teacher salaries and benefits must be a priority. In addition, in order to prevent burnout, teachers need more paid time to plan and prepare for high-quality instruction. With the amount of growth we are experiencing in many parts of Utah and in order to reduce class sizes, we'll need more teachers. Increasing salary and giving teachers more paid time to do what they need to do are two essential things for our students' futures. Also, teachers should be able to focus less on end-of-level testing proficiency percentages and more on growth of the WHOLE student--academic and otherwise. I think sometimes we feel pressured to cram the core into the kids' heads when really what they need is to learn life skills (diligence, kindness, organization, respecting for self and others, working as a team, etc.) first, and then they will be able to succeed academically. In order to be able to focus on the whole child, less pressure must be put on educators' test scores. Yes, there needs to be accountability for teachers, students, and schools, but testing is not the only way to do that—student surveys, parent surveys, administrator evaluations, student growth, self-evaluations, etc. could all be helpful ways of showing accountability. Finally, at my school (and many others) we have many students whose problems are beyond what we, as regular education teachers, have the training to sufficiently support. We need more resources available to help those students who need more mental and emotional support than we are able to give. Thank you for your time.

Abbie Twingstrom, Weber School District

Maintaining quality teachers will REQUIRE the state to seriously increase the salary of all teachers, within all districts equally. Allowing districts to allocate the funds tends to allow them to reallocate it elsewhere. Many teachers leave the state or leave the profession entirely because of the lack of importance to be compensated or even trusted at times to be able to manage their own time when given time to plan meaningful and engaging experiences in the classroom. Much time is wasted in just filling the need to have committees and going through the motions of unnecessary programs felt beneficial by those who have never taught or haven't been in a classroom setting for many years. Also, in my experience, the best administrators are those who have taught a minimum of 10 years in a classroom, and just by obtaining a degree online shouldn't be the sole reason for advancing any individual. Much is learned after many years in a classroom that can't be taught by only reading a book or attending a class. Public opinion needs to change as well, that teachers are solely responsible for a child's education. True parent involvement is needed. We are educators, yes...we are caregivers as well, but much of what happens at school is first taught in the home. Public awareness may transmit to a higher respect of teachers. I know this is a difficult task, and I know most all teachers rather give up personal time and personal funds to help a child succeed, but this needs to stop. Stop relying on the individuals that entered this profession as a personal call to help others by continuing to have them make the only sacrifices.

David Van Eerden, Weber School District

Studies have shown that the larger the class size, the less effective the teacher. This is so true. In our day where teachers are being blamed, or held accountable for students learning and test scores, class size has to be taken into account and dealt with. A teacher can hardly maintain control in a class of more than 25 students, and it is very, very difficult to meet the needs of all those students, to help them learn to read, write, and do math on grade level, when there are so many students and so many needs. I think legislators need to spend time in classrooms to see the conditions, the job teachers are trying to do, and what the struggles and conditions they are working under are, to see what and why they need to make changes to the education in our state. I have taught school for 12 years and do not recall ever seeing a legislator in the school I work at. There needs to be many changes made to education to improve it, but reducing class size would be a first step in the right direction.

Gina Baird, Box Elder School District
School and Educator Accountability

Before you write and pass a bill into law affecting education, spend significant time in the classroom teaching and working with children with the ideas in the bill. Use and test your ideas in the classroom before writing them into a bill. Write your bills with significant teaching experience, not your own student experience. Learning and teaching are night and day different. You need to know what teaching children today is like in Utah to be able to craft effective bills to help children learn and teachers to be able to help children learn. Law like the Sage test burden our children and teachers with a wasted and poor use of time. Let's empower, not burden.

Bryan Jenkins, Davis School District

As always, I spend hours of my time at school and at home filling in ridiculous objective, targets, lesson plan forms, collecting data, data, data, and more data etc... that does not support me in actual planning and teaching. It's like I have two jobs: 'professional educator' and glorious administrative/secretarial professional. They say, "When you plan your lessons"; when do you do that much less even look (and I mean look) at the next weeks materials. I work at a Title 1 school where most parents do not help their students. With free breakfast in the classroom, I've now lost 20-25 minutes of instruction time. I have to stand by the food (can't have a student do that now), log it, count it to make sure entrees match with fruit (if not, toss some fruit over to the sharing basket/but in the lunch room you can't share???), listen to several students questions or problem, take tardy slips (don't lose those while you are at the back of the room serving breakfast), reminding them everyday to do the same routine we've been doing since August, go to my computer and log onto Gradebook to enter roll, keep telling students to eat instead of talk (those that have seconds (2 milks, 2 entrees need more time), tell them numerous times to begin their self-start; we don't begin 'school' until 9:20-9:25. And that's not to mention that on Mondays the Star Spangled Banner is played and we say the pledge. Oh, and add announcements in there somewhere. Breakfast needs to be in the cafeteria where students can eat and chit chat and learn to sit at a table and enjoy a meal. Not turned around in their seats, walking around the room, shoving food in their desks (yes, they have been told over 100 times/one time we had fruit flies for weeks until I found a rotten banana and rotten apples mushed in back of a student's desk), milk everywhere, smelling sink where the left over milk is emptied....... We waste 15 minutes during small group time by 15 students going next door to get a Chromebook from a cart that needs to be unlocked, walking back, students going to their group desk seat and logging on. That's one group time wasted. I asked Donor Choose for 15 Chromebooks but I haven't been lucky with that. Sorry for the run-on's and fragments.

Robin Harman, Granite School District

Use the science and real rational of the educating process to direct your decision making and money directions. Testing is not the solution to success of students. Neither is school grading. Class size affects student outcomes. Parents and communities need to be held accountable for their children not just an educator, their administration or the school. Where the money is spent needs to be directed to these issues not charter special interest groups.

Johanna McMullin, Granite School District

Most teachers are very hard working and love their jobs. I take home school work every night, because it's important to me that my students succeed this year and have learned what they need to be successful in their next school year.

Susan Pratt, North Summit School District

Why is Utah ranked so low in average spending per pupil and test scores? I have now taught 5th grade classes with 28, 37, 34, 30, 31 students in each of the past 5 years. How can I effectively teach with so many students in my class? How come charter schools receive money from the state, but they aren't held to the same standards as public schools?

Peter Haslam, Salt Lake City School District

Time commitments have increased due to additional responsibilities - flex time classes requiring preparation, referrals to special programs like homework lunch and academic support, increased expectations for remediation & retesting, increased quantity and variety of parental notification, teacher training on days that used to be preparation days. There has not been additional compensation for these extra responsibilities, thus restricting my availability for
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the second job that I need in order to support my family. Additionally, parents and administrators are quick to criticize any perceived shortcomings in any of these areas. On top of that is the constant push from state and district officials and policies to improve, putting more blame and responsibility on teachers instead of students.

Karl Powell, Weber School District

I spent thousands of dollars on my education and training. I spent hours and hours honing my craft. Because of administrators who are more interested in climbing the slippery pole than treating teachers as colleagues, I am no longer teaching in the subject area of my major. This is one example of many other teachers where we are not being treated as professionals. Yes, money is important. But as long as teachers are being treated without respect, the teacher shortage won't be fixed.

Johnny Aird, Davis School District

I would like them to know how much our special education student count has increased over the last few years. These students are coming with more and more deficits and more and more intense behaviors. We have rooms the sizes of closets with an average of 11 to 14 students per group. Our small group instruction is a thing of the past. We have been very creative in making sure that all student needs are met but feel that we still fall short. We are told that there is not funding for additional support in our classrooms, we are told that the norm for special education student case load is 40 to 50 students per one teacher. We are the last group thought about when it comes to new technology. Between two full time special education teachers we share 11 ipads for 55 students. The technology we do have is usually the oldest in the school but we are grateful to have any! We constantly take on student teachers just to have additional bodies in the rooms for support. We have little to no prep time due to the amount of students needing to be seen and the services that need to be provided. The motto is do more with less and we magically make it work but only to the best of our abilities. Support public education but in doing so also support special education and realize that those students count too!

Samantha Johnson, Davis School District

That with the shortage of teachers we should be better supporting them. No new bills to make it tougher on new teachers. Ann Millner's new law is a joke. Also the state school board needs to back off and start supporting teachers for a change.

Chad Staley, North Summit School District

The present state of funding of education in Utah is appalling! It demeans teachers and also students, setting a standard for low expectations and low self esteem. This affects students all their lives.

Heather Dorrell, Other

I teach kindergarten and it is becoming increasingly more difficult every year. We have more students than we have ever had before and there are more and more behavioral issues that we all deal with. These impact our ability to teach, which is not fair to the other students. Teacher morale is not as high as it once was with all that we deal with, along with the high emphasis on testing. I understand the importance of testing, but there are many factors that are not considered when children are tested. I have seen high ability children have an “off day” and perform poorly. Children who have speech issues and IEP's are not given accommodations on the DIBELS test. Kindergartners are not required to be in school, but still count in how well our classes perform on the test, reflecting back on the teacher. I spend a great deal of my own money, which I know is my own choice. I am frustrated that we are no longer allowed to ask for class donations, but we are required to pay jr. high and high school fees. I truly love my job, but the concerns stated above are concerns that I have heard from many other teachers as well. Thank you for your attention.

Hayley Brown, Alpine School District

Come to my class of 36 kids, and teach for a week. See the whole week.

Traci Parkinson, Alpine School District
School and Educator Accountability

Class sizes need to be addressed, along with time to teach the standards deeper.

*Emilie Whitehead, Alpine School District*

I would love to see members of the legislature be required to spend a large number of consecutive hours in schools in their districts (NOT just token visits). "Come, walk in our shoes", see and experience what we need instead of just hear about it. State and Local School Board Members should do the same.

*Susan S. Petersen, Box Elder School District*

The three computers we have for a small student lab in the classroom are old and not supported by the district. They are being taken away with nothing to take its place. The teacher is expected to do something like write grants to fix the problem.

*Helena Langford, Davis School District*

Please communicate why it's not okay for our test scores to be high? The writing assessment just changed because our students are doing well with persuasive/argumentative writing so now the test has been changed to be more challenging. I don't understand it nor does the public!

*Karen Congram, Granite School District*

It is unfair to hold teachers responsible for student scores, when you just got rid of laws for truancy. I have 3 students this year that miss literally 50% of school and I am still held responsible for their scores. It is so discouraging to work so hard and have your teachers scores published. Parents don't know if you have students that don't come to school, or a lot of resource students, or other factors that skew the scores. They only see your overall score and then we are judged on this. It is so stressful for teachers. This is a major reason teachers get discouraged and have threatened to quit.

*Valerie Hathaway, Juab School District*

Teachers are hard working professionals with education. We need to be compensated as such. We need to have some incentive to stay and deal with the growing needs of this generation.

*Jami Houle, Alpine School District*

Providing teacher merit-pay by increasing the accountability for high end-of-level students scores without being able to control what happens in a child's life outside of school is like expecting a dentist to get paid only if all of his patients have no cavities, regardless of how well they brush their teeth at home, and how strong their teeth naturally are as a result of their genetics. Most teachers work harder than other professions, but get the bad rap due to things completely out of their control. It is a highly stressful job and continues to become increasingly more stressful because of the demands imposed upon them from the public and legislators.

*Sharon Cook, Box Elder School District*

I have been teaching for a few years. In this time I have seen many great teachers quit because their needs were not meet. Instead of lowering the standards to become a teacher, the state should focus on keeping the teachers they have. The reasons teachers quit include: too many students, not enough pay, lack of supplies, and too much accountability for student achievement (at some point parents need to be held accountable too).

*Tralyn DeBres, Box Elder School District*

The morale of teachers is ever decreasing. Teachers need support from legislators to help them stay successful in teaching!

*Holly Stuart, Cache County School District*

Visit our classrooms.

*Alzina Barnhill, Davis School District*
School and Educator Accountability

I believe providing up to date technology in school is important. The problem comes in that technology needs to be replaced. If it is used how we should use it, then we are going to need replacement within 5 years. This is never written into budgets and is very frustrating to many of us when we go to use the technology and it doesn't work. There are days when the only thing that works in my room is my white board. That is right, not my smart board but my white board. I just ask that while getting technology into the classroom is important, it is just as important to update it periodically.

Lori Burnett, Davis School District

The role of an educator has been overwhelmingly modified in the past several years. Today’s teacher in the public schools must prepare several lessons for the same classroom of students. My daughter is a high school teacher. She is often very overwhelmed preparing her lessons for an AP history class. Her classrooms have close to, or over, 30 students each. The students in each class include: IEP, 504, Foreign Exchange, ELL, along with a few high achieving. She has to prepare four lessons, in order to reach each students needs, for each class period. She also has to deal with lazy students, unreasonable parents, and members of the faculty who are so burned out they no longer participate in extracurricular clubs and coaching. She could have pursued many careers but she wanted to teach secondary public education. She had some wonderful teachers who inspired her and she longs to do the same for others. She is single and has no social life because so much time is spent writing lessons, helping students individually, and coaching. She is a GREAT teacher exhibited by the number of students who want HER as a teacher! But she is honestly questioning if she made the right career choice. She loves her students and hopes she is inspiring them through her lessons. She is a real teacher! But she is wondering about exploring other options.

Darline DeBry, Emery County School District

We are doing the entire school system a great disservice and cheating students of a quality education when we do not give them well paid, qualified teachers and do not hold charter schools accountable for test results.

Tracy Bell, Granite School District

When I went into teaching, I went into it knowing I would not make a lot of money. However, I was allowed autonomy to design curriculum for my individual students. Now, I am spending hours preparing students for a lot of standardized tests (SAGE, SLO, District reading and writing benchmarks). I am also spending hours preparing portfolios to prove I am a qualified teacher. All this time not spent on my students is drawing my attention more to my low salary and huge class sizes. Teachers are getting burned out and that is what is causing the huge shortage.

Tami Ewell, Jordan School District

Get out in the schools and sub in a class. See what is happening before you make any decision.

Kim Howard, Jordan School District

I have great students and I believe all students can learn, but I have students that don’t attend or when they do they have their hoodies on and earphones in. When we as teachers try to address the behavior or address any school challenge, we get bullied to keep our opinions to our self's. It never use to be that way it started when school grades were implemented.

Dave Anderson, Logan City School District

Teachers want to be excellent. We work extra hours to create interesting lessons, grade the rigorous assignments we assign, and find new materials. We love our content and we enjoy working with students and helping them learn and grow. But we have many factors working against us. 1) Class sizes are so large, it is hard to meet the needs of individual learners. 2) Teacher pay does not adequately compensate teachers for all the extra hours that are spent, and teachers quickly realize it is VERY DIFFICULT to support a family on the amount they earn. (Have you seen home prices?) 3) Legislation is passed without teacher input that adds to a teacher’s responsibilities but doesn’t help student learning. For example: sage testing was required, but students opt out or race through it just to be done, and then schools/teachers receive a poor “school grade.”

Lori Zaremba, Nebo School District
Attract and RETAIN quality teachers.  

David Bettinson, Other

Over the past 10 years since I've become a teacher, I have seen the expectations placed upon teachers increase significantly to the point that each year, I see many of my colleagues in the profession leave the teaching profession to pursue other career paths. They have no choice but to do so after being pushed to teacher burnout trying to keep up with daily responsibilities as a teacher and attend more meetings serving on at least one school committee or being asked to create curriculum notebooks with no more pay. I, myself contemplate this action on a daily basis due to the added expectations teachers are asked to complete each year with meager salaries that can barely support ourselves and/or our families especially if we own our homes or cars. In addition, class sizes in public schools are way too big to effectively teach our students. For example, in classes that require a lot of writing from our students, it is almost impossible to give immediate, quality feedback to our students if we want to also, meet the demands of our personal lives. It feels like the golden age of teaching has passed where we were trusted to do our jobs, catering to the various learning styles of students is completely ignored by being required to give them more and more standardized tests that reflect badly on the teachers if they do not do well. For many teachers, their love and passion of teaching is getting outweighed by the increased burdens placed on teaching each year. Please do something to ease our burdens as soon as possible. We are losing wonderful teachers each year for these reasons and more.

Nathalie LeBras, Provo City School District

I would like to share the realities of the work load including the emotional burnout.

Aaryn Birchell, Uintah School District

I work hard every day trying to make a difference in student's lives. I would appreciate it if some of the legislators would acknowledge that we do hard things every day under tough circumstances. We need more help with difficult kids. We need more help in the classroom with either more aide time or smaller class sizes.

Lynne Graves, Weber School District

Please come into our classrooms before making legislative choices.

Wendy Western, Cache County School District

The unpaid time and overall commitment that I give to my job that goes unrecognized and uncompensated.

Jennifer Mattson, Canyons School District

We're overworked and exhausted. Many of us are tired of having to work on school things evenings and weekends just to try to keep up. We are being held accountable for things we have no control over. Parents and students don't have any accountability unless they choose to. We are expected to do more than 1 person can possibly do and are criticized when we can't do it. We are professionals. We work in education every day and we should be making educational decisions for our students. We have too many students with many different needs and we can't help all of them. Our curriculum is more than we can teach in one year. We've had many things added to the curriculum, but very few things taken out. We're stressed because of testing and observations and evaluations and so many other things expected of us. Valuable learning time is spent testing and practicing for tests. Tired, stressed out teachers don't make better teachers or enhance relationships with students and it does not improve education. If I were choosing a career today, I definitely would not choose education because of the stress and my own time and money that goes into it.

Susan Carter, Davis School District
School and Educator Accountability

No matter how many hours I put in or how hard I try, it's never enough. The district just keeps handing down more and more that they expect me to accomplish in the same amount of time each day. They open the buildings on Saturdays so that we can donate even more time. Every day I think to myself, "This is why no one is going into education."

Lisa Gehmlich, Davis School District

Children learn from their parents. If the parents don't value education they won't help their children to improve and value learning. Get the parents off "free money" and get them working for what they receive to help them understand that education and working are the way to provide for your family.

ReNae Jackson, Davis School District

How unfair many teachers are treated.

Michele Hart, Granite School District

They are making very important decisions, that unfortunately many of them do not have enough information or experience to address. I want them to spend some considerable time in the classroom teaching, and experiencing a classroom situation in Utah before they start deciding what is important and what is not.

Gloria Holmstead, Granite School District

I appreciate how my local legislators support education and make a difference for myself and the families they serve. Patrice Arent, Jani Iwamoto from my school area. Marie Poulsen, Brian Shiozawa (until he just left) from my home area. They are all great supporters of education and I appreciate them!

Kelly Kline, Granite School District

Teaching has changed so we are not only teaching but expected to entertain as well. This takes time and research and technology is moving so fast it takes time to learn. I feel that we need to decrease class sizes, increase preparation time, make sure we have quality teachers by paying more and holding them to a high standard which means giving them support in terms of continuing education, etc. I need to stay current in my subject area as well as in teaching methodologies.

Angie Pommerening, Jordan School District

My job, my passion for everything it entails doesn't end. There is an unwritten expectation that as a professional I am "on call" all the time looking out for the needs of my students inside and outside the school walls. I wish better pay was given for the demands this amazing job requires. I am a dedicated teacher and love what I do but having a Masters +30 seems like more pay should be extended. I am worth it.

Tracy Wareniski, Nebo School District

So many good things happen when we are allowed to do them

Shannon Iseminger, Weber School District

No all children are equally privileged. Get out into the schools and talk to us (teachers)!

Moani Revoir, Alpine School District

Giving timely and detailed feedback to students is one of the best ways for students to receive correction and improve. Getting to know each and every child to help them learn is also very important. However, doing this with student loads of over 238 students is unrealistic without spending nights and time on the weekends to make this happen. If we don’t reduce class sizes in our schools, we are just cheating our youth out of their deserved education.

Cassie Grether, Davis School District

I work as a special education resource teacher. The added paperwork involved is already a known, challenging factor. However, my greatest concern is the shortage of teachers we have to provide "specialized teaching". We have
2 full time teachers and 1 aide to spread over 52+ students with learning disabilities and/or behavior concerns. I would like the legislators to imagine meeting with a group of 6-7 peers and having the following occur during the first 30 minutes: 1- peer comes in defiant and unwilling to participate in group except for calling out off topic remarks, 2- peer begins crying that another peer is looking at him, 3- peer does not understand topic and is unwilling to listen long enough for the speaker to explain it, 4- peer makes silly remarks trying to disrupt group...and etc. The only way to address this is to have more support/aides to squelch the tiny issue before it becomes full blown and the learning stops. My point is smaller classes allow teachers to address individual needs more appropriately and quicker.

Janet Hilton, Davis School District

I have had 30 students in my 1st grade classroom for at least 5 years now. More and more expectations are placed upon our shoulders as teachers and with that the tools necessary are not provided. We are exhausted and need advocates who will help and assist and not just tell us what to do! There is a big piece missing in all of the questions and items on the agenda and that is of the human side. We are working with children who need to feel safe, loved, listened to and not assigned as a number and put on a machine to learn.

Brenda Lanham, Davis School District

Come see what it's really like in a Title One school.

Krista Nielsen, Davis School District

How changes in community values and priorities have impacted expectations placed on educators.

Brett L. Taylor, Davis School District

We have committed teachers working hard every day. We need to find ways to support them and help make the job easier instead of harder. We are chasing people away from teaching with high stakes testing, large class sizes, increased responsibilities, and lack of a livable wage.

Tracy Hansen, Granite School District

There is a huge disparity of resources, teacher training, and needs amongst the schools in Utah. Rather than focusing on test scores and school grades that label minorities and economically disadvantaged students, and therefore the teachers of these students, as “failing”, use the data that you have collected to provide resources to teach life skills and sociable behaviors to students in need. Stop building the school to prison pipeline. Start caring about the people in need, they are part of your community no matter how high on the hill you build your house.

Nichole Hillburn, Granite School District

Please spend a day in the title one schools of your district.

Janet Sharp, Granite School District

The story is simply too complicated...Everyone wants to blame the teachers when the test scores are low, when the failing rates are high, when attendance is bad. Everyone blames the teacher because it is the only person in the equation that can be controlled. It's too dangerous and political to hold parents accountable. It's not “fair” to hold the students accountable. It's never a problem with the curriculum or the class size...How many meetings I have been in where I am told a good teacher can teach any size class. So, the teacher gets blamed. We have communities in this state that are at risk. Schools in which 70% of the teenagers are reading at a 4th grade level. Entire buildings of students who are so depressed and anxious that learning is virtually impossible. But, it is the teacher that is blamed. We are told to collect more data. We are told to put our lessons into templates. We are told to only teach that which can be tested. And, therefore, teachers burn out and leave the profession. Teaching is a hard job on the best of days, but when you are constantly blamed for every single failure in the system, the job is unbearable. The real solution to these problems is for everyone to take a step back and look at the whole forest. The trees are dying.

Mary Ward, Granite School District
Students need to be the focus of all concerned and involved with education. Politics and test scores are driving everything and kids are being forgotten. Assessment and instruction needs to be driven by student needs and be developmentally appropriate. Standardized testing, constant data meetings and testing, and a lack of the "basics" are taking away from what elementary students truly need to be successful...a firm and solid foundation. We don't teach a grade level such as 2nd or 5th. Instead, we teach an age group that has all levels crammed into it: from beginning readers all the way up to high-school level readers because there is no accountability on students and parents to make education a priority. High stakes testing has created a host of issues for parents, students, and teachers such as anxiety, stress, cheating, etc.

Tricia Adams, Iron County School District

Every year the classrooms get more crowded. Every year teachers burnout because of the load and lack of mentoring. Our new teachers don't get what they need and then don't get their contracts renewed because they aren't up to standard. No wonder we have a teacher shortage.

Connie Wallace, Iron County School District

Class size does make a huge difference

Amy Patterson, Murray City School District

We need to supply students with a very high quality of education that will help the students in their field of employment and ability to function in society. We are not in the business of replacing parental responsibility and individual accountability.

Thomas Hawks, Nebo School District

Newcomer English language learner students need more support and more time to learn English and the school system before they are required to meet standards expected for proficiency on standard tests

Margo Harpster, Salt Lake City School District

Put children first.

Peggy L Twitchell, Sevier School District

I have too many students. I also do not have the technology or equipment I need to provide a quality education so the students have the skills they need to succeed in higher education.

Jalayne Engberg, Alpine School District

Come spend three full days in my public school classroom, from the beginning of class until classes end, including lunch. After about three full days, you as a legislator will be have a better understanding of the educational process!

Christine Redford, Alpine School District

I have no problem with end of year testing. As an educator, I am able to learn a lot from end of year tests. The issue I have is there is accountability for the teacher (evaluation) and school (school grading), but the students don't have any accountability with the test. I am unable to hold them accountable for their results and they know it. I have had students tell me they struggled on one of the first problems and so they decided it wasn't worth it. They finished the test in about 5 or 10 minutes. By not holding students accountable, it is hard to get good reliable feedback from the end of year tests. Also, parents are able to "opt out" their students. This also makes the information received from these tests skewed and not a true reflection on the school or teacher. If the school is held responsible for the data then the data needs to be a true reflection on what is going on inside the doors.

Kyle Sanderson, Alpine School District

Teachers are overwhelmed with the expectations to plan and prepare whole group and differentiated lesson plans, to track, perform weekly progress monitoring and create documentation for low-performing and behaviorally challenging students, to attend meetings 2 or more times a week, to fulfill CT0SS requirements, to grade papers, to fill out report
School and Educator Accountability
cards and parent-teacher conference forms, to keep in contact with parents, to deal with students’ daily emotional,
social and physical needs on top of teaching the state and district standards to an unlimited number of students. We
are held responsible for our students’ performance on district and state testing, yet get little to no state or district
support with regards to student attendance or student behavioral issues. I personally, spend on average 18 -20 hours
of my own time (off-contract time) weekly to keep up with the demands of my job because of the lack of paid planning
time and the amount of on-contract time I have to spend doing after school duty and attending meetings. I believe
most teachers would prefer to have more uninterrupted, self-directed on-contract time to meet all of the requirements
of our job and to collaborate with each other, than to have any other kind of compensation. We want to do a great job
educating and building positive relationships with our students but the current lack of preparation time and the
unreasonable list of expectations on us make it impossible.

Kay Bailey, Canyons School District

The fact that Arizona ranks higher than Utah, and yet Utah piles more responsibilities and higher expectations on
teachers, speaks volumes. How about we go back to basics for what a teacher is expected to do, and hire specialists
to deal with behaviors, data collecting, and interventions for severe academic needs? And instead of piling as many
students as can fit into a classroom, let’s get smaller class sizes so students each benefit from more one-on-one
interaction with their teacher? We have forgotten how badly teachers are taken for granted, but even more just how
much impact a teacher can have, given the right circumstances.

Keith Piccolo, Canyons School District

I want legislators to realize that teachers ARE doing everything they can for children. I feel that they treat educators
as "the enemy", when we are the exact opposite. There are excellent teachers out there, but because of test scores
and school grades, educators are blamed for problems that are not in their control. The classes are huge, as
educators, we take that on and do everything we can for each child.

Franki Galbraith, Davis School District

They are out of touch with what they fill is important to mandate teachers to do with their accountability. I am an early
childhood teacher who is very sad at the lack of “play” time children have. I feel like over my years of teaching I am
holding these little ones to what I taught in first grade with only two and a half hours. We are programing child to not
have opportunities to explore their would and make real life connections.

Patrice Holbrook, Davis School District

When students are not at school I can't do my job, More help for dysfunctional families

Julie Johnson, Davis School District

Teachers have no rights, the administration is given all the power, they have no checks and balances, this promotes
corruption

Kristie McLeod, Davis School District

Teachers impact all people's lives through the process of helping children learn how to read and write.

Karen F. Sheets, Davis School District

Many teachers are discouraged with the teaching profession. Between increased behavior problems, learning issues,
lack of responsibility from students and parents, constant changing of curriculum, entitlement, class sizes, etc., it is a
hard profession. Even though, we put our heart and soul into teaching.

Terri Wall, Davis School District

I teach at an "at risk" school. We are on turn around alert. The teachers at my school go above and beyond what is
required for their classes. We appreciate the money the legislature gives us, but I am still spending hundreds of
dollars of my own like all teachers. Our kids don't have a lot of parental support to encourage them to read and
parents are so busy making ends meet that the student's school experience suffers. It is no fault of the student's, but
School and Educator Accountability

they are the ones being punished when schools are graded on test results. We all love our students, or we would not be in this line of work. We want them to succeed, but expectations are so high and we're teaching so much to the academic core, that the student is not being taught to make them a more rounded individual.

Kris Fisher, Granite School District

When there are no consequences for students who don't try and parents who don't help, when can we hold them accountable? If they are an equal stakeholder in the education process, they too should be held accountable. Why not take away their child tax credit. Education is a cultural importance and there are too many who do not value it. If there was a monetary consequence, there would be some value given.

Sage Harmsen, Granite School District

I'm still a provisional teacher, so I don't have a wealth of stories just yet. But what I do see in my schools are teachers who are giving up on students just a few months into the year because they're not equipped to give that student the work they need. They have 30+ other students they have to ensure meet certain benchmarks, and they're unsure of how to deal with certain behaviors so those students who need the most care and extra help get tossed to the SpEd teachers and generally forgotten. That's something that needs to change. Children shouldn't be falling through the cracks.

Maren Holmes, Granite School District

Teachers are constantly asked to do more and more without the tools, or time to implement the new requirements. Too much instructional time is taken with the testing we're required to do. Elementary classrooms with near thirty students add to the stress.

Janet Juengel, Granite School District

I think it is the same thing you hear over and over again, teachers are held accountable for so much but given less resources. We are also dealing with an increasing number of disrespectful students and parents. I would love to see some sort of parent accountability for their own child's success.

Leonora McCarrey, Granite School District

Teachers need to feel they are supported by legislators. The bar on classroom and student growth has risen to an almost unattainable level. Consider our students: some are homeless, receive no parental support, are hungry, have moved several times a year, have disabilities, etc. Our students cannot fit into a common goal. And teachers should not be considered failures if students cannot reach the state expectation. Please consider the individuality of all children in our state, in our schools.

Lori Gray, Jordan School District

Students deserve highly qualified teachers, small class sizes to meet individual students needs, that if it's not broken don't fix it. Students need a variety of classes and for students to be college ready they need to have a full schedule of credits all 4 years and middle school curriculum needs to continue to have a rigor to prepare them for high school.

Denise Dewsnup, Millard School District

This year has been the most frustrating year for me. I feel like have no support from parents (they are unable to be reached or working 2 1/2 jobs and can't be contacted to talk them about their student), if I send a student to the office they return to me (issue solved for a minute). I'm told by administrators their hands are tied as there is no attendance court/rules anymore. I have students that are constantly tardy and interrupting my lessons. I go home feeling beat up emotionally and mentally daily. I've taught 22 years. If someone asked me if they should teach...I would answer no! We have no support, no help, and no appreciation. Why? I do appreciate the raise we got last year. It was great!!! There is more to our job than teaching. We are parents, cops, counselors, life coaches, care givers, planners, and the list goes on....thanks for listening.

Shellie Anderson, Nebo School District
School and Educator Accountability

I have been a full day kindergarten teacher for four years. I have had classes well over 20 students. In these classes I have had MAJOR behavior problems. Sometimes up to three students. These students take all of the teacher time. I did not feel that I was teaching, I felt that I was managing a terrible situation all day, every day. I had little support from my administration (who didn't want to be the bad guys). I know I am not alone in these types of situations. It is ridiculous that there is no support. Parents want it to be our problem, not theirs. But the other students in the class are the ones who suffer. Why would I want to stay teaching? I often feel that there are better things out there, even though I love the kids, and I love teaching.

Jennifer Prince, Nebo School District

Teachers are overworked with the class sizes, and the amount of testing overwhelming the teaching. It takes the brain time to put concepts into long-term memory, and students are suffering with over-testing and not enough time to learn. The teachers I work with are always talking about another mandatory test coming up. It's taking away from the kids. In the last 7 years of teaching, I have seen many classes over 30. And to be realistic, anything over 25 students at once is not teaching, just managing the load. Students learn better when there is a tight sense of community--much harder to do in a class over 25.

Erica Hammon, Salt Lake City School District

My biggest concern as an educator are the students who come through my classroom door already tired, stressed and upset because of their home life. Their needs are not being met and with such large class sizes I'm supposed to somehow motivate them to "let it go" and focus on learning. Then when that doesn't really work I am graded on their ability to test well regardless of their circumstances and that they are over tested. I'd like my legislators to work in a title I school for 6 weeks, and their pay, insurance and overall job rating be based on a test that would sum up everything they taught those little 10 year old kids in ONLY six weeks. Schools and teachers cannot control the minds of others, not even the precious little people we teach. It is hard to stay motivated when your own professional ability lies in the hands of a child. What keeps me going is not pay, not the incredibly long, in depth evaluation sheet. I keep going for the kids I know may not remember how to turn a mixed number into a improper fraction. I hope they will remember feeling important, smart and know someone believes in them.

Vivian Rose, Tooele County School District

As an elementary educator, WE NEED MORE HELP!!!! I need money for a teacher assistant to enter data, help with testing, making copies, etc.

Claudia Empey, Washington County School District

If merit pay is funded, focus should be on student achievement that is not solely based on standardized testing. Teachers in special education settings often have children who do not do well on standardized tests, and this should not be the only way to gauge the effectiveness or qualifications of teachers. In addition, recent budget cuts to classroom supply funds has made it difficult to provide/replace materials needed for child success in classrooms. Hiring teachers without a teaching degree and expecting seasoned teachers to "mentor" them in vital strategies such as classroom management is unreasonable. Teachers are not compensated for the number of hours they work outside of contract time in order to help the children be successful and complete other required assignments. Mentoring unqualified teachers is yet another responsibility on which experienced teachers are expected to undertake in already strenuous circumstances, without additional compensation. In order to keep qualified teachers, districts/state should offer incentives such as helping with student loan repayment and increasing salaries of licensed teachers, instead of trying to fill positions with persons unexperienced or uneducated in the field of teaching. Hiring persons who have not graduated from an accredited college with a degree in teaching is like a "slap in the face" to those teachers who have worked for such an achievement and indicates to them that their hard work is unrecognized and unnecessary. Not everyone can be a teacher and it is high time that they are recognized for what they have achieved and not given the indication that they can be replaced with anyone off the street. Teachers are what makes all other professions and without them other careers would cease to exist.

Tina Cole, Alpine School District
School and Educator Accountability

We need help with one-on-one technology in our classrooms. I just received my first iPad for my classroom, so we have one to share with the class. Pay the teachers to keep the teachers. Charter schools need to held to the same standard as all schools. Why do they have so much money to go on all their field trips? Does the public pay for the trips to National parks? We need more help with social issues in our schools. We need more help with students with special needs, the students who don’t qualify for resource.

Denise Lee, Box Elder School District

Why is it always a battle with legislators to fund public education? Utah is a state of family unity, so why not provide what is best for children without always having to prove why we need money to support education. I would love legislators to come spend a week in my classroom and school, so they could see for themselves why public funds are important. Teachers put in so much extra time to planning for their student's learning without compensation and yet, they are still being told it's not enough, plus the message being sent from legislators, we don’t value our teachers, you are just expected to meet all the demands. The teacher shortage comes from low pay and demanding expectations, I feel legislators created it to begin with.

Jacquelyn Austin, Cache County School District

Education is vital part of a better society, if we care so much about families and children here in Utah you can show it by supporting education legislation that betters schools and helps keep professional and qualified employees in our state.

Lauren Rich, Davis School District

Charter schools and public schools must be held to the same educational standards (accountability). Utah education should use ESSA as a guide for better education of our students. Utah is competing NATIONALLY for quality teachers. Utah’s quality of life is not as good as it has been in the past because of air quality and higher cost of living. Those cannot be used as recruitment vehicles as in the past. Teacher compensation is becoming MORE of a priority in obtaining quality teachers!

Dennis Heidel, Granite School District

Quit marginalizing education and thinking one-size-fits-all packaging works when kids don't come in those packages. A business model is not best for education. Public funding is critical for education or decisions about your age related needs will be made by those not prepared.

Jill Sparks, Granite School District

We need to attract and retain quality teachers. Look at holding schools accountable for learning, but more importantly, make teaching a respectable profession again. Look at increasing funding and reducing ridiculous demands on teachers in order to attract and keep the best and brightest.

Rachelle Durrant, Uintah School District

Do something about education in Utah--teachers are worn out doing paperwork and charts when they need to be using their creativity and skills to teach their classes.

Cheryl Rogers, Alpine School District

We have to allow the teachers to have more teeth in holding kids responsible. Instead of making teachers allow kids to keep redoing things. Kids have to be allowed to fail if they don't do their part. Also when it comes to the point that the judicial system can't do anything to kids if they are on school property, so much so that if a student is going to break a law such as drinking alcohol they want to do it on school grounds we are in trouble. Also there needs to be something that balances out the money available to schools instead of having the haves and the have nots. In my 30 years of education there is so much more expected both time and stress related and the pay relatively the same.

Van Park, Box Elder School District
School and Educator Accountability

I have concerns that often money is allocated but there are so many strings attached or in the case of technology even required vendors with strings attached that it becomes difficult to put the money toward the greatest need. Additionally we have hard working teachers. When you hear the news stories otherwise these are the outliers. Please be mindful that all teachers/educators are not children who need to be heavily monitored and told what to do for EVERYTHING or reprimanded.

Leslie Burt, Cache County School District

I welcome legislators into my classroom so they can see how underfunded and unsupported teachers are with the expectations that are placed on us. We are willing to do the work, but it is impossible to make the gains they are expecting of us without more money for supplies, technology, and salaries of support staff.

Andrea Grant, Granite School District

Please fund education in Utah and get out of our way and let us teach.

Kim Irvine, Weber School District

Charter schools are receiving public funds but not being held to public standards. When a student moves from public to charter, the money doesn't follow the student. If public schools are held to a high standard, anyone receiving public funds should be held to the same standard. Charter schools are stealing funds by taking public students and then handing them back to public after money has been taken. A loop hole has been provided and not fixed. Teachers leave public schools because it has been made harder then charter schools. Rules are being made by people on the hill, when they have never been a teacher. They do what they want and don't listen to the people who put them in office.

Clint Sanderson, Alpine School District

For far too long the legislature has focused on what parents and students want in education, not what is actually needed to make it work properly in the state of Utah. Now we find ourselves in a situation where test scores are dropping, charter schools are not fixing the problem, students are leaving high school unprepared, and the legislature continues to ignore the voices of those who know the solution because it is politically convenient.

Dan Evans, Davis School District

I would like to share the message of how much we need to focus on the whole child. I have only worked in schools that are ravished with poverty, english language learners, and unmet basic needs. Each year I have taught, at least one student has had a primary caretaker die or face long term incarceration. This year, I have already had two students with parents die. Let me tell you, that when a kid comes in and can only talk about how dad overdosed last night, it changes your lesson plan. I'm tired of saying how "heartbreaking" these stories are. I'm tired of placating emotions that do nothing to change the situation. Fund a full time social worker and psychologist in every building. Encourage the creation of social emotional core standards so we can recognize schools aren't just reading writing and arithmetic. Childhood trauma is real, and has significant effect on the brain. Give these kids the support they need so they can make a better life for themselves.

Taylor Layton, Granite School District

As someone in the education system it feels like the people making decisions don't really understand what it is like to be at a title-1 institution or what teachers actually do. And I feel like they make uneducated decisions that don't directly affect them, and so they aren't changing or fixing the issues. They need to go visit a school and educate themselves.

Lauren Avelar, Salt Lake City School District

I am in an older school and technology is not equal from school to school. We are charged with preparing students to go out and succeed but lack the technology to help them succeed in a world driven by technology.

Janys Hutchings, Alpine School District
School and Educator Accountability

I teach at a turn around school. Our students eat most of their meals at school and for many, their teachers are the only adult they trust or have a relationship with. They love their teachers so much but they are spread so thin! On top of teaching the standards and expected to make the growth, we are teaching them basic skills that they don’t get at home. We get very little support from outside the school.

Amanda Cornwell, Granite School District

I work in a Title 1 school. Every year the demands on teachers, schools and districts grow without accompanying support. A new layer of expectation, policy or law is added every year. Meanwhile, the social issues that our students deal with are more difficult year by year and continue to affect more students. As a teacher, I feel stressed and pressured to figuratively (by myself) cure “cancer.” There is no one in my classroom helping meet the social, behavioral and academic needs of my students besides me. Yes, other people can (and do!) help from time to time by offering suggestions or intervening in specific behavior related instances. However, teachers need more support. We need more daily hands-on help to share the burden and create more opportunities to meet the needs of these children. I believe in teaching to the needs of those I teach, but I am only one person. In my estimation, this is why retaining teachers is so hard. The disparity of the expectation versus the day to day reality is great. The stress, therefore, is often unbearable, flattening and morale killing. It is honestly why I am losing my love of teaching and why I am currently looking to other career avenues.

Kerri Rustad, Granite School District

Teachers need to be paid for the many extra hours it takes to meet the ever changing new curriculum demands for the technology classes, and also be provided adequate training.

Carol Meinhardt, Millard School District

One local charter school has enough money to take their graduating class to Disneyland each year and we are struggling to have enough internet support or chrome books in each class to provide modern education. Why do Charter Schools have so much money? Why are we spending valuable time preparing the same thing as the old doctors to prove we are teaching? Isn’t a simple observation by the principal’s sufficient to see who is really teaching and who needs help?

Kathryn Crandall, Nebo School District

While the amount of money I can deduct on taxes is decreasing, the personal cost of purchasing supplies is rising. Students come to school with less every year making it necessary to purchase items myself. This is not ideal for me or my family as that money should not have to be spent on pencils or paper. The stress teachers deal with is also increasing. With expectations rising, less parental support, not enough funds, the stress is making many of my colleagues have increased health issues, myself included, that stem from dealing with the stress.

Carrie Van Nosdol, Nebo School District

Put education at the top of the priorities! We should not be last in the nation every year.

Pat Drussel, Provo City School District

I work in a school building that is getting close to 100 years old. No earthquake proof. No sprinkling system. It is literally sinking into the ground. Yet the east side wealthy got priority (for the most part) with the last bond. The population of the school is 70% free and reduced lunch and about 37% Hispanic. The political activity of senate leaders does not prioritize the citizens of my area. With the continual funding of charter schools our district has diverted money for years to fund its failed experiment. We perform well as a school with the population we serve. The charter school only takes the upper middle income indirectly segregating the city’s population with the busing policy of the school. That sounds like segregation to me. Fund public schools in the districts and dissolve the charters into the districts to help districts diversify where the money goes and maybe equalize the monster that our state has created with charter schools. Senator Hatch has the idea as many of the other legislators that we take only the best and the brightest. “Part of what makes America so special is that we welcome the best and brightest in the world, regardless of their country of origin.” Well guess what? We don’t. We take every student that walks through our
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doors. Charter schools do not do this, they are selective and kick out those who don't fit. Public schools take everybody, regardless of being the best and the brightest. The state legislators need to get off of their elitist high horses and start thinking about everyone and how we can all make it work rather than segregating in charter school mentality.

Robert Lyman, Provo City School District

I love my job. I love what I teach, I love my students, I love my colleagues. However, I find that I get burned out, frustrated, and just plain tired of all the responsibilities placed on teachers. The job is ALL consuming. When I'm not at school I'm still working either spending my own time planning, searching for ideas, grading, discussing with others, getting more education for myself, keeping myself current, etc. my life really is not my own, it belongs to my job. I completely understand why young adults are not going into the education field and I don't blame them. I hate to see it happen, but how can I recommend this job to young adults? We're over worked, under paid, under appreciated not only by some of our parents but by our state government as well. Teachers used to have great insurance and great retirement which compensated for the lack of pay. However that is not the case any longer. Both retirement and insurance benefits have been cut (we now have to pay part of our premiums). We are the only profession that gets punished for our experience- change districts and you get a pay cut and younger teachers are cheaper and hired first. We don't really get tax breaks either...last year I sat with $511.00 worth of receipts for items purchased for my classroom and I could deduct only $250.00 worth. We must do something to entice college students to go into education. My opinion is that the whole system needs to be overhauled. However, I only have 10 years until I can retire. I'm in it for the long haul. The system counts on that so the needed changes won't be seen or addressed until my generation of teachers is gone and we're destitute for teachers. We need to act now. Forget charter schools versus public schools. What good is either without quality teachers?

Michelle A. Harris, Alpine School District

We have to do something to keep teachers in the field and not looking for other jobs.

Kari Nelson, Alpine School District

Increase access to endorsement classes for special educators. I am currently working on a math endorsement and cannot find the final two classes to finish the endorsement. This is very frustrating. I am committed to obtaining the endorsement, but feel that there are too many "hoops" that we educators must jump through to get endorsed. It shouldn't be so difficult! I am also concerned with the requirements and who sets them. Perhaps there should be more online options as teachers are self directed learners. How can I get more involved with this process?

Julie Beane, Canyons School District

Veteran teachers are leaving their profession in record numbers. We need to ask why. There has been a turn in education as it becomes a fiscal competition where parents/patrons are more important than the educators. The loss of respect from parents students and administrators is creating weakness. The teacher shortage is more about the treatment of teachers than just the pay. When we hire people without a teaching degree or certificate we marginalize the expertise of our profession. Then the administrations raise the expectations and hoops to jump through to simply keep a job that there are no qualified teachers to re-fill. How is that positive?

Shelly Christensen, Canyons School District

I previously taught out-of-state before coming to Utah and I have noticed many differences in the education systems. Teachers in Utah are paid significantly less and the shortage is noticeable! Masters degrees are not common-place here because the salary increases are minimal. In other states, masters degrees are the norm and expected. Unfortunately, I now have student loans that are difficult to pay back due to Utah low salaries. I had an extremely easy time finding a job via skype, but I have noticed that it has been difficult to hire new well-qualified teachers. It is also difficult to retain the great teachers that we have because many teachers do not find the salaries worth the cost of paying for day-care. This is a huge problem and needs to be addressed immediately. Lowering teacher licensure requirements and standards is not the answer to maintaining high-quality education for future generations. I know
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teachers that have left teaching or Utah completely to find jobs elsewhere that pay more. On the other hand, I do have teacher friends in other states that could be persuaded to move here if the salaries were higher.

*Sara Finstad, Canyons School District*

Pay teachers better for all of the work that is added to our workload each year and you would retain more teachers. I am a special education teacher who is being required to complete a math certification in order to be "highly qualified" when I had met the requirements years ago by completing the English (ELA) Praxis. The math certification for secondary special education teachers currently requires 2 classes which you must complete Calculus 2 prior to taking, but Calculus 2 is not a requirement for the certification. Inconsistency and requirements like this are very frustrating and discouraging to desire to continue as an educator.

*Angelina Freer, Canyons School District*

Supply & Demand. Return Pension Benefits and increase Teacher pay then the Teacher shortage will go away.

*Emmanuel Kepas, Canyons School District*

You need good qualified teachers and they are hard to find and keep!

*Kristina Schade, Carbon School District*

Teachers are critical to our students and their futures. However, teachers are not treated with respect or like the professionals they are. They have to spend so much time "proving" they can teach and jump through so many hoops that it is not worth the compensations. Teachers no longer have a lot of control in their classroom. Often we are expected to teach everything without support from home. Teachers have become the only ones responsible for a student's education (students and parents are not held accountable for their students' learning). The teacher shortage will not improve until teachers are treated with more respect and are compensated fairly. No one wants to work in an environment where they are treated negatively when they can work in many other fields, receive better compensation, and have a more positive work environment.

*Sara Doty, Davis School District*

The need to find and retain good teachers.

*Christy Fong, Davis School District*

In many parts of the world, teaching is a valued and respected position--from the way it is viewed by students, parents, the community, and the community leaders who make decisions that impact education. Unfortunately, I feel like this is not always the case in our country and especially in Utah. Educators should be drawn here. If we want our students to be able to compete with students across the country and the world, then we need to keep quality teachers in Utah classrooms who have classroom education experience, who have succeeded in a college education program, who have done what was necessary to become knowledgeable in their content areas, who have high morale, and who feel valued. Currently, as a fourth year teacher, I have watched many of my coworkers leave teaching for other professions because of salary, because of the overwhelming workload, and because of the lack of support they are receiving from parents, community members, and community leaders. Others of my coworkers are quickly trying to move away from teaching, but stay in the field of education (by pursuing counseling, administration, district employment), not because they have a desire to work in these areas, but for these same reasons. They feel obligated to move. Why can I not feel valued as a teaching professional in a Utah classroom? Why do I feel like I might need to go elsewhere one day because of the direction we are headed in this state? I am qualified, and I love my job. Unfortunately, if we continue to try to fill classrooms with unqualified teachers and push qualified teachers out with a lack of salary, with a lack of classroom supplies/technology, with a lack of how we value them as professionals--instead of supporting and helping qualified teachers stay in the classroom--then what is going to keep teachers, like me, from leaving? Our students are not going to be receiving the type of quality instruction that they need. Our students are not going to be able to compete with other students across the country and around the world. Teachers make all other professions possible, including
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yours as a legislator. Please help keep qualified teaching professionals in the classroom. We need your desperately need your help!

Carly Maloney, Davis School District

We need strong new teachers who are qualified and supported for the future of our kids in Utah.

Edie Rostal, Davis School District

I am concerned about the teacher shortage. I work in a rural district that pays teachers less than many other districts. I see new teachers getting hired just to move on after a few years. More and more often, people are being hired with no teaching degree. I work in a school that just hired someone right out of high school to teach. Then, it seems like we are inundated with training to help us be effective educators. I believe this is to help those who are not qualified to teach. These ARL's make what teachers make, and I am still paying on my student loans from when I went back to school to get my teaching degree. So, not only are unqualified people are being hired to teach, but I feel penalized for getting the education necessary to do my job effectively. Additionally, because of the teacher shortage, these unqualified people being hired require help from other teachers (because that is what we do), increasing our workload so that we give the students all that we can.

Jennifer Jenkins, Duchesne County School District

Teachers have a passion to help others, but this passion cannot be met if we don't have quality educators in the classroom. The stress it puts on the quality teachers to help those less qualified is significant and unnecessary if we didn't allow under qualified staff into the classroom. More money needs to be put into education, not taken from it. Too many schools are running on too little and the time is now to step up and reclaim the money from legislators. Give each child the same opportunity you had in your schooling, because these students will someday be in your shoes.

Jill Tatton, Grand County School District

I am very concerned about the number of teachers I am seeing leave the teaching profession. Especially over the past 5 yrs. I have been teaching for 28 years and more and more has been added to our plate as educators. So much so that other professions look much more appealing as the work load isn't as demanding and the pay is much higher. We are also dealing with a lot more issues in regards to student behavior. Many feel they can't devote the time that is expected to be an affective teacher. There isn't much planning time for the elementary grades. There are a lot of PLC's and PD meetings, but not much time to plan, prepare, grade,and keep up with how to use technology to help our students learn.

Sherrie Brown, Granite School District

I am a 5th year teacher approaching the "burnout" phase. I teach at a Title I school and resources and support have continued to dwindle year after year. Our school has many students with behavioral issues and we are completely lacking support. We have no money for paraeducators to help and the district requires months of paperwork before intervening. We are drowning. I have a class of 24 students but I spend 80% of my time managing the behavior of 3 students. The students with behavioral issues needs are not being met in our school system. They are not getting the support and interventions they need because we lack resources. These students are also taking away learning time from other students. This is unfair to everyone. I love teaching but I don't even get to teach anymore. I spend all my time managing behavior. The day ends and I'm exhausted, I can't stick around for 2 more hours to catch up on grading and copying unpaid. Teachers need more support, we need help! Schools need copy room aides, paraeducators, behavioral health assistants. We can't do this on our own. Mandatory testing also brings extreme stress to teachers and students. One standardized test does not show the worth of students or teachers. Utah has to reduce the amount of testing, it wastes instructional time and does not accurately show student knowledge.

Laura Heffernan, Granite School District
School and Educator Accountability

Coming from out of state, I took a huge pay cut to teach here. When bargaining my salary, my district did not acknowledge that I have completed not only my SPED credential and master's credential, but also completed 65+ units for my multiple subject credential (to teach k-8 general education). They said that because this coursework was completed before my master's degree was conferred it does not count. I tried to explain that in California, they offer the option to complete a SPED credential as well as a multiple subject and then add your master's. So, my credential was conferred first in August and my master's was conferred in November. I tried to explain this to them that the credentials are independent units of each other and therefore should be counted. This is very frustrating since my district in California honored the amount of units I completed and Utah will not.

Tori Hoffman, Granite School District

I shared with Lisa: Teacher salaries Teacher expectations Problems of Alternative License Route Science curriculum expectations without textbooks or supplies Mentor/student teacher expectations

Patricia Gotberg, Jordan School District

I feel like teachers and legislators are on the same team. We both want what's best for the students in the state of Utah. We want to see our students achieve as high as they can. Sometimes, it feels like well meaning legislation undermines that team goal. We have an end of year test that is intended to help assess students and inform teachers of their teaching. By law, those same tests cannot be included in student grades and students can opt out of them for no reason whatsoever, yet teacher effectiveness is graded on those test results. We both want to see every student succeed in school, but parents can pull students out of school at any point of the year (for family vacations that could be scheduled during calendared breaks in the school year) and it is up to the teacher to get those students back up to speed again or we are the ones who have failed. We want to allow parents to have more of a choice in their student's education, but not all charter schools are held to the same standards with each other, let alone public schools. We want the best teachers in every classroom in the state. We want people who will go to whatever lengths necessary to reach every student in every chair in every classroom in every school (I'm not going to talk about compensation at this point, that is already a well know problem). We then allow people in the classroom with no knowledge of how to manage a class of 30-35 students (or more) because they demonstrated content knowledge on a test and they have taught Sunday School for years. Meanwhile we have seasoned teachers who spent years in college programs learning not only the same content, but how to engage learners of all levels and from different cultures. This seems to undermine that same vision of hiring and retaining highly qualified educators. Again, I firmly believe we are on the same team. I know that every legislator wants to see Utah schools and students lead the country in every aspect. It feels like there are unintended consequences with some legislation that has been passed in recent years that we, as a team, could address to better help Utah students live up to their potential and become the future leaders this state needs. We all want a better future for our children. I think that our team can do that. I know we can.

James Eric Perkins, Jordan School District

I feel like I am constantly being held to a higher standard as a teacher, but my students move on to the next grade regardless of their performance. Students are apathetic about their grades and progress. It is hard work to keep 25-35 students interested in anything. Some are very advanced. Some need lots of extra attention. As a teacher, I am supposed to be able to find ways to differentiate, but it is difficult. There are not many people skilled enough to be effective. We are losing teachers and there are not new ones coming because they realize how difficult it is and for little pay.

Michelle Hatch, Logan City School District

No everyone can teach or lead teachers -- it is a highly skilled profession. Teachers impact all future careers through the work we do. Treat teachers like the professionals we are and support our work and efforts as we care about children and their futures.

Jenn King, Park City School District
School and Educator Accountability

We need to pay teachers according to the consequence of poorly prepared young people—non employment or worse, incarceration. There is a direct correlation. Bet on education, but hedge your bets—expect a lot from them, but be willing to back it up with competitive salaries. Maybe bring back a fair pension, allow for teacher tax exemption, create a pathway to success for both educators and students.

Mary James, Provo City School District

I am a department chair in a high school for special education and my last several hires are on an ARL. We can't get and retain good special education teachers. We need to pay better so we can retain these teachers who teach the most highly impacted students in our society. We will pay in a big way in the future if we fail to educate these students well.

Wendy Nichol, Provo City School District

I'm a special ed teacher 11 years, ranging from elementary resource, elementary self-contained, and high school resource. This year I am an instructional coach for special ed ARLs and interns. As I take a new The burnout rate of special ed teachers is quite high, thus districts are having to rely on hiring an training people who are willing to do an ARL. This is an alarming trend that should be addressed somehow. It is really difficult to teach everything a special ed teacher is expected to do with people who have no pre-service prep! And quite frankly, I think special ed teachers are asked to do more than is possible considering a traditional work day. It is a highly stressful job that is not worth the pay they get.

Ingrid Shurtleff, Provo City School District

It is an insult to the nearly 30 years of teaching and 7+ years of learning, testing, and endorsements I have worked so hard to achieve to be considered a professional to have charter schools hire anybody they want to teach whether they are qualified or not. And then to lower the standards as a way to stop the teacher shortage is another slap in the face. If you want teachers to be professionals, then treat them as such! If there were a doctor shortage you wouldn't pick just anyone off the streets. Why would teaching be different. If you want to attract good teachers, then they need to be paid well. Too many new teachers are leaving because they realize they can't make it on a teacher's salary. There are too many requirements piled up on teachers for the amount of money they make.

Angela Williams, Provo City School District

We have gone many years with funding that does not meet the needs of our students, especially ESL populations. We have also gone along time with inadequate compensations for teachers who teach in Title 1 schools with so many more expectations and accountability on their heads.

Sonceria Zuckerman, Salt Lake City School District

I have personally visited with Representative Quinn and he has visited my US Government classes at Wasatch HS. Accountability. Put back into law that there is RESPONSIBILITY for students to actually attend school. Parents should have more support from our state legislature to encourage students to actually attend class for some civic dialogue and learning with peers! Students need to be more accountable for their actions, especially those in high school, in regards to daily attendance. Put some teach back in to the hands of local school districts.

Dawain Mills Wheatley, Wasatch County School District

Providing a quality education is important to the future work force in the state of Utah. In order to provide a quality education, you need qualified teachers. In order to get and keep qualified teachers, you need to make it worth their while to stay. That could be in the form of increased pay, increased benefits, increased planning time, etc. If you water down the qualifications for being a teacher, you water down the quality of the education provided. If you don't hold charter schools accountable in the same you do regular public schools, who are both receiving the money from the same place, then you water down the quality of education.

Randy Bird, Weber School District
School and Educator Accountability

I am now looking at the end of my career with 28 years in and contemplating how much longer to go. I have watched the pendulum of educational reform swing in so many different politically motivated directions at the expense of student learning. I am not sure anyone knows if anything that has been done really helped our students learn. What I can say is that I hope my students know that I cared about them. In the end this is what a good teacher is. I hope that they LEARNED along the way of course, BUT truly I want them to know that they can do great things if they believe and TRY. They are not alone. Learning can be difficult and not everyone learns lessons at the same rate. Just keep trying. I do love teaching. That is why I stayed in this profession for so long. BUT I do wonder if our politicians understand the wealth of talent they have in the field of education? If they honestly and truly know our worth? We are the ones our children see everyday. Day in and day out. Good, happy days and bad, sad, unhappy days. We see them for 6 to 8 hours plus a day for 180 days a year. We often become their surrogate parents, big brothers, sisters when there is no one at home. We walk a very fine line to help teach them to be upstanding moral citizens, teaching right & wrong, and in some cases we are the only ones in their lives that care enough to do so. I have seen so much change in the world and education but one thing that really hasn't is respect. Educators are still under the stigma of "those who can DO and those who can't TEACH" This simply is NOT true. Those who CHOOSE to teach, do so because they are special enough to realize that teachers prepare the future. They care about the youth that are in their care and a desire to help them reach for their dreams & goals. They teach them that the world is what they make it. Nothing worth having is just given to them. They work for it. They help them learn how to be the best version of themselves. That they can design what the future looks like. I know these all sound like idealistic platitudes, but they are what has kept me coming to school every day. So what is my point.-- I am worth more than I am earning. I work harder than most CEO's. My value is defined in the love and care I give my students. Money doesn't solve all problems but it does help to show respect for what we do. Question-- why would a bright, talented educated young person want to make a career choice when the world (Our political decision makers) does not value the profession. The compensations are better in the business world. --That students are more than a number scored on a random test. That life isn't some pen & paper test, it is doing. Yes Life is a test of sorts and how we live it is what demonstrates what we have learned. What we value. So what do you value?

Karen Draper, Weber School District

You have to address the cause of teacher shortages. Bandaids can only do so much.

Arron Wheeler, Weber School District

I'm concerned with the push for one-on-one technology for students. I can't get enough support for what little technology I have in my room, let alone have the demand for more tech help with students. I would hope legislators will listen to people in education rather than the hue and cry of others. We are in the trenches. A lot of the fall out educators are dealing with right now is due to "other voices", legislation coming about because of it and later proven to not have been wise!!

Rachel Gonzalez, Alpine School District

Please listen to the state's teachers. We are the experts in the trenches every day.

Denise Kelley, Alpine School District

As far as I'm aware, teachers are the only full-time government employees that do not receive holiday pay. Teachers should receive holiday pay. Additionally, it is impossible to support a family on a teacher's salary. Administrators are abusing their power and treatment of teachers who would do well are being pushed out by poor work environments. We should be able to take "personal days" without the punishment of paying $45, which, to my understanding, is not to pay for the sub, but is punitive to deter teachers from taking personal days.

Spencer Saluone, Alpine School District

The only students failing my classes are the non-attenders. We need support from our legislators to get and keep students in school. You want test grades to improve- make attendance mandatory!

Stacy Church, Box Elder School District
School and Educator Accountability

I went through the ARL program to become licensed. We should require a more rigorous licensing program and expect more of our teachers in an effort to increase pay to a respectable level. More meetings is not the answer. Meaningful training and licensing sessions to make the licensing program more meaningful.

David G. Smith, Cache County School District

While working as a Special Education Teacher. I had the opportunity to help a few students attend an ATC program while going to high school. Through academic assistance and their hard work these students completed their program while still seniors in High School. Fabulous for them, and I feel blessed to have been a part of their success. After graduation, I talked with these students and they informed me they had been hired on at local shops using the skills they learned in the ATC program. These students salaries were impressive. Much higher than my own and I had, at the time, been teaching for 12 years with my masters degree. Teachers simply do don't get paid a fair wage for everything they do. I was very happy for my students, but it really cut hard to my soul at how little I truly make as a teacher.

Melissa Fox, Davis School District

As a special education teacher in a resource setting in elementary school, I do not have any time during contract hours to do my paper work for the IEP's or hold IEP's during a time that parents can attend. I spend hours of my own time to complete these tasks. I do get time at the end of the year or the beginning of the school year to help with this. However, what I really need is to be able to collect the additional pay during the year when I am putting in the time to comply with the law.

Colleen Jensen, Granite School District

I have been an educator for many years. I feel like my work load has increased and my pay scale has not. I want them to know I work about 10 hours a day and do not get paid any type of overtime. Retirement and incentives that were there when I started teaching are not available to teachers anymore.

Lori Huey, Jordan School District

I feel like I am being treated like a yo-yo and that I have to teach my students like they are robots. I understand that we need to test but the testing is out of control and my students don't have time to be creative because we are worrying about making sure we have good test scores!

Karen Mann, Jordan School District

Please support education of our students! 1.) If we want our students to learn, then our students need to be in school. In order for students earn credit for a class, they need to be present a minimum number of days. 2.)If Charter schools are going to receive state funding, then the charter schools need to have the same regulations and educational standards that all public schools are held. For example, charter schools that receive state funding need to provide the special education plans required for all public schools, and need to be equally available to all students regardless of ethnicity, religious belief, socioeconomic group, learning ability, or any other discriminatory practice. As the minimum requirement, Charter schools need to teach the core subjects at the same breadth and depth of knowledge required by public schools in the state of Utah. 3.)Schools need funding in order to help our students have the equipment, resources, and technology to allow students to learn to the best of their ability. This includes having experienced and knowledgeable teachers to help challenge our students to think and develop. However, most teachers have to have a second job in order to pay their bills. Imagine what teachers could do if they made enough money to support their families with just one job, how much their energy and attention would increase if teachers could focus their time on their classroom.

Melissa Usher, Jordan School District

I would like to invite a legislator to come join my classroom and see what the students are learning. I believe when they see the good that we do, they would be more willing to pay teachers more rather than us always saying we don't get paid enough.

Marilyn Blakley, North Summit School District
School and Educator Accountability

I am a relatively new teacher and worked for years to get here. Now that I am here I don't want to stay because I don't feel valued at a professional. I could go get a higher paying and "easier" job tomorrow but I continue to sacrifice time and money because I want to help students. But if the constant disrespecting of teachers from the legislature doesn't stop I cannot stay for the sake of my own mental health

Greg Jorgensen, Nebo School District

Charter schools are NOT the answer.

Ruth S. Burkett, Other

I would like my legislators to consider the following things: 1. One-to-one tech is pointless without teachers who are trained (and trained WELL) to use it. 2. Admin Rule R277-531 (the PEER framework) feels extremely controlling for such a Republican congress. Its micro-managing language makes me certain you don't trust me as far as you can throw me...I can't imagine how it makes lifelong teachers feel. (Some kindness and validation from your direction would go a long way.) 3. When you consider points 1 and 2, hopefully you can easily see why young, tech-savvy teachers like me are never going to stay longer than a few years. Fifty percent of my prep time is taken up helping my older peers figure out how to use their tech and the other fifty percent is like forced A.D.D....I can't get anything done because you have me way too hyperfocused on my PEER plan and all of the other EYE requirements. I could have a higher paying job that is less time-consuming with like-minded peers who don't require constant help and a boss who trusts and respects me...why does anyone stay longer than 3 or 4 years? I mean, would you?

Chaela Mcdonald, Provo City School District

It feels like we are headed in a direction to dilute and undermine the qualifications of our job. We seem to receive less trust and more "babysitting", we seem to incentivize new temporary and under-qualified teachers rather than seasoned and educated ones, and to be putting a lot of money into "alternative" education such as charter and online schools. All of these things compound the current problem of diluting the quality of education.

Michelle Green, Washington County School District

Most teachers go into the teaching profession because they want to help our youth. They are interested in investing time, energy, money, and love for starters into educating our youth to be good, productive, law abiding citizens of the future. However, this can't be accomplished by the school system alone. Parent and community involvement is needed. Parents need to be held more accountable for their children. Teachers should not be "graded" on how successful students are. There are many factors that determine a student's success. Many teachers I have spoken with get discouraged. We are asked to add more and more to our responsibilities for no or little extra pay. I know many who have left the field due to the pay. Yes, many are willing to sacrifice, but some must also look to the financial needs of their own families. When looking at other states’ pay scales, Utah seems to be far behind. I have been teaching over 20 years with a Master's Degree. My income is about $3,000 to $4,000 more than other teachers in many states who have been teaching only 5 - 10 years. I have often said I would be willing to pay more in taxes to have a better public school system in UT. (My own children attended private Christian schools, (which I paid tuition for), and I paid my taxes willingly).

Nikki Bachman, Weber School District

We must stop putting unqualified educators in front of students. They don't deserve to have a year of their education wasted with a teacher who doesn't know what they're doing.

Elicena Saline, Canyons School District

Teachers' jobs are becoming so scripted and micro-managed that teachers are losing enthusiasm, too drained to be creative and scared about being judged. They no longer feel that they can contribute what is important to them without scrutiny. Testing scores do not take into account that some students who test, miss many days, and then perform poorly, thus penalizing the teacher.

Martha Johnston, Canyons School District
School and Educator Accountability

I’ve been teaching almost 30 years. I’m an excellent practitioner, have written several books for teachers, and travel the US presenting to teachers, all while working full-time in a Title I school here in Utah. Sadly, if I could retire, I absolutely would. The pressure that is put upon teachers and students with all of the SAGE testing is turning our schools into anxiety-ridden institutions. Principals, teachers, and students are almost constantly on edge. The money spent on these test is outrageous. And, to what end? Better accountability? For whom? I have a 4th grade son who is in an advanced academic program. I am an involved parent. I know where he is academically and I know how hard his teacher works. Scores on the SAGE do not better inform me, in fact, since the tests are mere snapshots of my child's performance on any given day, I mostly discount the testing results. I realize not all parents are as heavily informed or involved, but the legislature should listen to people in the field when they say, "We are completely stressing our students and teachers out. There will be and already is massive burnout." All of this contributes to an increase in the anxiety in our society as a whole (look at the current national rate of teens with depression and anxiety), and will cost the state of Utah more teachers. Make teaching about teaching. Learn from countries who don’t over-test their students, yet have amazing learning outcomes. Please do all you can to change the climates of our schools by getting rid of the majority of the tests you've put in place.

Janiel Wagstaff, Davis School District

Not enough resources.

Evlyn Jackson, Davis School District

We need our elected officials to respect our knowledge and expertise. We are the experts. Please allow us to practice our craft as you would any other highly educated professional. We are teaching little human beings how to function in our society, not just curriculum. What we do cannot be reduced to a standardized test!

Kay Lynn Schick, Davis School District
School and Educator Accountability

I am in an elementary school in the Granite School District that is a Turn Around school. This program has got to be the worst thought out legislation I have ever seen. We have struggled for three years with this monster. We have instituted so many different programs that it is hard to keep track. As they are instituted the teachers autonomy has diminished to nothing. We have meeting after meeting (so many that it is impossible to see the benefits of over half of them) We have had a large teacher turnover each year which doesn’t help student learning or staff cohesiveness at all. We have people continually coming in to observe our classes. All of these things raise the stress level of the teacher and the entire school. We were already headed in a great direction with our new principal before this crap hit the fan. It has become a behemoth of confusion and stress. Use this money to support teachers. Right now it is being used to stress teachers out, which in turn causes turnover. Turnover with a shortage of teachers is the last thing we need!!!!

Charles Bell, Granite School District

As teachers, we work diligently every day. Teachers in the high-risk schools work even harder and deal with stress on a high level. It would be nice to be appreciated instead of criticized when growth is small. It’s not because we don’t believe in our students or don’t try. That’s why I have always opposed Merit pay. We already put in the time and then some. I like how Granite actually pays a bit more twice a year in Title I schools because it makes the struggle of seeing little growth more bearable. From personal experience, I went from a B/C student in 7th grade to a straight A student. The difference--my parents were going through a divorce at the time. I can still remember the day that it felt literally like I was walking out of a cloud. I know that many of my students are experiencing the same thing. It does affect their learning ability. Be mindful that we celebrate even the smallest of achievement in a troubled demographics. Sadly, the tests are a constant reminder for struggling students that they are failures. How many times do we have to test and beat them down?

Phyllis Miller, Granite School District

Teachers, like firefighters and police officers, need to be valued to keep quality people in the profession. Legislators and the public need to be made aware that a school grade doesn’t mean everything. Testing results are over-emphasized.

Rachel Pehrson, Granite School District

Support the teaching profession by making teaching less demanding and place more responsibility on students rather than teachers.

Mike Valdez, Granite School District

The accountability teachers are having to do through all the assessments is wasting valuable instructional time for students. In addition it is putting extra stress on the profession by having teachers have to teach to the test so that they can get the portion of their salary that says they are proficient educators.

Linda Auwerda, Murray City School District

I work as a teacher specialist and I’m frequently asked to work with teachers that are struggling in the classrooms. More often than not, these are teachers that have not gone through the typical education programs and have not completely student teaching under a supervisory teacher. There idea that anyone off the street can teach is just wrong.

Rebecca Franchi, Ogden School District

I am more concerned about the respect teachers receive than the money they receive. While teacher pay may affect whether or not people go into teaching, it is the lack of respect that causes them to leave teaching. I am not sure why this issue is not addressed. When teachers give their all to their job, it is very disheartening to have achievement in testing be the only criteria for good teaching. Some of us are dealing with students with extremely challenging lives and if we can help them grow in any way, we are grateful. Why do we not have a growth mindset as opposed to an absolute achievement mindset? Students are not cookies to be cut out of dough to come out the perfect shape. They
School and Educator Accountability

are human beings who are struggling to make their lives work, some under very difficult circumstances. The reasons I tell people not to go into teaching have nothing to do with money and everything to do with respect.

Teresa Dickson, Provo City School District

Fear is gripping education to the point that no one can express differences without being branded with the term “negative” and this branding passes through the association of superintendents where there is extreme commitment to protect each others reputations without regard to open perspectives and improve from anonymous evaluations. The toxicity in education is causing tremendous teacher turnover

Anonymous, Provo City School District

Nobody wants to be a teacher anymore. Each year I ask my sophomores what they want to do when they graduate. The percentage who say they would like to be a teacher and is much lower than it used to be. This year I was surprised to have 3/92. That is higher than the last two years. I know that all my students who said they wanted to become a teacher didn't always follow through with it, but they at least looked at the profession and found it attractive in some way. Now almost every news story about teachers is negative. When I was young I looked forward to going back to school in the fall. I missed all of my friends that I hadn't seen or talked to in three months. And I did like learning even though there were some classes I found more interesting than others. My students don't look forward to coming back to school. They don't miss the social interaction because they are in constant contact. If they want to know something they can easily look it up or watch a video. When they come to school they deal with overstressed adults who are under pressure to make sure their students perform well on standardized tests, including the ACT. The ACT only matters for students who are college bound. So why would a kid seeking a tech certificate spend a significant part of his/her education preparing for the ACT? I feel like all the fun has been taken away for both teachers and students. There is no freedom to ask a question and then spend time exploring possible solutions. Some teachers may be willing to spend a day on an interesting question, but most are too worried that they won't finish the mandated curriculum if they take even one day to explore. The student gets very little choice in learning about things that interest him/her especially in a small school where electives are extremely limited. School is too rigid. We must conform to the bus schedule, state standards, testing schedule, traditions, etc, etc. Our students have evolved but school has not. I still love my job and I admire the students who are willing to conform and dig in but I do believe there is a better way and I don't think it involves one set of standards for everyone. I wish high school students were allowed to choose a path and work towards a goal. Everyone would be allowed to change their mind, but it may take extra time to go back and complete the requirements for that path. So what? If you are college bound their should be certain requirements that you must meet before getting accepted. If you can't meet the requirements you work harder until you can or you choose a new path. I still believe in a well-rounded education but I don't think it has to be age-based. I don't think that all of the sophomores should have to take math together. If a student is motivated and ready to graduate at 16 why not? If another is slower, less motivated, or has changed his/her path several times and doesn't graduate until 20, so what? I think we are doing our students a huge disservice in middle school/junior high to move them along no matter what. The middle school teachers can see the holes in their learning but they have no recourse. You can't force people to do things. If nothing happens to the student then they walk in to high school completely unprepared and they're forced to take math and language with people that are prepared. And eventually they believe they can never catch up so they either act out or drop out. Trying to do interventions with these students is by far the hardest part of my job. People are willing to send their child to kindergarten twice when they can see the child is clearly not ready to move on. So, why are they so willing to move their child on to high school completely unready? If the threat of staying in middle school one more year was enough to wake up 20 students, it would be worth it.

Lexa Larsen, Sevier School District

I have been an educator for 25 years and while I may not have all the answers I am greatly concerned about how in my opinion excessive testing and recording and monitoring accountability measures actually takes away from my actual teaching/facilitating or time on task for my students which i have seen to be the best thing for them. Many of us out here feel we are testing to death!

Michael Bottita, Alpine School District
School and Educator Accountability

The new law that passed allowing students to re-take credit and replace a grade on a transcript is ridiculous and completely self serving to some legislator and their child. Change this so transcripts retain some integrity.

_Diane Flood, Alpine School District_

The new attendance laws have crippled the high schools. Students and parents are not accountable for much and all responsibility has been put on teachers with little backing from the districts or state. Students need to be accountable for their actions. The grading system of schools often punishes schools and teachers for the actions of students and parents.

_Arlene Herrick, Alpine School District_

Privatizing/reorganizing “failing schools” in poor communities has not worked in other states--not Florida, not New Jersey, not Tennessee, not Louisiana. The holistic work you are doing with the homeless issue in SLC and generational poverty--i.e. there is large spectrum of planning and support necessary in a slow process with no quick answers--also must be applied to schools in Ogden, West Valley, Magna, SLC, etc.

_Patrick Mosbacker, Alpine School District_

We need to stop attempting to legislate everything about public education. There are too many mandates that limit the ability of educators to genuinely focus on student learning. By encouraging teacher initiative and providing financial support and other resources we can provide meaningful educational experiences that help students learn and retain information.

_Shawn Price, Alpine School District_

I am a teacher of reading to the lowest achieving 1st graders in the Elementary. I have had many years of training and experience. I am an expert in my chosen field. Yet even with the best teaching for each individual child I can't get some of them on grade level reading. Please, please, take into consideration that there are individual challenges for some children and provide the necessary funding to get them individual help.

_Kristine Proulx, Alpine School District_

Children want to learn and Teachers want to teach, but changing programs and expectations on teachers make it difficult. It requires additional time spent at school and takes the joy out of teaching.

_Kathy Rockhill, Alpine School District_

I believe if teachers had more time to analyze student data together and collectively come up with a plan to improve or strengthen Tier one instruction student learning would increase. Teachers would also need time to prepare the implementation of the plan. Professional Development teaching teachers how to use data and how to strengthen Tier 1 instruction is also needed.

_Shauna H Strong, Alpine School District_

We work hard! Please don't make our jobs harder.

_Allison Terry, Alpine School District_

I think that grading schools does not accomplish what is perhaps intended--especially when the bar was changed at the end. That's like giving students a criteria to get an "A" and then after they do the work changing the criteria because too many students were getting “A's.” All that is accomplished is that the test becomes meaningless.

_Ilene Washburn, Alpine School District_

Does experience matter? As a first year teacher, the first time I had a fight in my classroom, I broke up the fight, went on with teaching, and later that day decided I never wanted to teach again. But an experienced teacher put their arm around me, assured me it was going to be okay, and taught me how to better handle similar situations in the future. Ten years later, I am now in a situation where I can put my arm around other teachers and help them. Merit/bonus pay do not encourage this kind of camaraderie that is essential in education. Please give us more on the WPU and
School and Educator Accountability

let local schools decide how best to utilize the money. Also, we need more tools to hold students accountable. We have a school-wide goal that every student has to pass every essential assessment with 75% or better. Last year, many of my students were struggling to get a 60%. This year, once the students realize that I will hold them accountable for the assessment, they rise up to the challenge and do it. But I have to be able to hold them accountable. And if you pass laws where they are not accountable for test results, attendance, or behavior, then the students realize I cannot hold them accountable and stop trying. All 6 students who are not currently meeting the goal have a significant amount of absences.

Deatra Fawcett, Box Elder School District

Our High School currently 1/8/2018, has just over 1/3 of our students with failing grades. Which over 80% of those are directly related to attendance. What is the purpose of HB 239?

Joyce Hunzeker, Box Elder School District

One message I would like to get across to the legislators is how can you have a “high” stakes test when attendance for these students is horrible? When are you or will you acknowledge that parents need to get their children to school. Absenteeism is high in certain areas of the state. Make it the parent’s responsibility not the teachers!

Beth Stamey, Box Elder School District

The over-emphasis on testing / accountability is using money that would be better spent elsewhere. Except for perhaps teacher salaries and decreasing benefits, from my experience, the testing / accountability pressure is the top reason educators leave the profession. So many factors are beyond a teacher's control, it is exasperating being “blamed” for poor student performance.

Phillip Wade, Cache County School District

56% of our students receiving Ds or Fs in their coursework are at risk because of poor school attendance.

Julie Palmer Gnotta, Canyons School District

There is a lot of good happening in education which needs to be celebrated and encouraged. There also needs to be more accountability on all stakeholders for how they use time/money.

Brooke Blair, Davis School District

Teachers are not the enemy. I feel like they want to destroy teachers because they think we are the problem. We are not the problem.

Maureen Clemons, Davis School District

We are doing great things in school and balancing what parents what done for their students locally and decision makers do not see what really happens in the classroom. They need to visit a wide variety of schools rather than the select "golden child" schools. I work a full day at school with 30+ students and then spend another 4+ hours at home planning, grading, and continuing my own training. This is not a “leave it at work” job. There needs to be a greater understanding that we are professionals and are highly trained. We are a great resource - use us in the decision making process.

Steve Einfeldt, Davis School District

Teachers are: teachers, mentors, emotional support, parent support, safe haven for students. teachers today teach manners and politeness, skills that were taught at home in the past. Teachers teach self-worth and accountability to children. Quit treating teacher like they are the enemy. And quit asking the impossible. (evaluation/compensation of teachers, the testing children are asked to do and the pressures associated with the testing is not good for children)

Nina Gold, Davis School District
School and Educator Accountability

Come on another day when something needs to be addressed, such as teachers being held accountable for SAGE scores, yet they cannot hold the child accountable. Teachers being held accountable for student progress, (really just held accountable for scores), but parents and students are not accountable for attendance and other such issues. I come from a “Blue Ribbon School” and I believe I could represent my faculty well. Also, look to best practices for student learning, not for parent happiness when you are writing or voting for legislation. Don't patronize teachers.

Heidi Briscoe Holmes, Davis School District

I'd like to share what an awesome job teachers in our school are doing with their students. Students are getting a great education no matter what the test scores may indicate. Our teachers are dedicated, caring, and go above and beyond the call of duty!

Melanie Lane, Davis School District

How a test does not define the ability of a student or the effectiveness of a teacher.

Dennise LeBaron, Davis School District

If Charter school were created to do more with less, why are we giving them more money every year? they are not being held to the same standards as I am, I fail to see how they are even living up to their charter they were created for. It is very frustrating.

Wayne Madsen, Davis School District

Technology is a great tool, but it won't replace good teachers. We need to support the teachers we have in the schools and trust them to do their jobs.

Kristin Van Brunt, Davis School District

School districts are hiring new teachers with no teaching credentials or experience and paying them the same as highly qualified teachers who have a degree in the field of teaching and have completed hours of observations and demonstration teaching.

Denise Huffman, Duchesne County School District

Leadership should start from the teachers in the classroom. Let us tell you the problems and let us show you how to solve them. Let us show you how our kids are doing by making our own tests based on our own teaching. Trust the professionals. You trust a Dr, Lawyer, Investment planner, Grocery store clerk, accountant, cell phone salesmen, and even babysitters, yet for some reason teachers are not trusted. What have we done to deserve this mistrust?

Tom Hansen, Emery County School District

Spend time observing in all types of classrooms for at least a week before making decisions that effect students and teachers. Observe the reality of the decisions made for the long term success of the STUDENTS. It is clear our society is changing drastically with the increase of technology every year. It is time education changed drastically as well. As educators, we need to think about integrating classes such as social media awareness or job preparedness as part of graduation requirements.

Tara Battista, Granite School District

I am not against teacher accountability, but I am against the current method in which it is being done. My job should not be in the hands of an 8 year old child who might not feel like trying his best on the state test on a particular day. There are more effective ways of measuring my ability to teach.

Afton Cochran, Granite School District

We are the people best qualified to make decisions about education.

Jo Daley-Croft, Granite School District
School and Educator Accountability

Teachers are inadvertently being held accountable for students attitudes toward testing. Many times, students know more of the content than mandated tests indicate. Students are not motivated to do their best, just to complete the task.

Kristine Davies, Granite School District

Teachers are leaving because of the overload of meetings and responsibilities. We are given no time for our own planning and preparation. You just assume we will do it all on our own time, and we do!!

Wendy Davis, Granite School District

For more than three decades educators have been disproportionately held accountable for student learning, lambasted in the media, and "teacher proofed" by district approaches to assessment and curriculum. Multiple factors have contributed to this deprofessionalization of the teaching profession, but many of these factors can be traced to one focal point in time: April, 1983. In 1983 "A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform" exploded onto the educational and political scene. At its heart was a deficit-based approach to educators and students, calling teachers "beleaguered" and students "at risk," and providing five broad recommendations for improving our nation's schools. Embedded within these recommendations were imperatives that laid the foundation for the reforms that still drive education today, including the standards and accountability movement, standardized testing, and alternate routes to licensure. These reforms, which are now the norm, have been embedded into our national policies throughout the years, as evidenced by No Child Left Behind, the Obama-era Race to the Top initiatives, and most recently the Every Student Succeeds Act. The message of “those who can't do, teach” is pervasive throughout society. In order for education to successfully retain teachers and positively impact student learning, it must transform the profession into a place where talented people of all races, cultures, and identities wish to come. In order to achieve this lofty goal, public education must tap into its internal capacity for change at a systemic level, and public policy must support public education in this endeavor, not undermine it. When considering bills this session, please consider this: increased competition, increased accountability, and other "innovative solutions" are no longer innovative and were never solutions. More than thirty years of lackluster results are testament that these quick fixes are not fixing anything. At the end of the day, it is the capacity of those who enter our state's classrooms each and every day that will transform education: not technology, not external pressure, not external solutions. Bills that treat teachers from a deficit perspective only exacerbate the problem. Teachers enter the classroom with strong intrinsic motivation to succeed and help their students do the same, but deficit-driven measures slowly erode this commitment to excellence. Instead, consider that every teacher has something to contribute. Every teacher has something to bring to the table. Build on public education's strengths, and public education will not disappoint. In creating public education, the United States created one of the most innovative systems in the world. Please consider carefully how your efforts will serve to either support or undermine this amazing feat of our democratic society. Thank you.

Cindi Dunford, Granite School District

We need to seriously consider available resources that we can provide to our at risk communities so that when students are in school they can focus and perform. Suggestions could include; reliable, more affordable daycare options, parenting support, after-school programs.

Teri Edwards, Granite School District

Great education and commitment to children is happening everyday in Utah school celebrate that to the general public.

Bryan Good, Granite School District

Physical education is so underrated. It is getting old. Students who have no opportunities to be active during the day have very little motivation as the day goes on! The reasons for quality physical education are endless!!!!

Jo Heydon, Granite School District
School and Educator Accountability

Extra hoop jumping and "accountability" have good intentions, but they mostly just take up my valuable time for better classroom prep.

Chris Horne, Granite School District

Kindergarten teachers are held to the rigor of all other students but we have no recourse when student's do not attend school because it is not required. I can usually get my students on grade level (except for learning deficits) when they attend school regularly.

Wendee Johnston, Granite School District

Just as there are a lot of variables that determine student success, there are a lot of variables that play into a teacher's success in the classroom. Looking at teacher accountability and how effective they are in the class can include SAGE scores, Benchmark testing within the district, the types of assessments they are giving out, teacher evaluations, student evaluations etc.

Madeline Melini, Granite School District

As a veteran classroom educator with over 25 years, I have witnessed the educational changes proposed to improve and strengthen public education, however, the only real result has been a negative perspective of public education in which teacher accountability has exponentially increased while student/parent accountability has diminished making the teacher the scapegoat; students receive a free public education that has a considerable value, yet students/parents are not held accountable for their part if the bargain; I believe students/parents should have to reimburse schools for educational expenses if they do not meet specific guidelines such as attendance (limited absences/tardiness), completion of assignments/tests, and failing classes (limited Fs); students often get disenchanted with a class or teacher and stop attending or trying, and the responsibility is placed in the teacher to motivate the student which may never work, but just like adults in jobs, we are expected to meet specific metrics in order to keep our jobs and receive salary increases and/or bonuses; attending school is the job of the students, and their pay is reflected in their letter grade; As generally reflect a good student (retained employee) whereas Fs generally reflect a struggling student (released employee); responsibility for the educational value of a public education needs to be placed back on the students/parents which will reduce student discipline issues and increase student engagement

Ed Mondragon, Granite School District

Please stop killing elementary teachers with the ridiculous amount of data they are expected to gather weekly. Give them time to plan their lessons!

Jill Muir, Granite School District

The biggest issue I face with my students this year has been trying to get them to buy in to their education. While trying to hold teachers and schools accountable, we have forgotten to hold students accountable for their own learning. Students are not self driven to learn and perform well on assessments, and face no risks or rewards for working hard and doing their best. We need an assessment system that engages students, challenges them to do their best, and rewards them for their progress. Many of my students favorite activities are game based, wouldn't it be cool to have a game based system that made students want to succeed rather than just sit and stare at a test and click to be done. Students need to be held accountable for their learning.

Jared Newbold, Granite School District

Teachers should not be held accountable for the inaction of their students. I also don't believe in passing students to bring up graduation numbers.

Melanie Owens, Granite School District

There is a strong correlation between student achievement and SES. Rather than blame teachers and schools for poor student achievement, why doesn't the state look at the factors outside of the school that are contributing to school failure, and try and address those needs first? One day I called a student's home because his family did not
School and Educator Accountability

show up to SEP Conferences. The chaos in the home was so loud, that my colleague sitting across the office from me could hear the yelling, screaming, and crying through my phone as I tried to converse with the parent. This student's learning is inhibited because of the chaos in which he lives. If society truly wants to help this student succeed in school, we need to address the factors outside of school that are preventing him from succeeding.

Kristen Pearson, Granite School District

Teaching has become too much about how our test scores compare with those of other countries, and less about teaching students to be lifelong learners. We’re so worried about whether or not 5th graders can write a 5 paragraph essay that we don’t have time to teach them the importance of writing for communication and the nuances of writing for fun. They can all crank out an essay using the formula, as it were, with supporting details from a text, but they can’t create anything on their own, they don’t know how to form opinions or ask questions, and they hate writing. We’re so concerned about whether or not kindergarten students can use multiple ways to count to 100, or write a short paragraph with correct capitalization and punctuation, that we’re not allowed to spend the necessary time to teach them how to interact with others, use scissors, fold paper, use a glue bottle. We are losing these so called “soft skills” and we are gaining more and more behavior problems as the students go up through the ranks with teachers who don’t have time to teach them how to be people because they have to consistently worry about the damn test scores, that may or may not be tied to their job security (we’re all very confused about that). Music, and other art, teachers are treated as baby sitters, rather than the professional educators that they are, so that “regular” teachers can have a little more planning time, because music, art, history, and PE aren’t tested, they’re not considered to be important by the legislature. When in fact they are more important now than ever because they are the subjects that teach humanity, and how to interact with others, and how to process our feelings when we are hurt or scared or angry. Teachers are overworked and underpaid, but even more than that they are treated poorly. They are not trusted to do their job - which is to teach - but rather told how to do their job by nearly every person under the sun who has never even been a teacher.

Stacy Mayren, Granite School District

Quit trying to tell trained educators how to educate.

Jill Thackeray, Granite School District

I have been a professor at a university, a school counselor, a teacher and finished a 4 year apprenticeship in and now am a journeyman carpenter. I received an excellent education for all of the career paths I have had. However, my education for carpentry wasn’t in this state and from what I have seen at our Technology centers in Utah the education one receives is all over the place. It ranges from excellent to pathetic. This is due to the entire educational emphasis being put on our “core” curriculum, rather than paying much attention to the actual curriculum being taught. You can not focus on what is written in “the books”. You need to actually create a system for checking on what is being taught. As long as we place our “skills based” learning at the bottom end of our focus, and continue to falsely listen to academics at the university level who are very narrow in their personal experience and view of skills based learning, then you will the disparity between educational outcomes at the applied technology centers. Our children are often made to feel like outcasts, losers, or reprobates if they are sent to a technology center. Because counselors are from the world of academia the majority of kids that are sent to Technology centers actually fit the “outcast” definitions. Many of our parents who are actually from the “blue collar” world feel bad about themselves and either insist their children don’t understand their (because the think that somehow a university degree is the answer to all economic strife and don’t understand that they are often earning more than many university grads) or they feel like they need to bad mouth our schools because they were made to feel like second class citizens when they attended. Please consider some of these thoughts that the truth that is embedded in these feelings. I have been on both sides of this issue and know what I am talking about.

Matt Edwards, Iron County School District

I have watched the school system from a parents point of view, moved to watching the school system as a PTA active member point of view, and now I am a teacher seeing it from a teachers point of view. I have seen many changes over the 20 + years I have watch education. We should inspire to have good people helping teachers and
School and Educator Accountability

students succeed in life. However, I have watched as the worst teachers with the lowest standardized testing scores move up the ranks of the school system. How is moving a bad teacher up a good thing? When you the legislator wanted to make a change in education, you should be looking for the best of the best in their field. The teacher in the classroom making it work. Not the person that has been out of the classroom for many years that did not do a good job while in the classroom. Also, the legislators need to keep each district in check, making sure they are all following the same rules. Personally, I have been not hired for a job, only to find out that the district has hired someone else that did not have my qualifications. For example a reading specialist without a reading endorsement. In my district, to get out being “called out” on this lawsuit they immediately changed the title to reading coach, giving them the freedom to hire the principal’s friend. Breaking the rules like this should not be happening, and this is the reason many qualified teachers are leaving the field of education. When teachers that do not do well in the classroom get moved to well-paying jobs, and qualified teachers get skipped one more time. These teachers get skipped because what they do in the classroom, does make a difference, and it makes the school scores look excellent; administrators do not want to lose those scores, even a the cost of losing that educator.

Christine Hunter, Iron County School District

I became a teacher because I was passionate about student learning. I feel like all the other aspects of teaching have weighed me down and diminished my passion. The amount of work we do outside of teaching is too much and more and more requirements keep getting put on us. Let us teach and inspire the next generation.

Vanessa Black, Jordan School District

Please pay teachers and recognize our years or service. National Board Certification funding

Carmen Buchanan, Jordan School District

Let teacher teach and remove extra requirements they do that have nothing to do with teaching

Joan Cahoon, Jordan School District

Truancy and parental accountability needs to be addressed. Educators shall not be absolutely responsible for student success or failure.

Frances Anne Dallons, Jordan School District

Teachers are under a lot of pressure, which is being transferred to students. We need to put the fun back into teaching and learning. A lot of expectations on students is not developmentally appropriate.

Robyn Gardner, Jordan School District

I know that accountability is very important, but for the last few years testing have overtaken the time in the classroom. Please consider mandating fewer test given in the district.

Diane K Holland, Jordan School District

The demands on teachers are becoming impossible. Teachers are working tirelessly to rise to the expectations, but most teachers are just trying to help their students get through another day. Putting more pressure on the teachers to increase test scores and such is too much. Legislators do not seem to consider the emotional, physical, psychological, economic, physiological, and so forth, issues students bring to school. Educators do what they can to provide safety, counseling, reassurance, support, stability, food, and clothing for those students who need it, while maintaining classroom management and teaching the core.

Kaylyn Mueske, Jordan School District

I love my job and my students. Currently however I fear for the future. Our schools are being judged using assessments which the students are not accountable for. Teachers are then being asked to look at data based on those same faulty exams and make decisions that then affect hundreds of students. It is a circle of ineffectiveness to the extremes. Get rid of SAGE or make student accountable ON THEIR GRADES for the score. Additionally the
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respect a view of teachers is dropping. Where we were once viewed as professionals doing the most difficult and important job now we are seen as someone to blame when their child fails.

Christopher Nichols, Jordan School District

Dear Legislators, please keep in mind when proposing legislation that there is a cause and effect that affect teachers in the classroom. Every time you add another responsibility or layer of accountability to a teacher, you are taking away time that could be spent preparing effective lessons. Teachers are human beings who have families, get tired, and are not automatic robots. Sometimes when legislators pass legislation they don't take into consideration how that truly impacts the day of a teacher and his/her students.

Suzanne Rouse, Jordan School District

I would like to feel that my elected officials saw teachers as valuable people who are trying to do their best at all times. To know the demands upon teachers is three to five times more on each higher than for jobs in the public sector. Real success does not depend upon test scores. I spend more time testing in some cases than teaching. Each student is an individual and has different needs and abilities. We are ignoring student straights because of test scores. Not everyone will be able to achieve the highest level in everything. To expect it is unreasonable. It is like expecting everyone to run a mile. Even the child who does not have legs. That child will be a failure because of the fact they did not meet the mark. To base teacher value based upon outcomes is also not reasonable. Do I think teachers need some accountability yes. But there needs to be reasonable expectations. I have had two students who were dangerous to the other students and themselves, in that case I had to spend a significant amount of time protecting the students from the violent student. It takes so long to get a student like that into an appropriate situation sometimes a year. In the mean while my time to teach the students is greatly reduced. Every classroom is different with different needs. Each child is different too. They are not robots or a bunch of collected data. Some have ADHD, some have fighting parents, some have divorced parents, some never see or interact with parents for more than ten minutes a day, some are just not developed physically to meet testing guidelines. Does anyone even consider that each individual learns at a different rate and by slowing down greatly we can achieve huge gains in the long run. Education about real people or is all this a political ploy to get power over the other party so our party can make all the decisions. Put people first. Teachers are people. If you run them out of their jobs where will they go. To unemployment benefits, homelessness? What then? Who is going to pay to take care of people who were trying their best to contribute to society, paying taxes and being good citizens. Doesn't it make more sense to support teachers so they can continue to make positive impact?

Janice Snow, Jordan School District

Please treat educators like the professionals that we are. Please stop passing all these testing and accountability laws adding to all the hoops we have to jump through. Just let us teach.

Shaunti Turner, Jordan School District

Please let me teach. All I hear is data this and data that. Many of my students are developing test anxiety and have become complacent. Authentic learning is all but gone and has been replaced with with data driven methods. Many amazing teachers are leaving because of this. You look at my data and grade me as a teacher and my school, but don't take into account how many absences a student has, whether they have a learning or behavior disability, or some other contributing factor. I love the students and want them to succeed, but I feel the path we are headed down is a path for our educators and students to fail. Please just let me teach!

Tashalyn Wood, Jordan School District

We need to address chronic absenteeism. Students are required by law to attend school, so why are we unable to hold parents accountable for getting their children to school? I have multiple students that miss one or more days per week and I am the only one being held accountable for their lack of achievement. I can't teach them if they are not in class.

Judy Wright, Logan City School District
School and Educator Accountability

The High School that I teach at received an “F” grade. My kids go to this high school. I have them come here because it is an excellent school. The grading system is flawed. It is arbitrary and rigid. It does not reflect what is really going on in a school. It seems to me that it’s main effect, if not purpose, is to discredit public education. We need to find a better way to evaluate the job our schools are doing.

Issac Beh, Murray City School District

Teachers are professionals. We need to be able to do our job without yearly changes from the Legislature. We need to be able to teach, not test to heavily to show “accountability.” We need to have fair evaluations that aren’t cumbersome to complete.

Lori Johansen, North Sanpete School District

I believed the increased focus on charter schools is a mistake. In order to truly benefit the majority of Utah students, emphasis needs to be placed on supporting the public schools. Charter schools don't have to play to the same rules, can toss students and teachers out at will, and yet still dip into the pocket of public schools. The charter school system is not a system that will benefit all of Utah students, and continued emphasis on this may leave many students hung out to dry, especially those with lower socioeconomic status.

Erica Boyer, Nebo School District

Undervaluing teacher input in decision making is driving teachers away from the profession.

Lori Cunningham, Nebo School District

I don't think that legislators take into consideration everything that happens in a class/School when they decide to grade schools. Not once on any of my testing results sheets do I get an asterisk noting that normally my brightest students opt out of testing, my students that have missed 29 days of school during the year, or my students with active DCFS cases. I would like a legislator to come to my classroom for one day and see what it’s like before they put anymore requirements on teachers because we are burning out our best teachers with testing and paperwork.

Heidi Dimmick, Nebo School District

Graduation rates are not repeat NOT the indicator of success of a school. Simply lowering the bar and making it easier to graduate is not educating the students. We need to hold the STUDENTS responsible and not always blame the teachers or the school.

Justin Nelson, Nebo School District

Constant changes to testing and requirements before any time tested outcomes can be measured are disruptive and waste resources.

Julie Wilding, Nebo School District

Educators work very hard, yet we are given a very negative public opinion. It isn't fair. In one classroom, we might have a special ed student, 3 ELL students, 2 gifted students, 4 below grade level, and the rest average students. WE have to meet the needs of all. When we don't it is said that we are bad teachers. I would love to have a legislator come into my room, not for a few minutes, but for the entire day, so they can see bus duty, teaching, recess duty, planning, etc.

Nancy Berry, Park City School District

Teachers need to be fully trained at accredited colleges/ universities

Angie Erickson, Park City School District

I’m in my fifteen year of teacher and pressure and stress that we put on our younger children is ridiculous. March through May students begin developing ticks to cope with the pressure to pass the end of year test. I’ve had many students crying during the Sage test. I can't stand watching little kids cry because they want to please their teacher, because their teacher is extremely stressed about raising test scores and being watched by the administrators if the
School and Educator Accountability

kids don’t perform well. I used to love teaching and I was really good at it. Now I have to have my kids do the practice Sage test every month. We can’t go on field trips during Sage testing. I know kids need to be tested, but if we only weigh the cow and never feed it, when does it grow and develop?

Marie Mattinson, Provo City School District

I have been teaching for 21 years. It has become increasingly harder to be a teacher. We are constantly being asked to do one more thing that is not dealing with actual teaching. I now have to do so much paper work, that it cuts back on time I could spend making better lessons and preparing for the lessons. Please trust us that we are working hard and trying to get every student to learn every lesson, but we need parents to do their part as well. It takes more than a teacher for a student to learn. It takes a team.

Heather Peterson, Provo City School District

Our students are our top priority. I am not afraid of being held accountable for student outcomes, but I must be held accountable for what I have control over and in a fair manner. I do not want to be in competition with my colleagues (students who struggle pay for this) or held to an arbitrary standard. If my students make strong progress, from wherever they start, I should be recognized for that.

Holly Tippetts, Provo City School District

I am hopeful that new methods for collecting data about school and student progress on the Utah Core Standards will be developed this year and consistently implemented (longevity would be great, too) so that parents and communities are receiving a more accurate picture of what is happening in schools. Students spend too much of their instructional time taking tests - they should not be testing in every subject, every year, because in the high school that amounts to over 10 hours of state testing in addition to classroom assessments and any advanced placement testing.

Julie Anzelmo, Salt Lake City School District

I do not believe they realize the socio economic and social issues that impact our students in the state. We are not all the same and equity does not mean we all get the same treatment. Title one schools are more impacted and should be recognized as so.

Leann Banco, Salt Lake City School District

Art education is not an elective or add on curriculum. It is the vehicle that gets creativity, innovation, risk-taking, and choice making into a content area. It builds 21 century thinking/collaboration skills by allowing a student to explore his/herself as well as the world around them...building empathy and self awareness.

Lisa DeFrance, Salt Lake City School District

In Utah, I think that one of the most damaging things is that alot of teachers on the west side of Utah are not very educated with it comes to diversity. How do we allocate money to those who needs this type of training without jeopardizing other forms of funds.

Charles Musgray, Salt Lake City School District

Teachers work hard to provide for student learning in an increasingly hostile environment. Educators should be treated as the professionals they are.

Kelli Neuteboom, Salt Lake City School District

Immigration issues are causing unneeded stress to students. Because of their parents status we are observing more stress and fear in our classrooms. The Trump comments are not helping our school children as well. Please support encouraging legislators and the federal government to tone down their rhetoric. My students are dismayed and have been very articulate about the hate speech that is currently part of our government. Please support DACA and bilingual education in the state of Utah.

Mary Lou Oland-Wong, Salt Lake City School District
High stakes testing, and prepping for high stakes testing has created a trickle down effect in title 1 schools with weekly coaches and admin meetings which on paper, make it appear that significant learning is taking place. I have taught for almost 30 years and I can say that the effect this has brought to real learning is not so positive. There is less creativity in the classroom; less student centered learning. We are ignoring developmentally appropriate teaching especially in the lower grades so that our students can “score” proficient on a high stakes test. I have watched students from school after school lose their passion for learning. It is a travesty. This may not affect non title one schools who have many parent provided creative outlets and opportunities. We are creating an even larger economic divide when we curtail the arts, and take away real constructive learning at the expense of prepping students for high stakes testing. This has nothing to do with accountability; just in the way that accountability is measured.

Barbara Stevens, Salt Lake City School District

Special Education paperwork is prohibitive, not helpful.

Nicole Harmon, Sevier School District

Teachers are burdened by more students, more paperwork, more testing, and more credentialing requirements. I feel that all of this is taking away from the art of teaching our students. I wish I had more time to focus on lesson preparation and actual teaching. I’m always playing catch up on my assessments, data, paperwork, and other hoops I’m asked to jump through to prove my worth as a teacher. I’m burned out. I became a teacher to help students, not continuously prove to my legislators that I’m a good teacher.

Paige E. Shaw, Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind

The classroom of today has changed in negative ways because of an overwhelming focus on Sage test scores. Teaching to the test is just one problem. Poetry, art, creative writing, hands on experiments to name a few are left out in pursuit of test taking strategies and computer programs that are “guarenteed by the vendor” to raise scores. Very sad.

Ellen Bennett, Washington County School District

We as teachers show up each day to help students the idea that we are somehow responsible for all of societies ills and can fix anything is unreasonable. Not everyone can do our job and for the most part each teacher does their best.

Lori Daniels, Weber School District

The state is expecting teachers like me to bring kids living in poverty and at-risk situations to grade level when they come into my 6th grade classroom at a 2nd and 3rd grade level. The pressure we have to show proficiency on the state tests is very high and often unrealistic. We have been told this year that if we do not show major improvement, teachers and admin will be shuffled. We have already been trained by the best and our kids are still pretty low. The other issue I have is with the moving target on school grading. My school received a C 2 years ago, but 2 weeks later, the state changed it to a D. We worked so hard to get to that C just to have the state change the requirements of each letter grade.

Jessica Fiveash, Weber School District

I respect you for the work you do and I trust you to do your job to the best of your ability. As a teacher I look for that same respect and trust from my representatives. Legislation intended to "make teachers accountable" seems punitive and implies that we aren't doing our best for our students every day. Students are more than a test score, and teachers are more than statistics.

Camille Jackson, Weber School District
School and Educator Accountability

I am held responsible for the progress of the students in my class, yet I can do nothing when the child does not show up to school, or when the child refuses to put effort into their learning. There are situations where I do all in my power to help a student to learn, yet I know that the child could do so much more if these other factors were not getting in the way.

Cheryl Parkinson, Weber School District

The high stakes testing is not making education better. It makes students more stressed and prevents them from getting a well rounded education. Arts are cut severely, if not totally absent. Students are expected to do things that are beyond their maturity level. Success on the test can be predicted based on family life alone.

Michelle Wright, Weber School District
Testing Concerns

In our school our kindergarten class size is 26 children, which is 52 children with two sessions to progress monitor. The expectations for the teachers are to teach a 3 hour block of literacy that doesn't include time for recess, computers or math. It also doesn't allow for time to help connect with students, especially ones that have very little time with parents.

Lori Case, Alpine School District

If you truly want to know what is happening in classrooms/schools each of you need to sub for a week in a classroom to really find out what teaching is like. Then you may have some different opinions and willing to start doing the job you were voted in to do!

Kriss Spencer, Alpine School District

First of all, I would like to thank our legislators for the important role that they play in our democratic process. Without your service I could not do my job. As a public servant I would like to see teaching become as important as any other public servant's job. I am willing to sacrifice if I know it has merit but sacrifice without merit is useless and drains me as a teacher. When I feel that I am getting the support for my students that I need to teach, i.e. an aide in the classroom, technology, supplies, ect. I can teach much more effectively and feel that I can truly do what I intended to do when I became a teacher, Be a Change Agent! I hope that as this legislative session begins you will take into account that I might only have 28 students but half of those students need some kind of intervention. The other half might suffer if I can't get to them in a timely manner without support staff that I need. When I can have just one more body in the room I could possibly make the change for your student that would not otherwise be possible. Please help me teach the children in this state what they need to learn to carry on our democracy!

Karen Webb, Alpine School District

I stopped teaching when I stopped getting the support needed from administrators (who were too over-pressured by those above them) to maintain a classroom where students were not held accountable for poor behavior. It was a unique year when we had many transitory students who came from self-destructive homes. Those kinds of students need support before and after school so they can succeed in the high pressure environment of today's schools. We will never succeed with students whose everyday needs are not being met either because of poverty or lack of adequate supervision in the home.

Anita Price, Cache County School District

Dear Legislators, As a veteran teacher, I have watched our profession dramatically suffer in the past ten years. Not only do we have teachers that do not want to stay in our profession, they are running from it. Young people are discouraged from seeking this career path--not without reason. Teaching is arguably the hardest career and one of the most disrespected. If I were to average out my salary over the true number of hours that I work, I would be making much less than the minimum wage. I knew that teaching wouldn't be lucrative when I came into the profession. Money wasn't the reason I chose to work in education. What I did not know was the true lack of support and respect teachers receive. I currently teach in a classroom with 32 third grade students. There is not space in my classroom to accommodate them. My classroom budget was made for a class size of twenty-six students. That means that all of the supplies for six more students come out of my pocket. That's on top of what I already spend to enhance my curriculum. My school email inbox currently has 53 unread emails, most of which are complaints about one thing or another, that I have not had time to read due to my other responsibilities. I arrive at school no later than 7:00, and rarely leave earlier than 6:00. I still take work home every night. I take grading with me on vacation and feel guilty if I don’t work on it after my family has gone to sleep. I am asked to create trackers for multiple students. I try to stay on top of everything that I am asked to do, and if I drop one of the forty balls that I am juggling, I am belittled. The “fun” has been sucked out of my classroom. I am moving through curriculum at a break neck pace, attempting to prepare my students for “The Test” at the end of the year. There is little to no time for slowing down to make snowflakes or, more importantly, teach about character, citizenship, and friendship. There is a disconnect between administration and the classroom. We are constantly being asked to do “little things.” However, when you have a list of twenty little things that each take a few minutes, it adds up. I’ve always known that I was meant to be a teacher. I know that I make a difference in the lives of others every day. I’ve seen positive differences happen in amazing ways.
Testing Concerns

However, it's getting harder to see that silver lining amongst all of the dark clouds. We need your help and support. Our profession, our students, and the future of our state depend on it.

Katie Brown, Davis School District

Now is the time to stop messing around with teachers: let them do their jobs, pay them as professionals, back off with needless testing, stop treating educators as over-educated peasants.

Richard Heath, Davis School District

Why I teach and why I feel it is not possible to do so at this time. Too many demands with large classes and no time

Donna L. Trease, Davis School District

If I was to ever leave teaching it would be because of the ridiculous expectations I am held to and the lack of support from legislators dealing with difficult parents and students. I should not be the enemy.

Alexia Crandall, Granite School District

We would greatly appreciate being viewed as professionals and trusted to do the job that we have been trained to do.

Brooke Deardorff, Granite School District

First, I feel there is a definite need for more full time professionals to be positioned at one home school, which are trained to deal with mental health and wellness. In addition, Special Educators are being inundated with so many referrals it takes months of tracking data and testing and then those special education teachers are not full time at one school because they are so far and few between. This, in my personal opinion, creates a lack of consistency. Camaraderie between general education and special education teachers plays a key role in student gains when collaboration and consistency are prevalent. Full time teachers are not equipped or trained to deal with the rising amount of children experiencing adverse childhood experiences. It is extremely difficult to teach and learn with so many outside obstacles and emotional barriers. In many cases, the heightened demand on teachers and school communities to help students rise to academic achievement becomes an unattainable accomplishment for not only students but all stakeholders. i.e. teachers, parents, administrators, districts because of these influences. In turn, both students and teachers taste the bitterness of defeat and failure. We are trying everything to overcome so many of the hardships students face but it is a daunting task - but done with love and trust. However, it is exhausting! Often, as an educational cohort, we look at the academic aspect of children, but it seems as though we forget to ascertain whether or not our students are in a healthy socio-emotionally stable frame of mind to learn what we as educators are trying to teach them. Sure we can do clubs, and have an open door/open teacher-parent dialogue, have food pantries, wash clothes, give children gloves, talk to them when they have a rough day, and deal with the overwhelming effects of poverty on their brains and physical toll of their body, but then am I educating them academically or mentally and emotionally? Why isn't there an assessment that asks about the whole child, not just the academic child. This MAY or may not have an impact on their successes in other areas of instruction and curriculum. Secondly, teachers should be treated with respect as professionals and many in society forget the life-long impact of fabulous teachers. I still have not come to any sure conclusions as to why such a huge shift has happened ultimately giving teachers a bad reputation, but even as a first year teacher I feel the affects of this from districts, administration, parents, legislative decisions made on our behalf, and all of these people’s views trickle down through student points of view. How do we change this?

Kim Dillingham, Granite School District

Education needs to be the number one priority on every citizen's mind. We can't afford to put it anywhere but first.

Aubrey Dillman, Granite School District

Not all schools have the same supplies or opportunities and the legislators need to make sure all schools are on equal footing

Sonya Dollins-Colton, Granite School District
Testing Concerns

There are a lot of talented special education teachers. The students in special education classrooms might not score the highest on testing, but there is a lot of amazing progress that takes place in self contained special education classrooms. These teachers and students work very hard and should not be forgotten, set aside or told to work harder to get the students up to grade level. It is our intent to work with our students to their own unique abilities and to celebrate their successes no matter how small.

Heidi Henderson, Granite School District

Homeless youth prevention. Teacher Salary vs. Administrative Salary. A voice for teachers

Patricia Honey, Granite School District

The frustration of testing. All students shouldn't be tested only on paper, but through observations and real life situations. Preparing for the real world requires time, patience, consistency and a knowledge of their needs individually. Allow teachers to all be paid equally from K-12. We should only be required to specialize in 1 to 2 areas to be proficient at what we teach and not make Elementary specialize is 6 + areas while Jr. High and High school teachers need one area of expertise. There are many areas of relevant that are indicators of what makes a successful student successful through the support of their teachers. Teachers in elementary are require to be experts in more areas of studies than most people who work in other fields. That is not reasonable to ask. Our pay and hours we put in are not indicators that the future leaders of our country are important, when not enough funds are put into pay or funding needs of public schools. It's frustrating to keep loving and sharing your passion for education when teachers are force to work more with less everyday.

Sandy Thuy Jensen, Granite School District

It is time to fund education. Education powers our economy, helps children climb out of poverty, and enriches our cultural environment. Please, let now be the time to fund education in Utah.

Susan Jones, Granite School District

Feeling supported and safe should be the right of every teacher in the classroom. It is sadly getting to the point that every teacher I know is planning their exit, whether leaving the profession or counting down to retirement. It is becoming a burden that we don't know if we can bear any longer.

Jenny Morris, Granite School District

It's time to put of children first. They are our future. We need quality teachers, smaller classrooms, more support from our legislators. Testing has taken over teaching.

Cindy Moyle, Granite School District

Teachers have more demands placed on them then ever before. The teacher shortage will only increase if we don't start addressing class size, teacher salary, and if we don't start finding ways to boost teacher morale. This all starts with funding, but also coming straight to the source -- THE TEACHERS, before making new laws and decisions that will directly affect students and teachers.

Rebecca Vala, Granite School District

Education is one of the most important things you are addressing this year. Please take time to look at this fact: teacher shortage. People are not wanting to enter into the teaching profession due to government micro management vs autonomy. Professionalism should be valued and encouraged. Why are we not giving trust to a teacher to reach her/his students needs with an educated accountability and not just a check off sheet that we need to account to an administrator who is accounting a check off sheet to a district ... etc. with so many requirements and restrictions that it takes more time doing that than it does teaching our students ... not to mention the stress and worry if we are doing it exactly the way it is required by our administrators (and it seems to change a bit every year just to cause more stress)? Money is not the biggest issue for most teachers ... please take the outside testing "stress" away, all the testing accountability that we have to "report" and let us teach not just account. Teachers need support. We have parent support... we need legislator support! Please... keep class size small, support full-day
Testing Concerns

kindergarten (as it is really first grade as compared to when you were in school), give compensation to teachers who are willing to do extras, reduce testing accountability, and give us our autonomy to do what we know how to do, namely, TEACH.

Vivian Gubler, Jordan School District

I began my teaching career in a Title I school in Granite District as a classroom aide, then became a certified preschool teacher, and finally became a certified elementary teacher. I am in my 21st year of service in a classroom, and my 13th year as a certified kindergarten teacher. I currently teach in Jordan School District. I am a teacher because I absolutely love working with, and teaching children. During the past 20 years I have seen many changes in education. One of the things that impacts my ability to teach the most is class size. My classes are usually smaller because I teach in kindergarten, but many of my colleagues do not have room for all the children's desks, and their class sizes continue to grow. Teachers in our school are told that we need to be creative and figure out ways to deal with the ever growing class sizes. My classes are usually 5 or 6 children over the optimum student to teacher ratio for kindergarten, but I feel lucky as many other kindergarten teachers have over 7 to 9 children more than is best in an early childhood classroom. I feel my love for children and teaching is used against me. I will do my job for less pay, little to no recognition for a job well done, less than desirable classroom supplies and conditions, and constant pressure to do more with less. Over the past twenty years the testing requirements have become outrageous and I am now spending so much time assessing my kindergarten students, I hardly have time to teach the required curriculum. I am a good teacher, I am always learning and perfecting my teaching skills, I have received awards for my teaching, I have taught and mentored other teachers. I will never quit my job or let my students down, they receive my best every day. The people making decisions about my students and my classroom have no idea how things work in a classroom and all the things I do each day. We need the people making the decisions to be more involved in education. Come into my classroom and my colleagues classrooms, see how we make a difference in our student's lives each day, and see the things we do with so little. Please make decisions based on actual knowledge of the issues, get involved and listen those of us who are in the trenches each day trying to make a difference in our corner of the world!

Kerry Hoffmann, Jordan School District

Before I went into education, without a degree, I was taking home, after taxes, 100K per year. I have four degrees and went into education, not to make money but to help kids, so they might have a brighter and better future. However, it took me 30 years to go from a beginning salary of 28K to 50K. We live in a very sad and disrespectful state of how our legislators treat our teachers....., those on the front line, in the trenches.

Max Weiss, Jordan School District

The students are coming harder and harder to teach. For what teachers are asked to do and what they get paid to do it, teaching is becoming a less and less desirable job.

Heidi Hall, Nebo School District

You need to address accountability for district administrators and principals: They cannot be given carte blanche to make "progressive" changes to school systems, holding teachers in check with punitive evaluation measures. Sop worrying about teacher accountability and start focusing on too many administrators (who themselves can't teach) spending money on new methods that don't work. We know what works: caring, committed teachers small classes. No more tests. No more progressive programs. Back to basics. Kids need to read and write, speak and listen, learn and communicate. Let good teachers do their jobs!

Michael Thompson, Nebo School District

Utah has the opportunity to become one of the top states for education in the country. We do an amazing job on a limited budget, just imagine what we could accomplish if we were anywhere close to other states in funding.

Melanie Rice Moffat, Park City School District
Testing Concerns

The legislature should be ashamed of themselves. knowing that the teachers in Utah are the lowest paid in the nation and we have a rainy day fund. That could pay off the national debt!!!!!!! And what happened to the day that teachers taught. learning was fun and everyone got along. This consent use of testing is useless What a joke..

_Federica Gallegos, Salt Lake City School District_

Public Education is more and more demanding on teachers. Pressure from administrators, right up to superintendents is ever more stressful. There is a lack of help with problem students from administrators. Parents are often given more respect than the classroom teacher. Sage testing, in a big way, is as much about manipulating the computer and writing equations than about asking questions and having students show their knowledge. The i-Ready Computer Program used at our school could easily replace the Sage Testing. We get the needed data to help students progress and we wouldn't have to spend the money on SAGE and take time out of our schedule to do all the testing. Also, with i-Ready, parents would have a better idea of what the testing is about and how to help their student progress. In our school, we test SAGE three times a year. That is a a lot of time taken away from classroom teaching. It is disheartening to listen to teachers and feel their frustrations, knowing that things could be much better. So, besides the lower salaries of teaching, we seem to be asking people to enter a profession in which they will not be receiving a very high salary, but also, a profession in which you will have frustration after frustration thrown at you. Why work so hard in education when it would be easier to earn more money and have an easier work load in another profession?

_Kraig Nilsson, Sevier School District_

How ridiculous the evaluation tools they are using to evaluate educators. Also that the Sage test is not an accurate way to assess school performance.

_Steve Marsing, Wasatch County School District_

I believe in the power and responsibility that teachers have to influence students for good. However, we need support, compensation, and respect from our legislators and the public to best help these students succeed. Teachers work far more hours than many realize and our wages are not competitive in comparison to others with the same amount of education and training in other industries. In order to attract and retain quality teachers, increasing teacher salaries and benefits must be a priority. In addition, in order to prevent burnout, teachers need more paid time to plan and prepare for high-quality instruction. With the amount of growth we are experiencing in many parts of Utah and in order to reduce class sizes, we'll need more teachers. Increasing salary and giving teachers more paid time to do what they need to do are two essential things for our students' futures. Also, teachers should be able to focus less on end-of-level testing proficiency percentages and more on growth of the WHOLE student--academic and otherwise. I think sometimes we feel pressured to cram the core into the kids' heads when really what they need is to learn life skills (diligence, kindness, organization, respecting for self and others, working as a team, etc.) first, and then they will be able to succeed academically. In order to be able to focus on the whole child, less pressure must be put on educators' test scores. Yes, there needs to be accountability for teachers, students, and schools, but testing is not the only way to do that—student surveys, parent surveys, administrator evaluations, student growth, self-evaluations, etc. could all be helpful ways of showing accountability. Finally, at my school (and many others) we have many students whose problems are beyond what we, as regular education teachers, have the training to sufficiently support. We need more resources available to help those students who need more mental and emotional support than we are able to give. Thank you for your time.

_Abbie Twingstrom, Weber School District_

Before you write and pass a bill into law affecting education, spend significant time in the classroom teaching and working with children with the ideas in the bill. Use and test your ideas in the classroom before writing them into a bill. Write your bills with significant teaching experience, not your own student experience. Learning and teaching are night and day different. You need to know what teaching children today is like in Utah to be able to craft effective bills to help children learn and teachers to be able to help children learn. Law like the Sage test burden our children and teachers with a wasted and poor use of time. Let's empower, not burden.

_Bryan Jenkins, Davis School District_
Testing Concerns

As always, I spend hours of my time at school and at home filling in ridiculous objective, targets, lesson plan forms, collecting data, data, data, and more data etc... that does not support me in actual planning and teaching. It's like I have two jobs: 'professional educator' and glorious administrative/secretarial professional. They say, "When you plan your lessons"; when do you do that much less even look (and I mean look) at the next weeks materials. I work at a Title 1 school where most parents do not help their students. With free breakfast in the classroom, I've now lost 20-25 minutes of instruction time. I have to stand by the food (can't have a student do that now), log it, count it to make sure entrees match with fruit (if not, toss some fruit over to the sharing basket/but in the lunch room you can't share???), listen to several students questions or problem, take tardy slips (don't lose those while you are at the back of the room serving breakfast), reminding them everyday to do the same routine we've been doing since August, go to my computer and log onto Gradebook to enter roll, keep telling students to eat instead of talk (those that have seconds (2 milks, 2 entrees need more time), tell them numerous times to begin their self-start; we don't begin 'school' until 9:20-9:25. And that's not to mention that on Mondays the Star Spangled Banner is played and we say the pledge. Oh, and add announcements in there somewhere. Breakfast needs to be in the cafeteria where students can eat and chit chat and learn to sit at a table and enjoy a meal. Not turned around in their seats, walking around the room, shoving food in their desks (yes, they have been told over 100 times/one time we had fruit flies for weeks until I found a rotten banana and roting apples mushed in back of a student's desk), milk everywhere, smelling sink where the left over milk is emptied........ We waste 15 minutes during small group time by 15 students going next door to get a Chromebook from a cart that needs to be unlocked, walking back, students going to their group desk seat and logging on. That's one group time wasted. I asked Donor Choose for 15 Chromebooks but I haven't been lucky with that. Sorry for the run-on's and fragments.

Robin Harman, Granite School District

Use the science and real rational of the educating process to direct your decision making and money directions. Testing is not the solution to success of students. Neither is school grading. Class size affects student outcomes. Parents and communities need to be held accountable for their children not just an educator, their administration or the school. Where the money is spent needs to be directed to these issues not charter special interest groups.

Johanna McMullin, Granite School District

My class size keeps growing, I do not have enough supplies for all of the children and need to use my own money to purchase them. My students have very diverse needs and I feel like there is no way to meet all of their learning needs, let alone the social and emotional needs that must be met. Many of my students suffer from food insecurity, have parents working many jobs to survive, and struggle to stay on task and complete work. Growth of students is being emphasized in my District, but that is based solely on test scores, not on whether or not they can get along with others and be kind. I feel as if I were just starting out as a teacher I would leave the profession. The demands put on me to fix everything are ridiculous and take me away from my own family. I feel like I am failing at work and home.

Barbara Antonetti, Granite School District

I teach kindergarten and it is becoming increasingly more difficult every year. We have more students than we have ever had before and there are more and more behavioral issues that we all deal with. These impact our ability to teach, which is not fair to the other students. Teacher morale is not as high as it once was with all that we deal with, along with the high emphasis on testing. I understand the importance of testing, but there are many factors that are not considered when children are tested. I have seen high ability children have an "off day" and perform poorly. Children who have speech issues and IEP's are not given accommodations on the DIBELS test. Kindergartners are not required to be in school, but still count in how well our classes perform on the test, reflecting back on the teacher. I spend a great deal of my own money, which I know is my own choice. I am frustrated that we are no longer allowed to ask for class donations, but we are required to pay jr. high and high school fees. I truly love my job, but the concerns stated above are concerns that I have heard from many other teachers as well. Thank you for your attention.

Hayley Brown, Alpine School District
Testing Concerns

Class sizes need to be addressed, along with time to teach the standards deeper.

*Emilie Whitehead, Alpine School District*

I would love to see members of the legislature be required to spend a large number of consecutive hours in schools in their districts (NOT just token visits). "Come, walk in our shoes", see and experience what we need instead of just hear about it. State and Local School Board Members should do the same.

*Susan S. Petersen, Box Elder School District*

Providing teacher merit-pay by increasing the accountability for high end-of-level students scores without being able to control what happens in a child's life outside of school is like expecting a dentist to get paid only if all of his patients have no cavities, regardless of how well they brush their teeth at home, and how strong their teeth naturally are as a result of their genetics. Most teachers work harder than other professions, but get the bad rap due to things completely out of their control. It is a highly stressful job and continues to become increasingly more stressful because of the demands imposed upon them from the public and legislators.

*Sharon Cook, Box Elder School District*

Get out in the schools and sub in a class. See what is happening before you make any decision.

*Kim Howard, Jordan School District*

I have great students and I believe all students can learn, but I have students that don't attend or when they do they have their hoodies on and earphones in. When we as teachers try to address the behavior or address any school challenge, we get bullied to keep our opinions to our self's. It never use to be that way it started when school grades were implemented.

*Dave Anderson, Logan City School District*

Teachers want to be excellent. We work extra hours to create interesting lessons, grade the rigorous assignments we assign, and find new materials. We love our content and we enjoy working with students and helping them learn and grow. But we have many factors working against us. 1) Class sizes are so large, it is hard to meet the needs of individual learners. 2) Teacher pay does not adequately compensate teachers for all the extra hours that are spent, and teachers quickly realize it is VERY DIFFICULT to support a family on the amount they earn. (Have you seen home prices?) 3) Legislation is passed without teacher input that adds to a teacher's responsibilities but doesn't help student learning. For example: sage testing was required, but students opt out or race through it just to be done, and then schools/teachers receive a poor "school grade."

*Lori Zaremba, Nebo School District*

Over the past 10 years since I've become a teacher, I have seen the expectations placed upon teachers increase significantly to the point that each year, I see many of my colleagues in the profession leave the teaching profession to pursue other career paths. They have no choice but to do so after being pushed to teacher burnout trying to keep up with daily responsibilities as a teacher and attend more meetings serving on at least one school committee or being asked to create curriculum notebooks with no more pay. I, myself contemplate this action on a daily basis due to the added expectations teachers are asked to complete each year with meager salaries that can barely support ourselves and/or our families especially if we own our homes or cars. In addition, class sizes in public schools are way too big to effectively teach our students. For example, in classes that require a lot of writing from our students, it is almost impossible to give immediate, quality feedback to our students if we want to also, meet the demands of our personal lives. It feels like the golden age of teaching has passed where we were trusted to do our jobs, catering to the various learning styles of students is completely ignored by being required to give them more and more standardized tests that reflect badly on the teachers if they do not do well. For many teachers, their love and passion of teaching is getting outweighed by the increased burdens placed on teaching each year. Please do something to ease our burdens as soon as possible. We are losing wonderful teachers each year for these reasons and more.

*Nathalie LeBras, Provo City School District*
Testing Concerns

I would like to share the realities of the work load including the emotional burnout

Aaryn Birchell, Uintah School District

I work hard every day trying to make a difference in student's lives. I would appreciate it if some of the legislators would acknowledge that we do hard things every day under tough circumstances. We need more help with difficult kids. We need more help in the classroom with either more aide time or smaller class sizes.

Lynne Graves, Weber School District

Please come into our classrooms before making legislative choices.

Wendy Western, Cache County School District

We're overworked and exhausted. Many of us are tired of having to work on school things evenings and weekends just to try to keep up. We are being held accountable for things we have no control over. Parents and students don't have any accountability unless they choose to. We are expected to do more than 1 person can possibly do and are criticized when we can't do it. We are professionals. We work in education every day and we should be making educational decisions for our students. We have too many students with many different needs and we can't help all of them. Our curriculum is more than we can teach in one year. We've had many things added to the curriculum, but very few things taken out. We're stressed because of testing and observations and evaluations and so many other things expected of us. Valuable learning time is spent testing and practicing for tests. Tired, stressed out teachers don't make better teachers or enhance relationships with students and it does not improve education. If I were choosing a career today, I definitely would not choose education because of the stress and my own time and money that goes into it.

Susan Carter, Davis School District

How unfair many teachers are treated.

Michele Hart, Granite School District

I have had 30 students in my 1st grade classroom for at least 5 years now. More and more expectations are placed upon our shoulders as teachers and with that the tools necessary are not provided. We are exhausted and need advocates who will help and assist and not just tell us what to do! There is a big piece missing in all of the questions and items on the agenda and that is of the human side. We are working with children who need to feel safe, loved, listened to and not assigned as a number and put on a machine to learn.

Brenda Lanham, Davis School District

We have committed teachers working hard every day. We need to find ways to support them and help make the job easier instead of harder. We are chasing people away from teaching with high stakes testing, large class sizes, increased responsibilities, and lack of a livable wage.

Tracy Hansen, Granite School District

The story is simply too complicated...Everyone wants to blame the teachers when the test scores are low, when the failing rates are high, when attendance is bad. Everyone blames the teacher because it is the only person in the equation that can be controlled. It's to dangerous and political to hold parents accountable. It's not "fair" to hold the students accountable. It's never a problem with the curriculum or the class size...How many meetings I have been in where I am told a good teacher can teach any size class. So, the teacher gets blamed. We have communities in this state that are at risk. Schools in which 70% of the teenagers are reading at a 4th grade level. Entire buildings of students who are so depressed and anxious that learning is virtually impossible. But, it is the teacher that is blamed. We are told to collect more data. We are told to put our lessons into templates. We are told to only teach that which can be tested. And, therefore, teachers burn out and leave the profession. Teaching is a hard job on the best of days, but when you are constantly blamed for every single failure in the system, the job is unbearable. The real solution to these problems is for everyone to take a step back and look at the whole forest. The trees are dying.

Mary Ward, Granite School District
Testing Concerns

Newcomer English language learner students need more support and more time to learn English and the school system before they are required to meet standards expected for proficiency on standard tests.

*Margo Harpster, Salt Lake City School District*

I'm still a provisional teacher, so I don't have a wealth of stories just yet. But what I do see in my schools are teachers who are giving up on students just a few months into the year because they're not equipped to give that student the work they need. They have 30+ other students they have to ensure meet certain benchmarks, and they're unsure of how to deal with certain behaviors so those students who need the most care and extra help get tossed to the SpEd teachers and generally forgotten. That's something that needs to change. Children shouldn't be falling through the cracks.

*Maren Holmes, Granite School District*

Teachers are constantly asked to do more and more without the tools, or time to implement the new requirements. Too much instructional time is taken with the testing we're required to do. Elementary classrooms with near thirty students add to the stress.

*Janet Juengel, Granite School District*

Teachers need to feel they are supported by legislators. The bar on classroom and student growth has risen to an almost unattainable level. Consider our students: some are homeless, receive no parental support, are hungry, have moved several times a year, have disabilities, etc. Our students cannot fit into a common goal. And teachers should not be considered failures if students cannot reach the state expectation. Please consider the individuality of all children in our state, in our schools.

*Lori Gray, Jordan School District*

Teachers are overworked with the class sizes, and the amount of testing overwhelming the teaching. It takes the brain time to put concepts into long-term memory, and students are suffering with over-testing and not enough time to learn. The teachers I work with are always talking about another mandatory test coming up. It's taking away from the kids. In the last 7 years of teaching, I have seen many classes over 30. And to be realistic, anything over 25 students at once is not teaching, just managing the load. Students learn better when there is a tight sense of community--much harder to do in a class over 25.

*Erica Hammon, Salt Lake City School District*

Please fund education in Utah and get out of our way and let us teach.

*Kim Irvine, Weber School District*

For far too long the legislature has focused on what parents and students want in education, not what is actually needed to make it work properly in the state of Utah. Now we find ourselves in a situation where test scores are dropping, charter schools are not fixing the problem, students are leaving high school unprepared, and the legislature continues to ignore the voices of those who know the solution because it is politically convenient.

*Dan Evans, Davis School District*

I teach at a turn around school. Our students eat most of their meals at school and for many, their teachers are the only adult they trust or have a relationship with. They love their teachers so much but they are spread so thin! On top of teaching the standards and expected to make the growth, we are teaching them basic skills that they don't get at home. We get very little support from outside the school.

*Amanda Cornwell, Granite School District*

I am a 5th year teacher approaching the "burnout" phase. I teach at a Title I school and resources and support have continued to dwindle year after year. Our school has many students with behavioral issues and we are completely lacking support. We have no money for paraeducators to help and the district requires months of paperwork before intervening. We are drowning. I have a class of 24 students but I spend 80% of my time managing the behavior of 3
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students. The students with behavioral issues needs are not being met in our school system. They are not getting the support and interventions they need because we lack resources. These students are also taking away learning time from other students. This is unfair to everyone. I love teaching but I don't even get to teach anymore. I spend all my time managing behavior. The day ends and I'm exhausted, I can't stick around for 2 more hours to catch up on grading and copying unpaid. Teachers need more support, we need help! Schools need copy room aides, paraeducators, behavioral health assistants. We can't do this on our own. Mandatory testing also brings extreme stress to teachers and students. One standardized test does not show the worth of students or teachers. Utah has to reduce the amount of testing, it wastes instructional time and does not accurately show student knowledge.

Laura Heffernan, Granite School District

I'm a special ed teacher 11 years, ranging from elementary resource, elementary self-contained, and high school resource. This year I am an instructional coach for special ed ARLs and interns. As I take a new The burnout rate of special ed teachers is quite high, thus districts are having to rely on hiring an training people who are willing to do an ARL. THis is an alarming trend that should be addressed somehow. It is really difficult to teach everything a special ed teacher is expected to do with people who have no pre-service prep! And quite frankly, I think special ed teachers are asked to do more than is possible considering a traditional work day. It is a highly stressful job that is not worth the pay they get.

Ingrid Shurtleff, Provo City School District

I'm concerned with the push for one-on-one technology for students. I can't get enough support for what little technology I have in my room, let alone have the demand for more tech help with students. I would hope legislators will listen to people in education rather than the hue and cry of others. We are in the trenches. A lot of the fall out educators are dealing with right now is due to “other voices”, legislation coming about because of it and later proven to not have been wise!!

Rachel Gonzalez, Alpine School District

Please listen to the state's teachers. We are the experts in the trenches every day.

Denise Kelley, Alpine School District

I feel like I am being treated like a yo-yo and that I have to teach my students like they are robots. I understand that we need to test but the testing is out of control and my students don't have time to be creative because we are worrying about making sure we have good test scores!

Karen Mann, Jordan School District

Teachers' jobs are becoming so scripted and micro-managed that teachers are losing enthusiasm, too drained to be creative and scared about being judged. They no longer feel that they can contribute what is important to them without scrutiny. Testing scores do not take into account that some students who test, miss many days, and then perform poorly, thus penalizing the teacher.

martha johnston, Canyons School District

Nobody wants to be a teacher anymore. Each year I ask my sophomores what they want to do when they graduate. The percentage who say they would like to be a teacher and is much lower than it used to be. This year I was surprised to have 3/92. That is higher than the last two years. I know that all my students who said they wanted to become a teacher didn't always follow through with it, but they at least looked at the profession and found it attractive in some way. Now almost every news story about teachers is negative. When I was young I looked forward to going back to school in the fall. I missed all of my friends that I hadn't seen or talked to in three months. And I did like learning even though there were some classes I found more interesting than others. My students don't look forward to coming back to school. They don't miss the social interaction because they are in constant contact. If they want to know something they can easily look it up or watch a video. When they come to school they deal with overstressed adults who are under pressure to make sure their students perform well on standardized tests, including the ACT. The ACT only matters for students who are college bound. So why would a kid seeking a tech certificate spend a
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significant part of his/her education preparing for the ACT? I feel like all the fun has been taken away for both teachers and students. There is no freedom to ask a question and then spend time exploring possible solutions. Some teachers may be willing to spend a day on an interesting question, but most are too worried that they won't finish the mandated curriculum if they take even one day to explore. The student gets very little choice in learning about things that interest him/her especially in a small school where electives are extremely limited. School is too rigid. We must conform to the bus schedule, state standards, testing schedule, traditions, etc, etc. Our students have evolved but school has not. I still love my job and I admire the students who are willing to conform and dig in but I do believe there is a better way and I don't think it involves one set of standards for everyone. Everyone works harder, performs better, and is happier when they feel like they have some say in the path they take. I wish high school students were allowed to choose a path and work towards a goal. Everyone would be allowed to change their mind, but it may take extra time to go back and complete the requirements for that path. So what? If you are college bound their should be certain requirements that you must meet before getting accepted. If you can't meet the requirements you work harder until you can or you choose a new path. I still believe in a well-rounded education but I don't think it has to be age-based. I don't think that all of the sophomores should have to take math together. If a student is motivated and ready to graduate at 16 why not? If another is slower, less motivated, or has changed his/her path several times and doesn't graduate until 20, so what? I think we are doing our students a huge disservice in middle school/junior high to move them along no matter what. The middle school teachers can see the holes in their learning but they have no recourse. You can't force people to do things. If nothing happens to the student then they walk in to high school completely unprepared and they're forced to take math and language with people that are prepared. And eventually they believe they can never catch up so they either act out or drop out. Trying to do interventions with these students is by far the hardest part of my job. People are willing to send their child to kindergarten twice when they can see the child is clearly not ready to move on. So, why are they so willing to move their child on to high school completely unready? If the threat of staying in middle school one more year was enough to wake up 20 students, it would be worth it.

Lexa Larsen, Sevier School District

I have been an educator for 25 years and while I may not have all the answers i am greatly concerned about how in my opinion excessive testing and recording and monitoring accountability measures actually takes away from my actual teaching/facilitating or time on task for my students which i have seen to be the best thing for them. Many of us out here feel we are testing to death!

Michael Bottita, Alpine School District

Children want to learn and Teachers want to teach, but changing programs and expectations on teachers make it difficult. It requires additional time spent at school and takes the joy out of teaching.

Kathy Rockhill, Alpine School District

How a test does not define the ability of a student or the effectiveness of a teacher.

Dennise LeBaron, Davis School District

Please stop killing elementary teachers with the ridiculous amount of data they are expected to gather weekly. Give them time to plan their lessons!

Jill Muir, Granite School District

The effect of the turn around process for schools is demoralizing to teachers and has little effect on student progress.

Kathryn Prater, Granite School District

Teaching has become too much about how our test scores compare with those of other countries, and less about teaching students to be lifelong learners. We're so worried about whether or not 5th graders can write a 5 paragraph essay that we don't have time to teach them the importance of writing for communication and the nuances of writing for fun. They can all crank out an essay using the formula, as it were, with supporting details from a text, but they can't create anything on their own, they don't know how to form opinions or ask questions, and they hate writing.
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We’re so concerned about whether or not kindergarten students can use multiple ways to count to 100, or write a short paragraph with correct capitalization and punctuation, that we’re not allowed to spend the necessary time to teach them how to interact with others, use scissors, fold paper, use a glue bottle. We are losing these so called “soft skills” and we are gaining more and more behavior problems as the students go up through the ranks with teachers who don’t have time to teach them how to be people because they have to consistently worry about the damn test scores, that may or may not be tied to their job security (we’re all very confused about that). Music, and other art, teachers are treated as baby sitters, rather than the professional educators that they are, so that “regular” teachers can have a little more planning time, because music, art, history, and PE aren’t tested, they’re not considered to be important by the legislature. When in fact they are more important now than ever because they are the subjects that teach humanity, and how to interact with others, and how to process our feelings when we are hurt or scared or angry. Teachers are overworked and underpaid, but even more than that they are treated poorly. They are not trusted to do their job - which is to teach - but rather told how to do their job by nearly every person under the sun who has never even been a teacher.

Stacy Mayren, Granite School District

I became a teacher because I was passionate about student learning. I feel like all the other aspects of teaching have weighed me down and diminished my passion. The amount of work we do outside of teaching is too much and more and more requirements keep getting put on us. Let us teach and inspire the next generation.

Vanessa Black, Jordan School District

I would like to feel that my elected officials saw teachers as valuable people who are trying to do their best at all times. To know the demands upon teachers is three to five times more on each higher than for jobs in the public sector. Real success does not depend upon test scores. I spend more time testing in some cases than teaching. Each student is an individual and has different needs and abilities. We are ignoring student straights because of test scores. Not everyone will be able to achieve the highest level in everything. To expect it is unreasonable. It is like expecting everyone to run a mile. Even the child who does not have legs. That child will be a failure because of the fact they did not meet the mark. To base teacher value based upon outcomes is also not reasonable. Do I think teachers need some accountability yes. But there needs to be reasonable expectations. I have had two students who were dangerous to the other students and themselves, in that case I had to spend a significant amount of time protecting the students from the violent student. It takes so long to get a student like that into an appropriate situation sometimes a year. In the mean while my time to teach the students is greatly reduced. Every classroom is different with different needs. Each child is different too. They are not robots or a bunch of collected data. Some have ADHD, some have fighting parents, some have divorced parents, some never see or interact with parents for more than ten minutes a day, some are just not developed physically to meet testing guidelines. Does anyone even consider that each individual learns at a different rate and by slowing down greatly we can achieve huge gains in the long run. Education about real people or is all this a political ploy to get power over the other party so our party can make all the decisions. Put people first. Teachers are people. If you run them out of their jobs where will they go. To unemployment benefits, homelessness? What then? Who is going to pay to take care of people who were trying their best to contribute to society, paying taxes and being good citizens. Doesn't it make more sense to support teachers so they can continue to make positive impact?

Janice Snow, Jordan School District

Please let me teach. All I hear is data this and data that. Many of my students are developing test anxiety and have become complacent. Authentic learning is all but gone and has been replaced with with data driven methods. Many amazing teachers are leaving because of this. You look at my data and grade me as a teacher and my school, but don’t take into account how many absences a student has, whether they have a learning or behavior disability, or some other contributing factor. I love the students and want them to succeed, but I feel the path we are headed down is a path for our educators and students to fail. Please just let me teach!

Tashalyn Wood, Jordan School District
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Teachers are professionals. We need to be able to do our job without yearly changes from the Legislature. We need to be able to teach, not test to heavily to show "accountability." We need to have fair evaluations that aren't cumbersome to complete.

Lori Johansen, North Sanpete School District

Constant changes to testing and requirements before any time tested outcomes can be measured are disruptive and waste resources.

Julie Wilding, Nebo School District

I'm in my fifteen year of teacher and pressure and stress that we put on our younger children is ridiculous. March through May students begin developing ticks to cope with the pressure to pass the end of year test. I've had many students crying during the Sage test. I can't stand watching little kids cry because they want to please their teacher, because their teacher is extremely stressed about raising test scores and being watched by the administrators if the kids don't perform well. I used to love teaching and I was really good at it. Now I have to have my kids do the practice Sage test every month. We can't go on field trips during Sage testing. I know kids need to be tested, but if we only weigh the cow and never feed it, when does it grow and develop?

Marie Mattinson, Provo City School District

The state is expecting teachers like me to bring kids living in poverty and at-risk situations to grade level when they come into my 6th grade classroom at a 2nd and 3rd grade level. The pressure we have to show proficiency on the state tests is very high and often unrealistic. We have been told this year that if we do not show major improvement, teachers and admin will be shuffled. We have already been trained by the best and our kids are still pretty low. The other issue I have is with the moving target on school grading. My school received a C 2 years ago, but 2 weeks later, the state changed it to a D. We worked so hard to get to that C just to have the state change the requirements of each letter grade.

Jessica Fiveash, Weber School District

I think we need to stop saying we will just need to do more for less.

George Durfee, Alpine School District

In order for students to succeed there needs to be more adults per student. The only way a class of 30 students with one teacher works is if every student has the same needs and that will never be a reality.

Kristen Amber Holladay, Alpine School District

Allocate more money to pay teachers so we retain them and reduce class sizes.

Janel Tuckett, Alpine School District

The class sizes are too large to teach what is expected.

Suzanne Mackey, Canyons School District

Grading schools for test scores is not OK!

Allison Downs, Davis School District

Special Education has been on the back burner long enough

Kathleen Lamborn, Davis School District

You make decisions thinking you know what's best for all the schools, students and teachers and you never even set foot in an actual classroom. You're looking at raw, often times incomplete data. Would you for one second think like educators instead of businessmen? Come and observe classes, think about everything you put on the shoulders of teachers and try to teach something rather than making laws and rules based on what you think is best?

Maria Lee, Davis School District
Testing Concerns

Come to my classroom. See what I do.  

Carol Madsen, Davis School District

My students enjoy that I do not have them do their assignments using laptops or computers. They would rather do worksheets, assignments from the book, or hands-on activities. I am telling you this because the big push is for one-to-one technology in the classroom and the kids do not really like learning that way.  

Troy Murray, Davis School District

Teachers are the solution to education not the problem.  

Diann Bowles, Granite School District

I teach Kindergarten. Every day I come to work I feed my students two meals per day, check for properly clothed bodies, dry tears, watch for bruises of the body and the soul and address them appropriately...then teach. There is so much more to teaching a child than test results. Please remember that.  

Charmaine Grimm, Granite School District

Class sizes are way too large. Anything above 28 becomes crowd control, not teaching.  

EllenMae Johnson, Granite School District

Teachers don't feel that they are respected. Teachers have the summer off and they get alot of vacation time in between. They don't relize what it is like being in the classroom.  

George Duersch, Logan City School District

There is such a disconnect between how they perceive the school and the reality of it. I want legislators to spend at least a week in schools with different SES, get to know students on individual basis, talk with teachers about their concerns and take them in considerations during the legislative sessions. They need to be realistic when it comes to the achievement expected outcomes of students with disabilities. They all make progress but it depends greatly on their cognitive issues, which need to be taking in consideration. One major benefit that decreases the gap between abled and disable students are the accommodations the IEP team decides the students need in the Gen Ed classroom. For example, if a student has difficulty with short term memory and recall of information, a calculator will help the student with math computation. If they understand specific math concepts, but never get the answer correct because they can't recall multiplication facts, they should be allowed to use the calculator during assessments. We are in the technology era, with any restrictions. Why can't these students use them? Why can't we do all we can to help them experience success? They spend so many hours practicing math facts, when they could participate in the learning process with their peers and feel successful. Great special education teachers and teachers in general leave the profession due to the pressure and high expectation mandated by our legislature, with minimal support coming from them.  

Kathy Hanks, Murray City School District

My classroom is unbearably cold Nov. -Mar & unbearably hot Aug., Sept & sometimes May. Help! High-stakes yearly testing is ruining education. Kids & teachers are totally stressed oit. It doesn't help guide teacher instruction.  

Cindy Sumsion, Nebo School District

Teachers are the professionals, yet legislators, administrators and parents (who believe the quick-fix ideas of legislators), are often the ones who determine how and what we teach. This is counterproductive. I believe that students would benefit if teachers were given much more discretion in the classroom, standardized testing was drastically reduced or eliminated, and pay throughout educators (including administration) was much more equitably distributed.  

Kerrie Anderson, Weber School District
Testing Concerns

Make students a priority! Make Education a priority. There's a reason we can't keep teachers and they go to other states to teach. We are burning out. Wake up!

Marie Christensen, Weber School District

Come and try teaching in my shoes for a week.

Carol Wheatley, Canyons School District

Being a teacher is a very important job. It takes a lot of time and effort to make sure every child is learning. I feel that I am accountable for too many students and feel that classroom sizes should be decreased in order to be an effective teacher. I spend most of time devoted to getting lesson plans ready, correcting papers and time away from my family for the interest of my students. I also feel that I am spending more than I should out my own pocket monies to make my lessons engaging and helpful for students to do well on year end testing. There is so much pressure put on teachers to plan effective lesson, use resources that are not supported by the state or district and classroom sizes are too large.

Sonja Aoki, Granite School District

Depending on the area I am teaching in students either have school supplies or they do not because there is not enough money for me to spend as a teacher on my students supplies. I have 31 students in my classroom and in order for them to be successful and keep up with the curriculum and testing required of them, they need certain supplies. It is very expensive for me, on my own, to buy supplies for 31 students. I am lucky enough that my students parents are able to purchase their childs’ supplies. Whereas other schools families are unable to purchase their supplies, putting a financial strain on teachers. We need more money in order to encourage student-centered and hands on learning so our money is being spent on school supplies for science and math manipulative instead of purchasing pencils and notebooks.

Emily Atkinson, Granite School District

I (we) as teachers are always going above and beyond the a call of duty to help and support our students succeed. It seems that the legislators and the public (vocal) minority want to demonize and degrade teachers for not being perfect. Give the teachers the pay and the support that is needed to push to higher standards. Don't just legislate and make it harder for teachers to do their already complicated job.

David Jones, Nebo School District

We need smaller classes and higher pay to keep quality teachers. There are so many extra demands put on teachers too. It's hard to be a good spouse, parent, and teacher when all you do is go home and make sure everything is ready for school the next. There are way to many hoops to jump through. (Spend at least 2 hours a night thinking school) Trust us and let us do our job which is being the best teacher we can for our students.

LeighAnn Penrod, Nebo School District

So much of the money invested in education is not very helpful to improve student learning. Teachers are on the front lines and know what their students really need. Ask them!!!! There is Too Much Testing!!!!

JoAnn Hanson, Davis School District

Before any legislator is allowed a vote - 10 hours in an average school's average classroom

Julie D. Tarbet, Granite School District

I am concerned about so much testing for the students. It takes a lot of time away from teaching. Also, I work with all the special ed teachers and they are buried in paperwork. One great teacher quit and went back into private practice because she missed spending time with the students. I am worried that many parents aren't teaching their children respect for education and teachers...which effects the classroom and society greatly.

Valerie K Thurnell, Wasatch County School District
Testing Concerns

My grandchildren have to walk 2 miles to elementary school and the district said they can’t afford buses to transport them. Class sizes at all levels are too large to get a quality education. I have seen good teachers leave, almost every year I have taught, for better paying jobs. Computers for every student aren’t always the answer. There is far too much time spent on testing, not just at the end of the year but all throughout the year.

Julie LaRocco, Davis School District

Time is essential to plan effective lessons. There is not enough paid time to do so. Teachers work extra unpaid hours. We need a better salary.

Janeth Paredes, Alpine School District

I went to school to help students to be better. Not just academically, but socially and behaviorally. It has been hard. With all the high stake testing, data collecting so that others outside of the profession can check up on me, and disrespect for teachers everywhere. Teachers are often thought up as baby sitters for their children and hopefully the student learns something. This is wrong. We have 4 year degrees and are dictated to continue our education. We are paid minimally and treated as to our pay. Parents and government do not treat us as professionals who went to school to learn how to teach. They think they know best. Behavior in the classroom has decreased over the year partly because of this disrespect. Why should the students listen, when lawmakers and parents are putting down the teacher? Skilled teachers are leaving the profession because they cannot support their own families on the pay that is offered them. I once heard in one of my college classes “I might as well try teaching, I failed my other classes”. Is this the attitude we want our teachers in your child’s school?

Linda Hunzeker, Davis School District

The more we prioritize standardized testing, the more we will facilitate a generation of great standardized test-takers who accomplish little else. It’s not a coincidence that many great leaders were not stellar on their standardized test scores. We ought to get the idea: there are other things that are much, MUCH more important. But as long as we act like the test is most important, the harder it is for teachers to prioritize what really matters. We also need to take a look at Google and other companies: technology skills are not nearly as important as so called “soft” skills that are harder to quantify: communication, teamwork, persistence, grit, creativity, enthusiasm. THESE are what matters. And yet the money keeps going to standardized testing (and the parts of subjects that happen to be easy to create data from) and technology. It is so frustrating to be told to do things that are not in my students’ best interests. It is so frustrating to see the money go to what doesn’t matter.

Jon Midget, Davis School District

We spend so much time testing we don’t have time to teach. A lot of that is Davis School district requirements.

Kristy Young, Davis School District

I volunteer 2 hours of my time at school planning, meetings, etc. and numerous hours at home doing school related activities. I’m under valued and over-worked! I appreciate the salary increase, but when will the extra hours be addressed?

Trinda Carlson, Granite School District

In my half day Kindergarten classes, I am expected to teach a full day of curriculum, while doing a great deal on one-on-one testing. I need more time to work with struggling and advanced students. Look at giving us full-time aides, decreasing testing, or making our day an hour longer!

Karen Haslam, Granite School District

Teaching is more difficult than the average person understands. We are met with so many challenges, but are expected to meet very rigorous testing and expectations. We need to be valued by our legislators and we need to be valued by society so that we can be giving our students the best education. Investing in teachers means investing in our future!

Christar Krans, Jordan School District
Testing Concerns

I currently have 40 students in each English 11 class. I have a total of 210 students in MHS with many individual needs: SPED, 504s, and ESL/ELL needs. I am trying to prepare these students to take the ACT and do well. It is an impossible task.

Crystal Spackman, Murray City School District

I love teaching and I am a natural. I teach elementary school and know I make a big, positive impact on the lives of my students. I love them and they feel it. How do I know? I am invited to mission farewells, homecomings and weddings and am frequently greeted in public places with big hugs from former students. I become friends with many of their parents who seek out advice many years after I have taught their child. My test scores are good, I am beloved and I love teaching. I am also counting down the years (five first days left) until I retire. I always imagined age-related health issues would force me to retire, but I am in great health. I plan to leave teaching because the stress, needs & demands of teachers and students are too many. The expectations of a child have become too much for many of them to bear. My eight and nine year old students cry during testing because they do not understand what is expected or are unable to figure out how to use the mouse to accomplish the assigned task (click on, drag and drop dots and lines to demonstrate they understand perimeter or area.) Their little hands struggle to type essays, often about topics they do not fully comprehend like arboretums, culture museums or NASA careers. They have completed the 3rd grade Keyboarding curriculum and even spent many extra hours practicing, but they still have a hard time remembering how to capitalize letters or the difference between the available punctuation marks. They hunt for the letters asking, "Why aren't they in order?" They struggle to write using evidence from the articles provided without actually using the exact words. That is a lot to expect of an eight year old. Testing is too intense, too confusing and too overwhelming for too many of my students. I feel like I spend the entire year building relationships of trust and then end the year by subjecting them to hours of torture. I have eight-year-olds taking TUMS to survive the stomachache of testing. That is wrong. Third grade students need paper and pencil tests. The questions need to be more direct and age appropriate. We must reduce the hours spent on testing. Our current method of testing is killing their joy for learning and many teachers joy for teaching. Maybe with small classes and adequate support for the ever-increasing numbers of special needs students, the job would be "do-able." Right now, it is not. I am doing all that I can to make it possible for my students to succeed, but cannot keep up. The hours and expectations never fail to increase or intensify. I am one of your best teachers and am so worn out, I no longer WANT to teach. Who will replace me? The pay and benefits have never drawn people to teaching, but good retirement and health insurance benefits and "mom-friendly" hours helped compensate. Teachers could be home soon after their children returned from school, a draw for many women. Not anymore. Teaching is a full-time job with impossible demands and inadequate compensation. Multi-generational teacher families are telling their children not to teach. The decreased number of students entering education programs should tell you that society also views teaching as an undesirable profession. What are we going to do when the demands are so high, no one qualified will do it?

Michael-Ann McAfee, Nebo School District

As a teacher, there are some things that scare me about our current education system and the direction that we are headed. These concerns include 1. Teacher Shortage 2. Class sizes 3. High stakes testing requirements from the federal and state government 4. Teacher morale I watch my colleagues go home every night overworked, and underpaid. If we do not address our teachers and their support system I do not believe we can maintain a high standard of learning in Utah.

Ashley Davis, Ogden School District

The students are being tested to death! Let us get back to teaching!

Mary Beth Sheppard, Salt Lake City School District

Our students deserve the very best we have to offer. After all, the kids I work with are only 9 and 10 years old. There have been so many things added to our plates, that it's no fun being a teacher anymore. Adults have polluted our schools, and ultimately it's our students who pay the price. I used to love being a teacher. I would wake up every morning looking forward to going to work. I'll continue to do my very best, because that's what my students deserve.
Testing Concerns

However, I look forward to the day I can leave the profession. Hopefully legislatures will make decisions with our students in mind.

Steve Herrman, Alpine School District

Educators are leaving teaching because of poor pay, curriculum always changing (6th grade science), and class sizes are too high.

Kelley Tenney, Alpine School District

Talk to teachers in real classrooms about their needs and thoughts on education rather than listening to outsiders - outside of the teaching/education field

laurie brown, Davis School District

Don't mix public and private education. Get rid of SAGE testing - it is almost meaningless. Sinse students know the tests are meaningless to their grades - they simply don't care/the 'opt out/or they deliberately 'throw' the exams to punish teachers they don't like. They do NOT do what educators seem to think they do (rating schools/teachers). Just admit that if you don't have student accountability (grades)...you don't have a viable test.

Daniel Glad, Davis School District

I have only been teaching for 2 years and I have notice my class sizes go up, the demands go up, and the students motivation at home decrease, and a slight increase in salary. I do not believe students need iPads in second grade they need to learn to read, cut, and color, and how to communicate. They spend way to much time playing video games anyway. Students in grade school need to learn to socialize and not be on a computer. Other issues are my students are tested to death they are to young for all the testing.

Christina Torres, Granite School District

For the past 3 years I've had over 30 students in my classroom, one year 36. It is impossible to meet the needs of students academically with that many kids in the classroom. There is not enough text books, technology or time to even come close to meeting their needs. Teaching today is different than 20 years ago. Every year I have many students facing problems of homelessness, a parent in jail/prison, mental illness, abuse, suicide and often my main job is keeping these kids safe and help them navigate through very difficult circumstances. My frustration is that I am constantly barraged with mandates that make it almost impossible to teach. I spend more time testing, collecting data, retesting, trying to reach 33 students that I have no time to TEACH or plan effective instruction. In my current school the majority of teachers are burned out and do not enjoy coming to work, this is a sad state of affairs because these people are phenomenal teachers who have been overworked, underpaid, and undervalued. There is no other occupation where so much is given beyond what is required with little or no recognition. In fact, it's almost to the point where it is expected. We do what we do because we want to help students, however, at some point enough is enough.

Cindy Anderson, Jordan School District

Reduce testing so teachers have more time to teach.

Laurie Hamblin, Jordan School District

Please just let me teach! Forget DATA!!!! My students are not just numbers on a wall. Reduce standardized testing! I have had to cut out so much of my fun lessons because there is no time for them anymore. Treat us like professionals because we are. Don't tell us we're doing great when we have so little. Give us more and let us do more. Keep class sizes low and add aides to every room! Thank us with words, but also with bonuses. Give elementary teachers that teach all subjects those same STEM based bonuses that secondary teachers get. Come walk in my shoes for a few days and see what teaching is really all about!

Lynece Rowntree, Jordan School District
Testing Concerns

I feel that having severe SpEd students who continuously wander the halls creating distractions and disruptions for the main stream students should be addressed. We have three students that walk the halls ALL day long with aids because their disability is too severe for them to remain in a classroom. These students run in and out of classrooms, we have one who is a male student that keeps running into the girls locker room while girls are getting dressed. This student has injured teachers and aids because of his behavioral issues. The three of the students create major distractions and disruptions in ALL other classes throughout the day. Why do we not have a school specifically for their needs. We have to put the classes, office and bathrooms on lockdown because one of these students is out of control. Why should the entire school be locked down for one student who is out of control. The safety of other students and faculty is compromised because of these students.

_Denise Howard, Salt Lake City School District_

Teaching is an art- Many legislators have multiple children and understand that a standard 'do XYZ and you'll have the result you want' approach doesn't work for parenting like it does in manufacturing because children are people. Most people can remember a person or two that was able to give them a little extra attention and it was a game changer for them. As a teacher, I have 274 students this year and I do my best, but my time is so spread out that giving the kids the individual attention that really makes a difference is increasingly difficult. I still make a difference with a 1:274 ratio, but not what I could if it were 1:200 or even 1:150 ratio. We have been out of state to look at other, fantastically performing schools. None of them has ever had a teacher with more than 125 students to care for. If you could help work toward that, or at least give us props for doing what we do with double+ that number, it would go a long way. Thanks!

_Bryce Shelley, Alpine School District_

I believe teachers want to be successful at their jobs. They care for their students and work incredibly hard, but it is becoming increasingly impossible to meet the demands of teaching. In addition, to district and state mandates, there are more and more students with extreme behavioral issues. It is often beneficial for these students to be in a neighborhood school but we have not changed the way we do business. Schools are severely understaffed in the area of psychologists and social workers so general education teachers and special education teachers are expected to take care of behavior problems often at the expense of other students. Add to this constantly changing curriculum and programs, too much information to teach and test, too large of class size, and inadequate planning and paperwork time and you can see the reason for teachers leaving the profession.

_Shanan DeVries, Granite School District_

Teacher morale is at an all-time low. More is expected every year without additional support. In fact, most years we have lost support or funding that we had previously had. Students with serious issues are not getting help because schools "over qualify" students. I don't feel that it is ethical to base student support on a bell curve. If a student needs help, they should be able to receive services regardless of how many other students at that school are also receiving services. Class sizes are too large for the amount of behavior problems prevalent, making it impossible to effectively teach the content required. This is leading teachers to leave the profession altogether. It is not a matter of east side/west side schools, it is a problem everywhere. Too much emphasis is placed on testing at the end of the year. Tests are only one measure for student achievement, yet everything counts on it. It affects students and teachers alike. This is the only thing that isn't being changed about the school system, but it needs to be changed the most. There is no reason to base the accountability of an entire year on a single test.

_Elaine Johnson, Granite School District_

With class sizes so large the quality of teaching is lessened per student

_Dirk W. Menzel, Granite School District_

Give me time to teach!

_Connie Kawala, Alpine School District_
Testing Concerns

PLEASE - consider kindergarten when you are planning state tests. If you are requiring state testing for kindergarten, then we need support --- small class sizes (30 SHOULD NEVER BE ALLOWED - I HAVE HAD 33 IN A CLASSROOM BEFORE ------- THAT JUST BECOMES CROWD CONTROL AND BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT EVERY DAY). We need all day kindergarten and teacher aides. If they want us to meet all the standards that are required, WE NEED THE SUPPORT.

Denise Lindberg, Alpine School District

The amount of oversight and lack of respect is disheartening. We are trained, dedicated professionals -- treat us as such. We are given too many kids and expected to work miracles. We are only capable of so much and to be constantly berated is so discouraging. I grieve for what I cannot do for each of my kids with the time I have with them. Accept that we can't fix everything and we do the very best we can for all of our children. We want all our children to grow during the year, but realize that each child grows at their own rate/potential. To expect every child to "pass" at a certain rate is a disservice to the children who do the very best they can but don't quite make the cut. Celebrate the growth they've made instead of criticizing them as not good enough.

Kimberly Hawvermale, Alpine School District

If their continued employment/probation/interventions were based on a written test, how would they feel about it and what would they do about it . . .

Chad Hawkes, Cache County School District

Stop putting so much emphasis on testing and test scores. We need to return to developmentally appropriate practices and curriculum. Put some responsibility back on to the parents. The school system can not do it all. Reduce class sizes and treat teachers with respect. We are college educated professionals and should be treated as such.

Emily Jensen, Davis School District

I think that to attract and retain quality teachers we need to pay them well and give them class sizes that enable their very best teaching. Smaller class sizes lead to more individual attention and intervention time. Often, we are told about a new teaching strategy or management tool that is working somewhere else. We then watch the video and see how amazing the tool is. Then, we count the children in the master teachers class. Typically they have 18-22 students maximum. I have been teaching third grade for 20 years in Davis District and have 28-32 students each year. I think smaller class sizes would cause teachers in Utah to be more successful. Meaning, we would feel that we are really able to reach every student with what they need. This leads to job satisfaction and coupled with a salary that supports our families we would be fulfilled, driven, content, excited employees. This is the best profession there is! Now pay us enough and set us up for success. We are ready to shape the future. Help us, and it will be beautiful.

Deborah Sheffield, Davis School District

I think that it is important that aides in the schools be paid more. They are a very important part of the schools and it is difficult to find people to do this job because of poor pay and no time to instruct them how to work with children with specific needs. Or class sizes are to large and it is difficult to teach when we are required to do so much testing. Teachers need to teach more and test less. We need more social workers in our schools to help address behavior problems. Our class sizes are overwhelming. a

Leslie Archer, Granite School District
Testing Concerns

Disruptive students/unstable families make it increasingly more difficult to teach when resources aren't there to help students adjust/learn coping skills. We had to share our psychologist with THREE other schools last year and this year WE DON'T HAVE ONE AT ALL! No social workers two days a week and when do you think kids flip out/run away etc? Its when nobody is around to help. Teaching isn't possible when these situations arise.

Julie Down, Granite School District

Come to one classroom for the day & teach without lesson plans!

Bonnie Hall, Granite School District

I would like to invite them to work with me for a day! I think all of them would have a very different perspective if they spent a day in the classroom!

Ashley Raines-Parshall, Jordan School District

I wish that our legislator would come in the classroom to teach a lesson to the students so they could see what it is like to be a teacher.

Kerri Reyes, Jordan School District

I have had large classes (27-31) for several years now in my favorite class of 5th grade. There is so much required of me that is extra stressful because of being responsible for so many students.

Cathy Sandberg, Jordan School District

Find something other than Common Core to hold students accountable

Sheri Rivera, Nebo School District

I feel that I don't have enough time in a day to address the needs of each of my students. Also, there is much anxiety due to testing.

Bernard Rizzotto, Park City School District

Support our public schools

Nikki Hill, Weber School District

Merit Pay would not be benefit students, it would just create difficulties with the teachers not sharing, and teaching should foremost be a sharing environment to benefit all of the students. Paying teachers for students doing well on tests is not helpful. Take the merit pay money and put it towards professional development for teachers to attend such as ideas of how to improve their teaching and intervention strategies that would work to help students would be more beneficial to students and teachers.

Nicole Neal, Weber School District

Any additional funding education can receive would not be wasted. I see dedicated teachers sacrifice large amounts of their own time and resources only to be made to feel they’re not doing enough because an unreliable standardized testing system tells them so. Utah's Education could benefit greatly first from giving teachers a salary that compensates all they sacrifice, and next by funding greater technology and resources for the classroom. Teachers will be more energized to do the best job possible when they have less financial strain to deal with.

Sarah Martins, Alpine School District

If I could share one message with legislators it would be to put your feelings and biases towards public education to the side and focus on the wonderful children/students of our state. Be more supportive and less critical of teachers. Many times, our hands are tied and we are doing the best that we can. Our voices often go unheard, but as some of the people who have entrusted our vote to you, it is your job to represent our voices instead of special interest groups. There are no perfect teachers or parents or legislators for that matter, so let’s work together instead of against each other in doing what's best for the children of our state. Also, I would like to thank those legislators that
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support teachers. They are those legislators who know that teachers didn't go into teaching for the money. We are here to provide our students with the best quality education that we can give. We have no ulterior motives other than to see our students' smiling faces each and every day. When we feel valued as professionals in education, it encourages us to do our very best. And when I say professionals, we have earned that right by earning a degree in education which should be a fundamental requirement in any society. So, thank you for your monetary and emotional support. ??

Kammy Hanson, Davis School District

Stop micromanaging education and trust paid professional teachers to improve education.

Clair Schenk, Box Elder School District

Legislators, I LOVE teaching, but I am increasingly losing the joy in my profession. Maybe it's my district and it's emphasis on one curriculum, or the SAGE-type testing at the end of the year, or the increasing mental-health needs of the students in my classroom? Maybe it's the way my salary increases are eaten away by healthcare costs and premiums? Maybe it's feeling like there's no one REALLY listening to my concerns? Let me have a voice. Let me help inform you about what is happening in today's classrooms. Let me help you affect positive change in policy. Let me help you understand the value of increasing your investing in public education. Thank you!

Jen Buttars, Canyons School District

I would like to share that teachers are everyday heroes that deserve the same respect as fire fighters and the police. We are the people that meet with the children on a daily basis when it isn't an emergency and try to keep the students from ever needing to be seen by a law enforcement official or a first responder. This is not as glamorous, but every bit as needful. We are on the front lines trying to get every child to read so they don't become a statistic like the kids that can't read have a greater chance of being arrested and spending time in jail. Thank You for recognizing the importance of what we do and funding it adequately so that we can do our job to help each Utah student be as successful as possible.

Wendi McCloy, Davis School District

Students are currently required to complete multiple test in which the teacher is held accountable for. This includes students that have behavior issues, SPED students that do not understand the information as the material is above their level of understanding, and those students that simply do not care to take the test. While I believe that teachers should be held accountable for the progress made by their students it should be the progress made by the student compared to the same student, not progress made compared to a student from a previous year or even a different student in the same year. Each child learns at their own pace and a teacher can and should help increase knowledge and therefore the student will progress, but compared to where they began.

Dawn Christensen, Granite School District

I have always been passionate about educating children and so when all of my children had grown I decided after pondering the idea for many months that I would teach 5th grade. It is my first year teaching and I am turning 50 this year so I have a different perspective than the average brand new teacher. I spent years helping in each of my four children's classrooms, being a room mom, and always serving on the PTA. I worked as a substitute teacher, Reading Tech at a Title One school, however, nothing prepared me for how difficult it would be teaching full time. I have been blown away by the amount of time it takes to plan lessons for my students. The amount of time it takes to correct papers, the amount of personal money I have had to spend to make sure great learning takes place in my classroom. Teaching is exhausting when your students walk out the door, but then they are hours left in the day to plan lessons, set up the lesson and find ways so that each child can learn something even though each student is uniquely different. I had never fully appreciated how hard a teacher works until I became one myself. I didn't understand the tremendous pressure they were under because of all of the tests that they need to administer to their students and how pretty much everything we do for each moment of the day is tied to a standard and is pertinent that each of our students learn and do well on their tests. It is challenging at best to teach students on grade level, but in my class, I have 6 students who go to Resource just in my class and I have students who range in grade level from 2 grade to
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9th grade and they are all expected to take the same tests. I feel like it is expected to teach to my children so that they can do well on a test and not how they can best learn. Every student is learning different and at different grade levels though each student is required to take the same test. I don't understand how this even makes logical sense. I feel like my students are completely burned out based on how many tests that they have to take. I feel like the workload that is required for a teacher to be successful is placed way too high. I am a hard worker and I spend countless hours so my students can have the best opportunity to learn in a way that is both challenging and fun as I believe that learning can be fun. However, with all of the tests that a teacher needs to administer it certainly takes the fun out of learning and add unneeded stress to each student. I left a management job where I was being paid over 20 thousand more a year and I was not working any overtime and did this because of my love of teaching. Most people thought I was crazy but I wanted to do a job I was passionate about and that was teaching. I love helping children learn, but teaching should not require these many unpaid hours, and require that I spend my own personal money in order to ensure that my students have the best education. If it wasn't for my love of teaching I would immediately go back to my other job. I feel like teachers are not valued as they should be and are not given adequate compensation for all of the additional hours that they work. I can now understand why there is a teacher shortage and I realize this problem will continue to get worse unless we value educators much more and provide the additional resources they need to be successfully and so they don't have to break the bank.

Cami Vail, Jordan School District

Go to schools - not the districts - to find out what is really going on - get your hands dirty

Dana McConnell, Washington County School District

First of all, I am concerned and frustrated with all the testing we have to administer to our students. We are testing more than we ever did. While collecting data is important, instruction is critical for the students to be successful with evaluations. Second: our supply money for ink, materials, etc. is insufficient for the needs of our students. If we continue to cut the budget, our students and their ability to progress will suffer, which means we will suffer in the long run. We must remember that these children will be our leaders of tomorrow.

Teresa Brewer, Weber School District

Continue to reduce the emphasis on testing. Students, parents, and educators are tired of mandated testing that takes time away from instruction and learning. Time to teach and time to learn are vital to the educational growth of our students. School is not fun or engaging for students when we emphasize the test and not critical thinking and real life applications.

Don Paver, Davis School District

I am a mother of a child with special needs and a special education teacher. My child is considered a mild/moderate student. She struggles with school on a daily bases. There is rare chances for her to feel successful and enjoy school as she gets older. She is currently in 7th grade and she knows she is behind all the other students. She hides her school work from me because she does not understand it and feels embarrassed. She is not the only student who does this. I also run a parent support group monthly to talk about our students struggles and parents are feeling this across the board. In middle school they are expected to sit in a general education classroom for math and reading with peers who are a lot higher than them. They feel humiliated most of the time. Then instead of going to an elective class, which is a chance for them to feel successful, they are told they have to do ANOTHER math and reading class because they are too low and need the extra time. Why can't they have just a reading and math class that is geared toward the struggling students so they can not miss the one opportunity they have to feel successful. I am very frustrated and I speak on behalf of many, many parents and students. We need real solutions to meet or special education students. We need real testing solutions for them so they don't dread the test but feel excited to see themselves grow. We need real solutions so they don't drop out of school.

Jennifer Shepherd, Washington County School District
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It's time to take educating our children seriously and it's time to realize that teaching is a profession. Having teachers take more tests to prove they are professional has not improved the quality of teachers nor has it improved the pay for teachers as people thought it would if we took tests like nurses, lawyers, and doctors. We work the same number of hours, deal with similar if not more stressors, and still our pay is not equal to many professions that require the same degree of education or less. Legislators have got to realize that not everyone can teach because right now, not enough people are choosing to teach, because we don't value those who can.

Melissa Allmon, Alpine School District

I'm having a hard time enticing competent people to choose teaching as a profession. Several alternate-route-to-licensure candidates are about to quit. This is becoming a high-stress job (with increased emphasis on standardized testing) that does not offer the respect of pay commensurate with that kind of stress.

Aimee Anderson, Davis School District

I have taught at the same at-risk school for 26 years. I am passionate about teaching my students that they can be successful. It seems that my passion for teaching is often at odds with your desired outcome. I love the Core. I believe it teaches thinking and problem solving. I am not loving that I now do more non-teaching activities during my prep and home time. There are too many hoops that need to be jumped. This is a trickle down process that starts at the legislature. I am a professional who knows her stuff. I know how to get kids to see success and be successful. I resent being told by those who do not teach, how to teach and what success is. I resent being told that my time is not valuable. I resent being told that any person on the street can be a teacher without training. This devalues the time and effort I have given to this profession. I had planned on teaching for forty years. I am not sure I will be able to handle the lack of respect and consideration for another fourteen years.

Kimberly Harmon, Davis School District

The public education system is dying. We have neglected it so long that that we as citizens are lucky that it is still intact. We are losing teachers at such an alarming rate and if we are not careful the education system will crumble right before our eyes. Please invest in education, by decreasing the work of teachers and giving them implement time, giving us other school staff a live-able wage. Please look at how you are compensating teachers. I work in a low income area with students with severe Autism. My students make progress much differently than others and I fear that merit based pay will only stack high quality teachers in more affluent areas with students without exceptional needs. Please look at laws that protect special education teachers. I have had multiple head injuries and a broken bone from school and that's not to include the daily bumps and bruising. Provide money for protective equipment. I shouldn’t have to fight for my right to work in a safe place. Before you make another law in education, spend some time in the schools. I am frustrated that those making the judgement calls have never walked a day in our shoes. Please treat us as respected citizens of society and not a fall back career. If you want the state of Utah to succeed in the future then you must invest in it, by decreasing class sizes, giving us implementation time, and letting us decide what is important to teach. Stop standardized testing, it is so very harmful to our education system in so many ways. Take a good look at Finland’s education system and find ways to go in that direction.

Camille Gregory, Granite School District

As a speech/language pathologist working in the schools, I see a lot of wasted time for testing. The results on some of the testing is not timely enough to provide needed feedback and many tests are taking precious instruction/reinstruction time away from students. Many of my scheduled times for meeting with students are interrupted during these mandatory tests that come from the state school board. They are irrelevant to many special education students and cause undue anxiety. And now that these tests are online, if there is a "glitch" in the system, even more time is wasted. Testing needs to be back in the hands of the teachers and schools that work most directly with their community of students and are most familiar with their needs. A “cookie cutter” approach is not working.

Noel Lee, Granite School District
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Give me a reason to stay in this profession. Please. Granted, I made the wrong choice and choose elementary education. I should have chosen Math, Science, or some other STEM subject in a secondary setting. Had I done so I could have loans forgiven. To add insult to injury I finished my degree to be 'highly qualified' and I have the student loans that go along with the process. Now someone can walk in and teach in a classroom without being 'highly qualified'. Could I please be reimbursed for the money I spent at university to fulfill the old standard? Also, the only way to increase your salary is by putting in time (years and lanes) or getting out of the classroom. Isn't it ironic that you are dealing with a teacher shortage and the structure encourages good teachers to get out of the classroom. You want more STEM in education. Why pursue a higher degree in education when, according to the very same argument we give students for pursuing STEM education, a teacher could retool themselves for a new career that has all of the benefits of a 'real job'?

Ray Sahagun, Iron County School District

I have been teaching for 16 years. I love my profession. However, I can see why we are having the lack of teachers coming into and staying in our profession. The lack of pay and the amount of requirements we are required to do isn't worth it to many. I am all about raising expectations and giving students a quality education, but expectations and requirements need to be realistic. If you want to attract and keep quality teachers...make the profession more attractive. Society has changed, therefore, changing some of the student behaviors we experience in classrooms. That alone makes teaching more difficult than it used to be 10 years ago. Teaching has shifted to data driven based on assessing. I have no problem assessing and analyzing the data, but there is a point when it starts to effect the amount of time you actually have to give instruction. It sometimes feels like assessing is the only thing you doing. It's getting to the point that it's taking out the enjoyment of learning and teaching.

Emily Farr, Weber School District

I teach at a school that is the most economically challenged in my District. We are the oranges among the many schools of apples. Our school is ranked high among Title 1 schools, but average when compared with the apple (non-Title 1 schools). We (the teachers and staff) work very hard to help each child grow and improve both academically and socially. We work very hard. It is frustrating to have those who make decisions for us (the legislature) not think we are doing our best. We are always learning and growing in our own field to improve, but testing doesn't show the great growth some students actually achieved during that year. Testing doesn't always show the great amount of teacher effort to help each and every student. It would be wonderful to have good faith in teachers to express knowledge and gratitude for working so very hard. Great compensation would be nice and certainly more help (volunteers) would be welcome. However, our number one concern is helping each child learn.

Stacey Hawkes, Alpine School District

I have taught for 33 years. The students have more problems now. They have so many issues with home and family. Behavior has become a greater issue and more difficult to control. Teachers are held to a high standard, which they should be, for testing scores. However, students and parents do not have the same high standards. I would like to see students and parents have some kind of accountability for SAGE testing other than just opting their students out of the test. Teachers can be the very best and still have students who just click the buttons on Benchmark tests and SAGE tests. We cannot reward or punish students for test scores. It is difficult to motivate students to do their best, when there is no incentive. Yet, teachers are told that we will not get increased pay if our students do not perform well.

Michelle Hanson, Granite School District

We are drowning in senseless meetings and paper work. We need time to help our students, not the bureaucracy.

Suzie Michaels, Granite School District

I am a Special Education teacher of 16 years. My priority is with my students. I struggle every year seeing high school age kids struggle to read on grade level. My biggest frustration is that I do not have enough time to truly help them, because of the demand of paperwork that is required of me. This is not only Special Ed paper work, but PLC required paperwork. I am not opposed to change, and appreciate the efforts that are being made to better education
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for students. However, I do not see a point, when we do not have the time to truly study, prepare, and implement these new ideas. I feel the decisions are made on for teachers by people who have no idea the amount of time it takes to teach. I would like to propose extra paid time each day for teachers to prepare and work with students. I would also like to see Special Education departments in each school get funding for a secretary to help file, schedule, and arrange meeting, so that teachers can teach.

Alison Lavery, Jordan School District

Students are not a product but people; and funding, incentives, collaboration, and planning needs to reflect that.

Barbara Balch, Sevier School District

Lack of qualified paraprofessionals in the special education classroom.

Nela Craig, Wasatch County School District

The last few years at my school, we have had a revolving door of teachers. They are well-qualified, well-trained, fantastic teachers. They left for salary increase in other districts or they left the profession all together due to stress. It is hard to hold on to the quality teachers. Teacher burn out is a real thing. We need to fix the problems that are causing new teachers to leave the profession or go to Charter schools. We need them in regular public schools. Our students need the best. I know teacher burn out is a real thing. If I wasn't where I am in my career, I would consider moving to another field. Teaching is exhausting on its own, but you throw in everything else we have to do and the pressures we are under, and it is down right horrible, to the point of a mental breakdown.

Tiffany Rudelich, Canyons School District

Teaching 4 different lab based science classes, makes it very difficult to disaggregate data generated through tests and collaborate effectively with teachers in my school teaching the same subject, much less peers more than 20 feet away from my classroom. Attempting to prepare lessons, lab activities and stay caught up with grading is impossible without devoting 5 hours a day out side of class every day including weekends.

Jana Barrow, Davis School District

Teachers have one of the most important jobs in the country, yet we are treated like dirt by the legislatures on a national, state, and local scale. Funding continues to be cut, student achievement drops, and more and more teachers are leaving the profession because we cannot offer them anything more than a life of stress and politics. We have test scores shoved down our throats and are told we are not successful based on those scores, but then are told that we need to do what our students need. We are threatened with our job security if our students don't perform on high-stakes tests, yet we are told not to teach to it. The only good thing about education is the kids, and that is putting it in the most positive terms that I can. I am sick and tired of having nothing but bad news from my administration, and told that I am a bad teacher because my students can't pass a test that was created for high-income, achieving students, and doesn't take into account the majority of the students who actually come through our public school system. When I have children, I will not put them through the disaster that is the public school system in America. That is the impact this profession has had on me as a teacher.

Grace Blair, Provo City School District

I moved from Ogden SD this year to Weber SD due to a lack of teacher support. Ogden provided some amazing training for my first 3 years, but they were not kind or fair to me or the other teachers. SUPPORT does not necessarily mean more training- it means listening to sides, sharing feedback and ideas, training when necessary to make the necessary changes, etc. It does not seem as though Weber has as much training (perhaps because I am not a “new” teacher) but they do seem to have the SUPPORT so often lacking. My administration is approachable and fair. The expectations for teachers are obtainable. The focus is on student learning- not just on testing. I am happy where I am, and hope that Weber does not slide down the unhappy slope that Ogden was going. Education is a job we take out of love... I nearly lost that and am happy to have found it again.

Tracy Beck, Weber School District
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Students matter more than test scores. I teach ALL students. As educators we don't get to hand pick our students. Our students come to us as they are. Many are hungry or from broken homes. Many that didn't have anywhere to sleep last night. Our job is to educate the whole child not just prep them for testing.

*Kellie Lowe, Davis School District*

If we can stop the schools are broken stance and instead be dazzled that they work at all considering the size of the task, we might be able to tweak a few things here and there instead of lurching from one fix-all to another with no measurable, positive results, ever.

*Liz Sharp, Davis School District*

We focus so much on teacher accountability and school accountability, but what about parents being held accountable? I can only teach the students that come to school and stay all day. Merit pay and testing doesn't take any of that into account.

*Michele Van Dyke, Davis School District*

We are testing students too much. Because of the amount of testing, they have stopped taking tests seriously and are burned out by the time end of the year testing comes up. Because of the pressure to have students ready for the high stakes test, the fun experiments and learning activities have been removed from our students' educational experience. It's no wonder why students drop out in high school. We have increased pressure on students and teachers alike. I've talked to many people who wanted to become teachers at one point in their lives. Because of the increased requirements for teachers and the decrease of other educational activities, they have changed their minds about their career. That's very unfortunate!

*Savannah Mieure, Duchesne County School District*

I think that teachers are burnt out and the legislative mandates and push for more and more testing is pushing us away.

*Andrew Gee, Granite School District*

Enough with the punitive efforts to punish educators. We are undervalued and constantly asked to do more and more with no incentive. I hate my job today because of the way I am treated. I used to feel valued and not I feel nothing we do is ever good enough.

*Carol Overson, Granite School District*

I have been a kindergarten teacher for over 20 years. This year has been by far the worst year in regard to respect for teachers. My workload is unbearable with very little support in the classroom and now the state has come out with an impossible kindergarten test. Not only will it take from instruction time but will provide me with very little information that I didn't already know. The test is estimated to take 30 minutes per child and only the kindergarten teacher can administer the test. I have 45 students. This will take approximately 23 hours of instruction time to give.

*Carrie Christensen, North Sanpete School District*

I spend extra hours daily in study, preparation, and training opportunities to improve my craft. I spend my own money buying items for my middle school science class. It seems that there is never enough funding to do great hands-on science activities. I also am constantly worried about the success of my low social economic student population, who have not learned the value of a good education. I frequently receive unfriendly E-mails from parents who can't understand why their child can't get a free ride. I feel it is my duty to give the students of my classes opportunities to grow and become well-rounded scientific minded citizens that can make a positive difference to themselves and the people in their lives. The things that I need to do this are: 1. Solid training. I went to a state funded science training this year that was ill prepared and didn't have any opportunity for teachers to experience the new technology or hands-on experiences. 2. A solid understanding of what the sage test will look like to prepare and give my students opportunities to be successful. I feel I miss the mark every year. 3. I need the proper technology, up-dated equipment, and supplies to create well-planned learning opportunities. 3. I need to know that I will be paid well and
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will have opportunities to get raises. I believe that merit pay creates a competitive and not a collaborative environment amongst educators. 5. I need good insurance so I can stay healthy while doing such a stressful job. 6. I am ok with the size of classes I have if I could get a technician to help set-up the experiment for my next class that will begin in 4 minutes. 7. It would be nice to have one bathroom break in day and a lunchtime that was longer than 20 minutes. I believe in education and I want to leave a mark of excellence in this little part of the world I am teaching in and I believe that you want to do the same. When you are discussing issues, please always put the rising generation of this state in the forefront of all discussions.

Doni Bufton, Nebo School District

As an early childhood educator, I have witnessed a "push-down" of academic expectations. Our system has ignored the vast knowledge we have of child development and we are expecting young children to perform academically above their capabilities. I have witnessed students shutting down and becoming negative towards school in kindergarten and 1st grade because the expectations are unattainable for them. We need to reevaluate the core as written and use research based knowledge to determine best practices for early learners.

Connie Sorensen, Other

I have worked in a very high impact school and as a teacher it was so stressful and frightening with with parents. I was not treated as a professional and told what to do and how to do everything. I am now in a school that is not Title 1, they do not have the resources to help teach students. They need more money for technology or even the simple math manipulations. I am treated more like a professional and given more freedom to teach the way I feel best for my students. I care about my students and not just test scores. Therefore, I will do whatever I need to help them. Treat teachers like the professionals that they are.

Charlotte Hart, Provo City School District

Quality teachers matter!

Richard Magleby, Salt Lake City School District

Kindergarten has been described as the new 1st grade and our youngest learners are required to know and be able to do a lot and most rise to this challenge with amazing success! As a teacher of 46 5 and 6 year olds most days are really great but a lot of days are extremely exhausting! The exhaustion comes from keeping up with assessments of 46 students to ensure learning is happening, material preparation for 46 students, as well as trying to meet the individual needs of each student through small group interventions or use of technology or implementations of RTIs for various students, and the list goes on. One thing new this year we have been asked to administer the KEEP assessment. It took me a solid 3 days at the beginning of the year to administer this test and several more hours at home on my own time to input the results into the computer system. I recently looked over the end of year KEEP. I am not worried about the content of the test or whether my students will do well on it, they will. What frustrates me is that we are asked to do this but given no realistic plan on how to make this happen. I am teaching people! This assessment if I were to administer it as designed would take me at least 25-30 min a student! There will also be a handful of hours spent inputting the data results into the compute after on my own time after school hours. I am never not tired and overwhelmed in this profession. I have been teaching for 12 years and am seriously considering a job change this coming year as I just cannot physically or emotionally keep up with what we are asked to do in such a way I know I am doing my best! There are plenty of teachers who do just enough to get by and I am just not a person who is okay with just getting by.

Cami Argyle, Weber School District

I LOVE teaching second grade. It is my passion. It is my calling. I'm good at it too. Children who come to me already not liking school, learn to love school. What I would love to do, is teach. I don't want to fill out forms, test children to tears, etc. I am fine showing that my students make growth. However, I am not okay adding more testing, more 'data collection' to their workload or my own. I feel that teachers have become vilified. There are some "bad apples" in education, as there are in ANY profession. However, I think you will find the majority of teachers teach because they LOVE it! They love inspiring children, they love opening children's eyes to a new concept or way of thinking, they love
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making a difference. I really wish the legislature would focus on way to SUPPORT teachers so we can better support our students. I wish the legislators saw teachers are caring professionals who work so hard to make a difference instead of how we are often portrayed.

Stephanie Liechty, Weber School District

I teach special education and I feel like I burn the candle at both ends to be able to keep up with the paper work that I am required to do and also focus on what my students need. I feel like more and more energy is being given to the "paper work" side of my job and testing my students as opposed to teaching my students. This is NOT how it should be and it's hurting my students.

Shelese Stansfield, Weber School District

Please communicate why it's not okay for our test scores to be high? The writing assessment just changed because our students are doing well with persuasive/argumentative writing so now the test has been changed to be more challenging. I don't understand it nor does the public!

Karen Congram, Granite School District

It is unfair to hold teachers responsible for student scores, when you just got rid of laws for truancy. I have 3 students this year that miss literally 50% of school and I am still held responsible for their scores. It is so discouraging to work so hard and have your teachers scores published. Parents don't know if you have students that don't come to school, or a lot of resource students, or other factors that skew the scores. They only see your overall score and then we are judged on this. It is so stressful for teachers. This is a major reason teachers get discouraged and have threatened to quit.

Valerie Hathaway, Juab School District

We are doing the entire school system a great disservice and cheating students of a quality education when we do not give them well paid, qualified teachers and do not hold charter schools accountable for test results.

Tracy Bell, Granite School District

Students need to be the focus of all concerned and involved with education. Politics and test scores are driving everything and kids are being forgotten. Assessment and instruction needs to be driven by student needs and be developmentally appropriate. Standardized testing, constant data meetings and testing, and a lack of the "basics" are taking away from what elementary students truly need to be successful...a firm and solid foundation. We don't teach a grade level such as 2nd or 5th. Instead, we teach an age group that has all levels crammed into it: from from beginning readers all the way up to high-school level readers because there is no accountability on students and parents to make education a priority. High stakes testing has created a host of issues for parents, students, and teachers such as anxiety, stress, cheating, etc.

Tricia Adams, Iron County School District

I have no problem with end of year testing. As an educator, I am able to learn a lot from end of year tests. The issue I have is there is accountability for the teacher (evaluation) and school (school grading), but the students don't have any accountability with the test. I am unable to hold them accountable for their results and they know it. I have had students tell me they struggled on one of the first problems and so they decided it wasn't worth it. They finished the test in about 5 or 10 minutes. By not holding students accountable, it is hard to get good reliable feedback from the end of year tests. Also, parents are able to "opt out" their students. This also makes the information received from these tests skewed and not a true reflection on the school or teacher. If the school is held responsible for the data then the data needs to be a true reflection on what is going on inside the doors.

Kyle Sanderson, Alpine School District
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I want legislators to realize that teachers ARE doing everything they can for children. I feel that they treat educators as "the enemy", when we are the exact opposite. There are excellent teachers out there, but because of test scores and school grades, educators are blamed for problems that are not in their control. The classes are huge, as educators, we take that on and do everything we can for each child.

Franki Galbraith, Davis School District

I teach at an "at risk" school. We are on turn around alert. The teachers at my school go above and beyond what is required for their classes. We appreciate the money the legislature gives us, but I am still spending hundreds of dollars of my own like all teachers. Our kids don't have a lot of parental support to encourage them to read and parents are so busy making ends meet that the student's school experience suffers. It is no fault of the student's, but they are the ones being punished when schools are graded on test results. We all love our students, or we would not be in this line of work. We want them to succeed, but expectations are so high and we're teaching so much to the academic core, that the student is not being taught to make them a more rounded individual.

Kris Fisher, Granite School District

With increased class sizes, students are not being given the support that they need. Last year I had a class of 32 first graders, with one having extreme behaviors. I left school frustrated and exhausted. It was the first year that I really had the idea that any other job would be easier than this and I wondered why I was putting myself through that every day. This year I have 32 sixth graders, and while that is more manageable, I feel like I can't give the time and attention that they each need during this critical time in their life. We have the chance to touch their lives and make a difference but that is extremely hard to do with such large class sizes and other demands of testing and teacher accountability.

Amber Parry, Granite School District

My biggest concern as an educator are the students who come through my classroom door already tired, stressed and upset because of their home life. Their needs are not being met and with such large class sizes I'm supposed to somehow motivate them to "let it go" and focus on learning. Then when that doesn't really work I am graded on their ability to test well regardless of their circumstances and that they are over tested. I'd like my legislators to work in a Title I school for 6 weeks, and their pay, insurance and overall job rating be based on a test that would sum up everything they taught those little 10 year old kids in ONLY six weeks. Schools and teachers cannot control the minds of others, not even the precious little people we teach. It is hard to stay motivated when your own professional ability lies in the hands of a child. We do not feel you can control the factors or outcomes. What keeps me going is not pay, not the incredibly long, in depth evaluation sheet. I keep going for the kids I know may not remember how to turn a mixed number into a improper fraction. I hope they will remember feeling important, smart and know someone believes in them.

Vivian Rose, Tooele County School District

If merit pay is funded, focus should be on student achievement that is not solely based on standardized testing. Teachers in special education settings often have children who do not do well on standardized tests, and this should not be the only way to gauge the effectiveness or qualifications of teachers. In addition, recent budget cuts to classroom supply funds has made it difficult to provide/replace materials needed for child success in classrooms. Hiring teachers without a teaching degree and expecting seasoned teachers to "mentor" them in vital strategies such as classroom management is unreasonable. Teachers are not compensated for the number of hours they work outside of contract time in order to help the children be successful and complete other required assignments. Mentoring unqualified teachers is yet another responsibility on which experienced teachers are expected to undertake in already strenuous circumstances, without additional compensation. In order to keep qualified teachers, districts/state should offer incentives such as helping with student loan repayment and increasing salaries of licensed teachers, instead of trying to fill positions with persons unexperienced or uneducated in the field of teaching. Hiring persons who have not graduated from an accredited college with a degree in teaching is like a "slap in the face" to those teachers who have worked for such an achievement and indicates to them that their hard work is unrecognized and unnecessary. Not everyone can be a teacher and it is high time that they are recognized for what they have
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achieved and not given the indication that they can be replaced with anyone off the street. Teachers are what makes all other professions and without them other careers would cease to exist.

Tina Cole, Alpine School District

Why is it always a battle with legislators to fund public education? Utah is a state of family unity, so why not provide what is best for children without always having to prove why we need money to support education. I would love legislators to come spend a week in my classroom and school, so they could see for themselves why public funds are important. Teachers put in so much extra time to planning for their student's learning without compensation and yet, they are still being told it's not enough, plus the message being sent from legislators, we don't value our teachers, you are just expected to meet all the demands, so quit whining about it and just do it. The teacher shortage comes from low pay and demanding expectations, I feel legislators created it to begin with.

Jacquelyn Austin, Cache County School District

As someone in the education system it feels like the people making decisions don't really understand what it is like to be at a title-1 institution or what teachers actually do. And I feel like they make uneducated decisions that don't directly affect them, and so they aren't changing or fixing the issues. They need to go visit a school and educate themselves.

Lauren Avelar, Salt Lake City School District

I am in an older school and technology is not equal from school to school. We are charged with preparing students to go out and succeed but lack the technology to help them succeed in a world driven by technology.

Janys Hutchings, Alpine School District

Supply & Demand. Return Pension Benefits and increase Teacher pay then the Teacher shortage will go away.

Emmanuel Kepas, Canyons School District

I feel like teachers and legislators are on the same team. We both want what's best for the students in the state of Utah. We want to see our students achieve as high as they can. Sometimes, it feels like well meaning legislation undermines that team goal. We have an end of year test that is intended to help assess students and inform teachers of their teaching. By law, those same tests cannot be included in student grades and students can opt out of them for no reason whatsoever, yet teacher effectiveness is graded on those test results. We both want to see every student succeed in school, but parents can pull students out of school at any point of the year (for family vacations that could be scheduled during calendared breaks in the school year) and it is up to the teacher to get those students back up to speed again or we are the ones who have failed. We want to allow parents to have more of a choice in their student's education, but not all charter schools are held to the same standards with each other, let alone public schools. We want the best teachers in every classroom in the state. We want people who will go to whatever lengths necessary to reach every student in every chair in every classroom in every school (I'm not going to talk about compensation at this point, that is already a well know problem). We then allow people in the classroom with no knowledge of how to manage a class of 30-35 students (or more) because they demonstrated content knowledge on a test and they have taught Sunday School for years. Meanwhile we have seasoned teachers who spent years in college programs learning not only the same content, but how to engage learners of all levels and from different cultures. This seems to undermine that same vision of hiring and retaining highly qualified educators. Again, I firmly believe we are on the same team. I know that every legislator wants to see Utah schools and students lead the country in every aspect. It feels like there are unintended consequences with some legislation that has been passed in recent years that we, as a team, could address to better help Utah students live up to their potential and become the future leaders this state needs. We all want a better future for our children. I think that our team can do that. I know we can.

James Eric Perkins, Jordan School District
Testing Concerns

I am now looking at the end of my career with 28 years in and contemplating how much longer to go. I have watched the pendulum of educational reform swing in so many different politically motivated directions at the expense of student learning, I am not sure anyone knows if anything that has been done really helped our students learn. What I can say is that I hope my students know that I cared about them. In the end this is what a good teacher is. I hope that they LEARNED along the way of course, BUT truly I want them to know that they can do great things if they believe and TRY. They are not alone. Learning can be difficult and not everyone learns lessons at the same rate. Just keep trying. I do love teaching. That is why I stayed in this profession for so long. BUT I do wonder if our politicians understand the wealth of talent they have in the field of education? If they honestly and truly know our worth? We are the ones our children see everyday. Day in and day out. Good, happy days and bad, sad, unhappy days. We see them for 6 to 8 hours plus a day for 180 days a year. We often become their surrogate parents, big brothers, sisters when there is no one at home. We walk a very fine line to help teach them to be upstanding moral citizens, teaching right & wrong, and in some cases we are the only ones in their lives that care enough to do so. I have seen so much change in the world and education but one thing that really hasn't is respect. Educators are still under the stigma of "those who can DO and those who can't TEACH" This simply is NOT true. Those who CHOOSE to teach, do so because they are special enough to realize that teachers prepare the future. They care about the youth that are in their care and a desire to help them reach for their dreams & goals. They teach them that the world is what they make it. Nothing worth having is just given to them. They work for it. They help them learn how to be the best version of themselves. That they can design what the future looks like. I know these all sound like idealistic platitudes, but they are what has kept me coming to school every day. So what is my point.-- I am worth more than I am earning. I work harder than most CEO's. My value is defined in the love and care I give my students. Money doesn't solve all problems but it does help to show respect for what we do. Question-- why would a bright, talented educated young person want to make a career choice when the world (Our political decision makers) does not value the profession. The compensations are better in the business world. --That students are more than a number scored on a random test. That life isn't some pen & paper test, it is doing. Yes Life is a test of sorts and how we live it is what demonstrates what we have learned. What we value. So what do you value?

Karen Draper, Weber School District

I've been teaching almost 30 years. I'm an excellent practitioner, have written several books for teachers, and travel the US presenting to teachers, all while working full-time in a Title I school here in Utah. Sadly, if I could retire, I absolutely would. The pressure that is put upon teachers and students with all of the SAGE testing is turning our schools into anxiety-ridden institutions. Principals, teachers, and students are almost constantly on edge. The money spent on these test is outrageous. And, to what end? Better accountability? For whom? I have a 4th grade son who is in an advanced academic program. I am an involved parent. I know where he is academically and I know how hard his teacher works. Scores on the SAGE do not better inform me, in fact, since the tests are mere snapshots of my child's performance on any given day, I mostly discount the testing results. I realize not all parents are as heavily informed or involved, but the legislature should listen to people in the field when they say, "We are completely stressing our students and teachers out. There will be and already is massive burnout." All of this contributes to an increase in the anxiety in our society as a whole (look at the current national rate of teens with depression and anxiety), and will cost the state of Utah more teachers. Make teaching about teaching. Learn from countries who don't over-test their students, yet have amazing learning outcomes. Please do all you can to change the climates of our schools by getting rid of the majority of the tests you've put in place.

Janiel Wagstaff, Davis School District
Testing Concerns

As teachers, we work diligently every day. Teachers in the high-risk schools work even harder and deal with stress on a high level. It would be nice to be appreciated instead of criticized when growth is small. It's not because we don't believe in our students or don't try. That's why I have always opposed Merit pay. We already put in the time and then some. I like how Granite actually pays a bit more twice a year in Title I schools because it makes the struggle of seeing little growth more bearable. From personal experience, I went from a B/C student in 7th grade to a straight A student. The difference--my parents were going through a divorce at the time. I can still remember the day that it felt literally like I was walking out of a cloud. I know that many of my students are experiencing the same thing. It does affect their learning ability. Be mindful that we celebrate even the smallest of achievement in a troubled demographics. Sadly, the tests are a constant reminder for struggling students that they are failures. How many times do we have to test and beat them down?

Phyllis Miller, Granite School District

Teachers, like firefighters and police officers, need to be valued to keep quality people in the profession. Legislators and the public need to be made aware that a school grade doesn't mean everything. Testing results are over-emphasized.

Rachel Pehrson, Granite School District

The new attendance laws have crippled the high schools. Students and parents are not accountable for much and all responsibility has been put on teachers with little backing from the districts or state. Students need to be accountable for their actions. The grading system of schools often punishes schools and teachers for the actions of students and parents.

Arlene Herrick, Alpine School District

Teachers are not the enemy. I feel like they want to destroy teachers because they think we are the problem. We are not the problem.

Maureen Clemons, Davis School District

Teachers are: teachers, mentors, emotional support, parent support, safe haven for students. teachers today teach manners and politeness, skills that were taught at home in the past. Teachers teach self-worth and accountability to children. Quit treating teacher like they are the enemy. And quit asking the impossible. (evaluation/compensation of teachers, the testing children are asked to do and the pressures associated with the testing is not good for children)

Nina Gold, Davis School District

I'd like to share what an awesome job teachers in our school are doing with their students. Students are getting a great education no matter what the test scores may indicate. Our teachers are dedicated, caring, and go above and beyond the call of duty!

Melanie Lane, Davis School District

Teachers are inadvertently being held accountable for students attitudes toward testing. Many times, students know more of the content than mandated tests indicate. Students are not motivated to do their best, just to complete the task.

Kristine Davies, Granite School District

For more than three decades educators have been disproportionately held accountable for student learning, lambasted in the media, and "teacher proofed" by district approaches to assessment and curriculum. Multiple factors have contributed to this deprofessionalization of the teaching profession, but many of these factors can be traced to one focal point in time: April, 1983. In 1983 "A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform" exploded onto the educational and political scene. At its heart was a deficit-based approach to educators and students, calling teachers "beleaguered" and students "at risk," and providing five broad recommendations for improving our nation's schools. Embedded within these recommendations were imperatives that laid the foundation for the reforms that still drive education today, including the standards and accountability movement, standardized testing, and alternate
Testing Concerns

routes to licensure. These reforms, which are now the norm, have been embedded into our national policies throughout the years, as evidenced by No Child Left Behind, the Obama-era Race to the Top initiatives, and most recently the Every Student Succeeds Act. The message of “those who can't do, teach” is pervasive throughout society. In order for education to successfully retain teachers and positively impact student learning, it must transform the profession into a place where talented people of all races, cultures, and identities wish to come. In order to achieve this lofty goal, public education must tap into its internal capacity for change at a systemic level, and public policy must support public education in this endeavor, not undermine it. When considering bills this session, please consider this: increased competition, increased accountability, and other “innovative solutions” are no longer innovative and were never solutions. More than thirty years of lackluster results are testament that these quick fixes are not fixing anything. At the end of the day, it is the capacity of those who enter our state's classrooms each and every day that will transform education: not technology, not external pressure, not external solutions. Bills that treat teachers from a deficit perspective only exacerbate the problem. Teachers enter the classroom with strong intrinsic motivation to succeed and help their students do the same, but deficit-driven measures slowly erode this commitment to excellence. Instead, consider that every teacher has something to contribute. Every teacher has something to bring to the table. Build on public education's strengths, and public education will not disappoint. In creating public education, the United States created one of the most innovative systems in the world. Please consider carefully how your efforts will serve to either support or undermine this amazing feat of our democratic society. Thank you.

Cindi Dunford, Granite School District

Teachers are under a lot of pressure, which is being transferred to students. We need to put the fun back into teaching and learning. A lot of expectations on students is not developmentally appropriate.

Robyn Gardner, Jordan School District

I love my job and my students. Currently however I fear for the future. Our schools are being judged using assessments which the students are not accountable for. Teachers are then being asked to look at data based on those same faulty exams and make decisions that then affect hundreds of students. It is a circle of ineffectiveness to the extremes. Get rid of SAGE or make student accountable ON THEIR GRADES for the score. Additionally the respect a view of teachers is dropping. Where we were once viewed as professionals doing the most difficult and important job now we are seen as someone to blame when their child fails.

Christopher Nichols, Jordan School District

Please treat educators like the professionals that we are. Please stop passing all these testing and accountability laws adding to all the hoops we have to jump through. Just let us teach.

Shaunti Turner, Jordan School District

High stakes testing, and prepping for high stakes testing has created a trickle down effect in title 1 schools with weekly coaches and admin meetings which on paper, make it appear that significant learning is taking place. I have taught for almost 30 years and I can say that the effect this has brought to real learning is not so positive. There is less creativity in the classroom; less student centered learning. We are ignoring developmentally appropriate teaching especially in the lower grades so that our students can “score” proficient on a high stakes test. I have watched students from school after school lose their passion for learning. It is a travesty. This may not affect non title one schools who have many parent provided creative outlets and opportunities. We are creating an even larger economic divide when we curtail the arts, and take away real constructive learning at the expense of prepping students for high stakes testing. This has nothing to do with accountability; just in the way that accountability is measured.

Barbara Stevens, Salt Lake City School District
Testing Concerns

The classroom of today has changed in negative ways because of an overwhelming focus on Sage test scores. Teaching to the test is just one problem. Poetry, art, creative writing, hands on experiments to name a few are left out in pursuit of test taking strategies and computer programs that are “guaranteed by the vendor” to raise scores. Very sad.

Ellen Bennett, Washington County School District

I respect you for the work you do and I trust you to do your job to the best of your ability. As a teacher I look for that same respect and trust from my representatives. Legislation intended to “make teachers accountable” seems punitive and implies that we aren’t doing our best for our students every day. Students are more than a test score, and teachers are more than statistics.

Camille Jackson, Weber School District

I am held responsible for the progress of the students in my class, yet I can do nothing when the child does not show up to school, or when the child refuses to put effort into their learning. There are situations where I do all in my power to help a student to learn, yet I know that the child could do so much more if these other factors were not getting in the way.

Cheryl Parkinson, Weber School District

The high stakes testing is not making education better. It makes students more stressed and prevents them from getting a well rounded education. Arts are cut severely, if not totally absent. Students are expected to do things that are beyond their maturity level. Success on the test can be predicted based on family life alone.

Michelle Wright, Weber School District

I love my job and I love teaching the kids. Even with the low income, I am willing to be a teacher. Saying that, for how much we work, and plan outside of our contract hours so we can find the best ways to teach our kids, we’re not getting paid enough. I also think the other faculty members such as the lunch ladies and janitors should earn more as well. They work hard and are a big part of our team at school. Also having a smaller class size would be amazing. That would give us teachers more time to focus more on the kids one on one. I think tests scores would go up much higher. With test scores as well, you need to think about each school and the environment. The school I'm working at is a title 1 school with over 30 different languages. You can't possibly think that these kids who can't speak English very well or at all can meet the state standard scores?! Now that doesn't mean they don't learn anything. If you actually looked more at growth, you can see how much these students have learned which I think is a lot more important than seeing if they met the scores that should have been reached. How would you feel if you took a test in a language you don't understand to well and expect to get a high score. You will feel pretty lousy. Another huge problem I don't agree with is that anyone who has a bachelor degree can become teachers. I think teachers should have a degree in education. First, it's not fair to those who worked hard in school to get their teaching degree. Second, the state shouldn't be so desperate for teachers that they will hire anyone that has any degree. If you want good quality teachers, hire teachers that went to school in that field. If you need more teachers, maybe think about actually paying us better and that would probably be a huge help on not having a shortage on teachers. Also, I don't think teachers need to take the praxis tests to get their license. We already went to school for at least 4 years, why do we need to take a stupid test that we don't actually need because we don't really teach that to the kids. These tests are college level tests that the kids don't ever learn. I would think having a degree in education would be good enough. I know for me, I have major testing anxiety and science and social studies are subjects I have a hard time learning. The praxis content tests almost made me not be a teacher. I had to retake those tests several times in order for me to finally pass them, plus pay so much money! If you need good quality teachers, pay us more, have smaller classrooms, and don’t require us to do more testing to have our license when we have our degree in education. Believe we can do our jobs without having to take these tests.

Tarikua Whatcott, Granite School District
Testing Concerns

Stop requiring teachers to do more with less! Also, quit requiring so many tests (probably more from the district) to where we feel like we are always testing.

*Liz Halloran, Jordan School District*

Stop with the testing and really look into the impact teachers are having

*Robyn Kabwere, Jordan School District*

Students today have higher anxiety about school, including high stakes testing, than ever before. The measures legislators pass for teacher accountability and student performance are negatively impacting students and preventing them from being successful.

*Sara Susov, Jordan School District*

Our daily demands. All the moving parts that go into teaching students, people, on a daily basis. The demands are increasing, but also the demands for mental health and emotional intelligence. Our students come hungry, stressed, abused more and more every year. We need smaller class sizes to support these students as well as intervention systems. Basically money for new programs and more teachers. We are here for students. We are not whining entitled people. We just want to do our jobs well.

*Jennie LaFortune, Murray City School District*

Listen to our educators needs for their students.

*Harriett Arreola, Salt Lake City School District*

Testing only gives a snapshot of how students perform. Teacher effectiveness can not be measured in student test performance.

*Patricia Christensen, Salt Lake City School District*

If you really want the students to have the technology skills to succeed in the world today, give us (teachers) the tools to teach the skills. One-to-one devices are really the only way to make sure we can integrate technology into everyday teaching in a meaningful way. If you expect them to excel on the end-of-level computer tests (SAGE) you must give us the tools to help them be comfortable working in a computerized environment.

*Sara Weston, Davis School District*

Teaching is much more complex than people outside of teaching realize. Standardized tests do very little to measure student knowledge and success.

*Ben Breinholt, Granite School District*

We need smaller class sizes and more funding. We need to differentiate and align tests with student level.

*Hilary Ruhling, Granite School District*

When we give funds to public and private education, our future children have a better chance of staying out of poverty and have a hope of a brighter future. There would less crime in our cities and more opportunities for young people to good in this world. If they had access to quality education with before and after activities, art programs, etc.

*Rebekah Spencer, Granite School District*

Help us help the students of Utah!

*Rett Neale, Salt Lake City School District*

I have worked for over 21 years in the public school serving children/students with various disabilities. There have been years where my caseload has been upwards of 90 students. Somedays, to say this job is difficult would be an understatement. I receive legislative funding, which I am grateful for, but my district does not give any additional funding. In order to “qualify” for an aide, I have to prove how overwhelmed I am, which makes me feel incompetent. I
Testing Concerns

I am currently working in a special needs preschool setting where four classrooms range from 12-17 children with only one or two “model” children. The rest of them have an IEP, which requires specialized services. In one classroom there is a student with Downs Syndrome, five with Autism, and two others with lesser known diagnoses, and most are non-verbal. Few of these children are potty trained, almost all have mild to severe behaviors that have to be handled, and the manpower and salary is not near enough for the job that is required of me, the teacher, and of her aides. We love the children, and that’s why we power through and come to work everyday. However, your consideration regarding salary, teacher shortages, and funding would be greatly appreciated. Thank you for your time.

Kimberly Budge, Alpine School District

I love what I do. I love working with students and seeing their progress. I appreciate the support that allows me to work with students.

Kristi Tonga, Alpine School District

6th Grade Core Class sizes of 41 kids!

Kevin Brindle, Wasatch County School District

Legislators need to be in the schools and in the classrooms of their constituents! Policies are being made by people who have NO IDEA what the day to day is like in Utah schools. Problems won’t be solved until there are conversations with people in the trenches of education. We have many ideas for you from how to address the teacher shortage, to class sizes, to testing concerns.

Ellen Cox, Davis School District

There is too much testing. Ideally, we test only every few years at the elementary level. Our student populations are challenging and a class size over 22-25 in elementary, with those challenges affects student learning and teacher retention.

Karen Grim, Granite School District

Emphasis on testing, CFAs, and benchmarks is hurting the performance and creative mastery of teachers, turning them into assembly-line employees.

Mark Marsing, Granite School District

Last year my class of Kindergarten was 29. I had two classes of 29 students. It was the hardest year of my life. I felt that most of my efforts were spent managing the class, instead of actually instructing and learning and discovering. This year one of my classes is 23. The decreased class size has made a world of difference. My test scores are already SIGNIFICANTLY higher than the previous year. It may not be right for all class sizes to be smaller, but in the younger grades where we are learning more than just reading, the class sizes NEED to be smaller. We are learning how to move in a group, how to sit, how to hold scissors and a pencil, how to follow rules, how to listen to an adult and to a peer, etc. There are so many “soft” skills that we tackle in the lower grades.

Kara Telford, Granite School District

We need to see how we can help people be teachers, they get to the end and all those Praxis test seem to be the stopping point when they can't pass. Some say its not worth it to them to throw all of that money away when the test is so hard.

Des Dyches, North Sanpete School District

Talk with teachers not just “representatives”

Tom Matlock, Other
Testing Concerns

Smaller class sizes has an effect on all students. It is of significance importance when you see that groups of higher class sizes always have lower scores than those of smaller class sizes. Larger class sizes also have greater behavior issues and less one on one time with the teacher. Also, I would discuss end of year testing. The tests are not appropriate for elementary students. The math especially is not a test of math knowledge but a series of brain teasers that cause anxiety and tears for young students. Also, allowing a test given to an eight or nine year to be the main source of grading a teacher’s ability does not allow for the actual benefits that teacher brings to a classroom.

Vickie Burt, Box Elder School District

When I started teaching history, we had class sizes around 26-28. We had 3 trimesters (180 days) to teach our students about US history. We were able to include fun activities and tell stories to bring history alive. Now in the Cache district, one school has reduced US History to 2 trimesters (120 days) and Utah History to 1 trimester (60 days). We barely have time to get through the basics in US History and only about half in Utah. History is a core class, but is being treated like an elective or an expendable course of study. We want to hold our students accountable for their knowledge of our history and government, yet we are reducing our teaching of the subject. Also with the reduced number of sections being taught our class sizes are averaging 36-38. Kind of a mixed or contradictory message.

W. Kyle Stolworthy, Cache County School District

I would really like for legislators to understand how difficult and under-appreciated teaching really is. I have 200 8th grade students (about 35 per class) this year. Dozens of them have accommodations through IEP's or 504's, and I am held responsible for the individualized instruction of 200 students whose reading abilities range from a 1st grade level to college level. When you make standardized testing mandatory for teachers, but not students, you send the message that teachers are to be judged solely on test scores and that teachers are to blame for low test scores. What about student, parent, and community responsibility? If our focus on test scores is going to continue, those tests must be mandatory and must come with some sort of accountability on the part of students. The second issue I would like to address is the huge push to focus on IT education and future careers. I would ask that we keep in mind the fact that the job market shifts and fluctuates. IT jobs are not the only jobs out there, and we would be remiss in any effort to focus too strongly on STEM-only curriculum. Utah students deserve a well-rounded education that opens their eyes to possibility and gives them a chance to choose their own path. Finally, I ask that you consider the state of “compulsory education” and attendance in Utah. Now that the courts systems will not deal with attendance issues, we can not say that education in Utah is compulsory. Essentially, a child can drop out of school at any age that their parent/guardian begins letting them stay home. Parents should be held legally accountable for providing an education to their children. If they wish to homeschool, they should provide evidence of homeschooling. A free public education is something that all children deserve. Utah should do its part to show that we value education by once again enforcing attendance laws.

Chera Fernelius, Davis School District

Class size does matter, SES of the school does matter. Teachers know better than legislators.

Emily Christensen, Granite School District

More focus on the whole child and not on testing.

Olynn Elliot, Salt Lake City School District

Quit mandating curriculum for public schools because they don’t have a clue. Teachers have to fix the problems the mandated curriculum cause

Jeff Marston, Salt Lake City School District

We need more resources for our west side schools. We need smaller class sizes and more behavioral support for students that struggle.

Amy Milenski, Salt Lake City School District
Testing Concerns

I will tell you first that I love my profession, my students, my principal, my colleagues, and living in Utah my entire life, but we have had some issues that need addressing as of late. Salary is a huge issue in Utah education! Every human being has to go through an education for his or her profession, so we should value the teaching profession the most. Many teachers, myself included, have over 20 years’ experience with Masters Degrees and several other endorsements, which give us extra years of college education. Most of these added courses are to benefit our students in the classroom, yet, sadly, our salaries do not reflect our knowledge or experience. Our state should respect and appreciate those educators who have continued to teach and worked to increase their personal education by giving them increased pay. Many states hold dear their teachers who are highly educated and show appreciation in higher salaries. Consequently, Utah college graduates are turning away from the education field because of low pay, little recognition for their skills, and no respect. In addition, I cannot begin to tell you, how many teachers give much of their salary in supplies to their under-privileged students, without expecting anything in return except a smile and a thank you. Now, I understand that the small supply stipend teachers receive from the state is going to be axed. Utah’s Governor Herbert said in his state address, the Utah sales tax collected from Amazon purchases would go toward education. Where did it go? Currently, our education system feels more like “Life Depressed” than “Life Elevated.” The school attendance is important! Since legislation has changed our laws for student attendance, we do not have students/parents held accountable for education. In our local schools, we see an increase in absences in several students, and our high school teachers believe there will be a decrease in high school graduates. Teachers and schools should not be held accountable for testing scores when students do not attend school. Students will always miss school if they can because they underestimate the value of education. If our youth fail their complete education, Utah will have a future society of illiterate people, unable to live in a functioning society. This will increase our welfare population, homelessness, and crimes because they will not have any proper job skills or be able to attend college. We must bring back mandatory education. Instead of being “Life Elevated,” Utah will become “Life Deflated.”

Michelle Fidell, Carbon School District

Teachers work hard, and aren’t treated as most professionals. We are struggling with keeping qualified teachers because the pay isn’t great, and the load too much. The testing also is way too much throughout the entire school year.

Jennifer Bodell, Granite School District

I work in a rural school, so class size is not an issue, but I do spend hours on lesson plans and grading, making sure my 3rd, 4th and 5th grades are getting what they need. I would hate to see taxes raised, since we ranch and the cattle market is not the best. I have often wondered and I am not educated with enough information to say this next idea is the answer to our problems with education in Utah, but sometimes I think why not bring in the lottery and loosen up the liquor laws. So many people go out of state to play the lottery and purchase liquor. I also think we are TESTING our kids way too much. I get anxiety and so do they when it is testing time. If the 3rd grades and up are required to SAGE test, I think the lower grade teachers need to be accountable for some state test. I don’t see the fairness across the board.

Vauna Wilcock, Box Elder School District

Educators are often expected to pay for their own training, or to sit through ‘standardized’ training at their schools that does not apply to their specialty/interests. This causes a feeling of disrespect for our time and creates friction between educators and administrators who have to ‘provide’ these trainings. We are professionals, and as such should be given opportunities to choose what we would like or ‘need’ to improve our teaching, not given a ‘one size fits all’ generalized workshop with no paid time to use the information so that we can create something that would be used to better the education of our students. Also, changing the testing ‘system’ every few years is a disservice to both educators and students, as students are now focusing on navigating the ‘system’ rather than showing their knowledge on the content. Instead of spending time teaching the content, teachers must take time out to show students how to navigate the new ‘system’.

Alisha Kerby, Granite School District
Testing Concerns

Every year I have excellent students who opt out of taking year-end exams because of their parents' political reasons. Their absence distorts records of my performance and my school's performance which feeds the perception that the education system doesn't merit respect. It also teaches students that if they don't agree with something, they are not accountable for it, which any worker in any workplace knows is not how life works. The state's inability or unwillingness to address this problem in a meaningful way is embarrassing.

Michael Henriken, Jordan School District

Teachers are over worked and under paid. Then on top of teachers being underpaid we tend to use our own money to buy supplies, and things we need for our classroom. Teachers often (typically every day for me) take work home, or we stay late to work, and do work when we are not being paid, because we have so much to do in not enough time. Standardized testing doesn't really measure how much the students are learning in class, because they aren't motivated to do the best they can. The tests also do not take into consideration how much they have grown as a person, (learning the life long skills they need to succeed as an adult).

Coy Taylor, Nebo School District

I wish that your decisions would be based with the end of the line in mind. All I seem to hear is that, "We just gave the teachers this...", when in reality with all the other factors, sometimes teachers do not get that. Tell it for what it is. (Not popular, I know) For example, "we just gave the teachers 7%, but with the rising cost of insurance, and declining enrollment, teachers will probably not get any of it." I'm the one that has to tell the public the truth and we the teacher come over as whiners. Your truthful support would go a long way. Secondly, I am losing a lot of teaching time to accomplish every new mandate that comes down the pike. I'm feeling less and less like the teacher I was hired to be.

Chris Rasmussen, Logan City School District

Teachers work so hard just so we can jump through hoops. The Sage is not working. Help students to be successful and don't take away the arts, activities and other areas. Students need a well rounded education.

Kaylynn Dara, Salt Lake City School District

I feel that testing is overdone and that teachers have to "teach to the test" in order to keep their jobs and keep their schools with a positive rating. Teaching should be driven by their desire to enlighten young minds and inspire their students to love learning, to empower them with the information and skills they will need to achieve their life goals and to make their lives better. In essence, to become lifelong learners.

Paula Cloward, Alpine School District

If you want retain/recruit good teachers you need to reward them ($$). Test scores are not the only way to measure teacher's success. I know several good teachers that teach the less motivated students and do a great job. If we only look at test scores, no one will want to teach those classes. Second, we need students in class in order to educate them. Teachers have no control what happens outside of their class. We need student/parents to be accountable for their own/students attendance.

Brad Crowther, Alpine School District

Linking student performance to teacher pay, much more complicated than that!

Wendy Gladden, Davis School District

It doesn't matter we get lip service and you do what you want to do.

Alan Hansen, Davis School District

Too many good teachers are leaving the profession because the means of accountability have taken the joy out of teaching. I believe in accountability but the way we have gone about making teachers accountable has become punitive and punishes creativity. Combine that with the low salaries and teachers often decide that their talents will be better used in another profession.

Sherry Carolan, Weber School District
Testing Concerns

Veteran teachers are not given the respect they deserve!! We need more planning time. We need people who can do data analysis all the data and then show the teacher the results. We don't have time for all that data. We are doing data and tests more than we are teaching. This teaching gig is for the children. I was a child of the 50's. I can read do math and have a Masters degree all without the data. We were learning not taking tests, teachers were not taking a good amount of the day putting in data. We were kids and we excelled.

Cyndy Mikesell, Jordan School District

Stop Micromanaging. SAGE is a good test - but everyone needs to take it and have it count on their grade. Parental rights are important, but so are parental responsibilities, if you are going to legislate one, you have to legislate the other, they aren't independent of each other.

Tony Romanello, Jordan School District

Teachers need to be accountable, ADMINISTRATION NEEDS TO BE ACCOUNTABLE TOO. Teachers need to feel supported and listened to not just told what to teach and how to teach it. What we are doing in education today is only failing our students.

Cheryl Thomson, Box Elder School District

Teachers in Utah are some of the best and they put forth a great effort to provide students with what they need. They put in a great deal of time and effort to do this, a lot of that time is on their own time and late into the night. Having time to collaborate with others is important.

Rhonda Harrison, Millard School District

Please stop trying to micromanage teachers. Treat us like the talented, dedicated professionals we are. All of the education bills proposed every year lower morale and constantly move the target we are told to shoot for. Stupidest bill ever passed is the one saying we can't use SAGE scores on a student's grade. What a waste of time and money. They have no ownership in the test so the results are useless.

Michelle Bagley, Alpine School District

Good teachers get punished by tests like SAGE. I was intentionally given a group of students who really struggle to pass math. It is a great anxiety to them. If you went to my class you would see how much they learned and the progress they made. It was incredible. Unfortunately when it came time for sage, since there is no accountability, they all just clicked through the test which reflected on me. I was then told I was a bad teacher because of the students would not try on the SAGE. For reasons like this I am actually looking to leave education despite pleas from the counselor begging me to stay since I am their go-to teacher for students who struggle in math.

Randall B Barker, Alpine School District

Teachers are incredible professionals that come in early and stay late everyday. They go in on weekends and spend their breaks and time at home preparing, grading and always trying to be better and find better ways to help the kids they teach. Yet there is always more being asked and more being demanded of us. We want to give and I work with incredibly dedicated people. We don't get paid like other professions so we should at least be trusted that we are putting in our hours and trusted to have benefits that are reasonable. Higher pay would also retain some of these amazing people that dedicate their whole life to serving and teaching the children of our future everyday.

Kimberlee Hamilton, Alpine School District

I feel as though my students see me as a "test giver" instead of a teacher. I realize students need accountability for their learning. But why can't it be project based or hands on based more than paper and pencil or computer? I feel as though I cannot give those kind of assessments because of how much drill I need to give to be able to have the students ready for the "test". Which then really only makes me look like I was a good or bad teacher based on a test they take once and at the end of the trimester. It doesn't show the countless hours of class discussion where the students are engaged. The test only shows one moment in time.

Megan Cranmer, Box Elder School District
Testing Concerns

Let us teach, and stop worrying about test results. 

Lisa Johnson, Carbon School District

STOP judging teachers and children’s learning by a standardized test score.

Kim Bockholt, Davis School District

Our kids represent our future, and without quality teachers they won’t be prepared for the challenges. Our students need real life experiences that prepare them to move into the workplace. Taking tests only measures what they KNOW, not what they can DO. Our curriculum needs to address all of the Four C’s--Collaboration, Critical Thinking, Creativity and Communication--if we want to ensure a great future for our state, nation, and world.

Steven Hendricks, Davis School District

We are tired of moving targets with testing. Pick one and stay with it!

Cheryl Lefevre, Garfield County School District

If kindergarten readiness test scores were published by the state, my school’s attendance network would be failing before we even begin. My students’ family backgrounds do not support the kind of college readiness goals our state school grading program uses. 1. We need increased vocational education opportunities in our neighborhood schools, not just at the GTI center. 2. Denigrating the efforts of our students and teachers by giving out an annual grade largely determined by the socioeconomic level of our students and their families is unhelpful.

Ron Barnett, Granite School District

Our students are tested to death and need real-world skills taught in elementary schools (I am not an elementary school educator) including coping and resiliency skills and how to be a student....skills they are not seeming to learn. By the time they get to Jr and Sr High--it's too late.

Michele Belmore, Granite School District

I’m a teacher that cares a lot about her students. However, I could be done after three years because of the praxis 2 test and how it affects teachers to pass to keep teaching. Why not have teachers get their license with taking all the classes nessersary in college to get the license to teach like it was before.

Rachel Christensen, Granite School District

There is still too much mandatory testing in the schools.

JoyLynn Clark, Granite School District

Testing students does not work to make teachers accountable. All that is happening is the testing company is making money from education. Start rewarding the teachers that do an excellent job instead of killing our morale by always wanting more from us.

Marcia Ingram, Granite School District

common core for science in the middle schools is terrible, please compare the standard core over the last three changes it has progressively just become worse, vague and now politicized. Sustainability masking as global warming, and environmentalisms being pushed. Physics being minimized. When i started it was intro to physical science in 8th grade The book was organized and linear in how the kids learned it, now its all over the science map, changes made with no regard to resources and published books.

Brian Lestarge, Granite School District

They are ignoring or are unaware of what I mentioned in my comments above.

Tamera Marsden, Granite School District
Testing Concerns

There is no way to quantify student learning. Psychology does not even recognize these kinds of "statistics" because human behavior is not quantifiable!!!!

Audrey Nelson, Granite School District

I work with significant cognitive disability students. I am a lifelong teacher but feel under appreciated in my school because my students will never "met standards" but my students make gains all the time that are not measured by standardized testing or testing in general. I want my students to know they are important to you even without their test scores.

Athena Poole, Granite School District

Do you remember your teachers? Do you remember how they taught you to succeed? Is your success today merely the result of good test taking skills? Did your teachers help and encourage you to explore your interests and to seek more learning just for the fun of learning? I am so concerned as I look to the future. I see fantastic test taking skills in our students but I do not see the love of learning, creating, exploring. We hunker down on the computer and parrot back what will be on the test. We improve our test taking skills electronically. But we seldom take the time to explore, to pursue interests, to create. We should be worried about our students as they become adults. I fear that our country will no longer be the driving force in exploration, creativity, development. We may be the leaders in test taking but will that take us where we want to go? There is such a focus on collaboration, professional development, and peer coaching that teachers no longer have planning time or creative time of their own. Yes, we have the computers and technology, but we don't have the time to make lessons exciting, inviting. We aren't given the time to teach. I wouldn't want to be a teacher if I was starting out now! There is so little joy, delight, or thrill in teaching. It's all paper work, testing, training, more paper work and more testing. Does anyone respect a teacher? No, not really. Everyone is critical of everything we do. I have taught for 29 years. I turned down a promising career in medicine to become a teacher. Little did I know then that my passion for education would be extinguished by disrespect, tests, trainings, meetings, meetings, and more meetings. We are losing so many wonderful teachers because their passion to teach is squelched by the bureaucracy of teaching. If we truly want to give our students the best, then we need to take careful consideration of how we are treating the best!

Pyper G. Shelton, Granite School District

Please stop demonizing teachers. We work hard and are doing our best. It is hard to teach when we spend the bulk of our time administering mandated testing. One of the biggest challenges with teacher shortages is the substitute shortage. Limiting their hours to 29 a week is crippling our school's abilities to meet the needs of students because interventionists are being pulled to substitute.

Rachel Sorensen, Granite School District

Evaluations change, grading changes, testing changes, content change....Find something that works and stop changing.

Marcie Judd, Kane County School District

I feel like responsibility is being taken away from students. If students don't learn to take responsibility for their own learning, what kind of citizens will they be? Example: It's nice that we pay for them to take the ACT once, but shouldn't a college bound student take this responsibility on themselves instead of relying on the schools to give them an opportunity to take it. There are other examples of removing responsibility from the student if you look for them.

Marie Condle, Nebo School District

Students are tired of testing. They are not trying their best, especially if they think the test won't effect them in the long run. They want more creative, hands on approaches to learning. When these are offered and funded the students interest level and love for learning sky rocket.

Suzanne Rowley, Nebo School District
Testing Concerns

I have taught for 33 years and love every day that I go to school. I appreciate the one to one technology that my school has embraced and encourage other schools and districts to do the same. Teaching is easier now than it was 10 years ago due to the one to one and my denotation to bring my content online. I am saddened that the SAGE testing has been reduced to just the sophomores in my district. Lots of money and time were spent in creating the quality testing in science and I am not getting the information from testing that would provide me the data to improve my instruction.

*Linda Walter, Nebo School District*

Increased restrictions on teachers have stifled creativity and created in students a dislike for education. If it isn't fun, students don't want to learn.

*Alan Schultz, Ogden School District*

Children entering my class are the most at risk children in our district. Poverty, limited education of parents, little done at home to prepare young children for school, and many children learning English and Spanish is the situation we face. Continual testing takes precious teaching time and learning experiences away from the teachers and children. Many children are going through the "silent" phase. Testing only increases their anxiety at school. This is not education or learning. These children are tested more because of progress monitoring, however they struggle the most. Please, let teachers educate children!

*Stephanie Hall, Provo City School District*

I would like them to have some awareness for what state required testing looks like as schools attempt to implement it. I sympathize their desire to have data, but I'm concerned they don't know how disruptive it is to the school calendar (multiple days, booking computer labs, chasing truant students) and also absurd given how many opt out.

*Moses Baca, Salt Lake City School District*

Trust that professional educators know what they are doing.

*Bryant Baird, Salt Lake City School District*

Standardized tests do not authentically reflect student growth. We should move away from standardized tests and approach learning from a "whole child" perspective.

*Anonymous, Salt Lake City School District*

Emphasis on Reading, Writing, and Math far outweighs Science, Social Studies, Arts, PE, and Social Skills. Our students are able to write and argue a point using texts and data, but don't have the social skills to work with others collaborately. Their total self esteem is determined by the ability to pass a test!

*Carrrie Sorensen, Salt Lake City School District*

I'm getting tired of the negative messages about teachers. We are professionals who attended college, have additional degrees (sometimes lots), and are trying to do our jobs. If teachers were treated as responsible adults, school cultures would change for the better. Also, too much priority is being put on testing. We are not our testing, and current testing does not show what great things our kids are learning and know.

*Deidrien Booth, Weber School District*

Teaching is a privilege. Teachers need to be able to teach to impact student's learning at high levels. The amount of time spent on practicing for end of year testing is a shame and a waste of time.

*Jan Hatch, Weber School District*
Testing Concerns

Teaching is HARD, and it is getting harder. We need real support. We need schools to be empowered to stand up to parents who want to dictate what we do. We need to have a voice in how students are evaluated and in the use of standardized measurement—especially how standardized tests are used to judge teachers. When there is NO REPERCUSSION on a student for lackluster performance, we are merely judging teachers on their abilities to bribe students to try.

Holly Leake, Weber School District

In my first grade class, Friday has the nickname “Freaky Friday” because we have at least two tests to take. And other days often have a test as well. Enough with the testing already—let me teach!!!

Marilyn Parker, Weber School District
Workload / Classroom Support

In our school our kindergarten class size is 26 children, which is 52 children with two sessions to progress monitor. The expectations for the teachers are to teach a 3 hour block of literacy that doesn't include time for recess, computers or math. It also doesn't allow for time to help connect with students, especially ones that have very little time with parents.

Lorri Case, Alpine School District

If you truly want to know what is happening in classrooms/schools each of you need to sub for a week in a classroom to really find out what teaching is like. Then you may have some different opinions and willing to start doing the job you were voted in to do!

Kriss Spencer, Alpine School District

First of all, I would like to thank our legislators for the important role that they play in our democratic process. Without your service I could not do my job. As a public servant I would like to see teaching become as important as any other public servant's job. I am willing to sacrifice if I know it has merit but sacrifice without merit is useless and drains me as a teacher. When I feel that I am getting the support for my students that I need to teach, i.e. an aide in the classroom, technology, supplies, etc. I can teach much more effectively and feel that I can truly do what I intended to do when I became a teacher, Be a Change Agent! I hope that as this legislative session begins you will take into account that I might only have 28 students but half of those students need some kind of intervention. The other half might suffer if I can't get to them in a timely manner without support staff that I need. When I can have just one more body in the room I could possibly make the change for your student that would not otherwise be possible. Please help me teach the children in this state what they need to learn to carry on our democracy!

Karen Webb, Alpine School District

I stopped teaching when I stopped getting the support needed from administrators (who were too over-pressured by those above them) to maintain a classroom where students were not held accountable for poor behavior. It was a unique year when we had many transitory students who came from self-destructive homes. Those kinds of students need support before and after school so they can succeed in the high pressure environment of today's schools. We will never succeed with students whose everyday needs are not being met either because of poverty or lack of adequate supervision in the home.

Anita Price, Cache County School District

Dear Legislators, As a veteran teacher, I have watched our profession dramatically suffer in the past ten years. Not only do we have teachers that do not want to stay in our profession, they are running from it. Young people are discouraged from seeking this career path--not without reason. Teaching is arguably the hardest career and one of the most disrespected. If I were to average out my salary over the true number of hours that I work, I would be making much less than the minimum wage. I knew that teaching wouldn't be lucrative when I came into the profession. Money wasn't the reason I chose to work in education. What I did not know was the true lack of support and respect teachers receive. I currently teach in a classroom with 32 third grade students. There is not space in my classroom to accommodate them. My classroom budget was made for a class size of twenty-six students. That means that all of the supplies for six more students come out of my pocket. That's on top of what I already spend to enhance my curriculum. My school email inbox currently has 53 unread emails, most of which are complaints about one thing or another, that I have not had time to read due to my other responsibilities. I arrive at school no later than 7:00, and rarely leave earlier than 6:00. I still take work home every night. I take grading with me on vacation and feel guilty if I don't work on it after my family has gone to sleep. I am asked to create trackers for multiple students. I try to stay on top of everything that I am asked to do, and if I drop one of the forty balls that I am juggling, I am belittled. The “fun” has been sucked out of my classroom. I am moving through curriculum at a break neck pace, attempting to prepare my students for “The Test” at the end of the year. There is little to no time for slowing down to make snowflakes or, more importantly, teach about character, citizenship, and friendship. There is a disconnect between administration and the classroom. We are constantly being asked to do “little things.” However, when you have a list of twenty little things that each take a few minutes, it adds up. I’ve always known that I was meant to be a teacher. I know that I make a difference in the lives of others every day. I’ve seen positive differences happen in amazing ways.
Workload / Classroom Support

However, it’s getting harder to see that silver lining amongst all of the dark clouds. We need your help and support. Our profession, our students, and the future of our state depend on it.

Katie Brown, Davis School District

Now is the time to stop messing around with teachers: let them do their jobs, pay them as professionals, back off with needless testing, stop treating educators as over-educated peasants.

Richard Heath, Davis School District

Why I teach and why I feel it is not possible to do so at this time. Too many demands with large classes and no time

Donna L. Trease, Davis School District

If I was to ever leave teaching it would be because of the ridiculous expectations I am held to and the lack of support from legislators dealing with difficult parents and students. I should not be the enemy.

Alexia Crandall, Granite School District

We would greatly appreciate being viewed as professionals and trusted to do the job that we have been trained to do.

Brooke Deardorff, Granite School District

First, I feel there is a definite need for more full time professionals to be positioned at one home school, which are trained to deal with mental health and wellness. In addition, Special Educators are being inundated with so many referrals it takes months of tracking data and testing and then those special education teachers are not full time at one school because they are so far and few between. This, in my personal opinion, creates a lack of consistency. Camaraderie between general education and special education teachers plays a key role in student gains when collaboration and consistency are prevalent. Full time teachers are not equipped or trained to deal with the rising amount of children experiencing adverse childhood experiences. It is extremely difficult to teach and learn with so many outside obstacles and emotional barriers. In many cases, the heightened demand on teachers and school communities to help students rise to academic achievement becomes an unattainable accomplishment for not only students but all stakeholders. i.e. teachers, parents, administrators, districts because of these influences. In turn, both students and teachers taste the bitterness of defeat and failure. We are trying everything to overcome so many of the hardships students face but it is a daunting task - but done with love and trust. However, it is exhausting! Often, as an educational cohort, we look at the academic aspect of children, but it seems as though we forget to ascertain whether or not our students are in a healthy socio-emotionally stable frame of mind to learn what we as educators are trying to teach them. Sure we can do clubs, and have an open door/open teacher-parent dialogue, have food pantries, wash clothes, give children gloves, talk to them when they have a rough day, and deal with the overwhelming effects of poverty on their brains and physical toll of their body, but then am I educating them academically or mentally and emotionally? Why isn't there an assessment that asks about the whole child, not just the academic child. This MAY or may not have an impact on their successes in other areas of instruction and curriculum. Secondly, teachers should be treated with respect as professionals and many in society forget the life-long impact of fabulous teachers. I still have not come to any sure conclusions as to why such a huge shift has happened ultimately giving teachers a bad reputation, but even as a first year teacher I feel the affects of this from districts, administration, parents, legislative decisions made on our behalf, and all of these people’s views trickle down through student points of view. How do we change this?

Kim Dillingham, Granite School District

Education needs to be the number one priority on every citizen's mind. We can't afford to put it anywhere but first.

Aubrey Dillman, Granite School District

Not all schools have the same supplies or opportunities and the legislators need to make sure all schools are on equal footing

Sonya Dollins-Colton, Granite School District
Workload / Classroom Support

There are a lot of talented special education teachers. The students in special education classrooms might not score the highest on testing, but there is a lot of amazing progress that takes place in self contained special education classrooms. These teachers and students work very hard and should not be forgotten, set aside or told to work harder to get the students up to grade level. It is our intent to work with our students to their own unique abilities and to celebrate their successes no matter how small.

Heidi Henderson, Granite School District

Homeless youth prevention. Teacher Salary vs. Administrative Salary. A voice for teachers

Patricia Honey, Granite School District

The frustration of testing. All students shouldn't be tested only on paper, but through observations and real life situations. Preparing for the real world requires time, patience, consistency and a knowledge of their needs individually. Allow teachers to all be paid equally from K-12. We should only be required to specialize in 1 to 2 areas to be proficient at what we teach and not make Elementary specialize is 6 + areas while Jr. High and High school teachers need one area of expertise. There are many areas of relevant that are indicators of what makes a successful student successful through the support of their teachers. Teachers in elementary are required to be experts in more areas of studies than most people who work in other fields. That is not reasonable to ask. Our pay and hours we put in are not indicators that the future leaders of our country are important, when not enough funds are put into pay or funding needs of public schools. It's frustrating to keep loving and sharing your passion for education when teachers are forced to work more with less everyday.

Sandy Thuy Jensen, Granite School District

It is time to fund education. Education powers our economy, helps children climb out of poverty, and enriches our cultural environment. Please, let now be the time to fund education in Utah.

Susan Jones, Granite School District

Feeling supported and safe should be the right of every teacher in the classroom. It is sadly getting to the point that every teacher I know is planning their exit, whether leaving the profession or counting down to retirement. It is becoming a burden that we don't know if we can bear any longer.

Jenny Morris, Granite School District

It's time to put of children first. They are our future. We need quality teachers, smaller classrooms, more support from our legislators. Testing has taken over teaching.

Cindy Moyle, Granite School District

Teachers have more demands placed on them than ever before. The teacher shortage will only increase if we don't start addressing class size, teacher salary, and if we don't start finding ways to boost teacher morale. This all starts with funding, but also coming straight to the source -- THE TEACHERS, before making new laws and decisions that will directly affect students and teachers.

Rebecca Vala, Granite School District

Education is one of the most important things you are addressing this year. Please take time to look at this fact: teacher shortage. People are not wanting to enter into the teaching profession due to government micro management vs autonomy. Professionalism should be valued and encouraged. Why are we not giving trust to a teacher to reach her/his students needs with an educated accountability and not just a check off sheet that we need to account to an administrator who is accounting a check off sheet to a district ... etc. with so many requirements and restrictions that it takes more time doing that than it does teaching our students ... not to mention the stress and worry if we are doing it exactly the way it is required by our administrators (and it seems to change a bit every year just to cause more stress)? Money is not the biggest issue for most teachers ... please take the outside testing "stress" away, all the testing accountability that we have to "report" and let us teach not just account. Teachers need support. We have parent support... we need legislator support! Please... keep class size small, support full-day
Workload / Classroom Support

kindergarten (as it is really first grade as compared to when you were in school), give compensation to teachers who are willing to do extras, reduce testing accountability, and give us our autonomy to do what we know how to do, namely, TEACH.

Vivian Gubler, Jordan School District

I began my teaching career in a Title I school in Granite District as a classroom aide, then became a certified preschool teacher, and finally became a certified elementary teacher. I am in my 21st year of service in a classroom, and my 13th year as a certified kindergarten teacher. I currently teach in Jordan School District. I am a teacher because I absolutely love working with, and teaching children. During the past 20 years I have seen many changes in education. One of the things that impacts my ability to teach the most is class size. My classes are usually smaller because I teach in kindergarten, but many of my colleagues do not have room for all the children's desks, and their class sizes continue to grow. Teachers in our school are told that we need to be creative and figure out ways to deal with the ever growing class sizes. My classes are usually 5 or 6 children over the optimum student to teacher ratio for kindergarten, but I feel lucky as many other kindergarten teachers have over 7 to 9 children more than is best in an early childhood classroom. I feel my love for children and teaching is used against me. I will do my job for less pay, little to no recognition for a job well done, less than desirable classroom supplies and conditions, and constant pressure to do more with less. Over the past twenty years the testing requirements have become outrageous and I am now spending so much time assessing my kindergarten students, I hardly have time to teach the required curriculum. I am a good teacher, I am always learning and perfecting my teaching skills, I have received awards for my teaching, I have taught and mentored other teachers. I will never quit my job or let my students down, they receive my best every day. The people making decisions about my students and my classroom have no idea how things work in a classroom and all the things I do each day. We need the people making the decisions to be more involved in education. Come into my classroom and my colleagues classrooms, see how we make a difference in our student's lives each day, and see the things we do with so little. Please make decisions based on actual knowledge of the issues, get involved and listen those of us who are in the trenches each day trying to make a difference in our corner of the world!

Kerry Hoffmann, Jordan School District

Before I went into education, without a degree, I was taking home, after taxes, 100K per year. I have four degrees and went into education, not to make money but to help kids, so they might have a brighter and better future. However, it took me 30 years to go from a beginning salary of 28K to 50K. We live in a very sad and disrespectful state of how our legislators treat our teachers...., those on the front line, in the trenches.

Max Weiss, Jordan School District

The students are coming harder and harder to teach. For what teachers are asked to do and what they get paid to do it, teaching is becoming a less and less desirable job.

Heidi Hall, Nebo School District

You need to address accountability for district administrators and principals: They cannot be given carte blanche to make “progressive" changes to school systems, holding teachers in check with punitive evaluation measures. Stop worrying about teacher accountability and start focusing on too many administrators (who themselves can't teach) spending money on new methods that don't work. We know what works: caring, committed teachers and small classes. No more tests. No more progressive programs. Back to basics. Kids need to read and write, speak and listen, learn and communicate. Let good teachers do their jobs!

Michael Thompson, Nebo School District

Utah has the opportunity to become one of the top states for education in the country. We do an amazing job on a limited budget, just imagine what we could accomplish if we were anywhere close to other states in funding.

Melanie Rice Moffat, Park City School District
Workload / Classroom Support

The legislature should be ashamed of themselves. knowing that the teachers in Utah are the lowest paid in the nation and we have a rainy day fund. That could pay off the national debt!!!!!!!! And what happened to the day that teachers taught. learning was fun and everyone got along. This consent use of testing is useless What a joke.

Federica Gallegos, Salt Lake City School District

Public Education is more and more demanding on teachers. Pressure from administrators, right up to superintendents is ever more stressful. There is a lack of help with problem students from administrators. Parents are often given more respect than the classroom teacher. Sage testing, in a big way, is as much about manipulating the computer and writing equations than about asking questions and having students show their knowledge. The i-Ready Computer Program used at our school could easily replace the Sage Testing. We get the needed data to help students progress and we wouldn’t have to spend the money on SAGE and take time out of our schedule to do all the testing. Also, with i-Ready, parents would have a better idea of what the testing is about and how to help their student progress. In our school, we test SAGE three times a year. That is a a lot of time taken away from classroom teaching. It is disheartening to listen to teachers and feel their frustrations, knowing that things could be much better. So, besides the lower salaries of teaching, we seem to be asking people to enter a profession in which they will not be receiving a very high salary, but also, a profession in which you will have frustration after frustration thrown at you. Why work so hard in education when it would be easier to earn more money and have an easier work load in another profession?

Kraig Nilsson, Sevier School District

How ridiculous the evaluation tools they are using to evaluate educators. Also that the Sage test is not an accurate way to assess school performance.

Steve Marsing, Wasatch County School District

I believe in the power and responsibility that teachers have to influence students for good. However, we need support, compensation, and respect from our legislators and the public to best help these students succeed. Teachers work far more hours than many realize and our wages are not competitive in comparison to others with the same amount of education and training in other industries. In order to attract and retain quality teachers, increasing teacher salaries and benefits must be a priority. In addition, in order to prevent burnout, teachers need more paid time to plan and prepare for high-quality instruction. With the amount of growth we are experiencing in many parts of Utah and in order to reduce class sizes, we’ll need more teachers. Increasing salary and giving teachers more paid time to do what they need to do are two essential things for our students’ futures. Also, teachers should be able to focus less on end-of-level testing proficiency percentages and more on growth of the WHOLE student—academic and otherwise. I think sometimes we feel pressured to cram the core into the kids’ heads when really what they need is to learn life skills (diligence, kindness, organization, respecting for self and others, working as a team, etc.) first, and then they will be able to succeed academically. In order to be able to focus on the whole child, less pressure must be put on educators’ test scores. Yes, there needs to be accountability for teachers, students, and schools, but testing is not the only way to do that—student surveys, parent surveys, administrator evaluations, student growth, self-evaluations, etc. could all be helpful ways of showing accountability. Finally, at my school (and many others) we have many students whose problems are beyond what we, as regular education teachers, have the training to sufficiently support. We need more resources available to help those students who need more mental and emotional support than we are able to give. Thank you for your time.

Abbie Twingstrom, Weber School District

Before you write and pass a bill into law affecting education, spend significant time in the classroom teaching and working with children with the ideas in the bill. Use and test your ideas in the classroom before writing them into a bill. Write your bills with significant teaching experience, not your own student experience. Learning and teaching are night and day different. You need to know what teaching children today is like in Utah to be able to craft effective bills to help children learn and teachers to be able to help children learn. Law like the Sage test burden our children and teachers with a wasted and poor use of time. Let’s empower, not burden.

Bryan Jenkins, Davis School District
Workload / Classroom Support

As always, I spend hours of my time at school and at home filling in ridiculous objective, targets, lesson plan forms, collecting data, data, data, and more data etc... that does not support me in actual planning and teaching. It's like I have two jobs: 'professional educator' and glorious administrative/secretarial professional. They say, "When you plan your lessons"; when do you do that much less even look (and I mean look) at the next weeks materials. I work at a Title 1 school where most parents do not help their students. With free breakfast in the classroom, I've now lost 20-25 minutes of instruction time. I have to stand by the food (can't have a student do that now), log it, count it to make sure entrees match with fruit (if not, toss some fruit over to the sharing basket/but in the lunch room you can't share???) listen to several students questions or problem, take tardy slips (don't lose those while you are at the back of the room serving breakfast), reminding them everyday to do the same routine we've been doing since August, go to my computer and log onto Gradebook to enter roll, keep telling students to eat instead of talk (those that have seconds (2 milks, 2 entrees need more time), tell them numerous times to begin their self-start; we don't begin 'school' until 9:20-9:25. And that's not to mention that on Mondays the Star Spangled Banner is played and we say the pledge. Oh, and add announcements in there somewhere. Breakfast needs to be in the cafeteria where students can eat and chit chat and learn to sit at a table and enjoy a meal. Not turned around in their seats, walking around the room, shoving food in their desks (yes, they have been told over 100 times/one time we had fruit flies for weeks until I found a rotten banana and rotting apples mashed in back of a student's desk), milk everywhere, smelling sink where the left over milk is emptied....... We waste 15 minutes during small group time by 15 students going next door to get a Chromebook from a cart that needs to be unlocked, walking back, students going to their group desk seat and logging on. That's one group time wasted. I asked Donor Choose for 15 Chromebooks but I haven't been lucky with that. Sorry for the run-on's and fragments.

Robin Harman, Granite School District

Use the science and real rationale of the educating process to direct your decision making and money directions. Testing is not the solution to success of students. Neither is school grading. Class size affects student outcomes. Parents and communities need to be held accountable for their children not just an educator, their administration or the school. Where the money is spent needs to be directed to these issues not charter special interest groups.

Johanna McMullin, Granite School District

My class size keeps growing, I do not have enough supplies for all of the children and need to use my own money to purchase them. My students have very diverse needs and I feel like there is no way to meet all of their learning needs, let alone the social and emotional needs that must be met. Many of my students suffer from food insecurity, have parents working many jobs to survive, and struggle to stay on task and complete work. Growth of students is being emphasized in my District, but that is based solely on test scores, not on whether or not they can get along with others and be kind. I feel as if I were just starting out as a teacher I would leave the profession. The demands put on me to fix everything are ridiculous and take me away from my own family. I feel like I am failing at work and home.

Barbara Antonetti, Granite School District

I teach kindergarten and it is becoming increasingly more difficult every year. We have more students than we have ever had before and there are more and more behavioral issues that we all deal with. These impact our ability to teach, which is not fair to the other students. Teacher morale is not as high as it once was with all that we deal with, along with the high emphasis on testing. I understand the importance of testing, but there are many factors that are not considered when children are tested. I have seen high ability children have an "off day" and perform poorly. Children who have speech issues and IEP's are not given accommodations on the DIBELS test. Kindergartners are not required to be in school, but still count in how well our classes perform on the test, reflecting back on the teacher. I spend a great deal of my own money, which I know is my own choice. I am frustrated that we are no longer allowed to ask for class donations, but we are required to pay jr. high and high school fees. I truly love my job, but the concerns stated above are concerns that I have heard from many other teachers as well. Thank you for your attention.

Hayley Brown, Alpine School District
Workload / Classroom Support

Class sizes need to be addressed, along with time to teach the standards deeper.

*Emilie Whitehead, Alpine School District*

I would love to see members of the legislature be required to spend a large number of consecutive hours in schools in their districts (NOT just token visits). "Come, walk in our shoes", see and experience what we need instead of just hear about it. State and Local School Board Members should do the same.

*Susan S. Petersen, Box Elder School District*

Providing teacher merit-pay by increasing the accountability for high end-of-level students scores without being able to control what happens in a child's life outside of school is like expecting a dentist to get paid only if all of his patients have no cavities, regardless of how well they brush their teeth at home, and how strong their teeth naturally are as a result of their genetics. Most teachers work harder than other professions, but get the bad rap due to things completely out of their control. It is a highly stressful job and continues to become increasingly more stressful because of the demands imposed upon them from the public and legislators.

*Sharon Cook, Box Elder School District*

Get out in the schools and sub in a class. See what is happening before you make any decision.

*Kim Howard, Jordan School District*

I have great students and I believe all students can learn, but I have students that don't attend or when they do they have their hoodies on and earphones in. When we as teachers try to address the behavior or address any school challenge, we get bullied to keep our opinions to our self's. It never use to be that way it started when school grades were implemented.

*Dave Anderson, Logan City School District*

Teachers want to be excellent. We work extra hours to create interesting lessons, grade the rigorous assignments we assign, and find new materials. We love our content and we enjoy working with students and helping them learn and grow. But we have many factors working against us. 1) Class sizes are so large, it is hard to meet the needs of individual learners. 2) Teacher pay does not adequately compensate teachers for all the extra hours that are spent, and teachers quickly realize it is VERY DIFFICULT to support a family on the amount they earn. (Have you seen home prices?) 3) Legislation is passed without teacher input that adds to a teacher's responsibilities but doesn't help student learning. For example: sage testing was required, but students opt out or race through it just to be done, and then schools/teachers receive a poor "school grade."

*Lori Zaremba, Nebo School District*

Over the past 10 years since I've become a teacher, I have seen the expectations placed upon teachers increase significantly to the point that each year, I see many of my colleagues in the profession leave the teaching profession to pursue other career paths. They have no choice but to do so after being pushed to teacher burnout trying to keep up with daily responsibilities as a teacher and attend more meetings serving on at least one school committee or being asked to create curriculum notebooks with no more pay. I, myself contemplate this action on a daily basis due to the added expectations teachers are asked to complete each year with meager salaries that can barely support ourselves and/or our families especially if we own our homes or cars. In addition, class sizes in public schools are way too big to effectively teach our students. For example, in classes that require a lot of writing from our students, it is almost impossible to give immediate, quality feedback to our students if we want to also, meet the demands of our personal lives. It feels like the golden age of teaching has passed where we were trusted to do our jobs, catering to the various learning styles of students is completely ignored by being required to give them more and more standardized tests that reflect badly on the teachers if they do not do well. For many teachers, their love and passion of teaching is getting outweighed by the increased burdens placed on teaching each year. Please do something to ease our burdens as soon as possible. We are losing wonderful teachers each year for these reasons and more.

*Nathalie Le Bras, Provo City School District*
I would like to share the realities of the work load including the emotional burnout

Aaryn Birchell, Uintah School District

I work hard every day trying to make a difference in student's lives. I would appreciate it if some of the legislators would acknowledge that we do hard things every day under tough circumstances. We need more help with difficult kids. We need more help in the classroom with either more aide time or smaller class sizes.

Lynne Graves, Weber School District

Please come into our classrooms before making legislative choices.

Wendy Western, Cache County School District

We're overworked and exhausted. Many of us are tired of having to work on school things evenings and weekends just to try to keep up. We are being held accountable for things we have no control over. Parents and students don't have any accountability unless they choose to. We are expected to do more than 1 person can possibly do and are criticized when we can't do it. We are professionals. We work in education every day and we should be making educational decisions for our students. We have too many students with many different needs and we can't help all of them. Our curriculum is more than we can teach in one year. We've had many things added to the curriculum, but very few things taken out. We're stressed because of testing and observations and evaluations and so many other things expected of us. Valuable learning time is spent testing and practicing for tests. Tired, stressed out teachers don't make better teachers or enhance relationships with students and it does not improve education. If I were choosing a career today, I definitely would not choose education because of the stress and my own time and money that goes into it.

Susan Carter, Davis School District

I have had 30 students in my 1st grade classroom for at least 5 years now. More and more expectations are placed upon our shoulders as teachers and with that the tools necessary are not provided. We are exhausted and need advocates who will help and assist and not just tell us what to do! There is a big piece missing in all of the questions and items on the agenda and that is of the human side. We are working with children who need to feel safe, loved, listened to and not assigned as a number and put on a machine to learn.

Brenda Lanham, Davis School District

We have committed teachers working hard every day. We need to find ways to support them and help make the job easier instead of harder. We are chasing people away from teaching with high stakes testing, large class sizes, increased responsibilities, and lack of a livable wage.

Tracy Hansen, Granite School District

The story is simply too complicated...Everyone wants to blame the teachers when the test scores are low, when the failing rates are high, when attendance is bad. Everyone blames the teacher because it is the only person in the equation that can be controlled. It's to dangerous and political to hold parents accountable. It's not "fair" to hold the students accountable. It's never a problem with the curriculum or the class size...How many meetings I have been in where I am told a good teacher can teach any size class. So, the teacher gets blamed. We have communities in this state that are at risk. Schools in which 70% of the teenagers are reading at a 4th grade level. Entire buildings of students who are so depressed and anxious that learning is virtually impossible. But, it is the teacher that is blamed. We are told to collect more data. We are told to put our lessons into templates. We are told to only teach that which can be tested. And, therefore, teachers burn out and leave the profession. Teaching is a hard job on the best of days, but when you are constantly blamed for every single failure in the system, the job is unbearable. The real solution to these problems is for everyone to take a step back and look at the whole forest. The trees are dying.

Mary Ward, Granite School District
Workload / Classroom Support

Newcomer English language learner students need more support and more time to learn English and the school system before they are required to meet standards expected for proficiency on standard tests

Margo Harpster, Salt Lake City School District

I'm still a provisional teacher, so I don't have a wealth of stories just yet. But what I do see in my schools are teachers who are giving up on students just a few months into the year because they're not equipped to give that student the work they need. They have 30+ other students they have to ensure meet certain benchmarks, and they're unsure of how to deal with certain behaviors so those students who need the most care and extra help get tossed to the SpEd teachers and generally forgotten. That's something that needs to change. Children shouldn't be falling through the cracks.

Maren Holmes, Granite School District

Teachers are constantly asked to do more and more without the tools, or time to implement the new requirements. Too much instructional time is taken with the testing we're required to do. Elementary classrooms with near thirty students add to the stress.

Janet Juengel, Granite School District

Teachers need to feel they are supported by legislators. The bar on classroom and student growth has risen to an almost unattainable level. Consider our students: some are homeless, receive no parental support, are hungry, have moved several times a year, have disabilities, etc. Our students cannot fit into a common goal. And teachers should not be considered failures if students cannot reach the state expectation. Please consider the individuality of all children in our state, in our schools.

Lori Gray, Jordan School District

Teachers are overworked with the class sizes, and the amount of testing overwhelming the teaching. It takes the brain time to put concepts into long-term memory, and students are suffering with over-testing and not enough time to learn. The teachers I work with are always talking about another mandatory test coming up. It's taking away from the kids. In the last 7 years of teaching, I have seen many classes over 30. And to be realistic, anything over 25 students at once is not teaching, just managing the load. Students learn better when there is a tight sense of community--much harder to do in a class over 25.

Erica Hammon, Salt Lake City School District

Please fund education in Utah and get out of our way and let us teach.

Kim Irvine, Weber School District

For far too long the legislature has focused on what parents and students want in education, not what is actually needed to make it work properly in the state of Utah. Now we find ourselves in a situation where test scores are dropping, charter schools are not fixing the problem, students are leaving high school unprepared, and the legislature continues to ignore the voices of those who know the solution because it is politically convenient.

Dan Evans, Davis School District

I teach at a turn around school. Our students eat most of their meals at school and for many, their teachers are the only adult they trust or have a relationship with. They love their teachers so much but they are spread so thin! On top of teaching the standards and expected to make the growth, we are teaching them basic skills that they don’t get at home. We get very little support from outside the school.

Amanda Cornwell, Granite School District

I am a 5th year teacher approaching the "burnout" phase. I teach at a Title I school and resources and support have continued to dwindle year after year. Our school has many students with behavioral issues and we are completely lacking support. We have no money for paraeducators to help and the district requires months of paperwork before intervening. We are drowning. I have a class of 24 students but I spend 80% of my time managing the behavior of 3
Workload / Classroom Support

students. The students with behavioral issues needs are not being met in our school system. They are not getting the support and interventions they need because we lack resources. These students are also taking away learning time from other students. This is unfair to everyone. I love teaching but I don't even get to teach anymore. I spend all my time managing behavior. The day ends and I'm exhausted, I can't stick around for 2 more hours to catch up on grading and copying unpaid. Teachers need more support, we need help! Schools need copy room aides, paraeducators, behavioral health assistants. We can't do this on our own. Mandatory testing also brings extreme stress to teachers and students. One standardized test does not show the worth of students or teachers. Utah has to reduce the amount of testing, it wastes instructional time and does not accurately show student knowledge.

Laura Heffernan, Granite School District

I'm a special ed teacher 11 years, ranging from elementary resource, elementary self-contained, and high school resource. This year I am an instructional coach for special ed ARLs and interns. As I take a new The burnout rate of special ed teachers is quite high, thus districts are having to rely on hiring an training people who are willing to do an ARL. This is an alarming trend that should be addressed somehow. It is really difficult to teach everything a special ed teacher is expected to do with people who have no pre-service prep! And quite frankly, I think special ed teachers are asked to do more than is possible considering a traditional work day. It is a highly stressful job that is not worth the pay they get.

Ingrid Shurtleff, Provo City School District

Please listen to the state's teachers. We are the experts in the trenches every day.

Denise Kelley, Alpine School District

I feel like I am being treated like a yo-yo and that I have to teach my students like they are robots. I understand that we need to test but the testing is out of control and my students don't have time to be creative because we are worrying about making sure we have good test scores!

Karen Mann, Jordan School District

Teachers' jobs are becoming so scripted and micro-managed that teachers are losing enthusiasm, too drained to be creative and scared about being judged. They no longer feel that they can contribute what is important to them without scrutiny. Testing scores do not take into account that some students who test, miss many days, and then perform poorly, thus penalizing the teacher.

martha johnston, Canyons School District

Nobody wants to be a teacher anymore. Each year I ask my sophomores what they want to do when they graduate. The percentage who say they would like to be a teacher and is much lower than it used to be. This year I was surprised to have 3/92. That is higher than the last two years. I know that all my students who said they wanted to become a teacher didn't always follow through with it, but they at least looked at the profession and found it attractive in some way. Now almost every news story about teachers is negative. When I was young I looked forward to going back to school in the fall. I missed all of my friends that I hadn't seen or talked to in three months. And I did like learning even though there were some classes I found more interesting than others. My students don't look forward to coming back to school. They don't miss the social interaction because they are in constant contact. If they want to know something they can easily look it up or watch a video. When they come to school they deal with overstressed adults who are under pressure to make sure their students perform well on standardized tests, including the ACT. The ACT only matters for students who are college bound. So why would a kid seeking a tech certificate spend a
significant part of his/her education preparing for the ACT? I feel like all the fun has been taken away for both teachers and students. There is no freedom to ask a question and then spend time exploring possible solutions. Some teachers may be willing to spend a day on an interesting question, but most are too worried that they won’t finish the mandated curriculum if they take even one day to explore. The student gets very little choice in learning about things that interest him/her especially in a small school where electives are extremely limited. School is too rigid. We must conform to the bus schedule, state standards, testing schedule, traditions, etc, etc. Our students have evolved but school has not. I still love my job and I admire the students who are willing to conform and dig in but I do believe there is a better way and I don't think it involves one set of standards for everyone. Everyone works harder, performs better, and is happier when they feel like they have some say in the path they take. I wish high school students were allowed to choose a path and work towards a goal. Everyone would be allowed to change their mind, but it may take extra time to go back and complete the requirements for that path. So what? If you are college bound their should be certain requirements that you must meet before getting accepted. If you can't meet the requirements you work harder until you can or you choose a new path. I still believe in a well-rounded education but I don't think it has to be age-based. I don't think that all of the sophomores should have to take math together. If a student is motivated and ready to graduate at 16 why not? If another is slower, less motivated, or has changed his/her path several times and doesn’t graduate until 20, so what? I think we are doing our students a huge disservice in middle school/junior high to move them along no matter what. The middle school teachers can see the holes in their learning but they have no recourse. You can't force people to do things. If nothing happens to the student then they walk in to high school completely unprepared and they're forced to take math and language with people that are prepared. And eventually they believe they can never catch up so they either act out or drop out. Trying to do interventions with these students is by far the hardest part of my job. People are willing to send their child to kindergarten twice when they can see the child is clearly not ready to move on. So, why are they so willing to move their child on to high school completely unready? If the threat of staying in middle school one more year was enough to wake up 20 students, it would be worth it.

Lexa Larsen, Sevier School District

I have been an educator for 25 years and while I may not have all the answers I am greatly concerned about how in my opinion excessive testing and recording and monitoring accountability measures actually takes away from my actual teaching/facilitating or time on task for my students which I have seen to be the best thing for them. Many of us out here feel we are testing to death!

Michael Bottita, Alpine School District

Children want to learn and Teachers want to teach, but changing programs and expectations on teachers make it difficult. It requires additional time spent at school and takes the joy out of teaching.

Kathy Rockhill, Alpine School District

How a test does not define the ability of a student or the effectiveness of a teacher.

Dennise LeBaron, Davis School District

Please stop killing elementary teachers with the ridiculous amount of data they are expected to gather weekly. Give them time to plan their lessons!

Jill Muir, Granite School District

The effect of the turn around process for schools is demoralizing to teachers and has little effect on student progress.

Kathryn Prater, Granite School District

Teaching has become too much about how our test scores compare with those of other countries, and less about teaching students to be lifelong learners. We’re so worried about whether or not 5th graders can write a 5 paragraph essay that we don’t have time to teach them the importance of writing for communication and the nuances of writing for fun. They can all crank out an essay using the formula, as it were, with supporting details from a text, but they can’t create anything on their own, they don’t know how to form opinions or ask questions, and they hate writing.
Workload / Classroom Support

We're so concerned about whether or not kindergarten students can use multiple ways to count to 100, or write a short paragraph with correct capitalization and punctuation, that we're not allowed to spend the necessary time to teach them how to interact with others, use scissors, fold paper, use a glue bottle. We are losing these so called "soft skills" and we are gaining more and more behavior problems as the students go up through the ranks with teachers who don't have time to teach them how to be people because they have to consistently worry about the damn test scores, that may or may not be tied to their job security (we're all very confused about that). Music, and other art, teachers are treated as baby sitters, rather than the professional educators that they are, so that "regular" teachers can have a little more planning time, because music, art, history, and PE aren't tested, they're not considered to be important by the legislature. When in fact they are more important now than ever because they are the subjects that teach humanity, and how to interact with others, and how to process our feelings when we are hurt or scared or angry. Teachers are overworked and underpaid, but even more than that they are treated poorly. They are not trusted to do their job - which is to teach - but rather told how to do their job by nearly every person under the sun who has never even been a teacher.

Stacy Mayren, Granite School District

I became a teacher because I was passionate about student learning. I feel like all the other aspects of teaching have weighed me down and diminished my passion. The amount of work we do outside of teaching is too much and more and more requirements keep getting put on us. Let us teach and inspire the next generation.

Vanessa Black, Jordan School District

I would like to feel that my elected officials saw teachers as valuable people who are trying to do their best at all times. To know the demands upon teachers is three to five times more on each higher than for jobs in the public sector. Real success does not depend upon test scores. I spend more time testing in some cases than teaching. Each student is an individual and has different needs and abilities. We are ignoring student straights because of test scores. Not everyone will be able to achieve the highest level in everything. To expect it is unreasonable. It is like expecting everyone to run a mile. Even the child who does not have legs. That child will be a failure because of the fact they did not meet the mark. To base teacher value based upon outcomes is also not reasonable. Do I think teachers need some accountability yes. But there needs to be reasonable expectations. I have had two students who were dangerous to the other students and themselves, in that case I had to spend a significant amount of time protecting the students from the violent student. It takes so long to get a student like that into an appropriate situation sometimes a year. In the mean while my time to teach the students is greatly reduced. Every classroom is different with different needs. Each child is different too. They are not robots or a bunch of collected data. Some have ADHD, some have fighting parents, some have divorced parents, some never see or interact with parents for more than ten minutes a day, some are just not developed physically to meet testing guidelines. Does anyone even consider that each individual learns at a different rate and by slowing down greatly we can achieve huge gains in the long run. Education about real people or is all this a political ploy to get power over the other party so our party can make all the decisions. Put people first. Teachers are people. If you run them out of their jobs where will they go. To unemployment benefits, homelessness? What then? Who is going to pay to take care of people who were trying their best to contribute to society, paying taxes and being good citizens. Doesn't it make more sense to support teachers so they can continue to make positive impact?

Janice Snow, Jordan School District

Please let me teach. All I hear is data this and data that. Many of my students are developing test anxiety and have become complacent. Authentic learning is all but gone and has been replaced with with data driven methods. Many amazing teachers are leaving because of this. You look at my data and grade me as a teacher and my school, but don't take into account how many absences a student has, whether they have a learning or behavior disability, or some other contributing factor. I love the students and want them to succeed, but I feel the path we are headed down is a path for our educators and students to fail. Please just let me teach!

Tashalyn Wood, Jordan School District
Workload / Classroom Support

Teachers are professionals. We need to be able to do our job without yearly changes from the Legislature. We need to be able to teach, not test to heavily to show "accountability." We need to have fair evaluations that aren't cumbersome to complete.

*Lori Johansen, North Sanpete School District*

Constant changes to testing and requirements before any time tested outcomes can be measured are disruptive and waste resources.

*Julie Wilding, Nebo School District*

I'm in my fifteen year of teacher and pressure and stress that we put on our younger children is ridiculous. March through May students begin developing ticks to cope with the pressure to pass the end of year test. I've had many students crying during the Sage test. I can't stand watching little kids cry because they want to please their teacher, because their teacher is extremely stressed about raising test scores and being watched by the administrators if the kids don't perform well. I used to love teaching and I was really good at it. Now I have to have my kids do the practice Sage test every month. We can't go on field trips during Sage testing. I know kids need to be tested, but if we only weigh the cow and never feed it, when does it grow and develop?

*Marie Mattinson, Provo City School District*

The state is expecting teachers like me to bring kids living in poverty and at-risk situations to grade level when they come into my 6th grade classroom at a 2nd and 3rd grade level. The pressure we have to show proficiency on the state tests is very high and often unrealistic. We have been told this year that if we do not show major improvement, teachers and admin will be shuffled. We have already been trained by the best and our kids are still pretty low. The other issue I have is with the moving target on school grading. My school received a C 2 years ago, but 2 weeks later, the state changed it to a D. We worked so hard to get to that C just to have the state change the requirements of each letter grade.

*Jessica Fiveash, Weber School District*

I think we need to stop saying we will just need to do more for less.

*George Durfee, Alpine School District*

In order for students to succeed there needs to be more adults per student. The only way a class of 30 students with one teacher works is if every student has the same needs and that will never be a reality.

*Kristen Amber Holladay, Alpine School District*

Allocate more money to pay teachers so we retain them and reduce class sizes.

*Janel Tuckett, Alpine School District*

The class sizes are too large to teach what is expected.

*Suzanne Mackey, Canyons School District*

Grading schools for test scores is not OK!

*Allison Downs, Davis School District*

Special Education has been on the back burner long enough

*Kathleen Lamborn, Davis School District*

You make decisions thinking you know what's best for all the schools, students and teachers and you never even set foot in an actual classroom. You're looking at raw, often times incomplete data. Would you for one second think like educators instead of businessmen? Come and observe classes, think about everything you put on the shoulders of teachers and try to teach something rather than making laws and rules based on what you think is best?

*Maria Lee, Davis School District*
**Workload / Classroom Support**

Come to my classroom. See what I do.  
*Carol Madsen, Davis School District*

My students enjoy that I do not have them do their assignments using laptops or computers. They would rather do worksheets, assignments from the book, or hands-on activities. I am telling you this because the big push is for one-to-one technology in the classroom and the kids do not really like learning that way.  
*Troy Murray, Davis School District*

Teachers are the solution to education not the problem.  
*Diann Bowles, Granite School District*

I teach Kindergarten. Every day I come to work I feed my students two meals per day, check for properly clothed bodies, dry tears, watch for bruises of the body and the soul and address them appropriately...then teach. There is so much more to teaching a child than test results. Please remember that.  
*Charmaine Grimm, Granite School District*

Class sizes are way too large. Anything above 28 becomes crowd control, not teaching.  
*EllenMae Johnson, Granite School District*

Fund education.  
*Terry Huff, Jordan School District*

Teachers don't feel that they are respected. Teachers have the summer off and they get alot of vacation time in between. They don't relize what it is like being in the classroom.  
*George Duersch, Logan City School District*

There is such a disconnect between how they perceive the school and the reality of it. I want legislators to spend at least a week in schools with different SES, get to know students on individual basis, talk with teachers about their concerns and take them in considerations during the legislative sessions. They need to be realistic when it comes to the achievement expected outcomes of students with disabilities. They all make progress but it depends greatly on their cognitive issues, which need to be taking in consideration. One major benefit that decreases the gap between abled and disable students are the accommodations the IEP team decides the students need in the Gen Ed classroom. For example, if a student has difficulty with short term memory and recall of information, a calculator will help the student with math computation. If they understand specific math concepts, but never get the answer correct because they can't recall multiplication facts, they should be allowed to use the calculator during assessments. We are in the technology era, with any restrictions. Why can't these students use them? Why can't we do all we can to help them experience success? They spend so many hours practicing math facts, when they could participate in the learning process with their peers and feel successful. Great special education teachers and teachers in general leave the profession due to the pressure and high expectation mandated by our legislature, with minimal support coming from them.  
*Kathy Hanks, Murray City School District*

My classroom is unbearably cold Nov. -Mar & unbearably hot Aug., Sept & sometimes May. Help! High-stakes yearly testing is ruining education. Kids & teachers are totally stressed oit. It doesn't help guide teacher instruction.  
*Cindy Sumsion, Nebo School District*

Teachers are the professionals, yet legislators, administrators and parents (who believe the quick-fix ideas of legislators), are often the ones who determine how and what we teach. This is counterproductive. I believe that students would benefit if teachers were given much more discretion in the classroom, standardized testing was
Workload / Classroom Support

dramatically reduced or eliminated, and pay throughout educators (including administration) was much more equitably distributed.

Kerrie Anderson, Weber School District

Make students a priority! Make Education a priority. There's a reason we can't keep teachers and they go to other states to teach. We are burning out. Wake up!

Marie Christensen, Weber School District

Come and try teaching in my shoes for a week.

Carol Wheatley, Canyons School District

Being a teacher is a very important job. It takes a lot of time and effort to make sure every child is learning. I feel that I am accountable for too many students and feel that classroom sizes should be decreased in order to be an effective teacher. I spend most of my time devoted to getting lesson plans ready, correcting papers and time away from my family for the interest of my students. I also feel that I am spending more than I should out my own pocket monies to make my lessons engaging and helpful for students to do well on year end testing. There is so much pressure put on teachers to plan effective lessons, use resources that are not supported by the state or district and classroom sizes are too large.

Sonja Aoki, Granite School District

Depending on the area I am teaching in students either have school supplies or they do not because there is not enough money for me to spend as a teacher on my students supplies. I have 31 students in my classroom and in order for them to be successful and keep up with the curriculum and testing required of them, they need certain supplies. It is very expensive for me, on my own, to buy supplies for 31 students. I am lucky enough that my students parents are able to purchase their child's supplies. Whereas other schools families are unable to purchase their supplies, putting a financial strain on teachers. We need more money in order to encourage student-centered and hands on learning so our money is being spent on school supplies for science and math manipulative instead of purchasing pencils and notebooks.

Emily Atkinson, Granite School District

I (we) as teachers are always going above and beyond the a call of duty to help and support our students succeed. It seems that the legislators and the public (vocal) minority want to demonize and degrade teachers for not being perfect. Give the teachers the pay and the support that is needed to push to higher standards. Don't just legislate and make it harder for teachers to do their already complicated job.

David Jones, Nebo School District

We need smaller classes and higher pay to keep quality teachers. There are so many extra demands put on teachers too. It's hard to be a good spouse, parent, and teacher when all you do is go home and make sure everything is ready for school the next. There are way to many hoops to jump through. (Spend at least 2 hours a night thinking school) Trust us and let us do our job which is being the best teacher we can for our students.

LeighAnn Penrod, Nebo School District

So much of the money invested in education is not very helpful to improve student learning. Teachers are on the front lines and know what their students really need. Ask them!!!! There is Too Much Testing!!!!

JoAnn Hanson, Davis School District

Before any legislator is allowed a vote - 10 hours in an average school's average classroom

Julie D. Tarbet, Granite School District
Workload / Classroom Support

I am concerned about so much testing for the students. It takes a lot of time away from teaching. Also, I work with all the special ed teachers and they are buried in paperwork. One great teacher quit and went back into private practice because she missed spending time with the students. I am worried that many parents aren't teaching their children respect for education and teachers...which effects the classroom and society greatly.

Valerie K Thurnell, Wasatch County School District

My grandchildren have to walk 2 miles to elementary school and the district said they can't afford buses to transport them. Class sizes at all levels are too large to get a quality education. I have seen good teachers leave, almost every year I have taught, for better paying jobs. Computers for every student aren't always the answer. There is far too much time spent on testing, not just at the end of the year but all throughout the year.

Julie LaRocco, Davis School District

Time is essential to plan effective lessons. There is not enough paid time to do so. Teachers work extra unpaid hours. We need a better salary.

Janeth Paredes, Alpine School District

I went to school to help students to be better. Not just academically, but socially and behaviorally. It has been hard. With all the high stake testing, data collecting so that others outside of the profession can check up on me, and disrespect for teachers everywhere. Teachers are often thought up as baby sitters for their children and hopefully the student learns something. This is wrong. We have 4 year degrees and are dictated to continue our education. We are paid minimally and treated as to our pay. Parents and government do not treat us as professionals who went to school to learn how to teach. They think they know best. Behavior in the classroom has decreased over the year partly because of this disrespect. Why should the students listen, when lawmakers and parents are putting down the teacher? Skilled teachers are leaving the profession because they cannot support their own families on the pay that is offered them. I once heard in one of my college classes "I might as well try teaching, I failed my other classes". Is this the attitude we want our teachers in your child's school?

Linda Hunzeker, Davis School District

The more we prioritize standardized testing, the more we will facilitate a generation of great standardized test-takers who accomplish little else. It's not a coincidence that many great leaders were not stellar on their standardized test scores. We ought to get the idea: there are other things that are much, MUCH more important. But as long as we act like the test is most important, the harder it is for teachers to prioritize what really matters. We also need to take a look at Google and other companies: technology skills are not nearly as important as so called "soft" skills that are harder to quantify: communication, teamwork, persistence, grit, creativity, enthusiasm. THESE are what matters. And yet the money keeps going to standardized testing (and the parts of subjects that happen to be easy to create data from) and technology. It is so frustrating to be told to do things that are not in my students' best interests. It is so frustrating to see the money go to what doesn't matter.

Jon Midget, Davis School District

We spend so much time testing we don't have time to teach. A lot of that is Davis School district requirements.

Kristy Young, Davis School District

I volunteer 2 hours of my time at school planning, meetings, etc. and numerous hours at home doing school related activities. I'm under valued and over-worked! I appreciate the salary increase, but when will the extra hours be addressed?

Trinda Carlson, Granite School District

In my half day Kindergarten classes, I am expected to teach a full day of curriculum, while doing a great deal on one-on-one testing. I need more time to work with struggling and advanced students. Look at giving us full-time aides, decreasing testing, or making our day an hour longer!

Karen Haslam, Granite School District
Workload / Classroom Support

Teaching is more difficult than the average person understands. We are met with so many challenges, but are expected to meet very rigorous testing and expectations. We need to be valued by our legislators and we need to be valued by society so that we can be giving our students the best education. Investing in teachers means investing in our future!

Christar Krans, Jordan School District

I currently have 40 students in each English 11 class. I have a total of 210 students in MHS with many individual needs: SPED, 504s, and ESL/ELL needs. I am trying to prepare these students to take the ACT and do well. It is an impossible task.

Crystal Spackman, Murray City School District

I love teaching and I am a natural. I teach elementary school and know I make a big, positive impact on the lives of my students. I love them and they feel it. How do I know? I am invited to mission farewells, homecomings and weddings and am frequently greeted in public places with big hugs from former students. I become friends with many of their parents who seek out advice many years after I have taught their child. My test scores are good, I am beloved and I love teaching. I am also counting down the years (five first days left) until I retire. I always imagined age-related health issues would force me to retire, but I am in great health. I plan to leave teaching because the stress, needs & demands of teachers and students are too many. The expectations of a child have become too much for many of them to bear. My eight and nine year old students cry during testing because they do not understand what is expected or are unable to figure out how to use the mouse to accomplish the assigned task (click on, drag and drop dots and lines to demonstrate they understand perimeter or area.) Their little hands struggle to type essays, often about topics they do not fully comprehend like arboreums, culture museums or NASA careers. They have completed the 3rd grade Keyboarding curriculum and even spent many extra hours practicing, but they still have a hard time remembering how to capitalize letters or the difference between the available punctuation marks. They hunt for the letters asking, "Why aren't they in order?" They struggle to write using evidence from the articles provided without actually using the exact words. That is a lot to expect of an eight year old. Testing is too intense, too confusing and too overwhelming for too many of my students. I feel like I spend the entire year building relationships of trust and then end the year by subjecting them to hours of torture. I have eight-year-olds taking TUMS to survive the stomachache of testing. That is wrong. Third grade students need paper and pencil tests. The questions need to be more direct and age appropriate. We must reduce the hours spent on testing. Our current method of testing is killing their joy for learning and many teachers joy for teaching. Maybe with small classes and adequate support for the ever-increasing numbers of special needs students, the job would be "do-able." Right now, it is not. I am doing all that I can to make it possible for my students to succeed, but cannot keep up. The hours and expectations never fail to increase or intensify. I am one of your best teachers and am so worn out, I no longer WANT to teach. Who will replace me? The pay and benefits have never drawn people to teaching, but good retirement and health insurance benefits and “mom-friendly” hours helped compensate. Teachers could be home soon after their children returned from school, a draw for many women. Not anymore. Teaching is a full-time job with impossible demands and inadequate compensation. Multi-generational teacher families are telling their children not to teach. The decreased number of students entering education programs should tell you that society also views teaching as an undesirable profession. What are we going to do when the demands are so high, no one qualified will do it?

Michael-Ann McAfee, Nebo School District

As a teacher, there are some things that scare me about our current education system and the direction that we are headed. These concerns include 1. Teacher Shortage 2. Class sizes 3. High stakes testing requirements from the federal and state government 4. Teacher morale I watch my colleagues go home every night overworked, and underpaid. If we do not address our teachers and their support system I do not believe we can maintain a high standard of learning in Utah.

Ashley Davis, Ogden School District

The students are being tested to death! Let us get back to teaching!

Mary Beth Sheppard, Salt Lake City School District
Workload / Classroom Support

Our students deserve the very best we have to offer. After all, the kids I work with are only 9 and 10 years old. There have been so many things added to our plates, that it's no fun being a teacher anymore. Adults have polluted our schools, and ultimately it's our students who pay the price. I used to love being a teacher. I would wake up every morning looking forward to going to work. I'll continue to do my very best, because that's what my students deserve. However, I look forward to the day I can leave the profession. Hopefully legislatures will make decisions with our students in mind.

Steve Herrman, Alpine School District

Educators are leaving teaching because of poor pay, curriculum always changing (6th grade science), and class sizes are too high.

Kelley Tenney, Alpine School District

Talk to teachers in real classrooms about their needs and thoughts on education rather than listening to outsiders - outside of the teaching/education field

laurie brown, Davis School District

Don't mix public and private education. Get rid of SAGE testing - it is almost meaningless. Since students know the tests are meaningless to their grades - they simply don't care/the 'opt out/or they deliberately 'throw' the exams to punish teachers they don't like. They do NOT do what educators seem to think they do (rating schools/teachers). Just admit that if you don't have student accountability (grades)...you don't have a viable test.

Daniel Glad, Davis School District

I have only been teaching for 2 years and I have notice my class sizes go up, the demands go up, and the students motivation at home decrease, and a slight increase in salary. I do not believe students need iPads in second grade they need to learn to read, cut, and color, and how to communicate. They spend way to much time playing video games anyway. Students in grade school need to learn to socialize and not be on a computer. Other issues are my students are tested to death they are to young for all the testing.

Christina Torres, Granite School District

For the past 3 years I've had over 30 students in my classroom, one year 36. It is impossible to meet the needs of students academically with that many kids in the classroom. There is not enough text books, technology or time to even come close to meeting their needs. Teaching today is different than 20 years ago. Every year I have many students facing problems of homelessness, a parent in jail/prison, mental illness, abuse, suicide and often my main job is keeping these kids safe and help them navigate through very difficult circumstances. My frustration is that I am constantly barraged with mandates that make it almost impossible to teach. I spend more time testing, collecting data, retesting, trying to reach 33 students that I have no time to TEACH or plan effective instruction. In my current school the majority of teachers are burned out and do not enjoy coming to work, this is a sad state of affairs because these people are phenomenal teachers who have been overworked, underpaid, and undervalued. There is no other occupation where so much is given beyond what is required with little or no recognition. In fact, it's almost to the point where it is expected. We do what we do because we want to help students, however, at some point enough is enough.

Cindy Anderson, Jordan School District

Reduce testing so teachers have more time to teach.

Laurie Hamblin, Jordan School District

Please just let me teach! Forget DATA!!!! My students are not just numbers on a wall. Reduce standardized testing! I have had to cut out so much of my fun lessons because there is no time for them anymore. Treat us like professionals because we are. Don't tell us we're doing great when we have so little. Give us more and let us do more. Keep class sizes low and add aides to every room! Thank us with words, but also with bonuses. Give
elementary teachers that teach all subjects those same STEM based bonuses that secondary teachers get. Come walk in my shoes for a few days and see what teaching is really all about!

Lynece Rowntree, Jordan School District

I feel that having severe SpEd students who continuously wander the halls creating distractions and disruptions for the main stream students should be addressed. We have three students that walk the halls ALL day long with aids because their disability is too severe for them to remain in a classroom. These students run in and out of classrooms, we have one who is a male student that keeps running into the girls locker room while girls are getting dressed. This student has injured teachers and aids because of his behavioral issues. The three of the students create major distractions and disruptions in ALL other classes throughout the day. Why do we not have a school specifically for their needs. We have to put the classes, office and bathrooms on lockdown because one of these students is out of control. Why should the entire school be locked down for one student who is out of control. The safety of other students and faculty is compromised because of these students.

Denise Howard, Salt Lake City School District

Teaching is an art- Many legislators have multiple children and understand that a standard 'do XYZ and you'll have the result you want' approach doesn't work for parenting like it does in manufacturing because children are people. Most people can remember a person or two that was able to give them a little extra attention and it was a game changer for them. As a teacher, I have 274 students this year and I do my best, but my time is so spread out that giving the kids the individual attention that really makes a difference is increasingly difficult. I still make a difference with a 1:274 ratio, but not what I could if it were 1:200 or even 1:150 ratio. We have been out of state to look at other, fantastically performing schools. None of them has ever had a teacher with more than 125 students to care for. If you could help work toward that, or at least give us props for doing what we do with double+ that number, it would go a long way. Thanks!

Bryce Shelley, Alpine School District

I believe teachers want to be successful at their jobs. They care for their students and work incredibly hard, but it is becoming increasingly impossible to meet the demands of teaching. In addition, to district and state mandates, there are more and more students with extreme behavioral issues. It is often beneficial for these students to be in a neighborhood school but we have not changed the way we do business. Schools are severely understaffed in the area of psychologists and social workers so general education teachers and special education teachers are expected to take care of behavior problems often at the expense of other students. Add to this constantly changing curriculum and programs , too much information to teach and test, too large of class size, and inadequate planning and paperwork time and you can see the reason for teachers leaving the profession.

Shanan DeVries, Granite School District

Teacher morale is at an all-time low. More is expected every year without additional support. In fact, most years we have lost support or funding that we had previously had. Students with serious issues are not getting help because schools "over qualify" students. I don't feel that it is ethical to base student support on a bell curve. If a student needs help, they should be able to receive services regardless of how many other students at that school are also receiving services. Class sizes are too large for the amount of behavior problems prevalent, making it impossible to effectively teach the content required. This is leading teachers to leave the profession altogether. It is not a matter of east/ west side schools, it is a problem everywhere. Too much emphasis is placed on testing at the end of the year. Tests are only one measure for student achievement, yet everything counts on it. It affects students and teachers alike. This is the only thing that isn't being changed about the school system, but it needs to be changed the most. There is no reason to base the accountability of an entire year on a single test.

Elaine Johnson, Granite School District

With class sizes so large the quality of teaching is lessened per student

Dirk W. Menzel, Granite School District
Workload / Classroom Support

Give me time to teach!

Connie Kawala, Alpine School District

PLEASE - consider kindergarten when you are planning state tests. If you are requiring state testing for kindergarten, then we need support -- small class sizes (30 SHOULD NEVER BE ALLOWED - I HAVE HAD 33 IN A CLASSROOM BEFORE ------- THAT JUST BECOMES CROWD CONTROL AND BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT EVERY DAY). We need all day kindergarten and teacher aides. If they want us to meet all the standards that are required, WE NEED THE SUPPORT.

Denise Lindberg, Alpine School District

The amount of oversight and lack of respect is disheartening. We are trained, dedicated professionals -- treat us as such. We are given too many kids and expected to work miracles. We are only capable of so much and to be constantly berated is so discouraging. I grieve for what I cannot do for each of my kids with the time I have with them. Accept that we can't fix everything and we do the very best we can for all of our children. We want all our children to grow during the year, but realize that each child grows at their own rate/potential. To expect every child to "pass" at a certain rate is a disservice to the children who do the very best they can but don't quite make the cut. Celebrate the growth they've made instead of criticizing them as not good enough.

Kimberly Hawvermale, Alpine School District

If their continued employment/probation/interventions were based on a written test, how would they feel about it and what would they do about it . . .

Chad Hawkes, Cache County School District

Stop putting so much emphasis on testing and test scores. We need to return to developmentally appropriate practices and curriculum. Put some responsibility back on to the parents. The school system can not do it all. Reduce class sizes and treat teachers with respect. We are college educated professionals and should be treated as such.

Emily Jensen, Davis School District

I think that to attract and retain quality teachers we need to pay them well and give them class sizes that enable their very best teaching. Smaller class sizes lead to more individual attention and intervention time. Often, we are told about a new teaching strategy or management tool that is working somewhere else. We then watch the video and see how amazing the tool is. Then, we count the children in the master teachers class. Typically they have 18-22 students maximum. I have been teaching third grade for 20 years in Davis District and have 28-32 students each year. I think smaller class sizes would cause teachers in Utah to be more successful. Meaning, we would feel that we are really able to reach every student with what they need. This leads to job satisfaction and coupled with a salary that supports our families we would be fulfilled, driven, content, excited employees. This is the best profession there is! Now pay us enough and set us up for success. We are ready to shape the future. Help us, and it will be beautiful.

Deborah Sheffield, Davis School District

I think that it is important that aides in the schools be paid more. They are a very important part of the schools and it is difficult to find people to do this job because of poor pay and no time to instruct them how to work with children with specific needs. Or class sizes are to large and it is difficult to teach when we are required to do so much testing. Teachers need to teach more and test less. We need more social workers in our schools to help address behavior problems. Our class sizes are overwhelming. a

Leslie Archer, Granite School District

Disruptive students/unstable families make it increasingly more difficult to teach when resources aren't there to help students adjust/learn coping skills. We had to share our psychologist with THREE other schools last year and this year WE DON'T HAVE ONE AT ALL! No social workers two days a week and when do you think kids flip out/run away etc? Its when nobody is around to help. Teaching isn't possible when these situations arise.

Julie Down, Granite School District
Workload / Classroom Support

Come to one classroom for the day & teach without lesson plans!  

_Bonnie Hall, Granite School District_

I would like to invite them to work with me for a day! I think all of them would have a very different perspective if they spent a day in the classroom!  

_Ashley Raines-Parshall, Jordan School District_

I wish that our legislator would come in the classroom to teach a lesson to the students so they could see what it is like to be a teacher.  

_Kerri Reyes, Jordan School District_

I have had large classes (27-31) for several years now in my favorite class of 5th grade. There is so much required of me that is extra stressful because of being responsible for so many students.  

_Cathy Sandberg, Jordan School District_

Find something other than Common Core to hold students accountable  

_Sheri Rivera, Nebo School District_

I feel that I don't have enough time in a day to address the needs of each of my students. Also, there is much anxiety due to testing.  

_Bernard Rizzotto, Park City School District_

Support our public schools  

_Nikki Hill, Weber School District_

Merit Pay would not be benefit students, it would just create difficulties with the teachers not sharing, and teaching should foremost be a sharing environment to benefit all of the students. Paying teachers for students doing well on tests is not helpful. Take the merit pay money and put it towards professional development for teachers to attend such as ideas of how to improve their teaching and intervention strategies that would work to help students would be more beneficial to students and teachers.  

_Nicole Neal, Weber School District_

Any additional funding education can receive would not be wasted. I see dedicated teachers sacrifice large amounts of their own time and resources only to be made to feel they're not doing enough because an unreliable standardized testing system tells them so. Utah's Education could benefit greatly first from giving teachers a salary that compensates all they sacrifice, and next by funding greater technology and resources for the classroom. Teachers will be more energized to do the best job possible when they have less financial strain to deal with.  

_Sarah Martins, Alpine School District_

If I could share one message with legislators it would be to put your feelings and biases towards public education to the side and focus on the wonderful children/students of our state. Be more supportive and less critical of teachers. Many times, our hands are tied and we are doing the best that we can. Our voices often go unheard, but as some of the people who have entrusted our vote to you, it is your job to represent our voices instead of special interest groups. There are no perfect teachers or parents or legislators for that matter, so let's work together instead of against each other in doing what's best for the children of our state. Also, I would like to thank those legislators that support teachers. They are those legislators who know that teachers didn't go into teaching for the money. We are here to provide our students with the best quality education that we can give. We have no ulterior motives other than to see our students' smiling faces each and every day. When we feel valued as professionals in education, it encourages us to do our very best. And when I say professionals, we have earned that right by earning a degree in education which should be a fundamental requirement in any society. So, thank you for your monetary and emotional support. ??
Workload / Classroom Support

Kammy Hanson, Davis School District

Stop micromanaging education and trust paid professional teachers to improve education.

Clair Schenk, Box Elder School District

Legislators, I LOVE teaching, but I am increasingly losing the joy in my profession. Maybe it's my district and it's emphasis on one curriculum, or the SAGE-type testing at the end of the year, or the increasing mental-health needs of the students in my classroom? Maybe it's the way my salary increases are eaten away by healthcare costs and premiums? Maybe it's feeling like there's no one REALLY listening to my concerns? Let me have a voice. Let me help inform you about what is happening in today's classrooms. Let me help you affect positive change in policy. Let me help you understand the value of increasing your investing in public education. Thank you!

Jen Buttars, Canyons School District

I would like to share that teachers are everyday heroes that deserve the same respect as fire fighters and the police. We are the people that meet with the children on a daily basis when it isn't an emergency and try to keep the students from ever needing to be seen by a law enforcement official or a first responder. This is not as glamorous, but every bit as needful. We are on the front lines trying to get every child to read so they don't become a statistic like the kids that can't read have a greater chance of being arrested and spending time in jail. Thank You for recognizing the importance of what we do and funding it adequately so that we can do our job to help each Utah student be as successful as possible.

Wendi McCloy, Davis School District

Students are currently required to complete multiple test in which the teacher is held accountable for. This includes students that have behavior issues, SPED students that do not understand the information as the material is above their level of understanding, and those students that simply do not care to take the test. While I believe that teachers should be held accountable for the progress made by their students it should be the progress made by the student compared to the same student, not progress made compared to a student from a previous year or even a different student in the same year. Each child learns at their own pace and a teacher can and should help increase knowledge and therefore the student will progress, but compared to where they began.

Dawn Christensen, Granite School District

I have always been passionate about educating children and so when all of my children had grown I decided after pondering the idea for many months that I would teach 5th grade. It is my first year teaching and I am turning 50 this year so I have a different perspective than the average brand new teacher. I spent years helping in each of my four children's classrooms, being a room mom, and always serving on the PTA. I worked as a substitute teacher, Reading Tech at a Title One school, however, nothing prepared me for how difficult it would be teaching full time. I have been blown away by the amount of time it takes to plan lessons for my students. The amount of time it takes to correct papers, the amount of personal money I have had to spend to make sure great learning takes place in my classroom. Teaching is exhausting when your students walk out the door, but then they are hours left in the day to plan lessons, set up the lesson and find ways so that each child can learn something even though each student is uniquely different. I had never fully appreciated how hard a teacher works until I became one myself. I didn't understand the tremendous pressure they were under because of all of the tests that they need to administer to their students and how pretty much everything we do for each moment of the day is tied to a standard and is pertinent that each of our students learn and do well on their tests. It is challenging at best to teach students on grade level, but in my class, I have 6 students who go to Resource just in my class and I have students who range in grade level from 2 grade to 9th grade and they are all expected to take the same tests. I feel like it is expected to teach to my children so that they can do well on a test and not how they can best learn. Every student is learning different and at different grade levels though each student is required to take the same test. I don't understand how this even makes logical sense. I feel like my students are completely burned out based on how many tests that they have to take. I feel like the workload that is required for a teacher to be successful is placed way too high. I am a hard worker and I spend countless hours so my students can have the best opportunity to learn in a way that is both challenging and fun as I
believe that learning can be fun. However, with all of the tests that a teacher needs to administer it certainly takes the fun out of learning and add unneeded stress to each student. I left a management job where I was being paid over 20 thousand more a year and I was not working any overtime and did this because of my love of teaching. Most people thought I was crazy but I wanted to do a job I was passionate about and that was teaching. I love helping children learn, but teaching should not require these many unpaid hours, and require that I spend my own personal money in order to ensure that my students have the best education. If it wasn't for my love of teaching I would immediately go back to my other job. I feel like teachers are not valued as they should be and are not given adequate compensation for all of the additional hours that they work. I can now understand why there is a teacher shortage and I realize this problem will continue to get worse unless we value educators much more and provide the additional resources they need to be successfully and so they don't have to break the bank.

Cami Vail, Jordan School District

Go to schools - not the districts - to find out what is really going on - get your hands dirty

Dana McConnell, Washington County School District

First of all, I am concerned and frustrated with all the testing we have to administer to our students. We are testing more than we ever did. While collecting data is important, instruction is critical for the students to be successful with evaluations. Second: our supply money for ink, materials, etc. is insufficient for the needs of our students. If we continue to cut the budget, our students and their ability to progress will suffer, which means we will suffer in the long run. We must remember that these children will be our leaders of tomorrow.

Teresa Brewer, Weber School District

Continue to reduce the emphasis on testing. Students, parents, and educators are tired of mandated testing that takes time away from instruction and learning. Time to teach and time to learn are vital to the educational growth of our students. School is not fun or engaging for students when we emphasize the test and not critical thinking and real life applications.

Don Paver, Davis School District

I am a mother of a child with special needs and a special education teacher. My child is considered a mild/moderate student. She struggles with school on a daily bases. There is rare chances for her to feel successful and enjoy school as she gets older. She is currently in 7th grade and she knows she is behind all the other students. She hides her school work from me because she does not understand it and feels embarrassed. She is not the only student who does this. I also run a parent support group monthly to talk about our students struggles and parents are feeling this across the board. In middle school they are expected to sit in a general education classroom for math and reading with peers who are a lot higher than them. They feel humiliated most of the time. Then instead of going to an elective class, which is a chance for them to feel successful, they are told they have to do ANOTHER math and reading class because they are too low and need the extra time. Why can't they have just a reading and math class that is geared toward the struggling students so they can not miss the one opportunity they have to feel successful. I am very frustrated and I speak on behalf of many, many parents and students. We need real solutions to meet or special education students. We need real testing solutions for them so they don't dread the test but feel excited to see themselves grow. We need real solutions so they don't drop out of school.

Jennifer Shepherd, Washington County School District

It's time to take educating our children seriously and it's time to realize that teaching is a profession. Having teachers take more tests to prove they are professional has not improved the quality of teachers nor has it improved the pay for teachers as people thought it would if we took tests like nurses, lawyers, and doctors. We work the same number of hours, deal with similar if not more stressors, and still our pay is not equal to many professions that require the same degree of education or less. Legislators have got to realize that not everyone can teach because right now, not enough people are choosing to teach, because we don't value those who can.

Melissa Allmon, Alpine School District
I'm having a hard time enticing competent people to choose teaching as a profession. Several alternate-route-to-licensure candidates are about to quit. This is becoming a high-stress job (with increased emphasis on standardized testing) that does not offer the respect of pay commensurate with that kind of stress.

Aimee Anderson, Davis School District

I have taught at the same at-risk school for 26 years. I am passionate about teaching my students that they can be successful. It seems that my passion for teaching is often at odds with your desired outcome. I love the Core. I believe it teaches thinking and problem solving. I am not loving that I now do more non-teaching activities during my prep and home time. There are too many hoops that need to be jumped. This is a trickle down process that starts at the legislature. I am a professional who knows her stuff. I know how to get kids to see success and be successful. I resent being told by those who do not teach, how to teach and what success is. I resent being told that my time is not valuable. I resent being told that any person on the street can be a teacher without training. This devalues the time and effort I have given to this profession. I had planned on teaching for forty years. I am not sure I will be able to handle the lack of respect and consideration for another fourteen years.

Kimberly Harmon, Davis School District

The public education system is dying. We have neglected it so long that that we as citizens are lucky that it is still intact. We are losing teachers at such an alarming rate and if we are not careful the education system will crumble right before our eyes. Please invest in education, by decreasing the work of teachers and giving them implement time, giving us other school staff a live-able wage. Please look at how you are compensating teachers. I work in a low income area with students with severe Autism. My students make progress much differently than others and I fear that merit based pay will only stack high quality teachers in more affluent areas with students without exceptional needs. Please look at laws that protect special education teachers. I have had multiple head injuries and a broken bone from school and that's not to include the daily bumps and bruising. Provide money for protective equipment. I shouldn't have to fight for my right to work in a safe place. Before you make another law in education, spend some time in the schools. I am frustrated that those making the judgement calls have never walked a day in our shoes. Please treat us as respected citizens of society and not a fall back career. If you want the state of Utah to succeed in the future then you must invest in it, by decreasing class sizes, giving us implementation time, and letting us decide what is important to teach. Stop standardized testing, it is so very harmful to our education system in so many ways. Take a good look at Finland's education system and find ways to go in that direction.

Camille Gregory, Granite School District

As a speech/language pathologist working in the schools, I see a lot of wasted time for testing. The results on some of the testing is not timely enough to provide needed feedback and many tests are taking precious instruction/reinstruction time away from students. Many of my scheduled times for meeting with students are interrupted during these mandatory tests that come from the state school board. They are irrelevant to many special education students and cause undue anxiety. And now that these tests are online, if there is a "glitch" in the system, even more time is wasted. Testing needs to be back in the hands of the teachers and schools that work most directly with their community of students and are most familiar with their needs. A "cookie cutter" approach is not working.

Noel Lee, Granite School District

Give me a reason to stay in this profession. Please. Granted, I made the wrong choice and choose elementary education. I should have chosen Math, Science, or some other STEM subject in a secondary setting. Had I done so I could have loans forgiven. To add insult to injury I finished my degree to be 'highly qualified' and I have the student loans that go along with the process. Now someone can walk in and teach in a classroom without being 'highly qualified'. Could I please be reimbursed for the money I spent at university to fulfill the old standard? Also, the only way to increase your salary is by putting in time (years and lanes) or getting out of the classroom. Isn't it ironic that you are dealing with a teacher shortage and the structure encourages good teachers to get out of the classroom. You want more STEM in education. Why pursue a higher degree in education when, according to the very same
argument we give students for pursuing STEM education, a teacher could retool themselves for a new career that has all of the benefits of a ‘real job’?

Ray Sahagun, Iron County School District

I have been teaching for 16 years. I love my profession. However, I can see why we are having the lack of teachers coming into and staying in our profession. The lack of pay and the amount of requirements we are required to do isn't worth it to many. I am all about raising expectations and giving students a quality education, but expectations and requirements need to be realistic. If you want to attract and keep quality teachers...make the profession more attractive. Society has changed, therefore, changing some of the student behaviors we experience in classrooms. That alone makes teaching more difficult than it used to be 10 years ago. Teaching has shifted to data driven based on assessing. I have no problem assessing and analyzing the data, but there is a point when it starts to effect the amount of time you actually have to give instruction. It sometimes feels like assessing is the only thing you doing. It's getting to the point that it's taking out the enjoyment of learning and teaching.

Emily Farr, Weber School District

I teach at a school that is the most economically challanged in my District. We are the oranges among the many schools of apples. Our school is ranked high among Title 1 schools, but average when compared with the apple (non-Title 1 schools). We (the teachers and staff) work very hard to help each child grow and improve both academically and socially. We work very hard. It is frustrating to have those who make decisions for us (the legislature) not think we are doing our best. We are always learning and growing in our own field to improve, but testing doesn't show the great growth some students actually achieved during that year. Testing doesn't always show the great amount of teacher effort to help each and every student. It would be wonderful to have good faith in teachers to express knowledge and gratitude for working so very hard. Greater compensation would be nice and certainly more help (volunteers) would be welcome. However, our number one concern is helping each child learn.

Stacey Hawkes, Alpine School District

I have taught for 33 years. The students have more problems now. They have so many issues with home and family. Behavior has become a greater issue and more difficult to control. Teachers are held to a high standard, which they should be, for testing scores. However, students and parents do not have the same high standards. I would like to see students and parents have some kind of accountability for SAGE testing other than just opting their students out of the test. Teachers can be the very best and still have students who just click the buttons on Benchmark tests and SAGE tests. We cannot reward or punish students for test scores. It is difficult to motivate students to do their best, when there is no incentive. Yet, teachers are told that we will not get increased pay if our students do not perform well.

Michelle Hanson, Granite School District

We are drowning in senseless meetings and paper work. We need time to help our students, not the bureaucracy.

Suzie Michaels, Granite School District

I am a Special Education teacher of 16 years. My priority is with my students. I struggle every year seeing high school age kids struggle to read on grade level. My biggest frustration is that I do not have enough time to truly help them, because of the demand of paperwork that is required of me. This is not only Special Ed paper work, but PLC required paperwork. I am not opposed to change, and appreciate the efforts that are being made to better education for students. However, I do not see a point, when we do not have the time to truly study, prepare, and implement these new ideas. I feel the decisions are made on for teachers by people who have no idea the amount of time it takes to teach. I would like to propose extra paid time each day for teachers to prepare and work with students. I would also like to see Special Education departments in each school get funding for a secretary to help file, schedule, and arrange meeting, so that teachers can teach.

Alison Lavery, Jordan School District

Students are not a product but people; and funding, incentives, collaboration, and planning needs to reflect that.
Lack of qualified paraprofessionals in the special education classroom.

The last few years at my school, we have had a revolving door of teachers. They are well-qualified, well-trained, fantastic teachers. They left for salary increase in other districts or they left the profession all together due to stress. It is hard to hold on to the quality teachers. Teacher burn out is a real thing. We need to fix the problems that are causing new teachers to leave the profession or go to Charter schools. We need them in regular public schools. Our students need the best. I know teacher burn out is a real thing. If I wasn't where I am in my career, I would consider moving to another field. Teaching is exhausting on its own, but you throw in everything else we have to do and the pressures we are under, and it is down right horrible, to the point of a mental breakdown.

Teaching 4 different lab based science classes, makes it very difficult to disaggregate data generated through tests and collaborate effectively with teachers in my school teaching the same subject, much less peers more than 20 feet away from my classroom. Attempting to prepare lessons, lab activities and stay caught up with grading is impossible without devoting 5 hours a day out side of class every day including weekends.

Teachers have one of the most important jobs in the country, yet we are treated like dirt by the legislatures on a national, state, and local scale. Funding continues to be cut, student achievement drops, and more and more teachers are leaving the profession because we cannot offer them anything more than a life of stress and politics. We have test scores shoved down our throats and are told we are not successful based on those scores, but then are told that we need to do what our students need. We are threatened with our job security if our students don't perform on high-stakes tests, yet we are told not to teach to it. The only good thing about education is the kids, and that is putting it in the most positive terms that I can. I am sick and tired of having nothing but bad news from my administration, and told that I am a bad teacher because my students can't pass a test that was created for high-income, achieving students, and doesn't take into account the majority of the students who actually come through our public school system. When I have children, I will not put them through the disaster that is the public school system in America. That is the impact this profession has had on me as a teacher.

I moved from Ogden SD this year to Weber SD due to a lack of teacher support. Ogden provided some amazing training for my first 3 years, but they were not kind or fair to me or the other teachers. SUPPORT does not necessarily mean more training- it means listening to sides, sharing feedback and ideas, training when necessary to make the necessary changes, etc. It does not seem as though Weber has as much training (perhaps because I am not a "new" teacher) but they do seem to have the SUPPORT so often lacking. My administration is approachable and fair. The expectations for teachers are obtainable. The focus is on student learning- not just on testing. I am happy where I am, and hope that Weber does not slide down the unhappy slope that Ogden was going. Education is a job we take out of love... I nearly lost that and am happy to have found it again.

Students matter more than test scores. I teach ALL students. As educators we don't get to hand pick our students. Our students come to us as they are. Many are hungry or from broken homes. Many that didn't have anywhere to sleep last night. Our job is to educate the whole child not just prep them for testing.

If we can stop the schools are broken stance and instead be dazzled that they work at all considering the size of the task, we might be able to tweak a few things here and there instead of lurching from one fix-all to another with no measurable, positive results, ever.
Workload / Classroom Support

Liz Sharp, Davis School District

We focus so much on teacher accountability and school accountability, but what about parents being held accountable? I can only teach the students that come to school and stay all day. Merit pay and testing doesn't take any of that into account.

Michele Van Dyke, Davis School District

We are testing students too much. Because of the amount of testing, they have stopped taking tests seriously and are burned out by the time end of the year testing comes up. Because of the pressure to have students ready for the high stakes test, the fun experiments and learning activities have been removed from our students' educational experience. It's no wonder why students drop out in high school. We have increased pressure on students and teachers alike. I've talked to many people who wanted to become teachers at one point in their lives. Because of the increased requirements for teachers and the decrease of other educational activities, they have changed their minds about their career. That's very unfortunate!

Savannah Mieure, Duchesne County School District

I think that teachers are burnt out and the legislative mandates and push for more and more testing is pushing us away.

Andrew Gee, Granite School District

Enough with the punitive efforts to punish educators. We are undervalued and constantly asked to do more and more with no incentive. I hate my job today because of the way I am treated. I used to feel valued and not I feel nothing we do is ever good enough.

Carol Overson, Granite School District

I have been a kindergarten teacher for over 20 years. This year has been by far the worst year in regard to respect for teachers. My workload is unbearable with very little support in the classroom and now the state has come out with an impossible kindergarten test. Not only will it take from instruction time but will provide me with very little information that I didn't already know. The test is estimated to take 30 minutes per child and only the kindergarten teacher can administer the test. I have 45 students. This will take approximately 23 hours of instruction time to give.

Carrie Christensen, North Sanpete School District

I spend extra hours daily in study, preparation, and training opportunities to improve my craft. I spend my own money buying items for my middle school science class. It seems that there is never enough funding to do great hands-on science activities. I also am constantly worried about the success of my low social economic student population, who have not learned the value of a good education. I frequently receive unfriendly E-mails from parents who can't understand why their child can't get a free ride. I feel it is my duty to give the students of my classes opportunities to grow and become well-rounded scientific minded citizens that can make a positive difference to themselves and the people in their lives. The things that I need to do this are: 1. Solid training. I went to a state funded science training this year that was ill prepared and didn't have any opportunity for teachers to experience the new technology or hands-on experiences. 2. A solid understanding of what the sage test will look like to prepare and give my students opportunities to be successful. I feel I miss the mark every year. 3. I need the proper technology, up-dated equipment, and supplies to create well-planned learning opportunities. 3. I need to know that I will be paid well and will have opportunities to get raises. I believe that merit pay creates a competitive and not a collaborative environment amongst educators. 5. I need good insurance so I can stay healthy while doing such a stressful job. 6. I am ok with the size of classes I have if I could get a technician to help set-up the experiment for my next class that will begin in 4 minutes. 7. It would be nice to have one bathroom break in day and a lunchtime that was longer than 20 minutes. I believe in education and I want to leave a mark of excellence in this little part of the world I am teaching in and I believe that you want to do the same. When you are discussing issues, please always put the rising generation of this state in the forefront of all discussions.

Doni Bufton, Nebo School District
As an early childhood educator, I have witnessed a "push-down" of academic expectations. Our system has ignored the vast knowledge we have of child development and we are expecting young children to perform academically above their capabilities. I have witnessed students shutting down and becoming negative towards school in kindergarten and 1st grade because the expectations are unattainable for them. We need to reevaluate the core as written and use research based knowledge to determine best practices for early learners.

Connie Sorensen, Other

I have worked in a very high impact school and as a teacher it was so stressful and frightening with with parents. I was not treated as a professional and told what to do and how to do everything. I am now in a school that is not Title 1, they do not have the resources to help teach students. They need more money for technology or even the simple math manipulations. I am treated more like a professional and given more freedom to teach the way I feel best for my students. I care about my students and not just test scores. Therefore, I will do whatever I need to help them. Treat teachers like the professionals that they are.

Charlotte Hart, Provo City School District

Quality teachers matter!

Richard Magley, Salt Lake City School District

Kindergarten has been described as the new 1st grade and our youngest learners are required to know and be able to do a lot and most rise to this challenge with amazing success! As a teacher of 46 5 and 6 year olds most days are really great but a lot of days are extremely exhausting! The exhaustion comes from keeping up with assessments of 46 students to ensure learning is happening, material preparation for 46 students, as well as trying to meet the individual needs of each student through small group interventions or use of technology or implementations of RTIs for various students, and the list goes on. One thing new this year we have been asked to administer the KEEP assessment. It took me a solid 3 days at the beginning of the year to administer this test and several more hours at home on my own time to input the results into the computer system. I recently looked over the end of year KEEP. I am not worried about the content of the test or whether my students will do well on it, they will. What frustrates me is that we are asked to do this but given no realistic plan on how to make this happen. I am teaching people! This assessment if I were to administer it as designed would take me at least 25-30 min a student! There will also be a handful of hours spent inputting the data results into the computer after on my own time after school hours. I am never not tired and overwhelmed in this profession. I have been teaching for 12 years and am seriously considering a job change this coming year as I just cannot physically or emotionally keep up with what we are asked to do in such a way I know I am doing my best! There are plenty of teachers who do just enough to get by and I am just not a person who is okay with just getting by.

Cami Argyle, Weber School District

I LOVE teaching second grade. It is my passion. It is my calling. I'm good at it too. Children who come to me already not liking school, learn to love school. What I would love to do, is teach. I don't want to fill out forms, test children to tears, etc. I am fine showing that my students make growth. However, I am not okay adding more testing, more ‘data collection’ to their workload or my own. I feel that teachers have become vilified. There are some "bad apples" in education, as there are in ANY profession. However, I think you will find the majority of teachers teach because they LOVE it! They love inspiring children, they love opening children's eyes to a new concept or way of thinking, they love making a difference. I really wish the legislature would focus on way to SUPPORT teachers so we can better support our students. I wish the legislators saw teachers are caring professionals who work so hard to make a difference instead of how we are often portrayed.

Stephanie Liechty, Weber School District

I teach special education and I feel like I burn the candle at both ends to be able to keep up with the paper work that I am required to do and also focus on what my students need. I feel like more and more energy is being given to the
Workload / Classroom Support

“paper work” side of my job and testing my students as opposed to teaching my students. This is NOT how it should be and it’s hurting my students

Shelese Stansfield, Weber School District

I am an adapted physical educator. The high school I teach at has a Unified Sports program (peers and student athletes with disabilities learning, practicing and competing in tournaments together). This program is very successful as all of our students become so involved in activities both during school and after school hours. Cooperation, friendship and teamwork as well as sportsmanship during competition are emphasized. All students grow personally as well as physically.

Julie Hines, Alpine School District

Being a teacher in public schools since I began my career in 1987 has been an amazing and difficult and wonderful experience. It’s an honor to lead youth, to help them grow, and to hopefully be a positive impact in their lives. The challenges today are more difficult because we are required to do so much more, with so much less money, and the support from parents and society in general is just not what it used to be. The respect for the profession has diminished. This is partially due to the level of professionalism displayed by teachers. I don't want to sound like a complainer, but you get what you pay for. A lot of my sharpest students would never consider teaching as a profession. Some of the student teachers I have mentored through the years did not demonstrate passion for teaching or for the youth. Let's make teaching a highly respected and sought after career again! Put a high value on amazing educators! Find a way to attract the best and retain them with fair salaries and fair expectations, lots of support and Utah Schools will continue to be excellent. If not, the only ones you'll get to do this job will be desperate, unmotivated people who are only in it because they think they get their summer off.

Kimberly Sorensen, Cache County School District

If education is as important as people think it is, there should be more money allotted to make class sizes smaller and pay educators more money to keep good teachers around. I spend at least 10 hours each day at my school, then I spend about 2-4 hours more, each night, working on school things. It's exhausting and I'm burnt out! This is my 23rd year of teaching, and it's not getting any easier. Although I put a lot of pressure on myself, it seems like educators are being required to do more and more every year.

Jodi Andre, Davis School District

I love teaching, I love working with students. But, I wish it was that easy. I work very hard to plan and make sure all their needs are met. I put in two extra hours of my own, unpaid time, everyday. Plus, I take work home over the weekend and I still feel like I can't get it all done. I have used a lot of my own money and resources on my classroom and students. I have a lot of behavior problems with students stemming from home or parental problems. I spend so much time disciplining and parenting students, that I can't get any instruction time in. I have 4 students that have already had over 14 absences and it's just the second term. It gets really depressing when I see other professions (same amount of education) put in less time and less stress and get paid a lot more. It's no wonder teachers are leaving the profession. Our brains tell us it is not worth it, but our hearts tell us the students are worth it. It's an internal battle that each teacher has to face and make decisions. It's a slap in the face when they hire people without teaching degrees, and I'm expected to teach and help them without any extra pay. I have been observed during snack time when I taught Kindergarten, and got marked down for not using technology. I have been marked down for not having my daily objectives listed, when in reality they were on the white board behind my principal giving the observation. I have been observed during a Valentines party and got marked down for not assessing and explicitly teaching. I got marked down for having garbage on the floor on another observation, and the students were cutting out word sorts. There is no place for the educator to write their thoughts or opinions, or defend what was really going on. We just get marked down and it makes our averages drop. There are a lot of things they can do differently on the observations to make them more valid and fair.

Susan Horning, Davis School District

We need to show how much being an educator is valued by respecting teacher demands.
Workload / Classroom Support

Megan Porer, Davis School District

Students deserve to have veteran teachers instruct them in a smaller class size, up-to-date materials and technology. I have 39 students in a class, no new textbooks, and not enough time in the day to grade papers, build my curriculum, consult with teachers from my department, mentor new teachers, and write emails, or make phone calls home. I have been teaching for over two decades and have worked with about 25 new teachers in my field. This revolving door in our profession only harms students and puts such burdens on the teachers that continue year after year. Please consider lowering our class sizes, give us up-to-date materials, pay teachers or give bonus money to those outstanding in our field, and stop giving the Public Education money to Charter Schools that do not have the same strict guidelines to follow. Thank you.

Susie Myers, Granite School District

Something needs to be done to help increase teacher morale. Teachers are very highly educated, yet are treated like we are uneducated. Society cannot function without teachers, and they need to be treated that way. This would do a lot to help with the teacher shortage that we are dealing with. Privatizing education or giving more money towards charter schools is not the answer. The education budget needs to be spent on finding the most qualified teachers who have a passion for education and who are willing to stay in the profession. Public school teachers are teaching the future leaders of this state and country. Supports are needed in classrooms, not just in increased funding and decreased class sizes, but also with increased funding for classroom aides.

Emily Saltas, Granite School District

The demands on teachers today are outrageous! No one can possibly do all that teachers are asked to do. It is not humanly possible. No wonder teachers are getting burned out and are leaving the profession. Make fewer demands, and allow us to simply teach.

Joan Thompson-Harris, Granite School District

Please come spend a week in any classroom. Please come see the day-to-day intricacies of our day and then see how it compares to what you felt before. See how many of our students depend on school for a hot meal, for TLC, and for so many other critical survival components on top of the educational ones we also provide. Please spend more than an hour or even a day. Then go back and decide how best to serve our student populations and our future caretakers.

Sarai T Memmott, Nebo School District

In the community I teach in...(inner city schools) we are the life line for their total education...You can hardly put a price on that...but good teachers are leaving because they can't meet their own financial obligations. So much pressure is put on them with no financial reward...it has to be a given.

Suzanne Williams Dennison, Ogden School District

I retired from the classroom four years ago after devoting more than forty years to the profession. I experienced many changes and shifts in the educational system during those years. But one thing has never changed. Every student deserves a well trained, qualified, caring teacher.

Trudy Henderson, Other

Growth in funding for public education in Utah began falling behind the rest of the Country decades ago but the resulting decay of services was largely kept hidden from the public for two reasons. Utah possessed some of the most dedicated hard working teachers and Utah students were largely from stable supportive homes. Those teachers are now retiring and the current work conditions are so poor that few college graduates view a career in Utah public education as a viable option. Schools are now forced to serve ever expanding social roles with students because fewer and fewer of Utah children have the stable supportive home life. Utah can no longer hide its failure to adequately fund public education. The crisis is no longer in the future. The future is now.

Charlie Matthews, Park City School District
It is important for us to attract and retain good teachers. I have friends who have quit teaching because, though they love the profession, they feel that they can no longer afford the luxury of serving our students. Not only is it a matter of salary, but of health care benefits also need to be improved. Too much of my salary is simply handed over to my health care providers -- I have less "available" money now than I did five years ago due to my increased health care and prescription costs. One co-pay for a life-saving medication that I have to take is over $400.00 on my current health care plan, which is the best plan available in my district. Last year the co-pay for this same medication was $150.00 under the same plan, while the previous year, it was $75.00. The pharmacists actually apologize to me when I get the prescription for this medication filled, explaining that my school district's health care plan has the highest co-pay for this particular medication that they have ever seen. Something has to change!

Victoria Muehlberger, Salt Lake City School District

Unfortunately, teachers responsibilities currently include parenting students. Because parents are often unable or unskilled at assisting students at home, teachers have assumed the responsibility for not only the academic success of their students, but teachers also must include ethics and behavior training. Additionally, students level of engagement has decreased due to their generations addiction to social media and technology. We must find methods and pedagogy to counter the lack of parental support and student interest in academics and future success.

Anonymous, Salt Lake City School District

If they need questions answered about education, ask the experts that are in the trenches everyday. If not, they should have to spend a week doing the complete job of a teacher before they run for office so that they can understand the complexities of being an educator and the changes laws that have an affect on education without understanding the impact that they have on teachers and students.

George O. Judd, Sevier School District

I have 27 first-graders in my class and an autistic boy!! Too many very young students per teacher ratio!! Please, lower classroom

Tanna White, Uintah School District

I believe that teachers salaries and benefits need to be improved to hold and retain quality teachers. Make sure that all administrators are education experienced and qualified to be in an education management position.

Paul Fawson Jr., Weber School District

Maintaining quality teachers will REQUIRE the state to seriously increase the salary of all teachers, within all districts equally. Allowing districts to allocate the funds tends to allow them to reallocate it elsewhere. Many teachers leave the state or leave the profession entirely because of the lack of importance to be compensated or even trusted at times to be able to manage their own time when given time to plan meaningful and engaging experiences in the classroom. Much time is wasted in just filling the need to have committees and going through the motions of unnecessary programs felt beneficial by those who have never taught or haven't been in a classroom setting for many years. Also, in my experience, the best administrators are those who have taught a minimum of 10 years in a classroom, and just by obtaining a degree online shouldn't be the sole reason for advancing any individual. Much is learned after many years in a classroom that can't be taught by only reading a book or attending a class. Public opinion needs to change as well, that teachers are solely responsible for a child's education. True parent involvement is needed. We are educators, yes...we are caregivers as well, but much of what happens at school is first taught in the home. Public awareness may transmit to a higher respect of teachers. I know this is a difficult task, and I know most all teachers rather give up personal time and personal funds to help a child succeed, but this needs to stop. Stop relying on the individuals that entered this profession as a personal call to help others by continuing to have them make the only sacrifices.

David Van Eerden, Weber School District
Workload / Classroom Support

Studies have shown that the larger the class size, the less effective the teacher. This is so true. In our day where teachers are being blamed, or held accountable for students learning and test scores, class size has to be taken into account and dealt with. A teacher can hardly maintain control in a class of more than 25 students, and it is very, very difficult to meet the needs of all those students, to help them learn to read, write, and do math on grade level, when there are so many students and so many needs. I think legislators need to spend time in classrooms to see the conditions, the job teachers are trying to do, and what the struggles and conditions they are working under are, to see what and why they need to make changes to the education in our state. I have taught school for 12 years and do not recall ever seeing a legislator in the school I work at. There needs to be many changes made to education to improve it, but reducing class size would be a first step in the right direction.

Gina Baird, Box Elder School District

Most teachers are very hard working and love their jobs. I take home school work every night, because it's important to me that my students succeed this year and have learned what they need to be successful in their next school year.

Susan Pratt, North Summit School District

Why is Utah ranked so low in average spending per pupil and test scores? I have now taught 5th grade classes with 28, 37, 34, 30, 31 students in each of the past 5 years. How can I effectively teach with so many students in my class? How come charter schools receive money from the state, but they aren't held to the same standards as public schools?

Peter Haslam, Salt Lake City School District

Time commitments have increased due to additional responsibilities - flex time classes requiring preparation, referrals to special programs like homework lunch and academic support, increased expectations for remediation & retesting, increased quantity and variety of parental notification, teacher training on days that used to be preparation days. There has not been additional compensation for these extra responsibilities, thus restricting my availability for the second job that I need in order to support my family. Additionally, parents and administrators are quick to criticize any perceived shortcomings in any of these areas. On top of that is the constant push from state and district officials and policies to improve, putting more blame and responsibility on teachers instead of students.

Karl Powell, Weber School District

I would like them to know how much our special education student count has increased over the last few years. These students are coming with more and more deficits and more and more intense behaviors. We have rooms the sizes of closets with an average of 11 to 14 students per group. Our small group instruction is a thing of the past. We have been very creative in making sure that all student needs are met but feel that we still fall short. We are told that there is not funding for additional support in our classrooms, we are told that the norm for special education student case load is 40 to 50 students per one teacher. We are the last group thought about when it comes to new technology. Between two full time special education teachers we share 11 ipads for 55 students. The technology we do have is usually the oldest in the school but we are grateful to have any! We constantly take on student teachers just to have additional bodies in the rooms for support. We have little to no prep time due to the amount of students needing to be seen and the services that need to be provided. The motto is do more with less and we magically make it work but only to the best of our abilities. Support public education but in doing so also support special education and realize that those students count too!

Samantha Johnson, Davis School District

That with the shortage of teachers we should be better supporting them. No new bills to make it tougher on new teachers. Ann Millners new law is a joke. Also the state school board needs to back off and start supporting teachers for a change.

Chad Staley, North Summit School District

The present state of funding of education in Utah is appalling! It demeans teachers and also students, setting a standard for low expectations and low self esteem. This affects students all their lives.
Come to my class of 36 kids, and teach for a week. See the whole week.

Traci Parkinson, Alpine School District

The three computers we have for a small student lab in the classroom are old and not supported by the district. They are being taken away with nothing to take its place. The teacher is expected to do something like write grants to fix the problem.

Helena Langford, Davis School District

Teachers are hard working professionals with education. We need to be compensated as such. We need to have some incentive to stay and deal with the growing needs of this generation.

Jami Houle, Alpine School District

I have been teaching for a few years. In this time I have seen many great teachers quit because their needs were not met. Instead of lowering the standards to become a teacher, the state should focus on keeping the teachers they have. The reasons teachers quit include: too many students, not enough pay, lack of supplies, and too much accountability for student achievement (at some point parents need to be held accountable too).

Tralyn DeBres, Box Elder School District

The morale of teachers is ever decreasing. Teachers need support from legislators to help them stay successful in teaching!

Holly Stuart, Cache County School District

Visit classrooms!

Alzina Barnhill, Davis School District

I believe providing up to date technology in school is important. The problem comes in that technology needs to be replaced. If it is used how we should use it, then we are going to need replacement within 5 years. This is never written into budgets and is very frustrating to many of us when we go to use the technology and it doesn't work. There are days when the only thing that works in my room is my white board. That is right, not my smart board but my white board. I just ask that while getting technology into the classroom is important, it is just as important to update it periodically.

Lori Burnett, Davis School District

The role of an educator has been overwhelmingly modified in the past several years. Today's teacher in the public schools must prepare several lessons for the same classroom of students. My daughter is a high school teacher. She is often very overwhelmed preparing her lessons for an AP history class. Her classrooms have close to, or over, 30 students each. The students in each class include: IEP, 504, Foreign Exchange, ELL, along with a few high achieving. She has to prepare four lessons, in order to reach each student needs, for each class period. She also has to deal with lazy students, unreasonable parents, and members of the faculty who are so burned out they no longer participate in extracurricular clubs and coaching. She could have pursued many careers but she wanted to teach secondary public education. She had some wonderful teachers who inspired her and she longs to do the same for others. She is single and has no social life because so much time is spent writing lessons, helping students individually, and coaching. She is a GREAT teacher exhibited by the number of students who want HER as a teacher! But she is honestly questioning if she made the right career choice. She loves her students and hopes she is inspiring them through her lessons. She is a real teacher! But she is wondering about exploring other options.

Darline DeBry, Emery County School District

When I went into teaching, I went into it knowing I would not make a lot of money. However, I was allowed autonomy to design curriculum for my individual students. Now, I am spending hours preparing students for a lot of
Workload / Classroom Support

standardized tests (SAGE, SLO, District reading and writing benchmarks). I am also spending hours preparing portfolios to prove I am a qualified teacher. All this time not spent on my students is drawing my attention more to my low salary and huge class sizes. Teachers are getting burned out and that is what is causing the huge shortage.

Tami Ewell, Jordan School District

Attract and RETAIN quality teachers.

David Bettinson, Other

I appreciate how my local legislators support education and make a difference for myself and the families they serve. Patrice Arent, Jani Iwamoto from my school area. Marie Poulsen, Brian Shiozawa (until he just left) from my home area. They are all great supporters or education and I appreciate them!

Kelly Kline, Granite School District

Teaching has changed so we are not only teaching but expected to entertain as well. This takes time and research and technology is moving so fast it takes time to learn. I feel that we need to decrease class sizes, increase preparation time, make sure we have quality teachers by paying more and holding them to a high standard which means giving them support in terms of continuing education, etc. I need to stay current in my subject area as well as in teaching methodologies.

Angie Pommerening, Jordan School District

No all children are equally privileged. Get out into the schools and talk to us (teachers)!

Moani Revoir, Alpine School District

Giving timely and detailed feedback to students is one of the best ways for students to receive correction and improve. Getting to know each and every child to help them learn is also very important. However, doing this with student loads of over 238 students is unrealistic without spending nights and time on the weekends to make this happen. If we don't reduce class sizes in our schools, we are just cheating our youth out of their deserved education.

Cassie Grether, Davis School District

I work as a special education resource teacher. The added paperwork involved is already a known, challenging factor. However, my greatest concern is the shortage of teachers we have to provide "specialized teaching". We have 2 full time teachers and 1 aide to spread over 52+ students with learning disabilities and/or behavior concerns. I would like the legislators to imagine meeting with a group of 6-7 peers and having the following occur during the first 30 minutes: 1- peer comes in defiant and unwilling to participate in group except for calling out off topic remarks, 2- peer begins crying that another peer is looking at him, 3- peer does not understand topic and is unwilling to listen long enough for the speaker to explain it, 4- peer makes silly remarks trying to disrupt group...and etc. The only way to address this is to have more support/aides to squelch the tiny issue before it becomes full blown and the learning stops. My point is smaller classes allow teachers to address individual needs more appropriately and quicker.

Janet Hilton, Davis School District

Come see what it's really like in a Title One school.

Krista Nielsen, Davis School District

How changes in community values and priorities have impacted expectations placed on educators.

Brett L. Taylor, Davis School District

There is a huge disparity of resources, teacher training, and needs amongst the schools in Utah. Rather than focusing on test scores and school grades that label minorities and economically disadvantaged students, and therefore the teachers of these students, as "failing", use the data that you have collected to provide resources to
teach life skills and sociable behaviors to students in need. Stop building the school to prison pipeline. Start caring about the people in need, they are part of your community no matter how high on the hill you build your house.

_Nichole Hillburn, Granite School District_

Please spend a day in the title one schools of your district.

_Janet Sharp, Granite School District_

Every year the classrooms get more crowded. Every year teachers burnout because of the load and lack of mentoring. Our new teachers don't get what they need and then don't get their contracts renewed because they aren't up to standard. No wonder we have a teacher shortage.

_Connie Wallace, Iron County School District_

We need to supply students with a very high quality of education that will help the students in their field of employment and ability to function in society. We are not in the business of replacing parental responsibility and individual accountability.

_Thomas Hawks, Nebo School District_

Come spend three full days in my public school classroom, from the beginning of class until classes end, including lunch. After about three full days, you as a legislator will be have a better understanding of the educational process!

_Christine Redford, Alpine School District_

Teachers are overwhelmed with the expectations to plan and prepare whole group and differentiated lesson plans, to track, perform weekly progress monitoring and create documentation for low-performing and behaviorally challenging students, to attend meetings 2 or more times a week, to fulfill CTESS requirements, to grade papers, to fill out report cards and parent-teacher conference forms, to keep in contact with parents, to deal with students’ daily emotional, social and physical needs on top of teaching the state and district standards to an unlimited number of students. We are held responsible for our students' performance on district and state testing, yet get little to no state or district support with regards to student attendance or student behavioral issues. I personally, spend on average 18 -20 hours of my own time (off-contract time) weekly to keep up with the demands of my job because of the lack of paid planning time and the amount of on-contract time I have to spend doing after school duty and attending meetings. I believe most teachers would prefer to have more uninterrupted, self-directed on-contract time to meet all of the requirements of our job and to collaborate with each other, than to have any other kind of compensation. We want to do a great job educating and building positive relationships with our students but the current lack of preparation time and the unreasonable list of expectations on us make it impossible.

_Kay Bailey, Canyons School District_

The fact that Arizona ranks higher than Utah, and yet Utah piles more responsibilities and higher expectations on teachers, speaks volumes. How about we go back to basics for what a teacher is expected to do, and hire specialists to deal with behaviors, data collecting, and interventions for severe academic needs? And instead of piling as many students as can fit into a classroom, let’s get smaller class sizes so students each benefit from more one-on-one interaction with their teacher? We have forgotten how badly teachers are taken for granted, but even more just how much impact a teacher can have, given the right circumstances.

_Keith Piccolo, Canyons School District_

They are out of touch with what they fill is important to mandate teachers to do with their accountability. I am an early childhood teacher who is very sad at the lack of “play” time children have. I feel like over my years of teaching I am holding these little ones to what I taught in first grade with only two and a half hours. We are programing child to not have opportunities to explore their would and make real life connections.

_Patrice Holbrook, Davis School District_

When students are not at school I can't do my job, More help for dysfunctional families
Workload / Classroom Support

Julie Johnson, Davis School District

Teachers have no rights, the administration is given all the power, they have no checks and balances, this promotes corruption

Kristie McLeod, Davis School District

Many teachers are discouraged with the teaching profession. Between increased behavior problems, learning issues, lack of responsibility from students and parents, constant changing of curriculum, entitlement, class sizes, etc., it is a hard profession. Even though, we put our heart and soul into teaching.

Terri Wall, Davis School District

When there are no consequences for students who don't try and parents who don't help, when can we hold them accountable? If they are an equal stakeholder in the education process, they too should be held accountable. Why not take away their child tax credit. Education is a cultural importance and there are too many who do not value it. If there was a monetary consequence, there would be some value given.

Sage Harmsen, Granite School District

I think it is the same thing you hear over and over again, teachers are held accountable for so much but given less resources. We are also dealing with an increasing number of disrespectful students and parents. I would love to see some sort of parent accountability for their own child's success.

Leonora McCarrey, Granite School District

This year has been the most frustrating year for me. I feel like have no support from parents (they are unable to be reached or working 2 1/2 jobs and can't be contacted to talk them about their student), if I send a student to the office they return to me (issue solved for a minute). I'm told by administrators their hands are tied as there is no attendance court/rules anymore. I have students that are constantly tardy and interrupting my lessons. I go home feeling beat up emotionally and mentally daily. I've taught 22 years. If someone asked me if they should teach...I would answer no! We have no support, no help, and no appreciation. Why? I do appreciate the raise we got last year. It was great!!! There is more to our job than teaching. We are parents, cops, counselors, life coaches, care givers, planners, and the list goes on....thanks for listening.

Shellie Anderson, Nebo School District

I have been a full day kindergarten teacher for four years. I have had classes well over 20 students. In these classes I have had MAJOR behavior problems. Sometimes up to three students. These students take all of the teacher time. I did not feel that I was teaching, I felt that I was managing a terrible situation all day, every day. I had little support from my administration (who didn't want to be the bad guys). I know I am not alone in these types of situations. It is ridiculous that there is no support. Parents want it to be our problem, not theirs. But the other students in the class are the ones who suffer. Why would I want to stay teaching? I often feel that there are better things out there, even though I love the kids, and I love teaching.

Jennifer Prince, Nebo School District

As an elementary educator, WE NEED MORE HELP!!!! I need money for a teacher assistant to enter data, help with testing, making copies, etc.

Claudia Empey, Washington County School District

We need help with one-on-one technology in our classrooms. I just received my first iPad for my classroom, so we have alone to share with the class. Pay the teachers to keep the teachers. Charter schools need to held to the same standard as all schools. Why do they have so much money to go on all their field trips? Where does this money come from? Does the public pay for the trips to National parks? We need more help with social issues in our schools. We need more help with students with special needs, the students who don't qualify for resource.

Denise Lee, Box Elder School District
Workload / Classroom Support

Don't forget the individual

Cheryl Orme, Cache County School District

Quit marginalizing education and thinking one-size-fits-all packaging works when kids don't come in those packages. A business model is not best for education. Public funding is critical for education or decisions about your age related needs will be made by those not prepared.

Jill Sparks, Granite School District

We need to attract and retain quality teachers. Look at holding schools accountable for learning, but more importantly, make teaching a respectable profession again. Look at increasing funding and reducing ridiculous demands on teachers in order to attract and keep the best and brightest.

Rachelle Durrant, Uintah School District

Do something about education in Utah--teachers are worn out doing paperwork and charts when they need to be using their creativity and skills to teach their classes.

Cheryl Rogers, Alpine School District

We have to allow the teachers to have more teeth in holding kids responsible. Instead of making teachers allow kids to keep redoing things. Kids have to be allowed to fail if they don't do their part. Also when it comes to the point that the judicial system can't do anything to kids if they are on school property, so much so that if a student is going to break a law such as drinking alcohol they want to do it on school grounds we are in trouble. Also there needs to be something that balances out the money available to schools instead of having the have the and the have nots. In my 30 years of education there is so much more expected both time and stress related and the pay relatively the same.

Van Park, Box Elder School District

I have concerns that often money is allocated but there are so many strings attached or in the case of technology even required vendors with strings attached that it becomes difficult to put the money toward the greatest need. Additionally we have hard working teachers. When you hear the news stories otherwise these are the outliers. Please be mindful that all teachers/educators are not children who need to be heavily monitored and told what to do for EVERYTHING or reprimanded.

Leslie Burt, Cache County School District

I welcome legislators into my classroom so they can see how underfunded and unsupported teachers are with the expectations that are placed on us. We are willing to do the work, but it is impossible to make the gains they are expecting of us without more money for supplies, technology, and salaries of support staff.

Andrea Grant, Granite School District

I would like to share the message of how much we need to focus on the whole child. I have only worked in schools that are ravished with poverty, english language learners, and unmet basic needs. Each year I have taught, at least one student has had a primary caretaker die or face long term incarceration. This year, I have already had two students with parents die. Let me tell you, that when a kid comes in and can only talk about how dad overdosed last night, it changes your lesson plan. I'm tired of saying how "heartbreaking" these stories are. I'm tired of placating emotions that do nothing to change the situation. Fund a full time social worker and psychologist in every building. Encourage the creation of social emotional core standards so we can recognize schools aren't just reading writing and arithmetic. Childhood trauma is real, and has significant effect on the brain. Give these kids the support they need so they can make a better life for themselves.

Taylor Layton, Granite School District

I work in a Title 1 school. Every year the demands on teachers, schools and districts grow without accompanying support. A new layer of expectation, policy or law is added every year. Meanwhile, the social issues that our students deal with are more difficult year by year and continue to affect more students. As a teacher, I feel stressed and
Workload / Classroom Support

pressured to figuratively (by myself) cure "cancer." There is no one in my classroom helping meet the social, behavioral and academic needs of my students besides me. Yes, other people can (and do!) help from time to time by offering suggestions or intervening in specific behavior related instances. However, teachers need more support. We need more daily hands-on help to share the burden and create more opportunities to meet the needs of these children. I believe in teaching to the needs of those I teach, but I am only one person. In my estimation, this is why retaining teachers is so hard. The disparity of the expectation versus the day to day reality is great. The stress, therefore, is often unbearable, flattening and morale killing. It is honestly why I am loosing my love of teaching and why I am currently looking to other career avenues.

Kerri Rustad, Granite School District

Teachers need to be paid for the many extra hours it takes to meet the ever changing new curriculum demands for the technology classes, and also be provided adequate training.

Carol Meinhardt, Millard School District

While the amount of money I can deduct on taxes is decreasing, the personal cost of purchasing supplies is rising. Students come to school with less every year making it necessary to purchase items myself. This is not ideal for me or my family as that money should not have to be spent on pencils or paper. The stress teachers deal with is also increasing. With expectations rising, less parental support, not enough funds, the stress is making many of my colleagues have increased health issues, myself included, that stem from dealing with the stress.

Carrie Van Nosdol, Nebo School District

I love my job. I love what I teach, I love my students, I love my colleagues. However, I find that I get burned out, frustrated, and just plain tired of all the responsibilities placed on teachers. The job is ALL consuming. When I’m not at school I’m still working either spending my own time planning, searching for ideas, grading, discussing with others, getting more education for myself, keeping myself current, etc. my life really is not my own, it belongs to my job. I completely understand why young adults are not going into the education field and I don’t blame them. I hate to see it happen, but how can I recommend this job to young adults? We’re over worked, under paid, under appreciated not only by some of our parents but by our state government as well. Teachers used to have great insurance and great retirement which compensated for the lack of pay. However that is not the case any longer. Both retirement and insurance benefits have been cut (we now have to pay part of our premiums). We are the only profession that gets punished for our experience- change districts and you get a pay cut and younger teachers are cheaper and hired first. We don’t really get tax breaks either...last year I sat with $511.00 worth of receipts for items purchased for my classroom and I could deduct only $250.00 worth. We must do something to entice college students to go into education. My opinion is that the whole system needs to be overhauled. However, I only have 10 years until I can retire. I’m in it for the long haul. The system counts on that so the needed changes won’t be seen or addressed until my generation of teachers is gone and we’re destitute for teachers. We need to act now. Forget charter schools versus public schools. What good is either without quality teachers?

Michelle A. Harris, Alpine School District

We have to do something to keep teachers in the field and not looking for other jobs.

Kari Nelson, Alpine School District

Veteran teachers are leaving their profession in record numbers. We need to ask why. There has been a turn in education as it becomes a fiscal competition where parents/patrons are more important than the educators. The loss of respect from parents students and administrators is creating weakness. The teacher shortage is more about the treatment of teachers than just the pay. When we hire people without a teaching degree or certificate we marginalize the expertise of our profession. Then the administrations raise the expectations and hoops to jump through to simply keep a job that there are no qualified teachers to re-fill. How is that positive?

Shelly Christensen, Canyons School District
Workload / Classroom Support

You need good qualified teachers and they are hard to find and keep!

Kristina Schade, Carbon School District

The need to find and retain good teachers.

Christy Fong, Davis School District

In many parts of the world, teaching is a valued and respected position--from the way it is viewed by students, parents, the community, and the community leaders who make decisions that impact education. Unfortunately, I feel like this is not always the case in our country and especially in Utah. Educators should be drawn here. If we want our students to be able to compete with students across the country and the world, then we need to keep quality teachers in Utah classrooms who have classroom education experience, who have succeeded in a college education program, who have done what was necessary to become knowledgeable in their content areas, who have high morale, and who feel valued. Currently, as a fourth year teacher, I have watched many of my coworkers leave teaching for other professions because of salary, because of the way teaching is viewed in our state, because of the overwhelming workload, and because of the lack of support they are receiving from parents, community members, and community leaders. Others of my coworkers are quickly trying to move away from teaching, but stay in the field of education (by pursuing counseling, administration, district employment), not because they have a desire to work in these areas, but for these same reasons. They feel obligated to move. Why can I not feel valued as a teaching professional in a Utah classroom? Why do I feel like I might need to go elsewhere one day because of the direction we are headed in this state? I am qualified, and I love my job. Unfortunately, if we continue to try to fill classrooms with unqualified teachers and push qualified teachers out with a lack of salary, with a lack of classroom supplies/technology, with a lack of how we value them as professionals--instead of supporting and helping qualified teachers stay in the classroom--then what is going to keep teachers, like me, from leaving? Our students are not going to be receiving the type of quality instruction that they need. Our students are not going to be able to compete with other students across the country and around the world. Teachers make all other professions possible, including yours as a legislator. Please help keep qualified teaching professionals in the classroom. We need your help!

Carly Maloney, Davis School District

We need strong new teachers who are qualified and supported for the future of our kids in Utah.

Edie Rostal, Davis School District

I am concerned about the teacher shortage. I work in a rural district that pays teachers less than many other districts. I see new teachers getting hired just to move on after a few years. More and more often, people are being hired with no teaching degree. I work in a school that just hired someone right out of high school to teach. Then, it seems like we are inundated with training to help us be effective educators. I believe this is to help those who are not qualified to teach. These ARL's make what teachers make, and I am still paying on my student loans from when I went back to school to get my teaching degree. So, not only are unqualified people being hired to teach, but I feel penalized for getting the education necessary to do my job effectively. Additionally, because of the teacher shortage, these unqualified people being hired require help from other teachers (because that is what we do), increasing our work load so that we give the students all that we can.

Jennifer Jenkins, Duchesne County School District

Teachers have a passion to help others, but this passion cannot be met if we don't have quality educators in the classroom. The stress it puts on the quality teachers to help those less qualified is significant and unnecessary if we didn't allow under qualified staff into the classroom. More money needs to be put into education, not taken from it. Too many schools are running on too little and the time is now to step up and reclaim the money from legislators. Give each child the same opportunity you had in your schooling, because these students will someday be in your shoes.

Jill Tatton, Grand County School District
Workload / Classroom Support

I am very concerned about the number of teachers I am seeing leave the teaching profession. Especially over the past 5 yrs. I have been teaching for 28 years and more and more has been added to our plate as educators. So much so that other professions look much more appealing as the work load isn't as demanding and the pay is much higher. We are also dealing with a lot more issues in regards to student behavior. Many feel they can't devote the time that is expected to be an affective teacher. There isn't much planning time for the elementary grades. There are a lot of PLC's and PD meetings, but not much time to plan, prepare, grade,and keep up with how to use technology to help our students learn.

Sherrie Brown, Granite School District

I shared with Lisa: Teacher salaries Teacher expectations Problems of Alternative License Route Science curriculum expectations without textbooks or supplies Mentor/student teacher expectations

Patricia Gotberg, Jordan School District

We have gone many years with funding that does not meet the needs of our students, especially ESL populations. We have also gone along time with inadequate compensations for teachers who teach in Title 1 schools with so many more expectations and accountability on their heads.

Sonceria Zuckerman, Salt Lake City School District

I have personally visited with Representative Quinn and he has visited my US Government classes at Wasatch HS. Accountability. Put back into law that there is RESPONSIBILITY for students to actually attend school. Parents should have more support from our state legislature to encourage students to actually attend class for some civic dialogue and learning with peers! Students need to be more accountable for their actions, especially those in high school, in regards to daily attendance. Put some teach back in to the hands of local school districts.

Dawain Mills Wheatley, Wasatch County School District

As far as I'm aware, teachers are the only full-time government employees that do not receive holiday pay. Teachers should receive holiday pay. Additionally, it is impossible to support a family on a teacher's salary. Administrators are abusing their power and treatment of teachers who would do well are being pushed out by poor work environments. We should be able to take “personal days” without the punishment of paying $45, which, to my understanding, is not to pay for the sub, but is punitive to deter teachers from taking personal days.

Spencer Saluone, Alpine School District

The only students failing my classes are the non-attenders. We need support from our legislators to get and keep students in school. You want test grades to improve- make attendance mandatory!

Stacy Church, Box Elder School District

While working as a Special Education Teacher. I had the opportunity to help a few students attend an ATC program while going to high school. Through academic assistance and their hard work these students completed their program while still seniors in High School. Fabulous for them, and I feel blessed to have been a part of their success. After graduation, I talked with these students and they informed me they had been hired on at local shops using the skills they learned in the ATC program. These students salaries were impressive. Much higher than my own and I had, at the time, been teaching for 12 years with my masters degree. Teachers simply do not get paid a fair wage for everything they do. I was very happy for my students, but it really cut hard to my soul at how little I truly make as a teacher.

Melissa Fox, Davis School District

I have been an educator for many years. I feel like my work load has increased and my pay scale has not. I want them to know I work about 10 hours a day and do not get paid any type of overtime. Retirement and incentives that were there when I started teaching are not available to teachers anymore.

Lori Huey, Jordan School District
Charter schools are NOT the answer.  

Ruth S. Burkett, Other

I would like my legislators to consider the following things: 1. One-to-one tech is pointless without teachers who are trained (and trained WELL) to use it. 2. Admin Rule R277-531 (the PEER framework) feels extremely controlling for such a Republican congress. Its micro-managing language makes me certain you don't trust me as far as you can throw me...I can't imagine how it makes lifelong teachers feel. (Some kindness and validation from your direction would go a long way.) 3. When you consider points 1 and 2, hopefully you can easily see why young, tech-savvy teachers like me are never going to stay longer than a few years. Fifty percent of my prep time is taken up helping my older peers figure out how to use their tech and the other fifty percent is like forced A.D.D....I can't get anything done because you have me way too hyperfocused on my PEER plan and all of the other EYE requirements. I could have a higher paying job that is less time-consuming with like-minded peers who don't require constant help and a boss who trusts and respects me...why does anyone stay longer than 3 or 4 years? I mean, would you?

Chaela Mcdonald, Provo City School District

We need our elected officials to respect our knowledge and expertise. We are the experts. Please allow us to practice our craft as you would any other highly educated professional. We are teaching little human beings how to function in our society, not just curriculum. What we do cannot be reduced to a standardized test!

Kay Lynn Schick, Davis School District

I am in an elementary school in the Granite School District that is a Turn Around school. This program has got to be the worst thought out legislation I have ever seen. We have struggled for three years with this monster. We have instituted so many different programs that it is hard to keep track. As they are instituted the teachers autonomy has diminished to nothing. We have meeting after meeting(so many that it is impossible to see the benefits of over half of them) We have had a large teacher turnover each year which doesn't help student learning or staff cohesiveness at all. We have people continually coming in to observe our classes. All of these things raise the stress level of the teacher and the entire school. We were already headed in a great direction with our new principal before this crap hit the fan. It has become a behemouth of confusion and stress. Use this money to support teachers. Right now it is being used to stress teachers out, which in turn causes turnover. Turnover with a shortage of teachers is the last thing we need!!!!!

Charles Bell, Granite School District

Support the teaching profession by making teaching less demanding and place more responsibility on students rather than teachers.

Mike Valdez, Granite School District

I work as a teacher specialist and I'm frequently asked to work with teachers that are struggling in the classrooms. More often than not, these are teachers that have not gone through the typical education programs and have not completely student teaching under a supervisory teacher. There idea that anyone off the street can teach is just wrong.

Rebecca Franchi, Ogden School District

We need to stop attempting to legislate everything about public education. There are too many mandates that limit the ability of educators to genuinely focus on student learning. By encouraging teacher initiative and providing financial support and other resources we can provide meaningful educational experiences that help students learn and retain information.

Shawn Price, Alpine School District

I believe if teachers had more time to analyze student data together and collectively come up with a plan to improve or strengthen Tier one instruction student learning would increase. Teachers would also need time to prepare the
Workload / Classroom Support

implementation of the plan. Professional Development teaching teachers how to use data and how to strengthen Tier 1 instruction is also needed.

Shauna H Strong, Alpine School District

We work hard! Please don't make our jobs harder.

Allison Terry, Alpine School District

We are doing great things in school and balancing what parents what done for their students locally and decision makers do not see what really happens in the classroom. They need to visit a wide variety of schools rather than the select "golden child" schools. I work a full day at school with 30+ students and then spend another 4+ hours at home planning, grading, and continuing my own training. This is not a "leave it at work" job. There needs to be a greater understanding that we are professionals and are highly trained. We are a great resource - use us in the decision making process.

Steve Einfeldt, Davis School District

Teachers are leaving because of the overload of meetings and responsibilities. We are given no time for our own planning and preparation. You just assume we will do it all on our own time, and we do!!

Wendy Davis, Granite School District

Let teacher teach and remove extra requirements they do that have nothing to do with teaching

Joan Cahoon, Jordan School District

Truancy and parental accountability needs to be addressed. Educators shall not be absolutely responsible for student success or failure.

Frances Anne Dallons, Jordan School District

The demands on teachers are becoming impossible. Teachers are working tirelessly to rise to the expectations, but most teachers are just trying to help their students get through another day. Putting more pressure on the teachers to increase test scores and such is too much. Legislators do not seem to consider the emotional, physical, psychological, economic, physiological, and so forth, issues students bring to school. Educators do what they can to provide safety, counseling, reassurance, support, stability, food, and clothing for those students who need it, while maintaining classroom management and teaching the core.

Kaylyn Mueske, Jordan School District

Dear Legislators, please keep in mind when proposing legislation that there is a cause and effect that affect teachers in the classroom. Every time you add another responsibility or layer of accountability to a teacher, you are taking away time that could be spent preparing effective lessons. Teachers are human beings who have families, get tired, and are not automatic robots. Sometimes when legislators pass legislation they don't take into consideration how that truly impacts the day of a teacher and his/her students.

Suzanne Rouse, Jordan School District

We need to address chronic absenteeism. Students are required by law to attend school, so why are we unable to hold parents accountable for getting their children to school? I have multiple students that miss one or more days per week and I am the only one being held accountable for their lack of achievement. I can't teach them if they are not in class.

Judy Wright, Logan City School District

Undervaluing teacher input in decision making is driving teachers away from the profession.

Lori Cunningham, Nebo School District
Workload / Classroom Support

Educators work very hard, yet we are given a very negative public opinion. It isn't fair. In one classroom, we might have a special ed student, 3 ELL students, 2 gifted students, 4 below grade level, and the rest average students. WE have to meet the needs of all. When we don't it is said that we are bad teachers. I would love to have a legislator come into my room, not for a few minutes, but for the entire day, so they can see bus duty, teaching, recess duty, planning, etc.

Nancy Berry, Park City School District

I do not believe they realize the socio economic and social issues that impact our students in the state. We are not all the same and equity does not mean we all get the same treatment. Title one schools are more impacted and should be recognized as so.

Leann Banco, Salt Lake City School District

Immigration issues are causing unneeded stress to students. Because of their parents status we are observing more stress and fear in our classrooms. The Trump comments are not helping our school children as well. Please support encouraging legislators and the federal government to tone down their rhetoric. My students are dismayed and have been very articulate about the hate speech that is currently part of our government. Please support DACA and bilingual education in the state of Utah.

Mary Lou Oland-Wong, Salt Lake City School District

Special Education paperwork is prohibitive, not helpful.

Nicole Harmon, Sevier School District

Teachers are burdened by more students, more paperwork, more testing, and more credentialing requirements. I feel that all of this is taking away from the art of teaching our students. I wish I had more time to focus on lesson preparation and actual teaching. I'm always playing catch up on my assessments, data, paperwork, and other hoops I'm asked to jump through to prove my worth as a teacher. I'm burned out. I became a teacher to help students, not continuously prove to my legislators that I'm a good teacher.

Paige E. Shaw, Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind

We appreciate any effort to aide in helping us teach our children. They will be our future leaders and should be prepared. Pour the funds and resources into having great teachers to be the guides for our students. You have to make education an attractive career choice for college students.

Lisa Aase, Alpine School District

Teachers work very hard and are not compensated for the hours that they are putting in beyond contract time to do their jobs well. I don't know very many other jobs where once the work day is over, work is taken home with them. It's set aside until the next day. Large class sizes (some over 42 in high schools) make it VERY difficult to give students one on one attention that they deserve. There are more requirements of us as teachers with evaluations etc. that take us away from designing and implementing fun, informative lesson plans. Burnout is high when you aren't appreciated or provided with resources.

Becky Bailey, Alpine School District

The teacher shortage is caused because of lack of pay first and then because of lack of respect given to educators. Educators are on the bottom of the pyramid of respect. It starts with parents and then students and then administrators and teacher are left to the demands of the above three factors. Give teachers the ability to follow through with classroom policies and procedures without being overridden by threats from parents and students of being sued. Return respect and control to teachers.

Karen Finley, Alpine School District

Resources matter when trying to help students on an individual basis. As we have been mandated to help every student be successful, the difference between 25 and 35 students in a classroom becomes quite clear. It is
impossible to effectively help every student in the way that they deserve when there is not enough time to talk to them. Make class sizes smaller by increasing the number of teachers. Increase the number of teachers by making this a profession that is respected and fairly compensated. Show the citizens of this wonderful state that you care enough about them to invest in their future.

Devin Fisher, Alpine School District

When I first got into teaching, I thought having holidays off at the same time as my kids would be awesome. I didn’t realize at the time that teaching requires so much more than that. We don’t get overtime, ‘cause if we did our school would run out of funding before we were even half way done with the year! The amount we are paid is minuscule when compared to how many hours we spend to prepare our lessons. Add on top of that the high volume of students in each class, the lack of funding for science materials (I have to purchase what I do mostly out of my own pocket, which means I can’t do as much as I would like), and the lack of classroom aids when they are really needed. I spend a lot of my “vacation time” either preparing for or finishing up things for my students. I’ve even had my family in helping, which, I can assure you, they weren't keen on doing for their vacation. And that doesn't even begin to address the teacher shortage (I totally understand how some could burn out!), the lack of respect we get from "choice" people (dare I put some partners in that mix?), and certain students, and you've got a recipe for a high-stress job with low pay and low morale. I'm not saying it isn't rewarding or that there is nothing but negative in this profession. I just wanted to get you in touch with our teacherly realities. Please don't forget us when the big guns roll in with their powerful allies and gung-ho ideas to use your influence for. We may not hold as much clout as they do, but we hold the hope of the future in our hands. Thank you.

Sharee Garcia, Alpine School District

We need to address teacher shortage, teacher morale and that teachers should be respected for being professionals.

Patrick Gleaves, Alpine School District

Education is the future; with poorly funded education comes ill-prepared citizens.

Kristin Greer, Alpine School District

Teachers and students have been waiting for many, many years to have a legislative strategic plan for education including class size reduction, increase in salaries and benefits, money for supplies and a respectful attitude toward teachers. Our students deserve the best education we can give them. And that costs money.

Phyllis Sorensen, Alpine School District

I and many of my colleagues feel strained with the increase of class sizes and the low incomes that cause us to look for supplemental incomes.

Clark Funk, Box Elder School District

People on the hill decide what happens in the classroom without full understanding of what happens. I would like to see more legislators have round table talks with actual classroom teachers.

Nancy Ulsh, Box Elder School District

Education has to be something you are willing to invest significant money into. Without the profession being something that will pay enough for a family to survive on, there will be a serious teacher shortage. It has to be a viable option for new college graduates to choose.

Corine Barney, Davis School District

Please support our teachers and children through the necessary measures of financial funding and meaningful supports. We need more qualified teachers to support the growing population and class size epidemic teachers are facing and we need to support current teachers so that they stay in this amazing profession and do some of the most important work.

Karly Bates, Davis School District
Workload / Classroom Support

This is about our community and funding education funds the future. The us vs. them idea needs to end.

Alyn Bone, Davis School District

Our classes are overloaded! I spend $2500 or more each year to buy supplies and technology to help my students. I am getting out of this profession and do not advise any one to enter it. We are micromanaged to the point that apathy has set in among the majority of teachers.

Sharlene Bremer, Davis School District

Special education teachers are overworked and underpaid.

Tanielle Carter, Davis School District

All students can learn! Teaching is an important! We need to provide teachers with additional preparation time and exposure to quality PD so that they can improve their craft and thus outcomes for students. Are special education teachers are dealing with more difficult student behavior and more challenging parents. On top of paperwork, their workloads are mounting with no relief in sight.

Kathy Chisholm, Davis School District

Teaching is a huge job that few realize how involved and draining it can be. We have to figure out a way to make teachers want to stick it out and stay with it!

Maureen Clark, Davis School District

How hard it is to teach without feeling valued.

Erin Fuller, Davis School District

In my experience, teachers work very hard, and are very dedicated and give many hours beyond what is expected. It would be nice to be appreciated more.

Robin Harris, Davis School District

you're not listening to the people who voted you in. You come in with your own agendas. Our state's growth in family sizes that affect schools and quality education can be the last thing funded. You can't squeeze anymore blood out of the turnip you've squeezed over the past decade. Wake up and make a significant difference in the lives of people.

C. Kirkham, Davis School District

The public school system is so broken. So much expected of teachers and we are expected to work for free so much it is no wonder we have a shortage of teachers!

Jennifer Louder, Davis School District

I am a teacher and I love my job. I love the students and want the best for them. My parents and both my brothers have been or are currently educators. So I come from a long line of educators. However, Raising kids on a teacher salary has its challenges and when I was a single mom, there were times we could barely make ends meet. I was offered another job and would have made more money although it was a job that didn't require a degree. After talking to my children, they knew I wouldn't be happy doing anything but teaching. They were willing to sacrifice so I could continue in the profession I love. As a kid, I always knew I wanted to be a teacher. I am so glad I am still a teacher and wish more good people would join the profession but I hear all the time I wouldn't make enough money. Just for instance I have two grown sons who now make more then I do without a degree and I have a masters degree. This gives children the idea education isn't important. I would love to see teachers paid more so we can get more people interested in being a teacher.

Natalie Roach, Davis School District
Workload / Classroom Support

We are in this profession because of our love of children and teaching. Over the last 10 years our workload has increased significantly, while support has not. Please consider that the policies you make regarding teachers also affects the education of the children of Utah.

Gloria Smith, Davis School District

Teachers are overworked, under paid and under appreciated. Expectations for teachers are too much, and if things don't change, teachers will quit. Teachers should have a life outside of school, but we don't. Teachers' own kids need to be their priority, but as it stands, teachers' families are sacrificing more than they should have to.

Heather Jacobson, Duchesne County School District

The number of mandates elementary is receiving is becoming a huge over load.

Jay Graft, Granite School District

Story #1--Before our recent pay raise, I was living from check to check. Now, I am able to put money into a savings and am able to buy a home. Story #2--There must be a way teachers can have smaller class sizes. There needs to be a way teachers are not teaching 20 students in one class then 39 in another class.

LaDonna Gustafson, Granite School District

I need smaller class sizes. 20 kids per class would be perfect!...or I need more funding for more aids in my class. I am a 5th year teacher and I am exhausted. I can't keep up with all the small groups, differentiation, language support, resource referrals, and interventions I am expected to do. I am worn out and ready to quit.

Michelle Hortin, Granite School District

I recently read an article about the best high school in every state in the United States. Each one had very small class sizes. Class size does make a difference in teaching ability. You can't have your class sizes unless you have more teachers. You can't have more teachers unless you offer a better salary and benefits than other places.

Paul McClatchy, Granite School District

We have kids with high needs (regular ed and special ed) who are sharing their teacher with 34 other kids, and we can't fill the aide positions. We need smaller class sizes, and better pay and benefits for teachers' aides.

Michael McDonough, Granite School District

Most of us have had to work 2 or 3 jobs while teaching to support our families. That decreases the time that we can spend planning, but it is the only way to pay bills for children. You took away the pension when times were rough, but we still make much less than others with Bachelor's degrees or Master's. Gangs are increasing again and the behavior makes it harder to teach.

Jane Myers, Granite School District

Every child in Utah should have a safe, public school in his neighborhood he can walk to. Parents should send their children to the child's neighborhood school, a public school, which has a solid basic educational curriculum - even though they feel the school is not good enough for their child. If improvements are needed they should work together with other parents in their neighborhood, at the school level, to insist the school to become "good enough" and thereby help their community and all children. The legislature can work toward the goal of a safe, appropriate neighborhood school for all children. (This can also have the added bonus of reducing car emissions to clean the air around us.)

Kathleen Rice, Granite School District

I teach kindergarten and I had very large classes last year, 28 in the morning and 29 in the afternoon. This year I have 24 students in the morning and 25 in the afternoon. Even just having 4-5 fewer kids in the class has made a huge difference and I feel like I can better serve my students this year. I am more aware of their individual needs, I can work with students in smaller groups and give them more of the attention they need, and I have more time for
Workload / Classroom Support

planning because I have less grading, copying, etc. I think I would be able to do an even better job if my class sizes continued to decrease in the future. I would love to see more teachers hired to reduce class sizes and that is the most important issue for me. I also would love to have more funding for classroom aides to help with the workload and student support and have them be more fairly compensated (I have had a couple really great aides who have had to quit because they didn’t make enough money), more money for classroom supplies, and increased salary/compensation for classroom teachers.

Rebecca Riley, Granite School District

Teachers are passionate about their careers, but without adequate living wages, small class sizes, nor supplies to be successful within the classroom, there isn’t an incentive to stay in the field, let alone to encourage others to enter the field.

Joanna Timothy, Granite School District

I am a Dual Language Immersion Chinese teacher who grew up in China and have been to graduate school in the US. I have taught both in Hong Kong and the US at tertiary, secondary and elementary level. Three biggest structural impediment to improving student learning are: 1. Multiple preps. Currently, I have four preps (beyond contract stipulation), two of which are brand new curriculum and two are a couple years old. Having these many preps make it impossible for me to fine tune my courses. I also have many great ideas that I do not have time to implement. If I spend too much time on one class, my other classes suffer. Consequently, no classes become as better as I’d like. 2. Lack of unstructured planning time. Growing up as a student in China, I got feedback from teacher on my assignment the same day I handed them in. That loop of practice and feedback is important for both the educators and the students to monitor learning. Lack of planning time makes individual feedback impossible. Also, having to teach 6 out of 7 periods in a day makes collaboration a luxury. 3. Students need recess. Students need unstructured free time to socialize, relax and go to the restroom. Few adults can function effectively having to go through 7 periods a day with only 4 min in transition and a 30-min lunch break. Many students, afraid of being tardy, simply do not go to the restroom in that 4-min transition time. Instead, they miss part of the class to go to bathroom. Giving students regular break will significantly help with classroom management and engagement.

Mengqi Wang, Granite School District

I would like to challenge all of the legislators to go to a school and sub for a day. It would be the administrators choice which classroom they subbed in. They should work with the teacher to see what goes into planning for a day and then stay and teach for all that day. It would be even better if they went for 3 days. I know that they have other jobs, but let them take the subs salary for that day or days. Let them work with some of our challenging students, or students who have left for Mexico for three weeks, or who come to school ill, etc, etc. I think that this should be a requirement to be a legislator that they sub at least one day a year.

Janet Wellman, Granite School District

UEA is not a liberal organization. It exists only to fight for the rights and benefits of teachers, and for practices that are best for students in Utah

Fred Ash, Jordan School District

I am a retired educator. It is sad to see that the education needs in Utah are still the same needs that were there in 1979.

Ann Hollowell, Jordan School District

Utah cannot afford to continue to be last in education funding in the country if you hope to attract big tech firms to locate in Utah.

Megan McCormick, Jordan School District

We work hard, and do our very best. Please don’t portray us as not trying to do our best.

Donna Allred, Juab School District
Workload / Classroom Support

Special Education is under funded and has high burnout. Aides are not paid enough and are not given adequate training. We also lack good curriculum and technology to help students with disabilities.

Pat Black, Logan City School District

Teachers are the life blood of our nation's future. Second to only the family.

Kirtt Myers, Millard School District

Need to pay enough money to attract quality teachers and have them remain in the profession.

LaDell Gillman, Nebo School District

Last year I had a class with 29 1st graders. That's too many!

Rachel Wigginton, Nebo School District

I feel that teachers are overworked, with unreasonable expectations. There are many expectations with very few monetary rewards.

Shea Wimmer, Nebo School District

How they are making TEACHING even more difficult than it already is by not understanding OR even acknowledging the efforts the majority of teachers make on behalf of their students.

Brenda Bensch, Park City School District

I invite each member of the legislature to come substitute in any classroom for one week, including planning lessons. (You only need a high-school diploma to apply as a substitute.) When you have walked in our shoes for a week, go back and write the laws you wish you had in place. It will change your whole world. We need legislators who understand what teaching really means. We need legislators who understand what it is like to manage a class of 27 ten year olds or 44 high-schoolers. We need legislators who care that Utah spends the LEAST of any state on their students, and whose teachers are paid less than most other states. We need legislators who care as much as the students in the desks what will happen to them. We need you.

Mariel Boone, Provo City School District

Focus on the key issues that teachers support, rather than political agendas that sound good to the public.

Darren Mecham, South Sanpete School District

Human social issues

Chelsie Acosta, Salt Lake City School District

If you want better teachers, increase their pay. If you want students to learn more easily, decrease the class size.

William Sullivan, Tooele County School District

I am a professional in education because I want to live in a better world. I am training that “better” world. Many of the rules and policies you create make it hard for me to be successful. Filling my classroom and tying my hands when it comes to discipline turns me into an inexpensive babysitter. Please value me and my time by providing the money to purchase supplies instead of having to create them myself. When a profession is valued, there aren't shortages in that area.

Angela T. Hansen, Uintah School District

Same thing I say each year. Watching you guys. Smaller class sizes is must. When caseloads/classes are too big, teachers are overworked, and students don't receive the needed attention and support. Putting more educators in schools to share the load will better help retain educators. Don't burn out educators.

Bret Morley, Washington County School District
Workload / Classroom Support

Utah has good public schools and teachers. Compare the data in an objective way, with same comparisons to charter, public school before making decisions. Use data, rather than articulate lobbyists

Lorene A Sorensen, Washington County School District

My legislators in North Ogden, Senator Christensen and Rep. Fawson, are continually on the wrong side of history by voting against educational funding and voting for red tape like SB 220 last year- to just name one bill among many. Utah is dead last in WPU funding-no excuse for that! They always quote the same argument "That Utah puts more money from budget towards education than any other state." That's like saying I have a really small apple pie...but I'm giving you a big piece! Its the smallest piece (WPU) in the nation, it's not enough, and I see the results first hand of Utah grossly under funding education for all these years. How they treat me as a teacher is a clear reflection of how they treat students. Not very good.

Paul Pontius, Weber School District

I am lucky in my building because as a High School Teacher I only have 184 students this year. Most of my colleagues have over 200. In most of my classes I have 35 students. Sometimes I think about how hard it is for parents to teach 3 or 4 or 5 or even 6 of their own children at a time, yet we are required to give 35 students individual attention during class when we only see them for 1 hour every other day. It is really crazy when you think about it. It is unrealistic to give students the time and energy that they need when we have so many students in a class. We need more funding to reduce class sizes. We need to recognize and compensate teachers for the impossible task we have given them.

Kara Allen, Alpine School District

I have been teaching for six years and I have loved what I do. However, this year, I have wanted to quit many times. I have a hard class with 26 students. I don't have sufficient technology and I took a pay cut moving districts. I have to mentor new teachers on my own time and that cuts into my own planning time. I have a Masters Degree and I'm barely paying my rent. I have many other skills where I could be making double what I make as a teacher. We need more money and more respect as teachers.

Aubri Elder, Alpine School District

I love being a teacher! We as teachers can always use more resources to reach every child.

Jacqueline Hull, Alpine School District

Teachers are not receiving fair monetary compensation for the many hours of time they put into educating children in our state. It is difficult to keep giving away extra hours outside of instruction time to attend trainings and meetings, prepare materials, grade papers, and donate time to extracurricular activities. Teachers don't get to leave their jobs at the office.

Cindy Jovet, Alpine School District

Have you ever been a teacher in a classroom? The training that we go through and the paperwork and meetings that we are required to do, all the while testing and teaching massive class sizes and expecting the students to show growth, and yet, we are one of the lowest paid professions. This world would not exist without teachers. I think that our salaries should reflect the worth of the work that we do in the walls of our classroom to raise your children and grandchildren. Think about a teacher that impacted your life. Imagine what your life would have been without that teacher. We perform miracles in the classroom with VERY little funds and TONS of students. It is time for everyone to stand behind educators and make it happen!

Anabis McGill, Alpine School District

Teachers are overworked and underpaid. Simple as that. Stop putting extra work on top of them and let them teach. Most people who teach love their jobs, but usually because of pay and/or all of the extra political agendas, they leave the profession. Put yourself in their shoes. Go into their classrooms and see what they are doing. When you actually
Workload / Classroom Support

take a minute to see what they do on a daily or weekly basis, you will be surprised at the dedication they have for their job and you will see where you need to help. Stop addressing your own personal agendas and fix the education in Utah.

Ashley Oney, Alpine School District

Teachers are not the enemy - lack of student and parent commitment to education is undermining all of our efforts to make a difference. Our morale is in the toilet - that's why I would not encourage anyone to go into education for a career at this point. It's not worth it! Something has to change and targeting teachers is not the answer. WE are doing the impossible in Utah with NOTHING!

Josette Pitardi, Alpine School District

Teachers are here to help students. Give us the tools we need through funding to do that!

Cherie Tobler, Alpine School District

Class sizes are simply too big. Over 50% of my students are below grade level. They don't get the help they need. The kids who are on grade level don't get what they need because I am trying to help the kids who are behind. None of us gets what we need.

Lynette Burrell, Box Elder School District

Standards for teachers regarding becoming certified and re-certifying are extremely high, and we have to pay those ourselves, yet anyone who is "highly qualified" can teach due to teacher shortage. These requirements are unfair to teachers--we need more consistency. When was the last time legislators spent SEVERAL days in a classroom to get a feel for the amount of work, etc. piled on us, besides having to meets stipulations that we can't teach without taking classes, etc. to re-certify.

Darlee Dyer, Cache County School District

I teach at an elementary school. I have many bright talented students who could use more creative ways to think. I work more than my contracted time just doing my daily tasks to keep up with what needs to be done. If I want to create really great lesson plans that engage the students each and every day I work much more than my contract time. Teachers need smaller classes and more planning time. Most of all teachers need to be paid for the hours they work!! I'm sure you are all paid for the hours that you work.

Suzanne Malloy, Canyons School District

Unless you make education a priority and back it with money you will continue to struggle with finding quality teachers.

Julie McFarland, Canyons School District

Come spend a day in my classroom. I would love to have a representative shadow me for a day. See how hard most of us work, the effort and time we spend with your children. Maybe then, you would be willing to support us better, respect us as Educators.

Kelly Avalos, Davis School District

Teachers are hard working educated people who deserve to be respected and compensated for the endless hours they give in behalf of children.

C. Braegger, Davis School District

I teach 2nd grade in the regular education side of a dual immersion school. Each year about 50% of my students are below grade level in reading. In order to better meet the growing numbers of struggling readers in my classroom, I have spent the last two years of my own time and financial resources to work towards earning the extra credential of a reading endorsement. I spend time outside of my contract hours planning Tier 2 reading interventions for all of my below level readers, as well as interpreting the data of their progress. Much of my time and energy is focused on
these struggling students with very minimal support from parent volunteers or even classroom aides in the school. I would like to think that I'm doing everything possible to help these struggling learners grow. It's one thing to boast about what we do as teachers, schools, districts or the state for our highest achieving students, but we must always have the question foremost in our minds, "What are we doing for the students who struggle most?" As a legislature, I would ask you the same question. What are you doing for the students who struggle most?

Kynda Farrell, Davis School District

Teachers are burning out. New mandates are thrown at us frequently with new training to attend and evidence of practice to provide. All of these equal less time for actual lesson prep and reflection of teaching. I am in an inclusive gifted classroom with 29 students. One third are typically twice exceptional and have behavior issues. I have no support to help these students because special ed is not the appropriate place for them. I can't get to my highly gifted students because my time is spent managing the many fires in the classroom due to the behavioral issues. Gifted students require twice the prep, twice the lessons, and twice the resources than regular ed because they excell so quickly. Plus we have twice the meetings...a set for the school and a set for the district gifted program. Yet, my prep time is the same as other teachers and I have the same pay. I am tired and burned out, yet my passion is gifted kids. We need help and it can only come financially so that classes in this population of students can be lowered, aids can be added, and our overtime compensated. It is these students who drive the high test scores and they need the resources to keep excelling.

Karen Long, Davis School District

COME SEE FOR YOURSELF...ALL DEMOGRAPHICS IN THE STATE.

Camille Meriwether, Davis School District

We are being spread too thin. We are faced with large classes, increasing responsibilities to meet the needs of struggling students, and fewer resources. we are not paid for the extra time all of this takes. It is my job and career which I love, but more and more it is becoming my life and taking away from family and other pursuits.

Tamra Owens, Davis School District

Every year I spend hundreds (and my first year I spent over $1000) of my own dollars to provide my class with items like: snacks, pencils, paper, science supplies, art materials, rewards/incentives, etc. I do this because my students come to school hungry, their parents don't have money for school supplies, and because I value imbedding learning into real-life, meaningful activities such as art and science. I have to spend my own money because $300 a year does not cover the cost of all of those items for 25+ students. I have taught for 5 years, and I have NEVER had fewer than 25 students. On average, I have 28. I do not make enough in salary to continue to spend my own money on my class. I am happy to do it, because I love these kids and want them to learn, but I should not have to. I am only a fifth year teacher, and I am burnt out. I do not intend to teach another year, and not because of the kids, but because of a combination of difficult situations that exist in the teaching profession. Here are a few of the situations that exist which make teaching an undesirable profession: lack of respect from the community, administration, and legislation; low pay (made even smaller because of the amount that I use to fund my own classroom), lack of funding and support from administration and legislation, and large classroom sizes.

Adree Fairbanks, Granite School District

Fund education! Put students first. Support teachers and fund them also.

Jane Munson, Granite School District

Teacher burn out is real. After 8 years of teaching I'm considering finding a new job. I love to teach and love working with my students but the new demands each year with little to no compensation isn't worth it anymore. Teachers feel unsupported at all levels and criticized daily. We are not paid for the time we spend. Our class sizes are getting bigger each year, but our budget stays the same, or in some cases, gets lower. I have to begged parents to donate to my class in order to have paper and pencils throughout the year. How are we expected to reach our goals with no supplies to do it?
Workload / Classroom Support

Carly Walkenhorst, Granite School District

Burnout

Tracy Castellanos, Jordan School District

I would want them to know how much money and time educators put into their classrooms.

Melody Green, Nebo School District

I often hear the argument that increasing funding has not been shown to improve student achievement. I disagree. I believe that an increase in funding can have a huge impact if that funding is allocated appropriately. For instance, additional teacher work days and lowering class size would be extremely beneficial to both students and teachers.

Jennifer James, Nebo School District

Students are not numbers. We may have to work with numbers to help the masses, but individual students need the care and attention necessary to grow and function in society. Class sizes should be no more than 24 to a class if possible. There should not be a class with more than 30 students--that should be against school policy. Additionally, teachers are payed less than many jobs that require little to no experience, let alone a degree. Yes, teaching is very rewarding and intrinsically motivating and satisfying, but there comes a point when teachers get burned out because they are doing too much for too little and it's hard to live off of such a little salary. After getting multiple degrees a person shouldn't have to have a second job to support themselves and a family, especially when this type of job is life consuming. School work does not stay in the classroom. Teachers should be valued more than many of the high paying, shallow jobs of the world.

Kate Ormond, Nebo School District

Educating our children is the most important priority.

Earl Gardner, Ogden School District

Teachers work hard every day to ensure a quality education for our students. Properly compensating teachers for their hard work would be appreciated. Class sizes need to go down to give students the attention they need.

Bradi Holder, Ogden School District

Teachers work so hard. Well beyond a 40 hour work week. Yet are continually required to do more & more; without lessening the overflowing work load that already exists. If teachers are required to do more & have more responsibilities, then, something should be taken out of their present workload in order to make time for the new requirements. Also, most teachers spend a lot of time working & creating things for their classrooms during the summer & are not recognized for those efforts that go above & beyond their contracted time.

Paula Hatch, Provo City School District

Increase teacher pay, lower classroom sizes

Linda Threlfall, Provo City School District

We need more money for the specialist areas.

Jay Griffin, South Summit School District

As things become more expensive for school districts, more and more of the money is coming out of my pocket. This is the only professional occupation where teachers are not only expected to fund their classroom, but the also fund the classes that are needed for licensing and increased knowledge for our changing world. I would like to see more support in these two areas, along with salary increases and class size reduction for the intermediate, middle, and high school classrooms.

Rosemarie Olsen, Washington County School District
Workload / Classroom Support

I have been teaching in the state of Utah for 23 years. My job has gotten harder and harder every year I teach. We are asked to do so much. I have a master's degree and four specialized endorsements on my teaching certificate yet my pay is at $65,000 a year. In any other career, with the same amount of education and experience my salary would be much higher. I did not choose to be a teacher for the money, and that is why I will always be a teacher, however, I am constantly told that I need to do more. Teachers are not the problem with education. You need to listen to what we are telling you. Lower class sizes, gives us time to plan and collaborate, support us with difficult students and parents, and quit blaming us when test scores are low. Stop tying our hands with so many controls and mandates. The last faculty meeting we had we were told we can’t ask parents to donate tissues, paper towels and ziplock bags, i.e. grocery items. These are things that I use in my classroom every day. Where am I supposed to get the money to buy these every year??? Come spend a day shadowing a teacher. It would really open your eyes as to what it is we face every day.

Adrianna Griffey, Weber School District

K-12 needs more funding, but K-3 teachers (even K-6) are inadequately represented in both major districts in which I have worked. My spouse is in secondary, and the discrepancy between funds/prep time/consideration is astonishing. Elementary teachers are “on stage” all day. In many districts, they get no duty-free afternoon recess. Can you “hold it” from 12:00-3:30. That's what teachers must do every day. Yes, secondary classes are larger, however, many classes require little correcting or one-on-one instruction. Secondary prep time is incredibly unfairly distributed. The only “prep” time elementary gets is usually taken up with things other than prep: bus duty, parental issues, or required time in PLCs, with precious little time in their own classroom. The legislature needs to provide increased funding for ALL education K-12, but K-3, is in desperate need. Kinder teachers, especially, will leave the grade just for survival.

Patty Nielson, Weber School District

This country needs better conditions for teachers. Teachers have created the past, constructed the present and they are ones helping to shape and secure our future. Without teachers, there is no Nation. We do not ask for anything out of this world, we are asking you to invest in the present and the future of our state and country.

Jose Garcia, Weber School District

My school had 34 students in each fourth grade class. A majority of the students didn’t know their multiplication tables, and scored lower than any previous fourth grade year on their sage at the end of fourth grade. My principal had to fight to get the budget for a half time fourth grade teacher. We are a traditional school so we do not benefit from track time. The 1/2 time fourth grade addition has increased student performance more than 100% but I find it very upsetting and disappointing that our principal and fourth grade teachers had to fight so hard for something so beneficial to the students.

Brittney Bryan, Alpine School District

Special education needs help. There are children with disabilities that are not receiving the help and services they need so desperately. They are being denied a chance to succeed in life. Public school is failing them by not paying special educators and their aides more. The teacher shortage is creating despairing issues. I was placed in a severe special education classroom this year as a first year teacher with 16 students. It was incredibly overwhelming to say the least.

Brynn Frazier, Alpine School District

My numbers in my classroom have been climbing steadily. I do not get funding for aides or any help. We should have an additional teacher, but do not have the FTE funding. I cannot get to all of them. Children are suffering. More than 20 students in a first grade classroom where we are trying to teach children how to read is nearly impossible with one teacher. I have close to 30. It is discouraging.

BetteJo McLeLland, Alpine School District
Workload / Classroom Support

Public Education needs to be a priority above charter schools and online systems. 90 percent of our students attend public school. Support this. Quit taking away resources to fund personal interest businesses that are dressed in sheep's clothing as educational improvements or online services i.e. Howard Stephenson and his money grab for his technology education business. Class size is too large to provide a nurturing experience while parents are continually too busy to help.

John Paynter, Alpine School District

Please take into consideration that public education is educating the future leaders and citizens of our state and country. The children are our future. They are the people who will be taking care of you when you are retired. We need to make education our top priority as it impacts all of society for good or bad! The children are our future!

Stacy Stevens, Alpine School District

I ask for more balance in the system. If we hope to supply Utah with more skilled workers, we need to draw more elementary age students into education by helping them and their families to negotiate the system. Research demonstrates the need for early childhood intervention, and for trauma sensitive schools. Hill Walker demonstrated how these foci can alleviate the tax burden related to putting people in prison 20 years ago.

Jaynan Chancellor, Cache County School District

We work hard everyday to ensure a great education for our students. Legislators need to step up and support (including their financial duty) public education.

Vonzaa Hewitt, Davis School District

A reduction in class size is the KEY! Whatever it takes. Outcomes for students will improve AND incentives to teach will increase!

Jayne Shaum, Davis School District

Something needs to be done with education. Too much is being put on teachers and the expectations keep getting higher. It's almost impossible to do what we need to do. I think we need more support for each student. We need more teachers. The students are getting harder and it's getting harder to reach each individual student. What if there were two teachers per classroom?

Fran Stoker, Davis School District

I have worked in the same school for 5 years and have had varying class sizes. I can personally attest to the learning and growth that takes place for all students when class size is low. This year I am overloaded with 32 students and feel extremely overwhelmed and guilty that I am not meeting all of their needs.

Mikelle Gordon, Granite School District

As dedicated as the teachers are at a school like mine (high poverty, refugees, violence/trauma/PTSD, not a neighborhood school, high stress/demands on teachers, etc), we are losing teachers every year because the work environment is not emotionally, mentally, and sometimes physically safe for teachers or students. We do not have the resources to help these students; we are teachers, not licensed social workers or psychologists. The climate of this type of school, should be trauma sensitive, however, what ends up happening is that teachers are experiencing tertiary, or second-hand trauma themselves. Affects of the trauma is absent-mindedness, being late, forgetfulness, depression and anxiety, stress-related illness, weight gain, losing interest and not motivated in personal life activities, mental health care and medications. We don't have the power or resources to support the teachers, or the students. With larger class sizes, the situation has worsened 10-fold. This is one reason we are not able to keep teachers, or attract new teachers.

Heidi Jensen, Granite School District
Workload / Classroom Support

My school has large class sizes and not enough para educators to help in these classes and in the Behavior Unit. I have 6 students out of 29 in my class who are on behavior contracts (general education classroom). We need help both in our school with more aides/para educators and PARENTS need help learning how to parent.

Karen Oliver, Granite School District

If given the resources schools and teachers would be able to meet the needs of the students we serve. Reduction in class size would enable teachers to personalize the help for the students in their classroom. This would help the overall budget spent on education in the long run because we wouldn't need to remediate as many students.

Tracy Rose, Granite School District

I believe we need more funding for our schools.

Lonee, Granite School District

Teaching is rough. Teachers teach because they want to and not because they aren't educated enough to do something else with their education. Whenever you vote on anything that impacts education, think about if it will make life easier or more harder on teachers. If it will make it harder, then you will lose good teachers, bottom line. Don't use education as a way to get people to vote on more taxes. Look at programs you have going and say "is this more important than the nurse I have in 4 years knowing what they're doing?" or "would the state benefit more from this or from adults who know how to problem solve on their own?"

Jenna Meeks, Jordan School District

My classes average 38 students.

John Lynn Taylor, Ogden School District

We need to stop bragging about how much we get out of our education system given that we spend so little money on it (compared to other states). Good enough is the enemy of great.

Edward Potts, Park City School District

Education is the most important investment our state can make. Why is this not the very top priority? I believe that teachers should have reasonably sized classes, be compensated fairly for their hard work, have opportunities and paid time to gain the expertise they need to serve ALL their students. And with all this in place I believe that teachers need to be held accountable for providing high quality, relevant instruction for all students as well as for creating and maintaining emotionally safe, positive learning communities within their classrooms.

Jennifer Newell, Salt Lake City School District

I hear of money getting to the districts but because it doesn't have specific earmarks it goes where the district sees fit, without any accountability. I disagree to all the trips to out of state place and single hotel accomodations and wasted expense.

Jennifer Chandler, Uintah School District

Teachers are professionals, just as doctors and lawyers. We have to continuously maintain our credentials, just as they do. However, we are not seen in the same light as those careers. Many times we are called underpaid babysitters which is a belitting comment, to say the least. Few beginning teachers stay in the profession for more than 5 years because the stress and strain has already drained them, and they look for other options that will utilize their educational credentials. We need the public to recognize what we do. That without us, there is no future. There will be no doctors, lawyers, architects, or any other white collar workers, because we provide the basis for these professions. I hope that legislators stand by us and support us instead of hanging their heads and stripping us of our dignity. Please, pledge to promote our dedication to providing a better future for all of us.

Misty Beckstrom, Alpine School District

Those building new communities need to pay an impact fee to build the required new schools. I hear developers, etc., have too much clout to make that a reality. That's the whole problem. We need more schools for more
Workload / Classroom Support

classrooms to reduce class sizes, then increase teacher pay. Paying me more does not increase the number of hours in the day and there’s only so much a teacher can do with 38 sixth graders. There is no time to prepare, to mentor, etc. Paying me more does not resolve that situation.

Helen Gurr, Alpine School District

Funding funding funding 20% increase in WPU! Aides in the classroom!

Sam Dixon, Davis School District

Decision makers need to spend a day in a Utah classroom. Don't make unilateral decisions when you haven't been in a classroom in 40 years. You need to see how hard teachers work, who arrives everyday, what our limitations are, what the possibilities are..

ML Hill, Davis School District

We are expected to teach with technology in the classroom with 5 Chrome books available for 30 students. If we want more we are to write grants and try to get more for our classrooms. It just makes it hard when we are told we have to do something, but are not given the resources in order to do what our district/administrators are asking of us.

Peggy Lechman, Davis School District

Every single day I worry about my 8th grade students that I teach. They have a lot going on in their young lives and not all of them get the attention they need. With my class sizes near 40 students in each class, I can't make the connection I would like to with each one. Making a positive adult connection is so important. Please make reducing class sizes a priority. There are many needs in public education. Please realize there are so many good teachers that want the best for their students. Lately I feel like my profession and public education is under attack and those that have negative feelings toward public education don't understand the pressures of teaching. I wish we could all focus on trying to fix and support our local public schools rather than take away funding. ALL students need to be a priority.

Holly Rogers, Davis School District

I have 28 students in my second grade classroom. I have 10 students with educational concerns. I need a smaller class size, so I can help fill in their educational gaps.

Melinda Smith, Davis School District

Education deserves unbiased attention. Classroom demands are greater than ever. Students and teachers need systems of support (human, monetary, and time resources) to ensure success.

Jen Ellsworth, Granite School District

I taught first grade with 31 students, I am still surprised every day that I didn’t quit. I now have 31 third graders, several of which are emotionally impaired and one that doesn’t speak English. I have a very low class and feel that there isn't enough of me to go around.

Kira Hurst, Granite School District

Our future in Utah depends upon quality education for our children. Fund us adequately, please.

Teri D. Jenkins, Granite School District

I am fortunate that I can teach for the joy of it (not for the money), but each year it gets harder and harder. Less support, more hoops, and huge classes make the job nearly impossible. If people in Utah want to support our children we need to be willing to pay for the education they need and deserve.

Kristine Marriott, Jordan School District

For the past four years, I have not had a “normal” classroom environment due to not enough FTE funding from my district. One year, we had to have 2.5 teachers at my grade level with no other grade to "split" with. As a result, a 1/2 time teacher taught the 3rd group in the morning, and my colleague and I had to separate her kids and teach them in the afternoon. During that year I had 40 kids for half of each day in an elementary setting. It was miraculous that any
learning went on at all. The next year presented the same funding problem and we tried having 2 part time aides share the third class for 1/3 of the day and rotated kids through as in middle school. It was a disaster in terms of classroom management for the aides, and that spilled over into the entire grade level. Once again, our test scores looked good, but we nearly made ourselves ill working as hard as we did to overcome the inherent problems that came with the model. This year, ONCE AGAIN, we didn't have enough FTE money to pay 3 teachers for 64 kids, so I have 32 6th graders (a group of struggling learners) and am barely keep my head (and theirs) above water. When is our state going to wake up to the fact that they can't keep working their most experienced and dedicated teachers to death and hope to retain them in the profession. Retirement is looking so nice right about now, and this is coming from a 29 year veteran teacher who had envisioned herself working another 5-6 years to help mold and change young lives for the better. Sigh. It is so very discouraging. Thanks.

Anne Renz, Murray City School District

With the new students coming in being tech savy and having to compete with their video game attention spans more funding for class size reduction would be great this will allow a more personal connection with students. Having nearly 180 students in a day it is difficult to build a connection with that many students.

Wayne Nielson, North Sanpete School District

In years past, my class size has been 30-31 students. I felt like I could manage that with time, teaching with depth and still have life outside of the classroom. Last year, I had 34 students in my 4th grade class. I feel like I am a pretty good teacher and I can do a balancing act, but it's amazing what a difference it makes with 3-4 more students in a class. Seating is cramped, teaching with depth is limited, and grading takes much longer. Not to mention management and behavior issues. This year I have 24 students and it is astounding what a class size does to teaching and the students learning! Please, if at all possible, keep class size under 30 students. Student learning is more effective and teacher motivation improves. That would help keep teachers in this profession and keep them motivated to want to become a better educator.

Denise Ray, Nebo School District

When Scott Howell was my state senator, I invited him to spend a day at my school. It was eye-opening for him. He told me that no one in corporate America would put up with the kind of conditions that teachers put up with. I'd like each legislator to spend one day in a school to see the great things that are happening with teachers who care and give their students what they need.

Linda Wills, Other

I would like the decisions my legislators make to have my students' best interest at heart. Teachers are continually doing more with less in an effort to meet the needs of very diverse classes. I want support in educating every student.

Amanda Roberson, Salt Lake City School District

Dear esteemed senators and representatives, In preparation for the coming 2018 legislative session, I invite you to come and spend an entire day at Mill Creek Elementary School in Granite School District (where I work as special education teacher) and do some or all of the following: (1) Observe a few teachers throughout the day and after hours until they go home (it's not uncommon for teachers at my school and elsewhere to stay after hours to grade papers and design lesson plans); (2) talk to teachers about challenges they face and their concerns for their students' learning and overall well being; (3) note classroom, library, technology and playground resources; (4) note classroom sizes, adult-to-student ratios, and one-on-one attention time for struggling students; (5) eat breakfast and school lunch, and observe the nutritional quality of the food; (6) eat breakfast with students in the cafeteria, eat lunch in the faculty room, and ask students and teachers questions; and finally, (7) talk to our amazing principal, Ann Kane, about the demographics, needs and accomplishments of our students, and about the commitment, skill and hard work of our teachers and staff. I know you have the best interests of the children of our state at heart. Please spend a day with some of the future parents, healthcare providers, leaders, clergy, entrepreneurs, artists, scientists, engineers, and teachers themselves of our state. I'm proud of our students; I want the best for every one of them; and yes, I
Workload / Classroom Support

worry for some of them, knowing the challenges they face in their lives. I think you'll feel the same way once you
meet them, and I hope you'll share your insights with your fellow legislators. Sincerely, Helen Salas-McCarty
Listening & Spoken Language Teacher Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind helens@usdb.org 801-792-6539
Helen Salas-McCarty, Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind

The schools are educating the future generations. They need support and parents need to be held more accountable
for their child's education.

Susan Roberts, Washington County School District

Teaching is my passion. I take it very seriously. I continually strive to keep my education current. Everyday I show up
to my classroom with excitement for the day and stay energized and organized so that my students can be engaged
and fully invested in their own education. I spend hundreds of dollars in my classroom on curriculum and incentives
for my students. Most of the time my class has over 30 students. Frequently we have to share supplies or I need to
buy them. I create my own social studies and science curriculum as I do not have the supplies and resources
available to me. I work many hours overtime and many extra days as my planning time isn't efficient. I teach in a
school with portable 7 full portable classrooms while the charter school down the road is building a new Jr. High. This
charter school has a high turnover rate and I personally have taught several students that come back into my
classroom. These students have a big learning curve as they adjust to our classroom (both behaviorally and
academically). Every student I have had from there has been a couple or more grade levels behind. They are darling
students just like all my students, but it takes more effort to teach them what they need to learn. The charter school's
Sage test results are far below the other local public schools (by half or third). Every single student in my classroom
grows. My low kids progress and so do my high kids. It's an environment of community, respect, and a growth
mindset. Teaching students is an important job as it sets the future for all these incredible, brilliant children. Our
students need more. They need a teacher that has time to adequately plan, a classroom size that is smaller so they
can receive more attention, and rigorous programs and incentives.

Jenifer Allen, Weber School District

I am an educator with both regular education certification and Special Ed certification. I currently have a caseload of
47 students. My group sizes are NOT small group. I am not taking a lunch so that the students have smaller group
sizes and I still have 12-14 in a group. It is not as effective as having a smaller caseload and more individualized
services for these students who need the extra help. I have a great supporting staff and they are hesitant to refer
students who need help because of my caseload. We need to do what is the best interest of the children we are
serving.

Melvina Austin, Alpine School District

I am a special education teacher. I love my students but it is getting harder and harder every year to give them what
they need in order to be successful. The amount of paperwork is overwhelming and my group sizes just keep
growing because there is not a cap on how large a resource class can be. When my class gets larger I do get more
aide time, but that doesn't help with the amount of paperwork and prep time required to give adequate services to my
growing number of students.

Mickelle Bowling, Alpine School District

The teaching profession is not treated with respect. We are licensed professionals, yet we are micromanaged by the
public and asked to do more and more with less time, less money, and increased class sizes. The problems in the
educational system are being placed squarely on the shoulders of the over-worked, unappreciated, and disrespected
educators who are doing all they can to help kids succeed. However, no one can compensate fully for the lack of
parental/home support and a student who is willing and actively participating in his/her learning.

Kristie Curtis, Alpine School District
Workload / Classroom Support

If we could have more planning time, especially with the new Science SEEd Standards and have smaller class sizes as we find more and better teachers, then retention of educators and engagement in the classroom would drastically increase is my hypothesis!

Nathalie Hernandez, Alpine School District

Let us teach, not be governed

Ryan Newman, Alpine School District

Teaching is a wonderful profession that changes lives. But those lives can be best affected with personal and individual relationships with teachers. That is much easily accomplished in smaller class sizes. Providing funding to reduce class size and increase compensation for teachers (NOT administrators) is one of the best ways to find and keep great teachers.

Scotten Whaley, Alpine School District

That when schools have the funding needed to hire additional teachers so that there is a reasonable amount of students being taught. When they fund for para to help with small group instruction in reading and math. We can accomplish the goals that you have set for us.

Robyn Smith, Box Elder School District

Teachers work VERY hard to meet the needs of our students. We are tired of being disregarded, and having people treat teaching like running a business. We are dealing with variables that we CANNOT control (actual little human, and their lifestyles etc). You cannot run teaching like a regular business. Give us some credit for knowing what we are doing, and being competent to do our jobs. Compensate us fairly for the work we do and help us be able to support a family on our wages. Presently we CANNOT support a family on a teacher's salary!!!

Virginia Spenst, Box Elder School District

Teachers need to be paid more to retain them, also, studies show that class size really does not have a significant effect on students. That may be the case, however, it does significantly impact the teacher, and the teacher is the one teaching the students.

Jennifer Asay, Canyons School District

Please give teachers the needed tools to do their jobs well.

Karen Cheney, Davis School District

We are doing our best! Please support us. We are not the problem.

John Hill, Davis School District

Teachers are leaving the profession. We need to stop great teachers leaving the profession. We need to make it a profession people fight to be in .. not get out.

Tonya Hyatt, Davis School District

Qualified teachers are an asset to education. It's unfortunate for educators to rely on unqualified teachers (or substitutes) when they have conferences or any type of leave at school. I absolutely love what I do. I teach my students everyday and look at them and wonder what career choice they will have. I see doctors, teachers, engineers, and many more. It does get harder to teach when we have 30+ students: Getting their attention, correcting, conferencing, one-on-one interventions or even small group.

Estephanie Maiava, Davis School District

I am a special education teacher with 14 years of experience multiple awards including the CARE Award and the Special Education Teacher for Davis School District. Two years ago I completely burned out - anxious, exhausted, sick. My caseload was too high and the students I work with are very difficult. I contacted the superintendent and my special education bosses and fortunately was able to get the extra help I needed, so I am still teaching. We cannot
afford to burn out teachers, because we can no longer replace them. Even though I love teaching, I warned each of my 8 children not to pursue teaching, because it is too little money to deal with exploding class sizes. I hope the legislators can do something to entice people to teach.

**Jill Major, Davis School District**

I am the only Kindergarten teacher at my school, and I have 55 students. I don't have the time, materials, and energy to help all of my students master the skills for Kindergarten. There needs to be a limit with how many students can be in a classroom to ensure each student to be successful.

**Jennifer McIlrath, Davis School District**

Depression and anxiety is on the rise among our students. We have too many students in our classes to be able to really know them, let alone notice who among them is struggling and contemplating suicide. They just get lost in the shuffle. I am teaching 38 students in AP BC Calculus, this class should be capped at 30 so that I can provide the help and support that they really need.

**Tracey Meade, Davis School District**

Special education teachers can't teach the students because there is too much paper work. Most special education teachers don't have time to teach.

**Curtis Page, Davis School District**

Education should be a priority. This is the future that we are taking care of and teaching. These are the people who will grow up and take our places in life. We need good people in education who are valued, trained, and supported so that the impact that they have on these kids will make a difference. This world is changing at such a rapid pace and the educational system we have in place is not keeping up. The salaries, training, and support are not there, the educational community is not valued and many of the best teachers are leaving.

**Suzy Price, Davis School District**

I have been teaching Junior High and High school for 17 years, all in Utah. Teacher moral is a steadily decreasing from the added responsibilities and decreasing focus on a positive work environment. Classes sizes are too large for effective teaching, and the demands for performance are increasing. Any business would say this is a bad model to follow for success. Teaching is a very rewarding experience, but I have a hard time recommending this profession to others as work environment and incentives to teach are being eroded.

**Bradley Shafer, Davis School District**

Teaching is hard and stressful, but so important. It is a professional position that needs to be funded as such.

**Kathryn Sorte, Davis School District**

I am really concerned with the continuing teacher shortage, and especially the fact that it is getting worse, not better. I don't claim to know the answer, but putting undertrained teachers in the classroom is NOT the answer. This does a disservice to the children who need an education. I believe that raising teacher pay and reducing class sizes and providing consistent, quality mentoring for new teachers are probably some of the best ways to attract and retain teachers. I am close to the end of my career, and I am concerned about who will teach my cute little neighbors and my grandchildren.

**Marcia Thompson, Davis School District**

Teachers are being asked to do more and more without training and with additional behavior schools. So instead of addressing the problem of why teachers are leaving, our state decides to make it easier to be a teacher. This will not fix the problem. The teachers will still keep leaving because of the high stress and low pay.

**Dawn Webb, Davis School District**
Workload / Classroom Support

The primary reason we have a teacher shortage in Utah is due to the high demands - not enough prep time (which leads to planning after hours), high class sizes, finding our own curriculum for some subjects, continuously adding new paperwork and requirements to our daily schedule - coupled with low pay. If teachers were paid for the amount of work they do, there wouldn't be a shortage.

Sara Wilson, Davis School District

I have been teaching over 18 years and finally feel appreciated with our pay raise. It does help a little. I love my job and the colleagues I work with. This job, however, takes a lot out of a person, especially when you have 30 or more students in your classroom. It should be mandated teachers should only have 25 students in their classroom. There is a difference when you have 5 - 7 more students. It is difficult to reach all students! Also, you need to keep teachers in the field by funding a merit pay bonus system. Keep good teachers!!!!

Kimberlee Affleck, Granite School District

As a first year teacher, I feel overwhelmed with the variety of requirements for maintaining my teaching license. The same is true of testing and curriculum for the classroom. I don't see how any 1 person can possibly have the time to address all these requirements properly. It is no wonder that most teachers quit within the first 3 years. It requires about 10-20 hours a week more than the allotted contract time. A reduction in class sizes would help a lot, or part-time assistant teachers to help with things like differentiation. The process of "educating" a student has become overly complicated, and it shows in teacher retention rates, student performance, career readiness. More and more it seems like public education has become a bloated institution whose hidden purpose is to funnel more tax dollars and community donations to private corporations who "support" and supply our schools with an increasing number of throwaway products.

Charles Christopher Elrod, Granite School District

I would like to see those who vote on educational issues substitute in three different educational settings. Then I feel they would see how much more support teachers need today in classrooms. As a teacher, when I get the support I need, I have more confidence in myself and the energy to do my best.

Susan Gunn, Granite School District

The biggest challenge I think that students and teachers face is the overcrowding of classrooms. I have had the great opportunity to have a 3rd grade classroom with only 22 students in it. My students made a lot of progress and it showed on their end of year tests. The next year I had 30 students. I did not have as much time to address learning difficulties with students because there were just too many of them. I noticed that as a whole my class did not progress as much and it showed on their end of year tests. It was so frustrating to know there were holes of understanding in some students and simply not have enough time to fill them all. Likewise this year when I first started teaching half day kindergarten I had 32 in my class. This was so difficult! It was harder to maintain order and it was hard to teach routines to so many and trying to assess and do groups was just insane. When we were fortunate enough to add another class and my class was reduced to 19, the difference was amazing. Things were calmer and more productive. I felt that I could cover twice as much material. I also can keep small group sizes low enough to actually have them be more effective and I can meet with my groups more often because there are not as many of them. In my personal opinion, reducing class size would be the number one action that would really increase student growth and learning. A teacher cannot be expected to give personalized education to such large class sizes. It is also very taxing to do the amount of grading required by a large class. Class sizes have been increased, but the money and time given to teachers to do all the grading, planning, preparation and paperwork associated with those extra students has not been increased. It is time to start to invest in and trust teachers.

Katy Halliday, Granite School District

The message that I would like to share with my legislators is that their votes regarding education speak directly to their priorities, and while there are certainly exceptions to this rule, by and large the Utah legislature has been far too slow to react to desperate needs in Utah's education system for far too long, oftentimes implementing "solutions" that are woefully weak and ineffective. What this conveys to teachers with whom I work is that the Utah legislature only
Workload / Classroom Support

cares about solving issues within education when they are faced with no other option than to act, and the consequent “action” taken by legislators is done only to put a faux-feather in their political cap so that they can say they've accomplished something substantive without actually having done so. We are facing a teacher shortage and yet there are people trying to make it harder for educated, experienced people that could be amazing educators to get certified? Utah crams more children into the average classroom than almost anyone and yet spends among the least per pupil annually: aren't they worth more than that? There are a long list of oft-discussed issues in education, both within Utah exclusively as well as nationally, but the bottom line is this: as teachers, we are aware that an inherent responsibility of our career is doing more with less, and if the message that the Utah legislature is sending us as educators continues to be that we need to continue to do even more with far less than anyone else, not only will Utah see a sharp decline in their impressive quality of education, but we as educators will send you the same hollow, ostensible support on the voting ballot.

Macord Johnson, Granite School District

The difficulties teachers address in the classroom in title 1.

Kerry Lee, Granite School District

The teacher shortage is real and getting worse. We need to make teaching a respected and well paid profession if we are going to attract and retain high quality teachers. I have had two student teachers recently that quit education after they were finished student teaching because the pay wasn't worth the about of work and emotion they put in.

Denice Long, Granite School District

Teachers are poor, overworked and given little respect as professionals. Address those issues and you will attract and retain quality teachers.

Denice Smith, Granite School District

As it currently stands, teaching is a very demoralizing profession. We are here because we want to be a force for good in our communities, but are being treated poorly by governmental officials, parents, students and occasionally administrators. It has an effect on how effective we can be as teachers.

Caitlin Thomas, Granite School District

I was a thirty-four year career educator. Although I received supply money (about $250), it was definitely not enough to provide supplies for each of my students. It amounted to less than $1 per year per student. I taught every 8th grade student in the school, had about 450 kids per year, and class sizes sometimes as high as 40 kids. We had a student body of 1400 at Hunter Jr. High. Although my supply money was never enough, that amount definitely was not enough for teachers who were in their first years of teaching. I spent upwards of $1200 dollars per year. New teachers don't even have enough money to pay their bills, let alone spend that kind of money in order to do their job. That's definitely a reason for new teachers to leave the profession.

Penney Tyree, Granite School District

Teachers deserve MORE. We work with some of the toughest issues for very little pay. We are bursting at the seams with class sizes of 36. We have both parents and students screaming in our faces and treating us with disrespect and we can't do anything about it. Not only that, but there is absolutely no regard or respect for educators. Enough is enough. Soon, no one is going to want to do this job. Changes must be made. Every day I hear quality educators talking about leaving the profession because there are too many problems and they just can't take any more. It is a real shame to see some of the best teachers out there wanting to leave their jobs.

Ashley Vierig, Granite School District

We are so grateful for the increase made last session to improve teacher salaries. This is a huge step in the right direction for drawing quality educators to the profession and keeping them here.I am concerned about the lowering of required qualifications for those newly hired teachers and the overall morale of teachers in general. When
Workload / Classroom Support

qualification requirements are lowered, it sends a clear message to those of us with Masters degrees and endorsements. It tells us none of that matters. "Anyone" can teach! We know this is absolutely NOT true. Just ask someone who has made the attempt and left. It is the most difficult job. A job we do every day with little to no support, no accolades, and mounting class sizes. The demands on teachers is growing every day. Teachers are asked to handle special education students that are not well served in the regular education classroom. This leads to very big issues. The message that teachers don't matter and don't do their jobs is loud and clear. We have to change this! Smaller class sizes, more pay at the starting levels, greater support and more training (not OFF contract time) is vital. Please help us change the perception of this profession. We are desperate and our students' futures depend on these changes. Thank you.

Jaime Woolley, Granite School District

My 26 year old son told me recently, "Mom, seeing how hard you work and what you go through, I don't see why anyone would want to become a teacher for the amount of compensation and problems you experience." My answer, "No one would do it for any other reason except that they love kids and want to help them." I think this is true of A LOT of Utah educators.

Rachelle Spencer, Iron County School District

As an educator I could not afford to buy a house. I went to a government program called the good neighbor program to be able to make it possible to afford a house. In order to afford a house I had to be willing to live in a rough rough neighborhood where drug deals happen in front of my house, where fights happen in the street, and where people pull out guns as a solution to their problems. I have had to have the police search my house once for and intruder. I have had to hide in my basement while guns and a fight were going on outside, while we had guests at our home. Is this the kind of places and situation you want you teachers who have 4+ year degrees to have to live. The first 5-10 years of a teachers career are the most low paid and most vulnerable to leave the profession. This is more likely to happen when they are not paid well and they are overworked. With the rising cost of our medical coverage and little increase in pay it has become harder and harder for new teachers to have the desire to stay with the profession.

Pam Bryson, Jordan School District

I work with special education students. I know I make a difference and help the students improve their skills. many students that I have worked with have returned to regular ed placement because of the hard work of the student, teacher, parent and myself. I have been in the classroom for over 30 years and am too young to retire (age 52). I am overwhelmed with the responsibilities that seem to be added to my plate each year. My contract time ends at 3:30 but I do not leave the school until 5:00 and often have work to do at home. I love my job and the contact I have with colleagues, parents and students. I can't keep giving more. I know what my students need but do not have the time to meet their needs because of the number of students I services (45, while the recommendation is 35). We need to be compensated for the time we are spending preparing for our classes. I don't need technology, I need man power. I need additional aide support or additional teachers to help with the demands. The regular ed teachers would be able to do more in the classrooms if there were fewer kids in there classes. That could cut down on the number of students qualifying for special education services. I need your help. I don't believe money is the answer to everything. But money is needed for more resources (people). I love technology and use it in my classroom. But that can not take the place of the student reading directly to an adult. Or the time needed to teach a student a math skill. I have 12 students in a 5th grade math group. I spend 20 minutes reteaching core 5th grade concepts and 25 minutes working on individual skills that they are deficit in. If they miss a problem they have to fix it with me. As you can well imagine, 1:12 ratio makes this difficult. I have been fortunate and have had 2 high school students volunteering in my class for the last 4 weeks (an assignment from their language arts class). Today as they were asking who needed help I did not have any corrections that needed to be done. For the first time this year I was caught up! One of the students will complete his volunteer hours in two days. The other student will continue to come for the remainder of January. Then I am on my own again. I cannot express enough how much they have helped the students and me. Imagine what kind of progress could be made with another adult in the class. That is what man power can do. The data shows that the students have made progress in these few weeks. Please consider the needs of each individual student. They need you to do your job so that we can do ours.
Workload / Classroom Support

Rochelle Manglinong, Jordan School District

I wish so badly that I had a TA or smaller class sizes. I teach English and I spend HOURS upon HOURS giving individual feedback on student writing. My students make significant improvement the more individualized feedback they receive and the sooner they get it. It just isn't possible to do with 35-40 students in each class. Imagine 240 essays that are 5-6 pages long on top of lesson planning, meetings, differentiated teaching, etc. NOT POSSIBLE.

Megan Murdock, Jordan School District

Older schools need to be updated with technology and are just as important as new schools!

Belynda Paxton, Jordan School District

We need higher salaries to retain qualified teachers

Kim Peterson, Jordan School District

Look at all schools and not just Salt Lake are.

Jolene Herzog, Logan City School District

Again focus on teachers and their concerns. We should and do focus on the students, but teachers and pay seem to not be addressed. Lots of talk but no action.

Derek Hoskins, Logan City School District

You cannot keep adding requirements in our teaching without supporting us in them. We are lacking pay, people, and parent support.

Canisha Harrison, Millard School District

I would like to let them know that teachers work very hard, and most teachers take their work home with them and work for hours every night. Many teachers get burned out within the first few years of teaching. My school has lost many teachers due to this, and I feel like higher salaries would help.

Nicollette Anderson, Nebo School District

Increase pay, or good luck finding teachers. Many of the teachers today are eligible for retirement within a couple of years

Scot Moldenhauer, Nebo School District

Teachers are over worked, have too large of classes, underpaid, and have horrible benefits. I am also very frustrated with the low quality of teacher that is coming into the field. I worked hard to earn my qualifications as a teacher, so it is really hard to watch others being hired with no teaching experience or qualifications.

Josie Reynaud, Nebo School District

Placing ELL students in already-overcrowded mainstream classrooms has been very counterproductive. Bring back LEP sheltered classes for ELL students.

Warren Brodhead, Other

Most of my mediocre paycheck goes to pay for the majority of lessons and units that I do to help the students become engaged in learning with hands-on and interactive lessons. But also having to pay for all relicensing and assessments to become a highly qualified teacher takes a big chunk too. Then you have those people who decide they want to teach and they have fewer mandates put on them and fewer fees. But if I want to change to a different subject matter which should require less time then those off the street with no experience I'm being told it requires 8 classes that will take approx two years.

Drew Wright, Other
I am a 29 year veteran teacher of secondary mathematics. I am a teacher leader in my school and district. My students score well on any state mandated tests, and overall, my students show progress each year. By all measures, I am effective. But I am burning out. Increasingly, I am having to make up for the lack of quality in hiring for new teachers, and I am being told more and more paperwork is the answer to show that I am an effective educator. Do I have room to improve? Yes. Do I want to collaborate? Of course. But for me to have to train teachers with little or no educational background on the pedagogy of how to run a classroom year after year is not fair to me or my students—or the students in the class where the new teacher tries to learn as they go. I am training these under-qualified hires on things that I learned when I was in school, in essence, giving away the education I had to pay for. Why is it not important to hold every educator to a high standard of pedagogy knowledge? And more often than not, these are also people who do not know the math well enough to teach it to high school students. They struggle from the first day of class, and students try to bail on them as soon as they figure that out. That makes class loads for competent teachers skyrocket, making the division of labor so skewed it becomes almost comical. This past year, we lost 3 highly qualified candidates for an open position to other districts because of the lower pay in our district. Our district could not compete with others close to us in the amount of raises that were offered. The state base is so low, teachers must consider those kinds of things. So now we have an under-qualified teacher who struggles every day, but was available and cheap a week before school started. And I have to try to make up for that through collaboration, mentoring and an increased student load. It is burning me out. I am hoping that the state will recognize that funding for teachers has not increased in so long that they will take action this session—both in actual salary and class sizes. I am hoping that we can attract and retain a higher quality of person into the profession. If that happens, I will be able to learn from others and improve my own practice, instead of always being the one asked to train under-qualified hires to just make it through the year.

Carla Johnson, Provo City School District

Teachers need more support in the classroom.

Malia Siufanua, Provo City School District

Working as a professional teacher for over 25 years, I can see that threatening tactics are non-productive such as merit pay of testing outcomes. To help students and teachers, make sure the salaries are adequate and the money is used for the schools students, not programs, or new promises. Get the money to the students.

Kimala Bosh, Washington County School District

Class sizes are way too big; I have 230 students. It’s really hard to provide individualized help with over 40+ students in a class. Not to mention grading all their work, prep and planning. I’ve been teaching for 15 years, but I’m really wondering there is a better career out there for me because I feel so overworked, underpaid, and underappreciated. I would discourage a young person from going into teaching.

Sara Sisam, Washington County School District

Please put students and teachers first in everything you do. Out students deserve more!

Karyn Wilson, Washington County School District

Teachers put in so much time and effort to be the best that they can be. They put in time to prep for lessons, correct student work, enter grades, read about current research and best practices, and think about what will help students achieve in all areas. Much of this time is outside of the contract hours. This is outside of contract hours because during the day, teachers are already running a marathon, so to speak, to make the most of the time that is with students. Teachers try to maximize all learning/ teaching time with the students. It would be nice to see that teachers are compensated for their time and efforts. I can see that in the time that I have put in through the past year and a half that I have been teaching, that there is so much work to be done from the moment I get to the school building to the moment that I leave. I am here before and after contract hours. I work these long hours alongside my colleagues. We all want the best for our students because we care. It would just be nice to be compensated for what we do for our students, who will be contributing members of society and future. We also want future educators that could be amazing in this career field to not be steered away just because they are not recognized or compensated for the work that is done in a school.
Workload / Classroom Support

Lexus Monroe, Weber School District

Legislators need to spend more time in public schools before they make the "rules" for student testing and success measurement.

Tina Thompson, Weber School District

Less testing and more teaching time

Sandra C. Toone, Weber School District

We are getting plenty of money from individual tax payers. However, the funds are distributed to a far too large administration. We constantly see teachers on the news asking for smaller classrooms and increased pay, yet every year their is more money from tax payers and yet those of us on the "FRONT LINES" do not see money or smaller classrooms. Please reduce administration size and salary. Push the money through to those of us with the kids every-single-day. We are the group who will make the difference in the outcome of students. This will also cause more of these amazing teachers to STAY in the classroom rather than move to administrative positions simply because they need more pay and are frustrated with class sizes getting larger and larger every year.

Christine Barger, Alpine School District

Being a teacher is hard on marriages and family life. In order to be the kind of teacher that you, parents, and I expect of myself, I am ALWAYS working extra time. My husband strongly disapproves of my doing that. You need to please pay teachers more for time worked so that we are not getting pennies on the dollar. Bonus pay may be the answer, but I am not sure yet. A huge help would be smaller class sizes.

Cindy Hansen, Alpine School District

As teachers we work hard and put forth our time and energy and are paid little. Every year I wonder if it is worth it. There is SO much required of me and there are times its too much. Grades, core curriculum, assessments, standards, documentation, effective teaching, supplies (I spent $2500 of my own money last year), taking classes to relicense (my early childhood endorsement from another state is not accepted so I have to pay and retake classes I have already taken), and class sizes are getting larger and larger (29 kids in Kindergarten is way to much and add 2 sessions that's 60 kids I need to teach a full day curriculum in half the day and report cards and parent teacher conferences). The list goes on. Every year I look at other careers to see what options I have as I'm spent. Please see teachers load is great.

Lois Hardy, Alpine School District

The "30 kids in a classroom" days are over in my area. It's 40 kids in a class now, and we don't have the supplies or technology to ensure adequate access for all students. We also don't have appropriate planning time because so much time has to be devoted to grading when there is such a high quantity of students.

Jessica Low, Alpine School District

I have taught Kindergarten or Preschool for 21 years. The teachers I've collaborated with over the years are amazing but so much is being required with so little being given back that most are ready to quit or move to another state. We are now required to take so many children with serious behavior issues... YES, even at 4 and 5 years old many children already have been abused or neglected to the point that they are violent, depressed, and discouraged with low self esteem or pressured by perfection driven parents that they can have ulcers, anxiety or distructive tendencies. We have many success stories, in fact MOST of my preschool children learn ALL of the letters and sounds and can count to 20 or beyond by the end of the year, but in preschool we only have 14 children in each class with a full time aide. The poor Kindergarten teachers are the ones that suffer. PLEASE HELP THEM!!

Irene Lynn Wilkerson, Alpine School District
A change in standards issued by the state with no funds for training or curriculum supplies available without writing our own grants. Increased workload due to the standard change without extra funding for meeting a working together to create new curriculum. Workload is already to large with each class having between 30-35 students in them.

Heidi Heil, Box Elder School District

We are passionate, caring, professionals who love our students and the opportunity to give them a brighter future. We work much more than our contract time preparing to make each day as meaningful as possible. We teach the individuals, and monitor and assess everyone’s growth. As teachers we push our selves to utilize best practices. Most of us take classes, and earn certificates well beyond what is needed for relicensure. Through out the summer I will take classes as well go in at least once a week to prepared, adjust, or improve curriculum. I am not only not paid, but I still pay for day care. It is important to me to continauly improve even in my twelfth year of teaching and implement best practices I am learning or ways to deepen understanding. I come in early and stay late to help individuals that struggle with concepts. We spend much more than we are compensated for on supplies, rewards, or things that make our lessons more meaning. I've done this for over crowded classrooms. I've had up to 32 third graders in class and 30 second graders. I care too much about the kids each year not to contact each family individually with a positive phone call through out the year and individual attention and praise. I can not do this when in my contract hours or with the legislative money allotted. I sacrifice my family time and money to help support these kids knowing I may be the only praise and love they get some days. Knowing they may not get support with reading or homework at home. As educators we do all these things because we care. Please support us support the wonderful children of Utah.

Alisa Olsen, Cache County School District

I'm a 30 year professional with a masters degree. I make a fraction of what other professionals make with similar education. Everyone talks that there is nothing more important than education, educating our children, no more noble calling than teaching. If that is true, look at how teachers are paid and treated.

Rob Stewart, Cache County School District

If we could lower class sizes, increase teacher pay based on growth performance of students rather than benchmark, or provide more classroom support- I believe that every student would benefit immensely.

Whitney Tibbitts, Cache County School District

Cost of living vs. Teacher pay in the State of Utah. Look at housing market for a reasonable house payment is close to have of a monthly check

Brandon Cornaby, Canyons School District

I'm trying my hardest, but I am sometimes overwhelmed with everything I have to do. I could really use more prep. time or fewer students.

Susan Callister, Davis School District

I just finished my degree in Elementary Education. I certainly didn't do it because of the money, but after doing my student teaching it has opened my eyes to how much teachers truly do! It feels like a slap in the face how little teachers get paid, for how much they do. I also have a 4th grader and his class has 33 students. The teacher is amazing and I love the school but the district won't approve another teacher for next year. It's a problem.

Magali Cromar, Davis School District

It is sad that after 23 years of teaching, I can't hardly afford a decent apartment without the help of a second job.

Pam Martinez, Davis School District

What teachers are expected to do keeps increasing and changing and they aren't adequately compensated for this extra burden it puts on them
Workload / Classroom Support

Lesley Mason, Davis School District

Kids need dedicated teachers to be successful. Teachers need to feel valued to continue giving what students need. We all need community support.

Sara McKay, Davis School District

The quality of my own children and my students’ education has continued to decline drastically. Very few children want to go into the teaching profession. Those who do - leave, and they leave quickly! It is an overwhelming job that is absolutely impossible to do properly within the contract time we are given. The pay is downright pathetic, especially when you consider the higher-level education and hoops we must jump through to get our jobs. Public respect towards teachers is at an all-time low. Money is put into the wrong places to supposedly create a quick-fix. I am truly scared for the future as I’ve watched these kids move on into life less prepared than ever. It's time to quit looking for a magical program or the fluffy words to make it appear that we are doing okay. Education is an incredibly broken system. Smaller class sizes would immediately increase student learning! Please DO SOMETHING!!

Kris Orton, Davis School District

I teach at a large elementary school. We service over 1,000 students. Our class sizes are inconsistently reduced. Some classes are at 25 students while third grade has over 30 students in a class. The toll on students and educators is unfair. There are space issues of safety within the class and on the playground. In addition, the stress level on these educators is significantly greater.

Stacey Osborne, Davis School District

Please don’t make any more big changes to education before allowing us time to implement all of the previous changes. Also, please don't add more things to do without taking things away first. I already work 11-12 hours every day just to keep my head above water. Good teachers are feeling like bad teachers because the work load has become impossible for us to meet. We love helping kids, but more and more of what is being required of us takes us away from our students and they are where the focus really should be. Thanks for listening.

Lisa Prochet, Davis School District

One of my science classes contains 35 students, and I only have 34 chairs in my room. Even though I teach at a Junior High, some of my students are reading at a 1st grade level. How am I supposed to diversify my lessons so that the low students are given the time and resources that they need, while the gifted students are challenged to their full potential? With a class of 35 it is impossible for me to give every student the learning experience that they deserve.

Amanda Shea, Davis School District

Help make teaching a profession that would make it so teachers would encourage our own children to become teachers. At this point very few would ever encourage our own children to follow in our footsteps.

Todd Street, Davis School District

Teachers should be valued, respected and compensated for all their time and effort

Celeste Watkins, Davis School District

Keep good teachers who are committed to good teaching

Lisa Wright, Davis School District

My kids are disrespectful and their major behavioral issues cut into teaching time EVERY DAY for 10-30 minutes daily. We need aides (who get paid decent money) to help govern so we can teach. Also, we need paid time to plan, grade, and learn curriculum/standards without kids and without professional development sucking up our time so we can meet the goals set for us.

Ali Brusa, Granite School District
Workload / Classroom Support

Leave me alone to teach.  
**Stacey Chappell, Granite School District**

Don't dismiss the will of UEA as you have tended to do in the past.  
**Travis Dahl, Granite School District**

We are all trying to do the best we know how. Students coming into schools now have been raised by the internet and coming less mature, lower academically, and with more behavior problems than ever. We need more support and funding.  
**Elizabeth Gifford, Granite School District**

Additional funding needs to be provided to either lower class sizes or hire intervention teachers to help academically at risk students become proficient in reading and math. Based on the current FTE Class size of 27.5, it is difficult for a classroom teacher to meet the individual needs of every student; especially with the large number of economically disadvantaged and English Language Learner students found in many schools within Granite School district.  
**Janet Nerdin, Granite School District**

It is really hard to get to ALL students and meet their needs when you have more than 25 students in your class. What would they do if they had 25 children to look after? Resources are important because so many of us use our own money to accommodate those needs.  
**Wendy Wagstaff, Granite School District**

I work with all day Kindergarten classes. I see a lot of growth for those students. They get the instruction they need, and they are absent less than half day peers. Teachers are burning out with the workload they have. Students have great emotional and behavioral needs, and smaller classes will help teachers meet intervention needs as well as better manage increasingly difficult behavior.  
**Marla Ward, Granite School District**

As a teacher, I am overwhelmed and it only gets worse every year. I have no time to teach my students, standards increase and support from the state decreases. We don't have the capacity to continue to take care of these children, educate them, and fully take care of ourselves and our families. If you paid us more, and gave us more help, we would be better equipped to handle the increasing workload that is given to us. We love this job, but the overwhelming downsides sometimes outweigh that. Take care of your teachers, and you'll see better results. Keep standards high, and have our pay match those standards. Stop disrespecting the work and knowledge of college educated teachers by hiring random uneducated people in the community to do their work. It all starts with the teachers. What you give to teachers, you'll see an equal improvement in the students.  
**Kasey Chambers, Jordan School District**

Increase pay!  
**Sydney Robinson, Logan City School District**

Long hours, chasing down supplies to purchase, more and more and more required teaching items with less and less curriculum provided. If you require me to teach something provide me with the curriculum, training, and prep time to teach it.  
**Wendy Jensen, Morgan School District**

Each child in my classroom has a story. The children that we are teaching today are suffering more and have more challenges than a child used to. Each year is less and less parent support. Not only is our student population becoming more difficult to help and teach, but the load we are receiving is more and more heavy. I have students
Workload / Classroom Support

who at 6 years old have already had a parent pass away. One student even commented in the middle of a lesson, "If my mom dies, I will be an orphan." That is what was on their mind...not the reading lesson I was teaching. Students whose parents won't help them do their homework or even let them have books to borrow because mom and dad don't want the responsibility of a lost or damaged book. This child is low in all areas and doesn't have a reason to learn because parents aren't invested in them. These kids are our future doctors, teachers, pilots, managers, cooks, etc. Invest today, for a better tomorrow. We need respect for our teachers. They need more compensation for their time. We need smaller class sizes to help these kids who their teacher is the only one who is helping them with their education. To give extra love and attention to those kids who have hard lives. We need a lighter workload to spend our time on things that are of more importance.

Brooke Vaquerano, Nebo School District

Many classrooms are becoming very crowded because of the lack of teachers. The lack of teachers is most likely because the pay they are receiving is not enough compared to the amount of work that is being asked of them. If you want better higher quality teachers and students to do better on tests and in their academic classes we need to higher more qualified teachers which means we need to look at compensations.

Allison Gorringe, Park City School District

Education needs to be top priority! Class sizes are too high. We either need smaller class sizes or funding for aides in every classroom to assist with the demands of various abilities of children. Additionally, we are one of the lowest paid/funded in the nation and with the demands of educating students, teachers are getting burned out or leaving the profession because of too much stress and not enough pay to compensate the numerous hours (beyond contract time) that educators are spending on preparation and professional development.

Michelle Peterson, Rich School District

This is the first year I have had less than 24 students in my Full Day Kindergarten class. We have been able to accomplish more with our writing, STEM activities, and intervention groups because of the manageable number of students. If you really want to put the Child First, Utah needs to lower the class size teacher-student ratio.

Maureen Erickson, Tooele County School District

Teaching takes more time than we are paid for especially when you have multiple classes of 35-40 sixth graders.

Rebecca Rich, Uintah School District

Teachers work hard every day to do their best; provide them the tools to succeed.

Christine B. Garloch, Wasatch County School District

I really enjoy teaching students and making a difference in their school day. On the other hand, the way things are in education today, i would not encourage anyone to go into teaching. That is not an easy thing to say as i come from a family of a lot of educators.

Dan Hill, Wasatch County School District

Teachers are overworked and underpaid.

Melinda Korologos, Wasatch County School District

The biggest battle I fight is getting parents to be supportive and involved in their child's education. I want there to be more accountability on the part of parents and students. The demands for my accountability has tripled since I have been teaching and there is no accountability on the part of parents and students. They can come every day and do nothing and they know that they will move on to the next grade and parents know that there is no consequence as well. However, if that child doesn't test well at the end of the year it is my fault! There is nothing by that child's name that says they missed 1/3 of the year, or that they never came prepared to school with anything, or that they took the end-of-year test in 5 minutes because they just guessed. I have 30 students in my 4th grade classroom and there is
Workload / Classroom Support

1 of me. It is extremely difficult for me to be successful with that many students without extra support from home. There has to be a way to get parents to buy into the importance of an education!! Our future depends on it.

Kristie Herzog, Weber School District

I feel that students are being short changed by my large class sizes, the average size is 34.

Wendi Jorgensen, Weber School District

Teaching is a difficult job. I always spend at least 10 hours beyond my contract hours making sure that my students are given the best that I can offer. Please reduce class sizes or find a way to pay teachers for the hours that they work beyond regular contract hours. More preparation time is needed to be an effective teacher that is able to do their job during regular contract hours.

Matthew LeDuc, Weber School District

There are more demands and less time. Students are coming with more social and emotional issues that have to be addressed along with additional educational needs.

Kim Vorwaller, Weber School District

We need schools out here in Eagle Mountain. Our city is growing extremely rapidly, and we need more classrooms and more teachers to keep class sizes down and ensure quality instruction for the kids here.

Rachel Ferguson, Alpine School District

Last year I had 32 third graders in my classroom. This year I have 25 because the principal was able to hire another teacher. It has been amazing giving my students more one-on-one time to help them excel. I have been able to work more with struggling students as well as challenge other students. They are all making huge strides in their academic understanding. It also has been a less stressful year. With seven fewer students, I also have fewer behavioral challenges.

Laura Laycock, Alpine School District

You are welcome anytime to come and see what we are doing in our classrooms. Please come and see what Utah students are learning first hand.

Jean Manuela, Alpine School District

It is difficult to make a difference in a students life when the class sizes in Elementary are 29-31 students. A few years ago I had a class that had 22 students in it. Every single student was proficient on the math SAGE and almost every student on the language arts SAGE. I even had resource students who were able to be proficient. I was able to spend the time with each student that they needed. Last year I had 31 students. This class has had that many students since 1st grade. They were difficult to reach as well as teach because their whole elementary career they were in huge classes with difficult behavior problems. Class size makes a difference!

Rebecca Wilding, Box Elder School District

Classrooms that have more than 24 students defeats the purpose of education. One-on-one time is diminished which means those who struggle are getting a majority of a teacher's time. The student who needs to be challenged is missing opportunities because a teachers is interacting with the lower students. How do I give equal time to each student? Small group instruction usually means dividing up time in the day, but most of that time is for those who struggle, which means leaving other groups to work independently. There are students in the middle who much of time will get off task. Classroom reduction is essential for a learning environment. I've had as many as 37 students crammed into a room designed to hold about 24. All my time was spent determining who received most of my attention and at the end of the day I would go home and wonder who I hadn't interacted with.

Nick Cornwell, Cache County School District
Workload / Classroom Support

I think the teacher shortage we are seeing in Utah is due to two key components. 1, we are one of the lowest paying states in the US when it comes to teacher salary. 2, we are class sizes that are almost unbearable. I do not think that any teacher should have more than 25 students in their classroom.

Krista White, Cache County School District

This year our district has struggled with the placement of high risk students. Because the district has been unable to attract teachers to the special education field we have experienced a shortage of qualified teachers to work in special classrooms for these students. Because of the shortage and lack of experience we have actually had adults hospitalized with injuries inflicted by elementary students. It is our job to ensure that all students are educated. I believe that, but we also need to stand up, open our eyes and acknowledge that not all students can benefit with these super violent students in the general population. Please become aware. Please allocate more money into the special education departments throughout the state. The money is needed to entice qualified experienced teachers, to hire more instructional aides in order to give the needed teacher/student ratio for success. This is a crisis situation. Please don't wait for the lawsuit that will force this to happen. Be proactive with this issue.

Dana W. Crosby, Canyons School District

Some kids will succeed no matter what. We need to direct resources toward getting kids caught up. I have a student who was “home-schooled” and is now suddenly entering the public school in 10th grade. He cannot write. He forms letters like a third grader. He needs one on one help and he's in a class of 35 that also includes students who have special needs and English Language Learners. This child is not a waste of money!

Karla Moosman, Canyons School District

The school system is breaking and almost broken. I have been a teacher is Davis district for 27 years. The decline has been massive!

Kayloa Anderson, Davis School District

I am a 2nd grade teacher in Davis district. This year I have 32 students in my class. Our 3rd grade has 36, 5th grade has 35. There are huge problems associated with such large classes. Increasing behavior issues, less time to work with high need students, less time to enrich student learning. It isn't fair to the students or the teacher in this situation.

Vonnie Buttars, Davis School District

I have 40 students with IEP’s. Each has been diagnosed with either a learning disability, autism, other health impairment (medical or psychological). That means I alone must plan curriculum for 40 IEP’s, teach my 40 students, progress monitor in math, reading, writing, social skills, use trackers for behavior monitoring, plan, develop, schedule and attend 40 IEP meetings and parent/teacher conferences, evaluate and collaborate with sp ed team for students who move in with IEP’s, I love what I do, but 40 students at one time is too many students, especially those who qualify for special ed services. There needs to be a limit of the amount of students each mild-to-moderate (resource teacher) special ed teacher should have. I want to do my best find it hard to do so with so many students.

Jan Green, Davis School District

I have taught for 8 years and almost all of those years were in the elementary grades of 1st through 3rd. My first 7 years of teaching, the classes have been upwards of 25 to 28 students. Those days were long and hard as I tried to provide for every student the best that I could. This year my school's principal took into account our numbers and worked to provided our grade level with another teacher. I now teach 21 second graders and what a difference it has made for me and my students. I am able to provide more of my time to each of them in a one on one fashion during practice time or in small groups or even one on one. This number is still not as perfect as it could be and you may think that lowering a class by 3 or 4 students would make that much of an impact but it does, I can testify to it. My students are able to learn deeper within the content, they are also less stressed out than prior years and I have even less students acting out than in prior years. I am providing more individualized help to more students during their practice time. I, as a teacher, am less stressed and more confident in teaching this group then I had been with the larger groups in previous years. I think that the ideal size would be more around 18-20 students maximum in
classrooms at the k-3 grade levels. In hose grades are the ages most critical in developing the child cognitively, educationally, and socially. It is the best time to catch and correct learning behaviors, reading interventions and mathematical concepts. These class sizes would entice licensed professional teachers to stay within the profession. These class sizes would reduce stress, increase productivity and provide more data on each student as we are able to follow through with each student on a more regular basis instead of every once in a long while. It will reduce the behavior problems we deal with as we will be able to work with more students to provide for their needs. The larger class sizes do not give teachers this kind of ability in their classrooms. Legislators, I plead with you to increase the WPU and provide for a more manageable number of students within classrooms so teachers can properly manage students needs. I plead with you to ask us, those who work directly with students and their education, about the issues we are facing in our schools, but also how your legislation will impact our students and us as professionals. Each of you are welcome in my classroom anytime and I would be happy to take the time to talk with you and answer questions you have. Please consider the future and provide for the best education our students should receive.

Anna Larsen, Davis School District

As an elementary school counselor and a former classroom teacher, I have found that over the years both children and teachers have lost some of the joy or education. Standards are needed and help to create goals but when there is no time to savor the moment and create "joy in the journey ", as well as reinforcing social-emotional skills, because of the academic pressures it is not as healthy an experience as it should be.

Kristine Pritchett, Davis School District

Classrooms have changed significantly. Teachers are expected to meet all student needs and constantly raise increase what students need to be taught without additional help. When we have students with additional challenges such as behavioral issues, mental health issues, home issues and no additional help it is extremely difficult to reach all student needs. Decreased class sized and/or additional teacher aid times would make all the difference in reaching individual students.

Kallie Read, Davis School District

I teach Resource and have mostly Applied Skills classes where we work with kids to reteach skills and make sure they are passing classes. I always have at least 14 kids in a Skills class with 2-4 who need specific individual help. It is difficult to focus on them one at a time and still manage and encourage the rest of the class. It is a sad situation and very frustrating as I know I could provide help to increase skills if I could just have a class the size that the feds mandate.

C. Tingey, Davis School District

Class sizes are too large, we need more instructors. I can work with, give more attention to and achieve better learning outcomes for a class of 25 versus a class of 40. If not more instructors, at least aides. I come from a family of teachers, out of state. In their contracts (out of state) aides are required once the number of students in a class exceeds a particular number.

Ben Boeve, Granite School District

Our classrooms have too many students. Many of the behavior problems and challenges with teachers not staying in education could be eliminated by having smaller class sizes.

LuJean Eldredge, Granite School District

I came to Utah from a state where all teachers are required to have a Master's degree to teach. I notice a significant difference in the respect and general teacher morale here in Utah, which I believe is partly due to the idea that teaching in Utah can be seen as a second class career or one that is just temporary until an individual finds a better position or quits working outside the home to support her or his family. I worked ten years in Utah before earning the salary I left in my previous state, yet I think the problem of morale and respect goes deeper than teacher compensation.

Rachel McKeen, Granite School District
Workload / Classroom Support

Teachers are incredibly devalued in Utah. We need people who will actually take the time to understand what it means to be an educator and what it takes to educate, to represent us. Legislators should not be making decisions without getting input from most teachers. There isn't near enough done in our state for education. The reason why no one wants to be a teacher is because you get treated so horribly for such little pay. We get more and more demanded of us with less and less support and resources.

Deborah Pryor, Granite School District

It is amazing the progress that my students make when their class size is smaller. I can focus on areas of needs, greater challenge activities, and truly build the whole student instead of just feeling like I'm surviving. I have seen teacher moral as well as student success improve when class sizes are smaller!

Audrey Sill, Granite School District

Fund public schools properly by reducing classroom size and providing a quality educated teacher for every classroom.

Valerie Turner, Granite School District

So far all the paid time that has been added for teacher preparation has been programmed. We don't have enough time to thoughtfully plan lessons that meet the state's objectives or to provide one-to-one feedback to students in over-crowded classrooms. For improved education of students teachers need UNSTRUCTURED time to do what we already know we should be doing to reach students who are struggling in overcrowded classrooms with over-worked teachers.

Milton Watts, Granite School District

Teaching is not easy. Consider supporting what we need in the classroom (supplies and staff support) and you might not have such a teacher shortage because burnout would be less frequent.

Heidi Wright, Granite School District

Utah is getting RIDICULOUS...... Do not let people teach the children without a CORRECT Teaching degree... NO RLI or Other degrees in to teach... Also, Get a raise out there for teachers NOT District people. 34 6th graders in ONE tiny room is HORRIBLE.... Don't go and add or subtract teachers or classrooms during a year do it in the summer breaks... all decisions FINAL

Halceyn Fobert, Jordan School District

Class size really matters. I've had smaller classes the past two years due to enrollment lowering - its amazing what I can do with less students. Having para professionals in the classroom to help is a huge help - we can give the students more one-on-one help they need with smaller numbers and extra helping hands.

Darle Taylor, Murray City School District

Teachers are leaving the profession from being overburdened. Smaller classes and time to prepare would help keep more teachers in the field.

Melissa Page, Nebo School District

They need to personally visit classrooms...specifically elementary classrooms. (I am not an elementary teacher...)

Natalie Terry, Nebo School District

Teachers are not the enemy.

Melissa Brock, Ogden School District
Workload / Classroom Support

In my smaller classes my students usually score 2-4% higher than my other classes. Class size has been shown to improve quality of instruction, and can also reduce the stress of educators. It is easier to focus on individual students when you don’t have 40 per class.

Heidi Schlegel, Ogden School District

If a teacher shortage is a concern, improving the teaching conditions will be the best way to combat it.

Russell Lebaron, Washington County School District

The suicide rate is consistently increasing for adolescents...we need more awareness among teachers to look for preventative interceptions.

Brenda Cook, Weber School District

Many teachers are quitting because of students with severe behavior challenges. There is little to no support.

Rachel Hughes, Weber School District

With the human development needing different attentions in different areas at different times with each individual, expecting the same outcome for all is unrealistic. Until class sizes are reduced and non-educator legislators research the effects their mandates and decisions have on human development, we are not going to advance well as humans or a state. The overload of work to teach so many students with a lack of resources and support staff continues to burn out educators, hence a teacher shortage. If we, as a state, don’t show that we value education by putting forth the necessary funding, see what happens when you lower the tax rate, and value teaching as a profession, we all will lose.

Marjean Wayment, Weber School District

I desperately care about my students. I care about their success and progress. However, my class size is 30 first graders. There are public schools who have even more students. With this many students in a class, there is no way to give each student what they need individually. It breaks my heart.

Traci Barker, Alpine School District

The need to lower class sizes or increase funding for aid support.

Jacque Beers, Alpine School District

I really feel with large class sizes and more and more being put on my plate from the district/state it is getting harder for me to address the basic needs of my students. I feel I have to teach everyone with the same cookie cutter mold because I am lacking time to work with smaller groups or individuals as much as I would like to.

Nicole Craig, Alpine School District

I know that research says that lower class sizes doesn’t affect teaching, but I think that is a very careful choice of words. A few years ago I had the biggest class size I had every had in my career, the very next year I had the smallest class size I had every had. This experience allowed me to see, very clearly, what difference it made in my teaching. While I agree that good teachers will always be good teachers, no matter the size of their class, it definitely affects management! There is a huge difference in managing 33 students and 22 students! It affects everything from walking down the hall, to stretching out supplies and materials, to how much space is left in a classroom after all of the desks are in it to accommodate those students, etc. To say otherwise is either coming from inexperience or willful ignorance. A good teacher will make it work, because they are passionate about what they do and they will do their best to not show their stress, but it makes an already tough job SO much harder!

Rachel Hill, Alpine School District

An overall message of the workload. I spend 2-3 hours every day beyond my paid time trying to keep my head above water. One year, I documented time that equaled 3 extra months that I worked for free.

Lisa Jolley, Alpine School District
Workload / Classroom Support

I love what I do and I wouldn’t still be teaching if I didn’t have a love for education and the children I teach.

Phyllis McIntyre, Alpine School District

Large class sizes is the #1 reason for the “dumbing down of America.” High achieving students are ignored by teachers who are trying to keep students safe. Teacher morale is at an all-time low.

Marla Wait, Alpine School District

The state law recently passed giving parents full control of whether or not their child attends school is causing an increase in school truancy. Students who skip school usually do so because the parents do not place importance on education. If we want an educated populace who can get and maintain adequate employment, parents must be held accountable for their child’s education. If a child does not attend a public school, legislation needs to be passed requiring parents show their child is receiving an education at home or in a private setting. Parents with truant students need to be fined.

Vanessa White, Alpine School District

With the way the word is changing, it is becoming harder and harder to feel like a successful teacher. It doesn’t feel great to feel unappreciated or like we make very much money, but most importantly, if I felt supported by my government and was given realistic expectations, the lack of pay would be in the back of my mind. Right now, we are being demanded of even more than ever and feel as if no one is willing to help us out, but instead give us more to do and deal with. Decreasing class sizes would be a great start to allowing us to feel like we can successfully do our job each day.

Josselyn Draper, Box Elder School District

Family and Consumer Sciences classes are important for students and provide students useful skills that they will use throughout their lives. Please support Family and Consumer Science classes

Julie Chatterton, Cache County School District

Class size matters! Currently, if I only spend 2 minutes a day with each of my students, that’s 56 minutes I don’t have. I’m there to make a difference. It’s about quality instruction not quantity.

Brynn Dutson, Cache County School District

Far too often studies are done about class size and the determination is made that class size does not effect student learning. These studies clearly have not looked at a real classroom. In a real classroom you have a student who has been diagnosed with obsessive defiant disorder (which is even more difficult to deal with than it sounds), 3 students who have been diagnosed with ADHD (and several who have not yet been diagnosed), 2 students who are performing at least 2 grade levels below the grade that they are presently in, and several students who steal, lie, cheat, and/or bully. Each of these students require double the time and effort to teach. So while on paper a teacher may show 25 students, in reality it feels more like 35. And precious time is being taken away from helping all students in the classroom to learn.

Sharon Grimnes, Cache County School District

How tough and mentally challenging it is to teach 30 fifth graders; to meet all of their needs. I would like the legislators to spend a week teaching school to see how teaching really is.

Sherrie Andrizzi, Canyons School District

I think legislators should go out to the school and volunteer for 1 day a year.

Barbara Bushnell, Davis School District

We can't think of schools as a business; children are not commodities

Debra Carter, Davis School District
Let me tell you about Johnny. He struggles to read, and write and takes a long time to process information. However, with the help of technology in the schools he is able to access Google Read and Write. With this program he is able to understand the assignments given to him by teachers and gives him a chance to get the ideas in his mind, down on paper. He is finally feeling success. Unfortunately, this program is only available on computers which are not available in all his classes. I struggle to teach him all the tools that can help him because classes are overloaded with students. His general education teachers struggle to give them the extra support needed because of the huge class sizes. 36-38 students. Teachers are sharing the I pad labs and not being able to use them as much as they would like. We live in an age where technology is critical for student learning and changing so fast we can not keep up. It is imperative that teachers are trained and students are learning through these resources. Thank you so much for helping us .. help our youth! Pamela Child, Special Education Teacher, Davis School District.

Pamela Child, Davis School District

As a first grade teacher, I must address the class census. I have had as many as 30 six year-olds in my class. It is like herding cats. I spent more time dealing with classroom management than teaching. Small groups became difficult to manage and 1 to 1 attention nearly impossible. Students at this age are just learning how to self regulate. They need extra individual and small group time to access the curriculum. We really handicap the children when their are so many in the classroom. In addition this places a larger strain on my time. It takes longer to complete the necessary paperwork for a class and to prepare for class. Differentiation becomes a burden. Often, this requires that a teacher has to research ideas for the varying needs of the classroom. The more students there are the greater this becomes. My job is like holding two full-time positions at once. The first job is to deliver the curriculum. The second job is data input, record keeping, planning and preparing. And yes it does take around 80 hours a week. This creates an unhappy balance between work and home.

Anna Davis, Davis School District

They really should come and spend some time doing what we do. It isn't as easy as they think! Schools can't be run like businesses. They need to listen to those of us doing the job!

Kim Dennis, Davis School District

Look at the load you are putting on teachers! If we are to be successful in all the areas we need fewer students! I work in a title 1 elementary school. My students need to learn the basics with their teacher. The teacher is often their only appropriate interaction during the day. Since so much responsibility has been taken away from parents teachers teach many of the social and early childhood skills throughout elementary school. So many of our students do not see print before they enter school. Children do not have piggy banks to learn counting, they do not cook from scratch or build. We have to build background as well as teach concepts. These students know how to play with devices but not how to interact with each other or adults. Put finding into smaller class sizes and not technology especially in elementary schools!

Kathy Johnson, Davis School District

Teachers are so disheartened. The evaluation system is discouraging at best and fails to motivate improvement. There are so many “new programs and techniques” being thrown at us monthly that we have no time to master any of it. I feel like a juggler who has new balls thrown in to my act every few minutes. I can't keep up, nor can my students. Soon the balls will all fall! Our time is micromanaged and our professionalism is minimized. How can we inspire students to be their best when we are devalued by so many sources, especially administration?

Patricia Knavel, Davis School District

Thank you so much for your concerns regarding improving public education in Utah. I have been a teacher for 13 years. It has been a wonderful career choice for me because of all the amazing students and their families, and fellow educators who have influenced me in a remarkable way. However, because my class sizes are so large (28 kindergarten students per class), I struggle with feelings of exhaustion and burn out. I would love to make it 17 more years until retirement because I am really good at what I do, but some days I don't know if I will make it. What carries me through it all is the positive relationships I have with my students and their families. I know how much they care.

Patricia Knavel, Davis School District
Workload / Classroom Support

for me and appreciate what I have done for their children. I would love to continue providing that service to my
community.

Valerie Lindeman, Davis School District

Any increase in technology needs to be paired with training for the teachers and mentor support or the money is just
wasted. Class sizes are important if you want to reach all children and keep up teacher morale.

Robin Marble, Davis School District

Appreciation for past efforts, but the key to success in any facet of life is education! Knowledge is POWER! Our
future depends on it!

Dr. Norma Jean Remington, Davis School District

I am a second grade teacher who started the year with 28 students. I have five students who have been diagnosed,
or who exhibit autistic tendencies. I also have five different students with life-threatening health conditions. Many of
my other students struggle with both behavior and academics concerns. All of the other second grade classes at my
school have a similar class make-up. Our grade-level focus has been on strengthening their behavior through a well-
structured classroom environment and growing their academics by focusing on reading and math. At the beginning of
the school year, I tested my lowest readers and pin-pointed specific phonics and fluency skills that they needed. Due
to the sheer number of students needing help, only six of my students have the opportunity for "small group time."
This is a special 30 minutes four times a week where I can work with my most challenged students while an aid takes
the rest of my class. In preparing for my small group time, my school does not have any leveled reading books to
help them with those targeted reading skills. The best that I was offered by my ELA specialist was a two page "story"
that covered multiple skills in an unengaging text. The last thing a struggling reader wants to read is a boring story. In
order to better serve my struggling students, I bought myself a license to a website that specializes in leveled readers
with targeted phonics and comprehension skills. My students like to read these stories because they are on-level,
they practice the specific skill we learned in small group, and the stories are engaging. How is it that if I need reading
books to help struggling students, that I have to spend my own money to get them? I realize that I could have written
a grant, but those can take months to get, and I needed them right at the beginning of the year. Why can't I get
necessities right when I need them? There is a saying about the Utah education system that feels true: Stack 'em
deep and teach 'em cheap. That's a poor legacy for our future.

Kathy Ritchie, Davis School District

As a public school teacher, I spend many hours of my own time correcting papers, giving feedback, working on
lesson plans, and preparing for our after-school robotics club. It would not take nearly as much of my own personal
time away from my family, away from my sleep, etc. if I had fewer students in my class. I could give each child more
individual attention, addressing his or her learning needs, if I had fewer students in my class. At the elementary level,
the workload is overwhelming. I work hard to help every child succeed, but that is a difficult never ending job when
there are rows upon rows of desks in my room. It is exhausting and takes way more than 40 hours a week. Please
help teachers succeed at helping Utah children succeed. We need your help. Reducing class sizes would really
alleviate the overwhelming workload.

Lynette Shupe, Davis School District

As an educator, my priority is student learning and growth. I wish that the legislative priorities matched ours, instead
of the bottom line, dollars and cents.

Melanie Tanner, Davis School District

I teach 7th and 8th grade math. I have 35 students per class, including students with learning disabilities. I have a
paraeducator in only one of my classes. I can't get to every student to give them the help they need. Last year I spent
over $1600 on my classroom. I haven't totaled my receipts this year, but I know I have spent over $1000. The supply
budget of $150 isn't nearly enough. Not even close. In our district, teachers have very little freedom. I am a creative
person with a Masters degree working a factory job. I am handed a curriculum map created by the district personnel
(who haven't been in the classroom for over ten years) for every single day of the year. I am told exactly when and
Workload / Classroom Support

how to give feedback, what I need to focus on in my teaching (which is the same for everyone, not tailored to me or my students), exactly how to grade, which tests to give and when, and the district chooses which textbook we use and how often it's replaced. I wish the district's power could be limited so that I had time and freedom to teach.

Shallin Squire, Duchesne County School District

Abnormally disruptive students continue to be one of the biggest challenges that prevent other students from being able to stay focused. When you have 5 adults dealing with one student throughout the day, there's one in every other class throughout the school, then something isn't working.

Marianne Amatangelo, Granite School District

I am very frustrated with how much time it takes to get help for students with special needs. I feel like if they received the help right from the very beginning that many of them would be more successful in school.

Shelly Anglin, Granite School District

I've noticed with smaller classes (25-30), I can talk to each student every day. When my classes are large (40 or more), I don't get to have the one-on-one interaction that I feel helps students be successful. Larger classes also have more discipline problems.

Valerie Aubrey, Granite School District

Students are the most important part of public education but it is nice to be validated as a teacher. I would like to be regarded as the professional that I am. I think that if teachers were held in higher esteem, there wouldn't be such a teacher shortage. It's the most difficult job I've ever had. (I did other things before becoming a teacher.)

Kim Best, Granite School District

I love being a teacher. I love that my job helps people everyday. However, it is becoming harder and harder to feel/be successful with the current system in place. Time is a huge factor. I need more time built into my day/week/year to be able to plan, collaborate, document, grade, communicate with parents, etc. I never feel like I am doing “enough” and that is hard to deal with when you work your hardest to be enough for the students you love.

Erin Bitner, Granite School District

Teacher respect is an issue. If we respect our students and their families by giving them the best we have to offer as we prepare them to become hard-working citizens in whatever occupation they choose, we should also be respected by legislators who make important decisions that affect all of our futures.

Toni Cook, Granite School District

Teachers do so much more than just teach. Each year we are seeing more and more difficult behaviors in the class. Superman would have a hard time keeping up with a good teacher. We need to get class size more manageable and more support for teachers in general. Going to the bathroom is difficult. All schools are not created equal, having worked at several schools in my job. A hard class in a affluent school is not the same as a hard school in an impoverished area, nor is the parent support.

Sabrina Felsted, Granite School District

I invite legislators to come to my school to truly see the population that our Title 1 school serves and to observe the vast and diverse needs these students have beyond academic skills acquisition.

Victoria Gorman, Granite School District

The impact of having a full-time aide in my All-day, Title I kindergarten class.

Patrice Hafen, Granite School District

After 26 years of teaching, I believe two factors are extremely important for student success. The first is small class sizes. Teaching math to a high school class with over 35 is virtually impossible. Other states have limits on class
Workload / Classroom Support

sizes around 25. If class sizes can’t be limited because of the teacher shortage, maybe we could increase funding for part time aides to assist in large classes. The second issue that would help students is increased planning time for teachers. We now have a lot of professional development, but absolutely no time to develop lessons to implement what we learn and turn them into good lessons. We just want some uninterrupted time to work on our lesson plans and prepare materials for class. Thanks for your concern.

Shannon Hanks, Granite School District

A lot of students get stressed out with large class sizes.

Cheri Jacobson, Granite School District

Class sizes matter

Cami Jennings, Granite School District

Smaller class sizes make a difference.

Melissa Klenk, Granite School District

Teachers need support and students also need some degree of accountability. My third issue is that students need more mental health supports and enough counselors and social workers to meet the needs of students.

Laura Pratt, Granite School District

I've been an educator in Jordan and Granite School Districts for 42 years and this will be my last year. I love my profession, but worry about what I see on the horizon. Wonderful, qualified teachers are leaving the classroom because so much is demanded of them. We need parental involvement and holding parents accountable if we are to make a difference. We need to not put so much on the plates of these teachers that they don't have time or energy to TEACH!

Lanea Sampson, Granite School District

We need more support with behavior and low students. Placements that meet their needs. The regular classroom is not the right fit for every student. It should not be so difficult to get students the help they need to be successful at school.

Konae Schlappi, Granite School District

Reduce class sizes and give us the respect we deserve. Trying to teach 36 + students in a class is more babysitting and crowd control. The Student needs to be held accountable for his/her behavior and learning.

Kerry Selk, Granite School District

I am an extraordinary and well-respected career educator with 18 years on the job, but doing well at my job pushes me to the absolute limit of my physical (and sometimes mental & emotional) capabilities. I love everything about teaching, but there is too much of it--240 students and all their issues and paperwork! I have stress-related irritable bowel syndrome, inflammation on the bottoms of my feet, occasional anxiety chest pain and stiff muscles. And I'm tired. Chronically tired. Getting through May is like ending a marathon--I get so tired I forget student names, lose my keys, leave my car running while pumping gas, etc. Excelling at this job is not a healthy, balanced way to live. Oh, and by the way, I can't recall one thing my district has done to reduce my workload in 15 years; instead top-down mandates seem increasingly punitive and disconnected with reality.

Lisa Thornbrue, Granite School District

We need support for teachers with children with mental health issues. I have seen dedicated teachers forced out of the profession due not having the proper training for how to handle a physically aggressive student or one that is very defiant. These were excellent teachers who cared about their students.

Dawn Wasden, Granite School District
Workload / Classroom Support

Put the money that is necessary into education to bring the average spent per child to at least the national average.

Stacy Wood, Granite School District

Teaching children is getting harder every year. So many of our students struggle to get to school and focus on learning because of problems at home. Is there a way we can be a better support to parents so they can better parent their own children?

Lorna Young, Granite School District

Stated earlier....It is becoming more difficult to accomplish all that is required with the amount of time we have to teach. Lengthening the day would be enriching for students. Pay us extra to have PLC's after school, then we can continue to teach our students. The time is short - we need to be wise in how it is used.

Katharine June Bolliger, Jordan School District

Teachers moral is low. Counselors and teachers are overworked and underpaid. reduce class sizes and counselor student ratios 1/250

Linda Tranter, Jordan School District

There are too many stories to tell. I would rather invite them to spend a day in my classroom.

Stephanie Strader, Murray City School District

Every child has their strengths and weaknesses. Not every child is stellar, but as we work hard and treat each child as an individual and celebrate their progress, whether it be great or small, we will build a community of successful people. We need to remember that there is a place for everyone in our world. We need janitors, as well as teachers. We need garbage collectors as well as law makers, etc. Everyone has a talent in something. Not every child has to be stellar to be important and do “important” things. Each job is important!

Eileen Lisonbee, Nebo School District

Class sizes are large. Reducing the class sizes or having more staff assistants would greatly increase the amount of time and attention that each student gets. Increasing student success.

Crystal Buck, Ogden School District

We need to think of the children. We need to reduce class sizes and give teachers a better environment to do what we do best, teach.

Jessica DeBoer, Ogden School District

Our students are supported by great teachers, but they face too many obstacles, the first one being class sizes. I have 3 AP English classes in the mid 40s. I cannot interact personally as needed with that many students. We cannot have discussions where everyone gets a voice, and I cannot read that many essays, giving quality feedback as much as I need to.

Kerrie Baughman, Salt Lake City School District

Teaching is a profession that deserves the highest commitment from all involved, teachers, students, parents, administration, school districts and the legislature. What we are doing now directly impacts Utah's future. We are so far behind many states and are doing many injustices to all of our students. Teachers, who haven't given up, are exhausted. Large class sizes do not make it easy for all students to get what they need. Behavior problems are showing up earlier and earlier. Students have much more to contend with every year. Teaching is the hardest job I've ever had. I have worked in business, retail, and non-profits and this, by far, is the most intense job I've ever had, with the most to lose. Please respect us and the children of our state. It feels like we are an afterthought in so many ways.

Lesley Jones, Salt Lake City School District

More student and parent accountability for poor attendance.
**Workload / Classroom Support**

*Joann Orr, Salt Lake City School District*

I waste more time getting students on task than actually teaching, as well as explaining rules.

*Reeve, David, San Juan School District*

Teachers are not given support. Administrators cater to students and parents before they listen to the teacher. Money will not replace the respect teachers need from the community and the students in their classrooms.

*Kayleen Lyman, Sevier School District*

Class sizes need to be addressed in order to better teaching principles.

*Jared Hendry, Wasatch County School District*

Teachers with really hard to ensure all students in their classroom are educated. Teachers deserve respect from legislators NOT empty promises or criticism.

*Hope Bruggink, Weber School District*

There has been an increase in demands in education over the past 15 years. These changes have been for the good but need additional supports. At the same time students needs and gaps have become harder and more diverse. We need training, resources, staff, and professionals to help meet the needs of these students.

*Julianne Christensen, Weber School District*

Please give us the freedom to teach in our classes. I feel like things are becoming so mandated and new things are being given to us all the time that it is hard to be an individual. I feel like everyone is supposed to teach the same thing the same day and there is becoming less individuality.

*Kimberlee Endicott, Weber School District*

I have taught first grade for 32 years. I am continually working to increase student learning in my classroom. As more and more demands are placed upon my time, I find it increasingly difficult to meet the needs of all my students when I have 25 first graders in my class. That number does not sound very big to someone who hasn't been in a first grade classroom, but the needs of a six year old are many, and they are expected to learn so much more than when I began teaching in 1983. On a typical day, I arrive at school at 7:45 and leave at 5:45 because there is so much preparation for each day of school. I am not alone in spending 10 hours at school each day. My first grade team is here with me. We are committed to these children and their learning. Please help us by limiting first grade classes to 20 students. Thank you.

*Laurie Kite, Weber School District*

Teaching is a challenging profession. Half the teachers in my school teach Chinese immersion classes, which are often smaller than the grade-level limit, while the other half teach classes significantly larger than this limit. Yet somehow, this continues, year after year, because the average class size is all that is considered. This is not right.

*Amy Matheson, Weber School District*

Teaching in today's classroom is darn hard work. There are so many kids with needs that are hard for one person to fulfill. Class size is too large. I spend way too much of my personal time (evenings/weekends) doing my job. Reduction is class size would help.

*Kristin Teller, Weber School District*

I have been an educator in Utah for almost 20 years. I have heard again and again from leaders and communities that they consider education to be a top priority in Utah. I understand that we have more students and unique challenges in Utah. However, the reality is that we do not have the funding to attract and retain quality teachers. Why should college students choose education as a career when the hours are long and hard, the "real" expectations for what teachers have to do are way beyond the actual expectations, the pay is mediocre, and they are constantly...
Workload / Classroom Support

berated by parents of their students for every perceived problem. Teachers should be protected from being yelled at by parents and respected for what they do day in and day out. Practically, we need a long term solution to fill our teaching positions - especially at the most challenging neighborhood schools. Teachers are professionals and need to be seen and treated as such.

Janelle Griffiths, Alpine School District

We must invest in the education of our children. We cannot continue to do so much with so few resources. We need technology to be funded and maintained. We need adequate classroom resources without having to spend our time writing grants to beg for money. Please fund education and invest in the future of our state.

CarolAnn Barton, Box Elder School District

Accountability, technology and PLCs have stepped up the quality of education. However, the additional time requirements for planning, collaborating and follow through is at the same time pinching the quality of teaching that is being demanded and desired to be given by educators. More planning and preparation time is needed for the educational process to reach the levels that are being pushed for.

John Petersen, Cache County School District

If the classroom teacher has the biggest impact on student learning, then we need quality teachers with excellent training in every classroom. This cannot be done through lowering licensing standards. We must make a concentrated effort to attract teachers to teacher preparation programs and provide mentoring and support to retain teachers once they are in the classroom. This includes increasing teacher pay, forgiving student loans, and improving retirement benefits among other things.

Erika Bradshaw, Canyons School District

The teaching shortage in Utah is causing schools to settle on less prepared, less skilled, and less experienced teachers. Legislators need to draw trained professionals to the state by DEMONSTRATING that they truly do value teachers. Right now it seems like educators are largely looked upon as poor public servants in Utah rather than qualified professionals.

Melissa Hansen, Canyons School District

As a teacher I aspire to educate, condition, and prepare my students to take lead, protect, and preserve our communities, economy and planet for future generations to come. I do this with a passion that drives from being a citizen, mother, and educator of this country. I would only ask that as an educator I am recieved with trust, proper support, and a sense of being valued for what I give to our community.

April Guardado, Granite School District

Thank you for your efforts to fight for public education! The fight, however slow, is making a difference.

Betty Chamberlain, Kane County School District

As a veteran teacher I am very concerned about retaining and attracting new teachers. I want my replacement to be a good one!!!! However, many of the quality young educators are losing interest in teaching. Also many of the new teachers we interview are far below the quality of those retiring. Something needs to be done!!!!

Mark Durfey, Murray City School District

As a special education teacher in Utah for 16 years, and a public education employee for 20 years, we need to better fund education, especially teacher salaries to ensure that we keep and entice quality educators to meet the needs of Utah students. I do not know of a teacher who doesn’t work above their “contract time” to meet the current expectations they have on them. It has been too long that teachers have done it because they love the students, without compensation for what they are doing. Even though we are at the bottom of funding for education, our students are not at the bottom of the nation in performance. Show teachers, parents, and students that they matter more than they ever have before.
Workload / Classroom Support

Wendy Wilson, Ogden School District

How the legislative funding for school libraries helps.

Sheryl Burton, Salt Lake City School District

The most important feature of society is equality, and that extends to equal opportunities for excellent education for all students.

Jenny Hartnett, Weber School District

Our aides are given no medical insurance, less money than a fast food worker, expected to take a physical risk to their person. This is a reason we have attrition in this field.

Casandra Daugherty, Alpine School District

I teach special education and over the last several years there as been an increase of students with diagnoses that merit specialized instruction, an increase in class sizes, but there has not been a matching increase in classroom funding. My students require a lot of specialized equipment much of which I have to buy from money that I donate. This last year I was told I was not allowed to ask for parent donations, which have helped us to meet the needs in the past. This is not okay. Teachers need to be able to ask for help from the parents, if the parents can’t give it that’s fine, but many would and having to wait in the hopes that the parents will ask us what we need is an inefficient process, especially when they are expecting me to simply ask for donations as I’ve done in the past. Another glaring problem in education lately has been our inability to pay our support staff acceptable and competitive wages, this has cause a huge shortage in our district. For the first time in almost 12 years of teaching I had to start the school year understaffed and it took nearly two months to find someone able and willing to take the job. I cannot run my classroom (I work with special education mild to moderate students in a special class setting) without my staff. Districts need increased funding so as to pay their support staff competitive wages. Legislators need to stop reassigning money that is suppose to be allotted to schools. Please stop with the lip service when it comes to education and put your words into practice.

Jennifer Gaskin, Alpine School District

If teaching students is the focus of teachers that should be the thing that is valued not all the extra work teachers have to do. It seem like there is a new requirement every month.

Merissa Jones, Alpine School District

I am all for increasing funding for education but I feel like that money never trickles down to the actual classroom and teachers. I have taught for a long time and I feel like the longer I teach the more I spend out of pocket because budgets are reduced and even administration is cutting back on supplies. I should have access to the supplies I need to do my job and to also be able to earn a livable wage. We spend way more time than people realize out of our contract hours and we do it because we love our students and want to see them succeed. We should be better compensated for that. If increasing the education budget doesn’t impact classrooms directly, then I’m not sure it is worth it. I wish legislatures would trust us to do our job. I feel like I have way more paperwork and testing than ever before. While there are some benefits to these, I find that I spend more time testing students than actually teaching. I have been well trained and know how to help students learn. Please let me use my skills to help kids. I feel like I am drowning in paperwork and breaking down tests. I just want to teach and assess my students as I know how to.

Kacey Oliekan, Alpine School District

By investing in education, we invest in our future. Teachers play such a vital role in the lives of today's youth and are tremendously under paid for the time and effort they put in. It is a labor of love and one we are happy to do. We work hard and get more with less funding than anyone. Visit the schools, talk to teachers, and please make informed and educated decisions.

Skyler Beard, Canyons School District
Workload / Classroom Support

Come spend a “real” day in my shoes. I don’t want to you teach my class, but just come and see what I do from day to day, minute to minute, student to student. Gain a understanding of being in the education trenches without all the glory of you teaching what you’d like to teach or just talking. Please have some respect for my degrees and my importance of creating well function adults. That will become legislators, voters, doctors, etc...

Carrie Follett, Davis School District

They already know the importance of education. I appreciate their continued support. Each year requires attention because of the student population growth and advancements in technology.

Timothy Ward, Davis School District

We have benefitted a great deal, seen huge student gains with new online programs, i.e. Lexia (Rosetta Stone), Reflex, Imagine Math, Utah Compose. However, the students must have one to one computers for them to utilize these resources. In addition, Hattie's research has revealed that teacher collaboration is one of the top indicators for student growth. We have benefitted a great deal from the time we have to glean from each other's experience, but we need more time to collaborate. Also, we have seen huge student gains from kids who have always been low functioning in reading and were formerly classified as “dyslexic” who have had access to “vision therapy” to help with visual tracking. Yet insurance companies are refusing to fund this therapy. I wish they could see what I have seen, kids who have been failing at reading, with an an attitude of hopelessness and failure, but are now becoming students who are experiencing success and having confidence in their educational experience.

Lenore Burgi, Duchesne County School District

Teaching is so beneficial but it’s also hard work. There are others influences on kids that affect their learning-the kids sensitivity issues when their socks bother them, teeth problems and parents unwilling to pay for dental care, custody issues and kids moving in and out of schools. I love teaching and I want the kids to love being in my class. I love doing stem projects and making learning hands on and fun, but that requires me to spend a lot of my own money in my classroom.

Barb Taylor, Granite School District

Well seasoned and experienced teacher here (19 yrs. public, 5 yrs. my own preschool) with serious requests for your attention. 1. Please consider specific funding for paid personnel to cover morning/recesses/after school duties so that teachers have time for further class prep, and TIME TO USE THE RESTROOM. (Having no a.m. recess or having recess duties, makes it IMPOSSIBLE to maintain a healthy urinary tract system.) Specific improvements and an increase in overseeing per grade level can happen, and happen more quickly if teachers were supported with paid peer planning/consultation time.

Wendy Wright, Granite School District

I would like to share the multiple stories of really good teachers who come to me in tears because their health is suffering, their families are suffering, and their students are suffering because they just don’t have enough hours in the day to do all that is needed.

Andrew W. Baggs, Jordan School District

My husbands pay has continually dropped the 20 years in education due to insurance costs

Laura Hales, Jordan School District

Help with stop demonizing teachers Less data collection for data collection sake think of education as an investment

Becca Kirkman, Jordan School District

I love teaching! I am proud to be a Utah teacher and am happy with a lot of the progress made in recent years to improve education in Utah. I hope that legislators will continue to pursue a solution to compensating teachers who are doing a lot more than teaching-I personally mentor other teachers, run the school's ESL program to keep us in
Workload / Classroom Support

legal compliance, and advise the National Junior Honor's Society—these responsibilities are an enjoyable part of my job, but often require hours outside of my contract or for me to sacrifice my much needed prep period to things other than data analysis/curriculum development/grading. Compensating teachers, even minimally, for this work would go a long way. Thank you for fighting for us, and please continue to advocate for Utah teachers.

Alisha Wheeler, Jordan School District

My personal success comes when my students succeed. I give 100% EVERY day. On block schedule I see 240 7/8 graders every two days. Grading NEVER ends--I spend 10-15 hours a week of my own time (totally uncompensated) preparing and grading. There is NO other profession where this is EXPECTED. I will be retiring early (age 60) in 2019 because I just can't continue to cope with anxiety and stress. Teachers can't and shouldn't be expected to continue to do more. The “badge of honor” that our legislature seems to equate with bottom of the barrel funding must stop. Compensate us for our outside of class hours, compensate us for REAL professional development. Encourage us rather than demean and belittle. Teaching is both a science (pedagogy) and art (love of subject). It's time Utah recognized that. And my “favorite” Utahism...children are our most valuable resource. Sadly the legislature of this state fails to adequately fund education, wants to make USBE partisan, and believes that online and charter schools are somehow better equipped to educate that priceless resource. I think that truism is a lie.

Ann Peterson, Juab School District

Something needs to be done in the community to help parents learn to support their children. Some of our students most likely will not go to college and would benefit from learning skills during high school that they can use to make a living. Change the graduation requirements or have two different diplomas so that learning a skill (mechanics, etc) would be enough to graduate or earn a diploma.

Juliann Bales, Logan City School District

Before they make all the rules and pass all the laws they should be required to be in the schools working with educators at least 50 hours a year

C. Carrigan, Morgan School District

Often, I see educators leave teaching because they feel undervalued. They are able to get other jobs and opportunities that are rewarded monetarily. In order to have consistency and attract influential teachers, salaries need to be appealing. My 17 yrs. in education have continually required more of teachers without compensation. While teachers at heart want what's best for kids, they find themselves resentful of the work that takes them away from a more balanced life without compensation.

Kelly Taylor, Nebo School District

I serve as teacher in addition to two “stipend” jobs as well as numerous other responsibilities at school. I visibly/publicly work 60 hours during a week. That does not account for the late nights, when my family is in bed, I spend at my computer planning, studying, and grading. All of this with a Master's Degree, I do for 50k a year. This is just my school responsibilities. I also am a husband, a father, a son, a brother, a neighbor, a civic leader, and must attend to my financial responsibilities. Each year I ask myself more and more - How? Talk is out there about teachers need more pay, teachers need more respect. The talk has not helped my situation. Yet, the expectations are that I control/compartmentalize my stresses and give my best effort to my students and players. I need to accommodate 200+ kids and their parents. I need to meet endless rules and guidelines. Legislators, I could go on and on. We, in education, need your full respect, support, and action.

Lee Gillie, Nebo School District

They always said education is their #1 priority but actions did not show it.

Mong-Hoa LeBras, Nebo School District

Quality teachers are leaving far too fast.

Linda Brown, Ogden School District
We are drowning over here. We are drowning in a workload that increases year to year without an increase in support or funding. We are drowning in disrespect from our communities, our parents, our supervisors, and our legislators. We are drowning in students who’s needs increase every time we turn around. We are drowning in Charter schools, that bleed our funding dry.

Christina Charbonneau, Ogden School District

Teaching is hard work. 99% of the teachers that I know are working really hard and educating our students because they love teaching and are committed to improving the lives of future voters and taxpayers. But I do feel like apologizing to my own childrens’ teachers. As a taxpayer, I wish I could donate directly to their classroom. I know how much money they make, and I do feel guilty that we (as a community) can’t find a way to pay them more. I think you need to listen to the people of Utah and improve educational spending or the people of Utah are going to go around the legislature and pass the educational funding through ballot initiatives. I’m not asking for Utah to spend as much as New York or Illinois. Let’s just try to get out of last place for per pupil spending. Please! Also, don’t forget about the special needs that so many schools are facing--special education students, students coming from poverty, and English as a second language students. They want to work hard and achieve their goals, but if they are in a class with more than 35 students, it becomes very difficult for the teacher to know their needs, let alone give them any extra support or help. When schools can provide paraprofessionals to translate and help teach, we can individualize instruction better and help more students learn. Feel free to come visit my classroom any time. Thank you, Julie Hagen

Julie Hagen, Provo City School District

More even funding dispersed between Title I and Non Title 1 schools within the state of Utah.

Molly Sprague, Salt Lake City School District

Rural education is continuing to be short changed, the WPU and Transportation budgets need to be increased.

Nathan Chamberlain, San Juan School District

SAGE testing is a failure

Dan Zaleski, Washington County School District

The maxim “You get what you pay for” is as true with education as it is with anything else.

Joseph Burke, Weber School District

Our society puts money towards what they believe is valuable, except for paying teachers. If education is valuable then pay teachers accordingly.

Kaylene Astin, Weber School District

There is research evidence (Hattie) that proves teacher collaboration has one of the highest effects on student growth.

Laurie Key, Weber School District

Get in the classroom, talk to educators

Anonymous, Weber School District

One issue that has not been addressed is the lack of funding to repair older schools. We work in cold buildings without adequate insulation. In addition, student behavior is increasingly difficult to manage and we lack resources to place children in more appropriate settings so all children can learn. There is an increase in the lack of respect from parents towards teachers. We will continue to have teacher shortages if these things are not addressed.

Jeni Halversen, Davis School District

I would like to share the challenge of my Special Needs unit being so grossly underfunded that we are unable to fully staff our classroom or keep consistent staffing. I have seen a staffing turnover of 100% every year since I have been
Workload / Classroom Support

teaching. I have several aggressive students and every time a staff member is changed their behavior gets worse. It also takes time for me to train my staff to be consistent on Behavior Intervention Plans, which is critical to student success and safety. Having sufficient aide support is what keeps talented Special Educators in the position more than anything else. This job is stressful, and feeling as though you are left without the help you need is extremely discouraging.

Elizabeth A. Spencer, Granite School District

Our 3rd grade team is diving deep into data and increasing the rigor and student expectations. We need time to prepare and plan while we get paid. There is never enough time "on the clock" to get things accomplished. We work hard during our weekly 1 hour collaboration and regularly spend and extra 1-1 1/2 hours more each collaboration day, on our own time, to meet our own expectations to raise the bar. Also our 4 classes share a chrome book cart of 30 computers, which is more than some, is not realistic when it comes to the expectations that are placed on educators. Technology needs to be increased in ALL schools, not just the new builds, the wealthy schools, or even the most stricken schools. Those of us who work in the middle economic areas are suffering from lack of technology.

Katherine Ferre, Alpine School District

Stop making decisions based on party....consider common sense legislation and get more teacher input.

Tamara Martin, Cache County School District

The economic, political, cultural, social and often emotional success of citizens, as well as the country/state as a whole, has largely been built upon and will continue to be built upon the effectiveness of our education system. It would be naive not to see the correlation between our country's accomplishments and its public school system. Similarly, the same is true for individuals. Much of the success of this system has been built on the backs of the sacrifice of educators' time and financial resources. A commitment to being a life-long teacher is synonymous with the life-long reality of financial stress. On top of this, teachers must deal with a culture that politicizes educational spending and curriculum. It is also part of our culture to reactively and unilaterally pass poorly thought out educational laws and requirements without enough data--or enough skill to correctly analyze data. Our education system isn't perfect; neither are teachers. But any improvement for the future depends on a true investment of our public and state's resources--one that actually matches the import of public education. This includes a plan to de-politicize educational policy, a recognition of the sacrifices of educators, an understanding that education cannot be judged as a business model, and a more educated/skilled and less biased approach in understanding and gathering data that could help form educational funding and policy. It also means that our legislature should look at educator as teammates--not adversaries.

Shannon Callister, Canyons School District

After fourteen years as an elementary faculty/administrator, I have returned to full-time teaching sixth grade students. I am comfortable and confident in this decision and grateful to be a Utah educator. The past fourteen years has provided various experiences and opportunities to serve students and their families as a professional educator. Being in the classroom full-time this year, has reminded me of how critical the success of the first-year teacher is to public education. The time, effort, and resources required to prepare curricula, organize a classroom (physically, academically, emotionally, and mentally), coordinate learning with parents, collaborate with colleagues, and motivate students is exhausting, dynamic, demanding, challenging, enlightening, inspiring, and never-ending. Without tremendous support, encouragement, and insightful guidance, the first-year teacher will not celebrate a third, fourth, fifth, and so on, year in this profession. I have spent numerous days working nearly non-stop from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 a.m. the following morning to be prepared for my students and fulfill professional requirements of the school, district, and state. I have a tremendous vision and great expectations for my students. I perpetually look for ways to improve their effectiveness AND mine. I recruit families in this process and strive diligently to ensure that everything done in my classroom contributes to student learning. I refuse to surrender to the combined menaces of poverty, bureaucracy, and budgetary shortfalls. I frequently check for understanding of ALL parties involved in student success beginning with THE STUDENT, but not ending therein. I establish and follow clear procedures and routines.
Workload / Classroom Support

to keep each student feeling safe and secure in my classroom and our school. We celebrate failure as an important step to success and we never give up. I receive smiles, tears of gratitude and sometimes frustration, handshakes, hugs, “high fives,” “thumbs-up,” notes, cards, emails, phone calls, and visits every day as feedback and insight to guide my teaching. The criticism and appreciation is generally heartfelt and constructive. I am grateful for both. As a Utah teacher, I thank you, the legislator, for your support both morally and financially so I can do the job that I love so very much! Every effort must be made by all of us to do what is best for Utah children, my students, my grandchildren, my youngest neighbors and friends, OUR SMALLEST CITIZENS. Eve Bean

Eve C. Bean, Davis School District

One student that has major behavior issues can make the difference between whether the whole class learns or not. We need funding to address these issues.

Karen Faddis, Davis School District

we do good things and some of the students do willingly and others kicking and screaming and some don't show up for the opportunity

Dave Ashton, Granite School District

Not every teacher wants a bigger salary (although it doesn't hurt!). I want to have the resources, environment, and people in my school that I need to make it possible for me to help my students succeed. We need more funding and we need it structured in ways that make a difference for the conditions and needs of each individual school. When I can go home at night and know that giving my all (as I do every day) is helping my students be prepared for the future, that is when I love my job. The most likely reason I would consider leaving teaching is watching my best efforts not be enough because I don't have the time to prepare and analyze or the support personnel that could make the difference for struggling learners.

Erin Butler, Granite School District

I teach fourth grade. I have a student that until this year, has never had positive contacts with his parents, was labeled a severe behavior problem, and was unsuccessful academically in many areas. In an attempt to help him, his parents enrolled him in a charter school during his third grade year. He was soon removed from that school. His parents tried to enroll him back at his neighborhood school, where the mother was told that there wasn't any room for this child. He then came to my school on special permit. He struggled in his classroom, and spent a large portion of his time in the principal's office, main office, or with the school counselor. This year is different. This child struggles with the physical motions of writing - forming letters and numbers. With a simple accommodation made, he was able to be successful on his vocabulary tests. When I contacted the mother to let her know, I could tell she was apprehensive about what I was going to tell her. When I let her know that her son was successful on these tests, she got emotional and told me it was the first positive phone she had ever gotten about her son. The change in this child has been evident. However, he stills struggles with formation of his letters, and anything that requires him to put answers on paper. With the help of an amazing special educator and a school psychologist, we have been able to try different things to help him be successful. Our biggest challenge, though, is getting the things that ca; most help him. We have tried using a computer with speech dictation, but the computer is too old to be really successful. It does not have a port for an attached microphone, so it picks up every little sound made in the classroom, in spite of how quiet 27 students are. This is frustrating as he is constantly having to start over. I am grateful for the financial help that in the past has been given schools, however, we need the funds to get up-to-date technology to help our students find success. Success breeds success. My student is more successful this year because of the success that he has had, but it is not enough.

Kristi Matthews, Jordan School District

I just returned to the classroom after being in administrative positions for 10 years and was overwhelmed with how many hoops teachers have to jump through on top of all their teaching responsibilities and the amount of time I was spending outside my contract hours to be ready to teach each day. Increasing our pay, lowering the class size and giving us more planning time would definitely help lighten this heavy load.
Workload / Classroom Support

Camie Simpson, Nebo School District

The legislature as well as our local school boards should be our biggest and best advocates.

Lana Eldredge, Washington County School District

I watch very talented and experienced teachers do whatever it takes to help their students. Mostly using their own money and time.

Kathy Anderson, Weber School District

Come spend some time in public education classrooms and you will see just what we are dealing with!

Karen Gardner, Weber School District

When I was student teaching 2 years ago several teachers warned me to get out while I can. Others tried to make sure I knew how much work I was signing up for. Over all I think teachers are getting burned out by the amount of work that is required in teaching, classroom management, and all the side projects dictated by state and district leaders. They want to do what is best for students, although that is what we want teachers to do, that desire is diminished by other pressures.

Lauren Mkina, Weber School District

I would like them to understand that title one schools are not failing. The system fails us. Teachers are working harder in these schools than in any other schools. Threats of giving labels or transferring teachers are not helpful. Money and community support is what we need. I would like to propose that legislators should be required to spend time in title one schools and see what is really going on.

Melanie W Vigil, Weber School District

When we had a teaching opening at my school 8 years ago we had over 200 applicants. Now we get about 30. It's getting harder and harder to find good teachers and unless something is done soon, public education in Utah will be in crisis -- and the 700,000 kids in public schools will suffer.

Robin Brunner, Alpine School District

Speech Language Pathologists fulfill a vital roll in the education system, but as with math/science/tech teachers, there is an serious shortages partly due to a shortage of SLPs in general, but also that salaries for SLPs are much higher in other settings. This shortage may need to be addressed specifically at the state level.

Arlene Erickson, Alpine School District

In order to support my family, I do remodeling work on the weekends--laying tile, painting, removing old cabinets, etc. I have a colleague who works at Geneva Rock to support his family, and another who stocks shelves at Smith's. We're a small army of salaried professionals working blue-collar jobs. We need more men in this profession in the classroom showing our under-performing boys what a responsible, professional man looks like. We need positive male role models for kids who don't have a dad at home. Yet those of us who resolve to stay in the classroom instead of advancing into administrative positions are often forced to choose between providing that example for our own children or providing that example for our students. It's a rare week that I don't put in 55-60 hours at school before heading in to my other job on Saturday. I can put in long days and hours; that's what I signed up for. But I didn't expect to have to give up any additional time many professionals reserve for their families in order to just get by. There needs to be a pathway to the sort of success that will allow teachers to contribute to our communities as teachers in the classroom and still have something left over for our own families.

Christopher Green, Alpine School District

I am a special education teacher in Alpine School District and every year my numbers have increased while my budget has decreased. Special educators are supposed to have "small groups," yet because of the number of students I serve, I frequently have groups of 10 or more. In the last few years I have had writing groups that have
Workload / Classroom Support

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ballooned up to 20 and 25! I serve students with a variety of disabilities and their accompanying needs. Some are fairly severe for a resource setting. Every year we fight to keep our meager para-educator time, so we have help in the classroom to meet student needs. Last year, The Legislature had an opportunity to pay special education teachers an additional stipend along with math and science teachers. They took special educators OFF of the bill because I guess they thought paying us what we are worth for the difficult job we do. Now we are facing a GRAVE shortage of qualified special education teachers because they can go to different states and have smaller case loads with bigger salaries and budgets. This problem will only continue to get worse because of the increasingly oppressive workload of difficult students and massive amounts of paperwork placed on special educators. At the beginning of this school year my case load had ballooned to 65 SCRAM (a full-time SCRAM load in Alpine School District is 32)! Without my principal demanding help for me, I would still be drowning under this ridiculous load of students. And even with money to fund a 1/2 time teacher, it was difficult to find qualified applicants because fewer and fewer students are choosing teacher as a career and even less are choosing special education because why would they considering the workload vs. salary? The "slow-bleed" of special educators has now become a "fast-gush." This does not bode well for our state. Soon parents will discover that their children with disabilities are in groups that rival the general education class sizes at times and that their needs are not being met appropriately. I predict lawsuits will be the norm. So rather than put the ambulance at the bottom of the hill (i.e. paying hundreds of thousands of dollars to lawyers and angry parents for not providing FAPE), let's look at the data and adjust special education teacher pay to attract and retain qualified candidates in the State of Utah. Doing this will ensure that student needs are being met by qualified, experienced teachers instead of "emergency, long-term" subs who have neither the experience nor education to guarantee progress along the general curriculum of students with disabilities in our state.

Kelli Hall, Alpine School District

I love my students, school, and job but there are so many concerns that I literally am trying to do my job from 7am-8pm each school day and I work on most Saturdays. This is my 4th year at my current High School and I taught 4 years at a Junior High. I teach 8 different preps and I'm the FCCLA advisor at our school. I thought it would get easier and take less time but not yet. There is a big difference of time that teachers spend in their job. Is there a way to compensate passionate teachers for their time and efforts? I'm older but I worry that the young passionate teachers will quit because of the load and low pay. Throughout my life, I have made much more money in every other job - per hour than teaching. Help?

Sandy L Kezerian, Alpine School District

The demographics in Utah are changing and the lack of funding is now and will continue to cause our students to be under served. We need more funding for instructional coaching and teacher support professionals that can bolster our new teachers and help retain them.

Travis Lemon, Alpine School District

Working within the public school system is becoming harder and harder every year. Expectations are increasing while salaries are not. Teacher benefits have been cut. It's becoming harder and harder to find qualified people to fill regular and special education positions. The answer so far has been to hire people who aren't qualified instead of realizing that we need to raise salaries and restore benefits so that we can attract qualified people. I currently work at a school that does not have a speech therapist because we can't find anyone who is willing to take the job. I was in a meeting yesterday where the speech therapist became overwhelmed with what she was being asked to do and left the room in tears. We are hiring individuals who are not school psychologists and expecting them to do the job of a school psychologist with no training. The number of ARL teachers, who have never taught in a classroom, is increasing. Because of this behavioral issues are skyrocketing as we are asking teachers to manage a classroom with no classroom management experience or instruction. I work in a school where it's reported an individual came in looking to apply for a tech job and was asked if he wanted to be a teacher. We are desperate and it's hurting our students.

Chris Melville, Alpine School District

I have had horrible experience working with someone on ARL / LOA programs at the elementary level in a resource classroom with no education background and no special education background. This person can not manage or
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engage the students and meet their IEP needs. We are having to teach her everything multiple times and she still
doesn’t get the hang of it because she doesn’t have the foundation for why teaching the skill is important. I have
spent half of the year doing 90% of her job. I will have to continue helping her write and hold IEPs for the rest of the
year. My special ed teacher leader / supervisor has also spent an exorbitant amount of time working with her also,
modeling lessons, doing evaluations, and conferencing over feedback and teaching new programs and skills. We
have had to do all of this with no compensation for the extra time we are having to put in to help her be successful.
Rochelle Pinnock, Alpine School District

I have an doctorate in Educational Administration and Leadership. I moved here from CA and 7 years of service
credit was transferred with me. I am currently making half of my CA salary - I made more my first year teaching in CA
(18 YEARS AGO) than I do now. I also work 1.5 hours more daily here. I am unable to get my Administrative
Licensure in Utah without redoing all of the coursework, even though I completed it all through my doctorate program.
In order to go into any type of leadership position, I would have to start over. I think that's ridiculous. In our
classrooms, we have awesome kids who are working harder than they ever have before to meet new state
standards. Having an opportunity to learn from each other and plan new curriculum is essential. I don't want more to
do, I'm already working very long hours. I want compensated time to plan, develop, and research effective, research-
based strategies and create meaningful, engaging units. I have no science supplies in my classroom. I have to
borrow from the other teachers at the school, if they're not using the materials. We are preparing kids to work in jobs
that do not exist yet. For a state that has so many children in its population and a renowned emphasis on family and
education, educators are not well compensated and classrooms/schools are undersupplied. Funds must be invested
in the quality of the teachers required to meet the rigorous demands of the state; to meet the needs of individual
students.
Kristi Smith, Alpine School District

People think the remedy to the teacher shortage is all pay. However, it is more related to workload and the number of
nonsense things teachers are asked to do on top of their teaching jobs. Teachers are overwhelmed.
Danny Esplin, Box Elder School District

In the state of Utah I do not know one person who is a teacher that can support a family on their salary. People who
have the profession as a teacher either has a spouse that also works to make ends meet or they have two jobs. This
is a huge deterrent in the teaching profession and it has had an effect on our quality of teachers. I have been a
teacher for 8 years now and half of those years I have been helping teachers hired who do not have a degree in
education. Right now Utah will hire anyone to teach and teaching is already a hard trial by fire job. Not having that
background of university training on analyzing data, classroom management, how to grade, etc makes the job even
harder on those hired individuals. Hiring people without these skills as teachers is not just hard on them, it's hard on
the kids, it's hard on the school trying to support them and get them the training they need. I know it also decreases
my morale wondering why I got a degree in the first place and if what I had meant anything. Raising the pay will
make the competition better. Schools will have people applying for the job and be able to select better teachers.
Teachers will not be taking in second jobs making them better more rested teachers and more time to plan for their
students. The bottom line is if you are a parent what kind of teacher would you want your child to have? A teacher
without a degree in education? A teacher who has to work two jobs?
Johanna Fyffe, Box Elder School District

Cutting health/PE programs is insane. Pay to retain teachers.
Amy Wadsworth, Box Elder School District

I have yet to return to my pay from 8 years ago if we factor in the $6,000 deductible insurance and the loss of funds
we received for teacher development of about & 3,000! Most of my children, my nieces and nephews make more
than I do.
Alison Griffiths, Cache County School District
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I spend 9ish hours a day at work, oftentimes working through lunch to get paperwork, planning, ieps, and things relating to ieps done. I am burning out.

Melanie Jones, Cache County School District

Teachers truly care about their students and their needs. Teachers want to best for their students. Teacher retention needs to be addressed. As a fifth year teacher with a masters degree the amount of time, work, and effort put in everyday is no where near validated through pay, benefits, and value. It is extremely difficult to live off of a teacher's salary; especially with the amount of education and experience I have which would be much valued in a different field.

Ashley, Canyons School District

We are overloaded with too many programs to learn and apply for demonstrating students learning levels and to show our abilities as a teacher. There is very little time if any for teachers to actually prepare quality lessons and be effective in their teaching when we have to spend more time writing about/explaining it to the powers that be. Yes, there are a lot of programs that do help us in being better teachers, but when it takes more time than a regular working day provides, teachers become very stressed and exhausted....burned out and want to leave the profession.

Diana Bettino, Carbon School District

I LOVE teaching. There is evidence to suggest that I am a skilled teacher that makes lasting impacts on students. I prioritize professional development and continually work to improve my craft. But, my love for teaching is NOT enough to ensure that I will stay in the profession. My love for teaching is NOT AND should NOT be justification for long hours with low pay. I am more than qualified to leave the profession and seek work where I will receiver higher pay and similar benefits. Please, please, make keeping qualified teachers and attracting new, qualified teachers to the profession the highest priority. Studies show that teachers impact students more than any other factor in the classroom. I know that making the job more appealing will keep great teachers in the field. Utah needs quality teachers for our children, who are our future.

Jacie Pressett, Carbon School District

I am moving my fifth grade class into blended learning. We are fortunate to have 1 to 1 technology, which is fabulous. I believe that blending will bring us higher growth. The planning and collaboration required, however, is incredibly time intensive. The number of meetings and trainings we are required to attend increases almost daily, and the result is that the time I put in on my job at home is getting seriously overwhelming. I'm excited about what I'm doing in my job. I think my class is going places. But nobody can take this workload long term without damaging their health or losing mental stability. Teachers are human. Human needs must be met. There are less stressful jobs for much higher pay. We should be shocks if there wasn't a teacher shortage.

Amy Coray, Davis School District

To whom it may concern, Please take education seriously. Utah is losing many good teachers because they aren't getting paid enough. It is too hard to be an effective educator and have part time jobs to cover the bills. This is the most pressing matter. If there aren't good teachers in the classroom, it will mean a lot of work/money for schools and districts to train and guide teachers who are not licensed educators. An increase in salary would mean more retention. It would mean more time with families. It would relieve much of the stress and pressure of being a teacher. Thank you for your hard work. Sincerely, A Good Teacher

Shon Feller, Davis School District

It is scary to be an experienced teacher and see what is happening to our profession! We are not attracting the quality educators that we need to for the future! A large amount of seasoned teachers are retiring and we don't have pay or benefits to interest people to enter this critical field! This is a CRITICAL time to invest in the efforts of attracting quality educators for the future of our Utah children! Best student outcomes or technology or class sizes won't be our biggest concerns if we can't first find high quality educators for teachers. More and more demands are placed on teachers every day and parents and students are becoming more and more challenging and time consuming. Burn out rate is high!! We need more support and more $ dedicated to adequate address increasing student needs. Teacher respect seems to be declining by some. More of our own time and money is being asked of us (not being...
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funded for classroom supplies, more meetings, more documentation required, more individualizing for more students, etc). We feel like we are being taken for granted. Our family time is being sacrificed with our increasing expectations. It is becoming humanly impossible to balance work and home life with this extremely demanding job! No wonder the burn out rate is high, no wonder we're not attracting enough high quality people to enter the field! Please invest so that we may continue to have excellent teachers to lead all that lies ahead for our students!

Natalyn Shepherd, Davis School District

The biggest drawback to teaching right now for me is not the pay. I feel that it is the lack of trust. My district does not trust me to make academic decisions and instead prefers to micromanage every aspect of my job as much as they can. Most of the new teachers hired last year were under qualified (about 90%, or 27 out of 30). Teaching standards need to remain high and the state needs to pay according to the high standards to attract and retain good teachers. In the end, we will get what we pay for.

Ed Goodrich, Duchesne County School District

Our rural district is so impacted by low teacher salaries that my newest colleague is a 20 year old with only a high school education. She has no teaching experience. I suggest that the legislature work to reduce teaching pressure and increase teacher rewards, including pay. Utah students deserve a quality education.

Kathryn Thomas, Duchesne County School District

This is an honorable and necessary profession that many people are leaving because the work load is too great and because many feel like they are not treated as professionals.

Sarah Allan, Granite School District

There have been recent incidents that a teacher position went unfilled for half of a school year. The first (Math), was filled at the semester. The second (English) has not been filled. It is now the end of the first semester. Current English teachers are taking the extra classes so that those students will be able to have a full-time teacher. Problem: 1. Education is no longer a desired career. 2. The policy of not hiring full-time subs able to teach five days a week destroys the continuity of education for classes who need the subs.

Traci England, Granite School District

Pay increase for all school staff, not just teachers and principals. In special education it is difficult to hire and retain staff.

Richard Kerr, Granite School District

Quality public education, including preschool, needs to be a number one priority alongside basic health care for all citizens.

Virginia Rothstein, Granite School District

I dare you to do my job for a day!!!!!!

Keetette Turner, Granite School District

This last year I have done 4 all-nighters in addition to my normal work hours AND staying late at the school just to keep caught up on paperwork required by IEPs. I am getting paid the exact same amount as any other teacher, yet my efforts to comply with regulations and support my students are ignored or taken for granted. The shortage of teachers is a huge issue, and the shortage of special education teachers is even greater. I want to continue to support my students, but I don't see how I can sustain this amount of effort at substandard pay. I am working a part-time job just to make ends meet. My wife is also working a full-time and part-time job. In short, if you want to solve the teacher shortage, and especially the special education teacher shortage, stop taking us for granted. Yes, have high standards, but stop making us jump through stupid hoops just so can do our jobs. When I have a choice of doing some stupid paperwork or help my students, I WILL ALWAYS HELP MY STUDENTS FIRST. Why? Because I got into this job because I believe in what I do. It's about time that legislature realizes that their well-meaning regulations
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have unintended consequences. Consequences like taking support away from students for paperwork that does nothing to help said students AND drives teachers out of the profession. Something that I wonder about every time I sit in front of my computer I bought with my money because the district was not able to buy a computer capable of handling the IEP program we have without it lagging and making the paperwork take even longer... And don't even get me started on how much of a waste of time summative testing is, or how it makes it harder for students to succeed. From the bottom of my sarcastic teacher's heart, thank you for saddling us with SAGE. A test that isn't a good test of knowledge and is instead a behavior test since we can't even remind our students to take their time or stop them from clicking through. We teachers have to make data-driven decisions. Something I love, by the way. Why is it that legislature don't bother to read the research on the negative impacts of summative testing on student success and graduation rates. This isn't football people. Schools should not be in competition with each other. They should be driven instead to improve the success rates of students. To UEA, please feel free to share my comments. Although I would prefer to remain anonymous since I am very candid about my feelings.

Brian Middleton, Iron County School District

What I think benefits my students the most is the extra time I spend after my contract time planning and preparing lessons. I find that my students are more excited to learn, and do better on tests when I have taken the time well after my contract time to prepare. I think it would be beneficial for both students and teachers if teachers were compensated for this time or schools given extra money for aids and support staff to help teachers spend less time after contract time. I think this would also help retain teachers. Many teachers leave because of the long Unpaid hours.

Melinda Eastman, Jordan School District

The two major things that will help us hire and retain teachers are being paid what we are worth and being valued - not overworked (like data crunching - we are not professional data analysts) and micromanaged. I think this has been evidenced in the recent reactions to the teacher shortage.

Marc Taylor, Jordan School District

The Public Education System in Utah is in crisis. This is not a political issue to be thrown around as a campaigning pawn. Public Education must be addressed by all leaders, citizens, and businesses. We all have to be committed, be on the same page and act in the best interest of our community; society.

Alma Taylor Brown, Logan City School District

I've been teaching elementary school for 23 years. In that time, I've spent an average of 3-4 extra hours a day outside of contract time in order to be an effective teacher. For some, it may sound like I'm not organized. To others I'm an award winning, effective teacher whose students love to come to school and who feel they have learned while spending time in my classroom. Let me use today as an example. The last bell rang at 3:10. It is now past contract time at 3:55pm. I've spent this time with a parent, answering e-mails from other parents, reading an article sent to the entire faculty by our administrator, answered a survey from the district concerning our language arts program, and am now writing to you. I still have 5 journals to read, several assignments and one assessment to record into the computerized grading record and finishing touches on tomorrow’s lesson plans to put into place. I could come early in the morning, but I already have to be here early for a faculty meeting. There’s just never enough time. It's so easy to get burned out. I'm old, from a generation of hard working, get the job done people. This new generation of young teachers is not willing to give the time, blood, sweat and tears to only be given more and more things to do with few materials, directions, and paid time to do them in. No wonder young people no longer aspire to be teachers! It's exhausting and many of our young teachers cannot qualify for a mortgage for a suitable house for their families! I appreciate the pay raise of the last year. It was a great start. It's time to look at other ways to assist teachers, to fill their buckets so they can fill the buckets of future citizens and community leaders.

Tina Nilsson, Murray City School District

Student success starts with supporting our teachers.
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Charli Quinonez, Murray City School District

We need to be trusted to do the work we have committed to do. As with all professions, there are few who make it hard for the rest. Teachers do not need legislation passed to remind or tell us how to do our job. We are tired of trying every whim or educational philosophy that comes around and is then legislated to us to follow. Stop moving the goalpost and allow us to be the professionals we are. Please pay us as if we were truly professionals. My daughter-in-law started her career making more (by almost double) than I do after working 10 years in the teaching profession. We both have a bachelor's degree. To help address the teacher shortage, pay and compensate us what we are worth. Please remember that we do not "have summer off". We work during the summer perfecting our craft, attending conferences, and attending classes to better ourselves in the profession we love.

Auralee Brooks, North Sanpete School District

When will we value educators? We are professionals and need to be duly compensated and given support at the school to meet the continuing list of tasks taking us away from our focus on student instruction and outcomes. We need skilled people.

Bryce Bird, Nebo School District

We have amazing students who are achieving incredible things. They need mentors who are quality and interested in helping students succeed. Teachers need to be paid more so that they want to stay in education. It's very hard to stay motivated to be in the classroom when you know your salary could double if you took a corporate job. The state should not continue to rely on people who do this job out of the kindness of their hearts. The state needs to make teaching a valued profession. The more they can do to support teachers, the better.

Angela Nederhand, Nebo School District

We have made good strides but there is still much to be done in order to secure the future of public education in Utah.

Stan Peck, Nebo School District

Teacher burnout is our current reality. Kids are coming with big issues that are not education related. We have to address these issues, as well as their education. It is draining to teach all the subjects, and do therapy on the student whose mom is in jail, who is living in a camp trailer, who has Obsessive defiant disorder, who thinks she is a boy and wants to transition to a male PLUS manage 30 kids in a classroom. Then spend 15 hours of overtime a week without pay, and want to stay in the profession. I have been teaching for 11 years. I spend much more of my time jumping through the hoops the state requires than planning for my lessons. Every teacher I know says, "When can I just be in my classroom and just teach!" More support needs to be given to teachers for dealing with behaviors and emotional issues. We can't spend our whole day doing therapy. It's not fair to teachers, nor the kids that are happy and ready to learn. Something has to change.

Lisa Peterson, Nebo School District

Teachers and other educators (I am a Speech Language Pathologist) in Utah are expected to work for free. Without donated time and money from us, the education system here would collapse. It is appalling.

Betina Workman, Nebo School District

Everyday I make a difference in the classroom. My students are excited to see me and I love them. I would love to feel that teachers have that same respect from the state of Utah. We have a teacher shortage because teachers do not feel respected for the differences we make each and everyday. We need to find a way to attract and keep teachers...emphasis on the keep.

Amy Dunn, Ogden School District

While working in a turnaround school in Ogden School District, I was expected to spend @ 3 or 4 hours outside of the contract time to visit parents or study teaching techniques. This was expected of all the teachers in the school,
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regardless of their levels of expertise. It made a poorly paid, professional job unattractive and took too much time away from my family life. Worst of all, it took time I needed to spend diagnosing my students' needs and planning for their academic activities and success. The practice was in contrast to what I had learned to be beneficial to my students' learning. It was extremely frustrating and made me feel less effective as a classroom teacher and very unimportant as a professional.

Linda Edwards, Ogden School District

I teach a behavior support class for the most at risk children in Provo City School District. These children have experienced severe trauma in their homes, including physical, emotional, and sexual abuse. As a result these students have mental illnesses. My co-teacher and I act as a social worker, therapist, mother, and teacher. We both have been attacked numerous times, as well as have had our room destroyed. One of our students would deficate in his pants daily and become violent and/or run away when confronted about it. All of this, and I only make a little over $31,000. I'm exhausted, I feel burned out, and to be honest, may not come back next year because of the physical and emotional exhaustion.

Jackie Martin Cooper, Provo City School District

As an assistant principal, we had to hire an ARL teacher due to the teacher shortage and we had to spend a ridiculous amount of energy and resources to help this teacher. The students aren't receiving quality teaching that they deserve. Start respecting educators through your words and actions! Increase teacher pay, speak positively of how much we do in Utah with so little, which will both help alleviate some of the teacher shortage.

Dan Aragon, Salt Lake City School District

The lack of para support in the resource setting due to low wages and needing too high of qualifications for the position.

Lonny Burton, Salt Lake City School District

We need to look at the teacher training programs currently in place at our higher education institutions. I would like to see more collaboration between k12 and universities on the issue of teacher training and retention in the profession.

Nicola Hack, Salt Lake City School District

I have been in the profession for nine years and the last two years have been the hardest and most stressful. We are getting unqualified teachers into our classrooms because of the shortages and this is putting more work and stress on those of us who are highly qualified good teachers. This year I have seriously considered quitting. I have been told that I am an amazing teacher and that the parents in our area don't want to lose me but with all the extra work of training unqualified teachers who are using alternative routes to get their degrees I am getting burned out. I come in early every day and stay late most afternoons trying to help these unqualified teachers and then struggle to have everything done for my own students. This causes unneeded stress and makes me seriously consider other job options. I am receiving no added benefit in training these teachers and they are making about as much as me because of pay increases to attract more people into the profession. There needs to be more compensation and benefits to retain those of us who are trained and have experience.

Andrea Reynolds, Tooele County School District

I have a 26 year old son on the ASD spectrum. I fought the insurance coverage problem for him 23 years ago for many years. This year, I had to and am continuing to fight it again. I was discouraged to know that this is a problem that many parents in our state are still having to fight. We have made leaps and bounds in the medical world to understanding what helps these children, and yet we still have NOT mandated insurance companies in the state of Utah to cover autism(including the simple process of "classifying" or "diagnosing" someone who is on the spectrum. There are over 30 states in our nation that have mandated insurance companies to cover autism, unfortunately, Utah has not. We need to push this through our system to help our children.

Mary Johnson, Alpine School District
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Teachers are feeling very beaten up. We're tired and discouraged. We've been blamed for everything. There's very little respect from parents and legislators. Spend some time in a classroom. See what we do. Just because you went to school as a kid doesn't mean you have the faintest idea what it's like to be a teacher. I've been to the dentist a hundred times. Would you let me work on your kids' teeth? Of course not. Neither do you know what it takes to create a successful classroom. We need to be listened to and really heard. We need support. We need to be paid enough that we don't need second jobs that take our focus and energy away. We love what we do. We want your children to reach the stars. We're working so hard. Don't just say you support us, show you support us.

Jake Southworth, Alpine School District

Children are not numbers and schools need to not be treated like businesses. Teaching children has so much more significance than any data/testing will ever show, and we need to focus on educating the whole child and not just focus on subjects that are tested. I am all for training and teaching with the latest/best practices that have been researched, but this doesn't happen without significant time spent on lesson plans, material development, and assessments created to measure learning. It is not fair to implement new curriculum standards or give teachers new assignments or expectations and expect them to invest their own time to always create materials, learn new material, and organize and prepare it all to be able to teach it. This job can be, and usually is utterly exhausting and doesn't just affect a teacher but also their families. We do it because we care, but you can only care so much and for so long. Probably the only other professions that put in the kind of time that teachers do, are given time during their work day to prepare and learn information necessary to do their job, and have a great deal of responsibility expected are paid a whole lot more. More pay would definitely make it more worth doing, but honestly there just isn't enough time in the day to do all that is expected even if we were compensated. Most people just take for granted what has to go into teaching to pull off even minimal success and don't realize what it takes to really accomplish some of the amazing things that we do, most of what can't be shown on a standardized test. I think what public education (well any education) does is crucial to most kids' lives and to our society, which is why I do what I do and will continue to do as long as I am capable. But we can't do it alone and need the support of parents, politicians, and the entire community that we live in because we're all interconnected, so it's important we understand each other and work together. Thank you for all you do in support of public education.

Heather Stewart, Alpine School District

I love teaching in Alpine district but I continue to actively search for a higher paying position out of Utah state. I'd prefer not to move but I cannot start a family or pay student loans on the salary I make. I have to coach multiple teams, supervise every after school activity, and participate in every teaching incentive/extra hours program I can just to try to make a living wage. I've taught for 6 years, but I cannot maintain this pace much longer. Moving just one state over ensures a $12k starting raise compared to Utah and a limit of 28 students per classroom. That's difficult to pass up.

Lee Tortorelli, Alpine School District

A teacher's day does not begin at 7:30 a.m. nor end at 2:50 p.m. We take our work home--prepare lessons for the next day/week, grade papers, contact parents, update grades, communicate with other teachers and much more. We love what we do but we are underappreciated by the administration and the legislation. Because we enter each day and help kids to learn and to grow in a safe, inviting environment, we too need an "atta boy". Those can come in many forms. It is proven that employees in any industry work harder for employers who recognize, empathize, and reward their hard work and celebrate their successes. Education should be no different. I love when my students tell me they love and appreciate me. I love it when my employer recognizes my time and effort in and out of the classroom. I appreciate it when the legislature passes on funding that increases my pay because they know and understand the value of an "atta boy" and a keep up the great work. We are working together to "grow" Utah kids.

Laura McKee, Box Elder School District

There are many teachers who are dedicated. I average 3 hours of over time a day and that does not include the time that I spend at home most evenings. Most teachers care about their students and the profession. That being said, many cannot afford to stay in this profession unless they become administrators. How sad! Many others, my son
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included, are choosing other careers. My son always wanted to be a history teacher. He loves history and would have made an incredible teacher, but....sadly he cannot raise a family on a teacher's salary. He watched me all these years and knows all the extra time that needs to be spent to be a good teacher. He chose another profession and I encouraged him to do so.

Wendy El Bakri, Cache County School District

As a mother and a teacher, I appreciate the quality of education taught by a teacher that has time to prepare appropriately, feels valued and is encouraged to update skills and technology. They must utilize this training and new skills making it available to their classroom with training provided. I know this is not the teacher's financial responsibility but ends up that way, due to funding deficits and high needs to stay current and effective.

Rachelle Kendrick, Cache County School District

We need to retain and attract quality teachers. Pay us like other professionals. I do just as much as an accountant, a tax adviser, a nurse, or any other college educated professional. In fact I give up more of my free time than most other professionals just to make up lesson plans, grade work, help out at school functions and get training to help me become more computer literate or updated on the newest best practices. I hardly ever have a "free weekend". When I am gone, it is important enough to have a substitute. Please treat what I do with respect and appropriate compensation.

Ruth Mudrow, Cache County School District

Get with the times...don't make any legislation 're education until they have been in the classroom at least a week. No one tells an attorney, doctor or even a mechanic how to do their jobs, why is it that everyone else has a say in what and how we teach? Pay us for our time. Utah is getting to be more expensive to live in. I know of teachers - teachers who are sole breadwinners or who are divorced, widowed or single having to work two jobs to make it here in Utah.

Mary Le Cheminant, Canyons School District

I know that the conversation isn't just about money, but logically, if you pay teaching professionals a competitive wage, you will not only attract higher quality people, but you'll be able to expect a higher quality outcome. People work to earn a living. Give quality teachers a better way to live and you won't lose them to other fields.

Shanalee Sadler, Canyons School District

Why am I as a teacher automatically bad, until I prove to you otherwise?

Bret Thomas, Canyons School District

Last year due to teacher shortage and district money I had 32 fourth graders. Their reading levels spanned from 6 words per minute to 157 words per minute. I had students with IEPs and 504s for behavior. We did not have a math text, science text, and piloted a writing program. I was responsible to have my students show growth on the sage test. We were lucky to just make it through the day without some major interruption, or catastrophe. All the while I'm being paid about the same as the local garbage collectors.

Jared Chiara, Carbon School District

That I am often (approx once per week) in my classroom until the last minute before the silent alarm goes off (9-10 PM) in an effort just to stay caught up in my responsibilities. I am ALWAYS in my classroom every day at 6 AM, no later.

Geoffrey C. Bovey, Davis School District

I love teacher work days. I love the opportunity to effectively plan and prepare engaging lessons and materials for my students. As a teacher, I would love to have teacher work days more often. I feel I would be a better teacher and my students would learn more.

Sharlie Howe, Davis School District
Workload / Classroom Support

Most parents are not present in a students education. We are a babysitter. Students need parent involvement to be successful.

*Stacey Howell, Davis School District*

We can't give students a top rated education if teachers are not given time to plan and collaborate with each other.

*Mark Hyatt, Davis School District*

Teaching is becoming an even more difficult profession. While educators are beholden to parents, administration, and counselors too, teachers have no advocate or voice against unfair practices and treatment without fear of retribution. There needs to be an evaluative practice for administration and counseling that teachers get to be a part of. These positions of "power" should undergo the same scrutiny and observation as educators.

*Carina Kinney, Davis School District*

I work with over 200 junior high students everyday; Grades 7, 8, and 9. I often work through my lunch in an effort to keep up with grading and preparation. I also go in early and stay late. More often than not I put in at least an extra 20 hours per week at work. There are increasingly more administrative tasks to attend to and higher expectations of excellence to achieve. However, with the increase of time and effort there has not been equal merit. I need a $5,000 raise and great benefits for the work I do. I can't appreciate a raise in the form of “better” or “increased” health care benefits. Benefits should be benefits not pay! Pay me money to pay my bills with. Pay me money to help me feel not only appreciated and valued for excellence in teaching your children, pay me money because of the value of the occupation itself and the personal time, talents, education, and experience I a provide on a daily basis to ensure your future and that of your posterity are good and full. Invest in me and I will do everything in my power to protect and grow your investment!

*Laura Larsen, Davis School District*

Special Education does use a lot of education money but is important in so many ways. Our special ed. students have a very positive influence on the gen-ed population. Our students SPED- learn so much about how to function in the real world from being with and watching the gen-ed population. However, in so many schools not all technology in the gen-ed classroom is given to the SPED classrooms. Also, some schools in our district have all the bells and whistles (smart while others limp along with broken windows and orange water. Resources should be evenly distributed, especially schools within a district. Let's be fair and above board.

*Barbara Lovell-Waddell, Davis School District*

When I am pulled out of my class for teacher training, my students suffer. Substitutes are not as effective as the professionals. They don't know the curriculum or individuality of each child's needs. Students will attempt to get away with negative behaviors when a sub is in the classroom. (Please remember...they are children.)

*Denise McMasters, Davis School District*

It would be financially feasible to know this could be a lifetime career not just temporary due to time and salary demands.

*Jodi Searle, Davis School District*

That I personally spend hours of overtime each week to help ensure each of my students can be successful. I don’t usually get home before 7 p.m., and on Fridays I stay until 10:30 or 11:00 p.m. Additionally, I spend between $3,000-$4,000 of my own money each year on classroom supplies. I am not exaggerating.

*Traci Taylor, Davis School District*

When I first began in this profession, I considered it the best job in the world. About five or six years ago, that attitude changed with more government intrusion and mandates but no increase in pay. The last two years, there has been a District takeover of the classrooms with mandate after mandate that has taken away more teacher autonomy and
Workload / Classroom Support

teacher innovation and has increased the work load with no increase in compensation. Any enthusiasm for this job has been completely crushed.

*Eric Gubler, Duchesne County School District*

Teaching is very demanding physically and mentally. My job takes a lot of time away from my family (an average of 60 hours each week). It also takes a lot of money out of my household budget. Please realize that teachers are willing to do what we can, but we are not bottomless pits of time and money. We need help.

*Susan Doman, Granite School District*

There is a lot of professional development which is very helpful. However, what we really need now is time to implement what is expected. This time could be paid time after school, time during school etc.

*Cindy George, Granite School District*

My job is hard. I know all jobs can be, but it is emotionally, logistically, creatively, and temporally demanding.

*Benjamin L McGowan, Granite School District*

I have a 6th grade program my district has committed to that requires 90+ minutes to teach effectively then threw us into a junior high setting with this program and have larger classes and 45-50 minutes to teach. No time whatsoever to help struggling students, or time period to do nothing but direct teaching! The district doesn't care & our grades will be compared to the rest of the 6th grade in our district who are still elementary schools and other middle schools with programs made for that time frame. Not fair, and this is how we burn out teachers!

*Belinda J. Nelson, Granite School District*

Please give me daily planning time and more classroom funding.

*Tracy Regnier, Granite School District*

Paraprofessionals increase of pay

*Rachael Wilson, Granite School District*

I would like legislators to support giving special ed teachers a pay increase. Special education teachers are expected to do what classroom teachers do and more.

*Genelle Morrison, Jordan School District*

I have taught for nearly a half century and still feel that my standard of living has not raised as many other professions, yet cost of living has increased at an alarming rate. I still remember my nephew graduating from high school and starting out in business for $10,000 more that I was making after 10 years of teaching.

*Sandra Peck, Murray City School District*

Teachers are extremely important to the future of our world - help us to feel important, be properly compensated have the time and resources to do our jobs the way they should be done.

*Annie Taylor, Murray City School District*

Kids achieving great things because teachers are allowed to teach. Stop making their job hard and treat them like professionals.

*Tim Mendenhall, Nebo School District*

As a first year teacher I am totally swamped. I am at school everyday until after six and come home and work another two to three hours after dinner. However, I feel like no matter how hard I work or how well I do on evaluations my efforts will not be recognized with benefits nor monetary bonuses. I am not even entitled to a paid maternity leave until after I have completed three years of teaching, which is just ridiculous!

*Erica Murdoch, Nebo School District*
I personally feel from my point of view that the amount of work and energy that "good" teachers put into teaching is burning "good" teachers out, because their work is not compensated fairly.

*Krissi Tanner, Nebo School District*

Teaching is a challenging job. Teachers work tirelessly trying to do the best for the students they love. We work countless hours and deserve to be compensated and respected.

*Deon Youd, Nebo School District*

Teachers work above and beyond to provide the best education and classroom experience for their students. We need to have adequate planning time and more paid prep time at the beginning of the school year. It feels as though we are expected to work many extra hours without pay at the beginning of the school year (and other times throughout the year) in order to be prepared. Please add a few more paid planning days at the beginning and throughout the year.

*Riliann Stettler, Ogden School District*

This is my fourth year teaching, and I am burnt out. I would say I am an excellent educator, but because of the mandates put on me by both the district and the state I feel that I can't do this anymore. I love teaching, I love my students, but I feel I am slowly being left with no choice but to leave. I'm begging you, raise teacher pay or figure out how to retain quality teachers. Figure that out by talking to current teachers who are in the thick of it and listen and care about us. We need help.

*Riley Hanni, Provo City School District*

I am a special educator for students who need significant support (behavior support, physical therapy, feeding, toileting, etc.) and I cannot do my job without para-educators. Unfortunately due to the low pay, low hours, and lack of benefits, we cannot keep them. Between myself and the other self-contained teacher we have lost 5 excellent para-educators in two years. They have gone on to higher paying jobs, a less intense workload, and often careers with benefits. As long as para-educators are capped at $12 an hour--no matter how well trained, experienced, or overqualified they may be--are limited to working 29 hours per week or less, and expected to be highly qualified for their positions, we will not be able to fully staff our classrooms. Without a full staff, our classrooms cannot run efficiently and we cannot provide the quality education that our students deserve and are legally entitled to under federal law.

*Tierra Healy, Provo City School District*

As much as education is fulfilling in and of itself, it is still a job that should be paid for what it's worth. Educators should be compensated for the incredible time, effort, and dedication they bring to the profession - not treated like the job is the reward itself.

*Christine Lavallee, Provo City School District*

Teachers are getting very discouraged with our salaries and little they go up. Our workload continues to increase but our pay does not.

*Julie Nelson, Provo City School District*

I teach classes and work as the schools athletic trainer. Both are full time jobs I average 65 to 70 hours a week, and I do not do either as well as should be. I would like to be a full time Athletic Trainer at the school I work but I have to teach so they can afford to have me around because the state dose no fund the position. I have been doing both for 25 years and I don't know If I can make physically or mentally to 30.

*Ben Ross, Provo City School District*

Please, please, please focus on the needs teachers have. We have a system where teachers are both overworked and used as the scapegoat when they are often not the problem. Please recognize the adverse role some districts have on growth in individual schools. Legislate that schools have more autonomy.
Workload / Classroom Support

Robert LeCheminant, San Juan School District

Rural students matter too

Ursula Mackay, Sevier School District

I am physically and mentally exhausted at the end of the day. Sometimes it feels like there is little support. We certainly don't teach for the money, but it would be appreciated. Also, the lack of respect from students and parents is getting ridiculous.

Elaine Carter, Uintah School District

Spend a week with us and see how much we care, do, and make a difference. Then understand why so many teachers work 2 or more jobs.

Stephanie Reed-Tippet, Uintah School District

I have been an educator for 14 years. I LOVE teaching but a few years ago I decided I needed a 5 year plan to leave teaching. I couldn't do it anymore. The pay, the lack of support for supplies, the lack of support with large class sizes and behavior students. The sense of moral in my building... all these things made me cry almost everyday that year because I couldn't do it anymore but I LOVE teaching. Something has got to give to help support our teachers! It isn't just money- yes we need higher salaries but not because we are greedy, but because this is a stressful job! We face so much stress and pressure everyday as educators and then to face the additional stress at home of how do I pay my bills? How do I buy a house or save for the future or even go on a vacation to relax (I work in the summers to have extra money to help survive the rest of the year)? it is all the stress together that are making teachers crack and breakdown. We ask for college degrees and masters degrees and endorsements which all come with student loans for many- we need to pay teacher enough to pay back those student loans. Student loan forgiveness programs are such small percentage of the cost of student loans. If as a state we can reduce some of the stress and burden teachers face in their lives as a whole- the stress of the classroom wouldn't be as great a burden since the load would have been lightened.

Elizabeth Brown, Wasatch County School District

Please come spend a day or two in special education classrooms. Get to know what our daily challenges are and see what a great job we are doing.

Glenda Gray, Wasatch County School District

When I'm paid more for my time, I feel valuable and more willing to do a better job for my administrator and students.

Tina Crawford, Washington County School District

There is a lot of talk about why we are losing or not attracting new teachers. From my experience it comes down to that the demands on teachers increase every year. The students become more difficult every year, the principals and districts demand more every year and so much time is spent in meetings rather than actually preparing,and the pay doesn't make it worth the stress and hassles. For double the pay it might be worth all the stress and unpaid overtime. We also definitely need more support and options for unruly students. I've had 5 year olds curse me, yell at me, and hit and bite me. And I have a very structured well run class. It is not that I'm not doing my job. We have emotionally disturbed children in the regular classroom and 5 min with the counselor doesn't fix it. In years past they'd be expelled. Now they want to fix the teacher, not the kids. When I meet a young person who says they want to teach, I warn them that teaching is a small part of what you actually do.

Jean Doty, Washington County School District

More money needs to go directly to teachers that is not funneled through the hands of the district and others. I need more money to help my individual classroom. I don't need more regulation of that money and hoops to jump through. I don't see increases coming down to me to use- grandeous plans for technology don't make it elementary schools.
Workload / Classroom Support

How about asking the teachers how they want to spend the money on technology individually? Now there’s an idea-huh?

Lee J. Claycomb, Weber School District

Ask a teacher about what teachers and classrooms needs. And, commit to spending time with teachers and as teachers before deciding up issues that affect students and teachers. I choose to teach, but to do so has been expensive in so many ways: I often PAY to do my job, PAY to keep my job, PAY with my a decline in my health due to rising expectations on my part and a lowering of understanding and support on your part.

Cassie A Cox, Weber School District

Stop putting more work on teachers with no compensation in terms of wages and especially no time to complete what you are asking for.

Terri Mason, Weber School District

Teaching is a very rewarding profession. We work extremely hard. It should be a profession that others seek rather than one many stay clear of. This could happen if teachers were payed better and had the needed resources and time to better their instruction. Planning and collaboration time is important. Having this in place will help retain teachers as well.

Tina Satterthwaite, Weber School District

I am the teacher that is lucky enough to teach a 4th/5th split this year because we don't have the funds for another teacher. While I love my class, it has been a challenge. This is my 12th year teaching and it almost put me under - teaching the split. I do appreciate funds that provide aide time. I wouldn't have been able to do teach this year, but it is still not ideal. Because of the split my team members have had larger classes because of parent concerns about having their child in the split. There is a lot more work for a lot of people.

Chelsea Nelson, Alpine School District

Teachers are expected to do more every year with what appears to be less money and larger class sizes. There is more and more tedious “busy work” work to “prove” they are good teachers, which takes time and energy that should be put into lesson plans and teaching.

Kimberly Bennett, Box Elder School District

Over the 12 years I have taught, I have witnessed many changes and new programs being implemented. It is so hard to keep up with changes in education, by the time we start to become proficient with one system, it changes, let's minimize program changes and focus on what really matters: finding ways to attract and retain good quality teachers in our schools, and then supporting them so that they can do their jobs each day without overburdening them with too many meetings, too much paperwork, or too many extra duties and assignments.

Rod Buttars, Cache County School District

There are classes that you are making required that the students and teachers alike do not want to participate in. These classes are meant to “promote” and give “exploratory” experiences to different careers in the CTE department. I am speaking specifically about College & Career Awareness (CCA) and Digital Literacy (DigLit). What it comes down to is that you are taking teachers away from teaching their content to force them to teach CCA. This is making us lose teachers because no one wants to teach CCA full time. I think the class is great because the students get a lot of different experiences, however, making it full time and required is killing the specific content classes our school offers. Digital Literacy does not need to be a full semester, every-day course. The DigLit curriculum could easily be added as a few weeks to the Exploring Technology class. It is stretching the curriculum ridiculously to make it a full year. By making these classes required, you are taking students away from our specific content classes (i.e. FACS, Exploring Technology, Manufacturing Technology) that they want to take! You are also taking students away from
Workload / Classroom Support

opportunities to take foreign languages, music, drama, and fine arts, thereby eliminating their programs as well. Please rethink the decision to make CCA and DigLit required. It would be better for all, including students, if you do.

Emalee Brown, Canyons School District

Remember that teachers are teaching our future. You get what you pay for!

Cindy Nottingham, Davis School District

I would like to share how important CTE classes are to introduce students to the trades. There are many high paying jobs that are not filled because students don't think they can make a good income in the trades. Through introduction and training, high school students may start their career right out of high school, many may go on to further their education with an associates degree or a Bachelors in that trade.

John Lindsay, Grand County School District

In a state with a severe teacher shortage, I find it interesting that we are trying to change the criteria used to hire new teachers, rather than fix what is wrong with the system and support the teachers we already have.

Tamra Fulmer, Jordan School District

The last two years have been difficult in as a special education teacher because my entire team is constantly changing. We are having a difficult time finding teachers and keeping them. It is also hard to keep aides in the classrooms because the pay is low and they often have to pay $75 dollars to take the para pro test before they can even begin working. It is hard to constantly train new staff when I could be using that time to help develop more lessons for my students.

Megan Ruff, Jordan School District

I am an ARL candidate. This is my third year teaching. I'm learning to teach, planning lessons, teaching AND taking classes all at the same time. This is overwhelming, and the classes that I'm required to take do not directly apply to the CTE class that I am teaching, which is a frustrating waste of time and money. It is costing me approximately $3500 to get my ARL, why? There is a teacher shortage, and I fulfill the requirements for my endorsements to teach the classes that I teach, I think there should be either free education for new teachers, and it should not be during the school year... this is really hard to balance with an active family, too. I understand why so many do not finish this process and leave the profession.

Rebecca Stone, Jordan School District

Special Education teachers need more paraprofessional support. The education standard for hiring paraprofessionals is too high which is causing a shortage in special education help. The education standard for hiring paraprofessionals need to be lowered so more individuals are able to apply for the position. There are 25 openings for special education paraprofessionals in our district. The students in the program are suffering due to the lack of additional help.

Christina Donnelly, Provo City School District

PLEASE show respect/validation for the teaching as a profession. I work very hard at my job and my student's test scores validate this. However, I also spend an inordinate amount of time helping a new third grade teacher at my school (who has a degree in Animal Husbandry- so it made perfect sense for you to decide she could now teach third graders effectively?). She is a darling girl who I like very much. But the responsibility to teach her how to be a teacher has now fallen to me and the rest of my already over-worked team. We didn't sign up to teach teachers- our job is to teach students. Now on top of teaching students, we are also expected to carry the load of teaching new teachers??? NOT OK!!!!!!! Require a teaching degree, please!!

Elise Brown, South Sanpete School District

I don't think any legislator should make any changes to education until they have spent months in a school seeing what is really going on, and have had to teach a class in a public school.
Workload / Classroom Support

Deborah Schmock, Salt Lake City School District

Teachers are professionals - the lowest paid professionals. Utah teachers are amazing! They impact lives inspite of little funding, large class sizes, and so many mandates,

Kalynn Sheffer, Uintah School District

Teacher and substitute teacher shortage will not go away until the legislature makes these jobs beneficial both monetarily and emotionally to perspective teachers.

Laurel Cloward, Weber School District

As a special educator for over twenty years and having seen a slow and steady increase in the amount of regulation. This year we've had an overwhelming increase in regulations that will take even more time away from my students, but will also cause an increase in work and huge increase in the size of student files. None of it will increase the quality of education for those students. In fact, it has reduced the amount of time I can put into helping students. One other thing.......what is the deal with allowing parents to keep their kids home and have no responsibility to get them to school? Schools are held accountable for increasing the skills of kids who are not here. Our hands are tied because we can't do a darn thing about kids who aren't even here. Example: A parent wants the district to provide private speech therapy for a student whose child only attends 55% of the time. I can tell you that if anyone asked me if they should pursue a career in education and particularly in special education I'd say and emphatic, "NO!" I love the kids and I love teaching them. I love all of the people who work in my building and those in my district that I work with. However, over the 25 years I've been teaching the kids and parents keep getting harder and harder to work with. I spend well over $1000 of my own money every year just trying to provide what they need. I bought my own ipads to the tune of $2500 a couple of years ago because I had students who needed access to some technology to allow them to convey their ideas in writing. If it weren't for how much I love my students I wouldn't do this. In addition, the amount of time we spend testing kids is absurd.

Marian Hellstrom, Weber School District

I am currently in my third year of teaching ELA in a junior high along the Wasatch Front. Many of my fellow friend teachers have left the profession to seek employment in other places outside of education. The underlining reason and common thread for their decision is the disrespect the feel from students and parents. Second to that is the increased demand of responsibility for teachers in and outside the classroom with little to no compensation and sometimes a lack of support. Myself, I could be a teacher for a long time. I'm a good teacher and if I keep going I know I'll be great. It is a rewarding profession. However, the thing that I foresee and one of my biggest struggles that ultimately is pushing me out the door is the disrespect of students and the lack of support from administrators being willing to listen to all sides of problems that arise in the classroom. Is there legislation for that? I'm not sure. With the teacher shortage happening, I question whether people are really looking at the reasons why teachers are leaving.

Amy Kendell, Weber School District

This is the third year that I have had to deal with a kindergarten child who has serious mental issues that impact my entire class. We need more in the building help to deal with troubled students. When the principal is out who gets to tend these students? I know I can teach but I am considering if I want to keep doing this job.

Betty Rabe, Weber School District

Working at a Title 1 school is really difficult. We have had a lot of teacher turn over. The class sizes are so big and the behaviors are extreme. Most of the behavior is out of our hands, daily we have to evacuate classrooms and disrupt student learning because of the 1, this is not right. We need more parent accountability.

Stephanie Smith, Weber School District

I love the extra days special educators get in the summer time but this year they were cut. We all start back at work by Aug 1st full time. Whether we get paid or not. It's so nice to get paid for some of those days.

Sally Cannon, Alpine School District
Workload / Classroom Support

Because I teach Kindergarten/Preschool, my principal says I do not get a prep time. No money. However, I (we!) are they that have to do the MOST prep for our students and spend way too many extra hours doing so. In 25 years of teaching, I have only had a prep 1 year...and the kids were short-changed time to do so.

Torri Davis, Alpine School District

For to long teachers have been seen as people who only work 9 months of the year and only short hours in a day. Teachers work year round they might only teach 9 months but they work year round. It was ridiculous that most of the districts in the state teachers got huge raises but Alpine district gave a token raise. Whether we like it or not the message sent there was that we were not valued and what we do is not that important. Those on the firing line should get the raises they are the ones paying the price.

Vicki Dorius, Alpine School District

The textbooks of Chinese Immersion program have been changed several times. Teachers need to make new flashcards and new materials often and put the old ones aside. It is kind of wasting educational resources and wasting teacher's time and efforts. Because the workload is heavy, this makes teachers frustrated.

Liu-I Fu, Alpine School District

Teaching is a very demanding job. It taxes us physically, emotionally, and mentally. We are required to make hundreds, if not thousands, of decisions every day, which is exhausting. We spend a lot of our “time off” on planning, preparing, and taking classes or attending conferences to become better teachers. Often times we are asked to do more with less, and we do it. We are invested in each of our students and are heartbroken, at times, at the hard things they endure at such a young age. But we do it willingly and love it because we are making a difference! It would be so nice to have real support and recognition for what we do with increased compensation, but also respect for us as educated professionals who are dedicated to our students, who are our future. I invite you to go into a classroom, or two, and see the amazing things that are happening in our schools. Talk to students and teachers and find out what works, what is great, what can be improved, etc. Schools are amazing places! Come and learn the things that have the highest impact on student learning. Or you can look up John Hattie's research on that. What you learn will surprise you. Take the time to understand what is really happening in our schools before you introduce and/or vote for legislation that will impact thousands of teachers and students. I again wholeheartedly invite you to spend time in some classrooms, mine is always open.

Angie Herman, Alpine School District

I wish the legislature and parents and even administrators really understood the amount of time teachers spend doing their job outside of the school day. Three to four hours extra hours per evening is par for the course in this profession. During the school day, I am busy teaching lessons and working with students. Contract hours are insufficient to prepare lessons, create differentiated instruction, grade papers and tests, figure out intervention strategies, research new methods, prepare technology enhanced lessons, respond to parent emails, etc. etc. etc. Burn out is very real! Increasing expectations feel completely unrealistic. Most days, as much as I love my job, I am just exhausted. One of the most disheartening aspects though, is all this extra time is just expected. We are frequently "offered" opportunities for professional development and additional training after school hours or on weekends. It is stressed that they are "voluntary" which just means - you are volunteering your time without compensation. If you don't take advantage of these trainings, it reflects negatively. Most other professions compensate you for extra training and extra work; we never get overtime pay or comp time. Many will say, but you get summer's off - that should make up for it. In summers, we are technically unemployed - that is unpaid time, which ironically most teachers spend prepping/decorating their classroom, taking workshops, prepping lesson materials, spending our own money on supplies, etc.

Pam Hyer, Alpine School District

Over the past several years, I have seen first year teachers leave the profession after only teaching one or two years. The biggest reason was that they felt like they did not have enough positive support from their principals and/or grade...
Workload / Classroom Support

level teams. I would hope that while we have a teacher shortage, there would be a better plan to support these new teachers. (Extra training......especially lesson planning and classroom management)

Barbara Nelson, Alpine School District

I understand that educators are not licensed doctors. Teachers are in the "trenches" everyday, year after year with children. They see patterns in behavior and learning. When a student shows behavior or learning outside of these common patterns teachers tend to want to know why. Then they tend to want to help, because usually these observations show needs in these children. It would be so helpful to the students, their families, and the school environment if teachers could really work with doctors or other trained professionals. So often teachers are told they don't qualify in raising red flags in behalf of student behavior and learning. Sometimes the students only have a teacher that can raise those warnings. I grow weary seeing students unhelped because a teacher isn't qualified to raise concerns. I would hope that procedures could be developed that would be beneficial for everyone involved when teachers notice concerns in behavior and learning.

Lisa Prestgard, Alpine School District

I truly appreciate their efforts to create a sound education system for our great State. Sometimes, however, I feel like decisions are based more along party lines than on a thorough understanding of the "on the ground" reality of the needs/issues that are affecting teachers/students every day lives. Is there a way to host every legislator for a day- to have them try the job so they can get a feel for what real issues are? Just a thought! If they had to be in a classroom for a day- and teachers had to be up at the Capitol building trying to hash out policy, maybe both sides would come to a greater understanding of the realities of the assignment- thus providing more common ground. Just a thought!

Julie Siebach, Alpine School District

Teachers have been well trained and are great at coming up with amazing lesson plans that engage students. But, teachers need time to do those things. Teaching is a very busy job and can be overwhelming. Any extra paid time for planning and prep is always appreciated.

Cathy Tom, Alpine School District

I would like to see legislators visiting with actual teachers and trying to understand what it is really like in a classroom. There are so many additional factors that teachers have to deal with everyday, and I don't think anyone who is not currently "in the trenches" can comprehend. (Even former teachers forget exactly what it's like.)

Julie van Dijk, Alpine School District

We are working as hard as we can. We care about our students as individual learners and want them to succeed. Teachers are professionals that spend hours outside of school working to help students.

Matthew Woolley, Alpine School District

I am a highly qualified and certified teacher. I love my job. I advocate for students to do their best.

Katie Wilkinson, Canyons School District

Class size in kindergarten and first grade needs to be drastically reduced so that needs are being met to reduce interventions later on in the students school years.

Jessica Fausett, Carbon School District

Support teachers so we can focus our time and energy on the kids.

Britni King, Carbon School District

I stay until 6:30 every night, preparing lessons, answering emails from parents, and doing everything that is asked of me. That's 2-3 hours of overtime every night that I don't get paid for. I also take papers home, after that, to grade. If I worked out my actual salary, it would be very depressing. This is an extremely hard job, that we do happily. It would just be nice to have some support and appreciation from our legislators and community.
Workload / Classroom Support

Jori Barton, Davis School District

I would like them to come spend a day in my classroom. If you are going to make rules about education, spend some time with us. I have invited them to my classroom, and haven't seen one show up yet.

Annette Brewer, Davis School District

We are getting a lot of varied technology in classrooms but we need more employees at the school to support the technology and coach teachers in the use of that technology. At least one person per school in Elementary schools and two in secondary schools.

Lois Crawley, Davis School District

Elementary school is every bit as important as high school. There should be attendance requirements that parents are required to meet.

Jean Ernstrom, Davis School District

Many teachers are not in the profession for money. We knew going in that it is a service profession. However, the difficulty of the day in and day out of this job is underestimated. You never leave the classroom mentally; in fact it usually takes a month in the summer to gear down and a month to prepare. There is always something that needs your attention. And because our "product" is people who come with tremendous challenges, our brains never turn off. We are now required by law to handle them medically, emotionally, psychologically, academically, socially, behaviorally and turn out an exceptional 'problem-free' product. Because we can't legislate parenting, we legislate 'in loco parentis' (the teachers) to the point where teaching and spreading the joy of learning is diluted. Please think carefully before demanding more--we are a societal institution, but we cannot bear all of society's burdens.

Jennifer Hogge, Davis School District

The demands on new teachers make it very difficult for them to succeed, especially for CTE or science teachers. Inheriting a new classroom(s) can be overwhelming. It is not uncommon for me to be at school for 12-14 hours to manage all of my classes, each with several students who have IEPs and 504s; I have 3 classrooms which need organizing, inventory, repairs; I also have to do shopping for specialized materials and equipment on top of, lesson prep, researching, marking and contacting students and parents. There are simply not enough hours in the day for me to meet all the needs of my students, at the expense of my young family.

Jonathan Lai, Davis School District

Utah teachers are dedicated to their students' success. They are amazing and creative to achieve all that has been asked of them with so little time.

Jennifer Low, Davis School District

I work with students with severe disabilities. I have 13 students with a lot of needs to be met and not enough Teacher assistants to help.

Lygia C Madson, Davis School District

I put my heart and soul into teaching and inspiring my students. I just recently had to do three interventions for a student. This was overwhelming and took away time from working with other students. It is agreed that this student will be tested, yet, I have to do another set of interventions. I have been working with this student since September. Here it is in the middle of January and this student still is not getting tested. I wish it weren't so difficult to get the help that students truly need.

Margaret Rafferty, Davis School District

Quality teachers and how they can work with parents are the most important direct impact on a child's educational experience. Please stop heading the other direction.

Sheri Ruvalcaba, Davis School District
The benefits of implementing arts programs at our school, specifically our school choir, yearly play production, opera by children. The arts matter!

*Cynthia Szymanski, Davis School District*

I have been teaching over 10 years and I am considering leaving the profession. This is even after receiving a sizable raise this school year--which proves to me that no amount of money will make people stay in a profession where they feel disrespected and overburdened. I want legislators to understand the reality teachers face on a daily basis. I want legislators to understand that not all teachers in Utah teach students from middle-class, white backgrounds (which is what most legislators are, and therefore that is the kind of school their kids attend), and not all teachers teach sweet elementary-age students. I have 35-40 students (12 to 14 years old) per class, I teach nearly 300 students due to the alternative schedule my school has chosen (think of the amount of grading that entails for every assignment), I have students swear at me and call me a 'bitch' on a regular basis simply because I have high expectations for behavior in my classroom, and I have had students throw things at me on 3 occasions. Administrators either have little power to do anything to deal with these students, or choose not to use it. Students feel they can get away with anything. It seems the more I try to teach and do my job well, the more the students hate me for it. What other profession deals with that?!

Maybe it is a situation unique to the middle school age—I do not know. But I do know that this is not a job I can continue doing long term. Before anyone assumes I am just one of the 'bad apple' teachers, please know that I am a good teacher. I have been asked to mentor new teachers, I have been department chair, I have received awards, I am frequently suggested as a teacher for new teachers to observe, my students perform better than the district average on tests despite the school having a high population of minorities and students of low socioeconomic status, and receive excellent ratings/reviews from administrators. Yet at this point I am thinking "I will do anything to get out of this profession." I need respect from students—or at least, fewer disrespectful students to deal with at a time—and respect and understanding from district personnel and legislators.

*Janelle Baker, Granite School District*

Come visit our schools and look at the dynamics of our student body. We have great kids but we also have parents that do not parent and students who only want to cause havoc and have no accountability. We need a way to deal with those few so that the many can learn and receive more attention.

*Carol Cabanillas, Granite School District*

Please realize that teaching is hard. It's not something anybody off the street can just walk in and do. I would love to stick a legislator in a classroom as if they were a new teacher and tell them to teach, so they could see what it's really like.

*Nad'a Carter, Granite School District*

Too much is being demanded of educators without the time or resources available. Teachers should not be putting in overtime without compensation on a regular basis. Elementary school teachers should be respected and given planning benefits secondary teachers have. As many as 9 subjects with 30+ students to prepare for and track data for deserves planning time every day!

*Susan Day, Granite School District*

There's no better investment we can make for our state and country than to invest in our children's education. Thank you for supporting us as we give our time, talents- physical, emotional and mental for our students.

*Lisa Foster, Granite School District*

As a first grade teacher, one of the biggest difficulties I face is having students who did not attend Kindergarten (or didn't attend much of it because it's not required in Utah). Every year, I have at least one student who doesn't even know how to hold a pencil - let alone know any letters, sounds, or counting. How do I help all of my other students, with their various needs, when I have students who are sooo far behind all of the other kids? It would really help if Kindergarten was required in Utah.
Workload / Classroom Support

Tami Frederickson, Granite School District

I am so tired of busy work the district makes up for us to do during our PLC and PD times. They want us to do all of this stuff but never give us any time to implement it. I need more planning time. Not more days to work. Just plan more planning time.

Pam Garvin, Granite School District

Effective mentoring is absolutely crucial in supporting and developing new teachers. Some districts do this well and others do not prioritize this. I’m a mentor and I work with 4 new teachers - thank goodness none of them are seriously struggling! Another mentor in my school is spending ridiculous amounts of time with a new ARL teacher every single day after school to try and help him. It’s a serious problem for the students in his class who aren’t learning anything - not because he doesn’t know the content (he does), but because he has no idea how to teach! ARLs need dedicated mentors in the classroom with them to get them set up for success. Since we don’t do this well, ARLs have significantly higher turnover than other teachers and our students are getting sub-par instruction from unqualified teachers in a sort of revolving door of new teachers because we aren’t investing enough to develop and support them through effective mentoring statewide. Not all schools are created equal. One size fits all technology solutions (ex. software purchases) are not necessarily the most appropriate in every setting. Challenges faced in urban districts are very different from those in outlying rural areas. Empower the LEAs to solve their problems - provide funding for specific areas but allow freedom to apply within limits like we see with the K-3 reading funding, which is SO important in the early grades.

Deborah Gatrell, Granite School District

There is not enough time to plan engaging lessons. I have students in front of me throughout the entire day except for a 45 minute collaboration time in which we only look at data. I have no time to actually plan what and how I am going to teach.

Meredith Harker, Granite School District

All of the professional development is not helping to be a better teacher. It takes time away from working with students and it really doesn't add much to my teaching. Teachers need more time to work on their own lesson plans, correct papers and manage the day to day work in the classroom.

Jane Jones, Granite School District

Too much professional development

Kathryn Long, Granite School District

Teacher Burnout

Judy Mangum, Granite School District

Being an effective elementary school teacher is SO much work! Our paid planning time is minimal compared to the amount of lessons that need to be planned and prepared to help students meet the Utah Standards in all the subjects we teach. More paid hours for elementary teachers to plan and collaborate would help teacher morale (acknowledging with $ the need for time to plan well for students) and impact student learning. (Perhaps an extra hour once each week would be a place to start.)

Jennifer Motzkus, Granite School District

My paraprofessionals do not make enough to feed their families. That needs to change.

Samantha Murdock, Granite School District

The amount of work teachers are expected to do is monumental. Every year I have been in education the tasks expected for teachers to accomplish increases. The district may eliminate some or give us easier ways to accomplish them, but then they add three or four others. We also have been given paid time to collaborate, and paid time to plan,
Workload / Classroom Support

but the district tells us what to collaborate on or they make us attend a professional development. "Here's is a raise" they say, "come for 15 more hours of professional development."

Suzanne Olson, Granite School District

Anything that can be done to help educators help our students to live happy and productive lives is worth the financial commitment you make to education. We are here because we love and care about these kids - support us so we can best support our students.

Patty Taylor, Granite School District

Currently this year I have 6 kindergarten students that have birthdays in August. Causing my classroom to be very young. I have had a yearlong battle managing behaviors because of how young they are. I feel as if all I am is a babysitter for these kids. If the deadline were moved back to December I feel like student learning would be impacted. The learning wouldn't come as quickly if at all.

Megan Vargo, Granite School District

Last year I had a VERY out of control child. He was in counseling but we still had to deal with him. He kept leaving my room, disrupting the class by making noises, crawling around the classroom, throwing things on the floor, roaming around the class during lectures and activities, then other kids started copying him. For 38 years I have been able to control my classroom so it was not lack of trying on my part. I was constantly having to stop my teaching to deal with this child. The class test scores were down that year, we did not get through the curriculum like we should have and sometimes had to leave the room because this student was out of control. This year I teach next to a teacher who has an autistic boy who hits her, licks her, body slams her, bites her and throws scissors, etc. at other students that are in the class. She has had to evacuate her classroom for the safety of the other students and the safety for herself as the student attacks her when he gets upset. They come into my room so I now have 62 students crammed into my class. We try to keep class running as usual but it is a disruption. These are the kind of students that are hampering the learning of the 30 kids in the class. PLEASE help find a solution for these kinds of problems.

Robyn Walsh, Granite School District

Spend a day at school so you understand education

Glenda Butikofer, Jordan School District

Teachers need time and support. So many things are changing so quickly and it is hard to keep up. One great investment would be an instructional coach in every building.

Donna Hunter, Jordan School District

After a long career in teaching I have finally retired but I'm still very sympathetic to educators and the difficulty they have managing all the expectations. Over the past 30 years of teaching I've seen the stress from outside sources mainly the district, principals and legislature do very little to support educators from the constant barrage of requirements. With my retirement I feel relief of no more ringing bells running my life, or parceling my time under an hour increments. With my time now I can finally plan for my families needs without always having 13 things to do at the same time. I'd like to help more in the schools but for the first time in so many years I am just enjoying being able to govern my own schedule without so very many restrictions on it.

Janet Reed, Jordan School District

Facebook post from January 4, 2018: All week I've been trying to find a reason to continue teaching. I am so burned out on all extra crap we have to do. What is expected of me as a teacher is ridiculous. I've been trying to think of any other profession I could stand doing. It's been a really rough week. I know I need a change but I don't know what. Then something happened today to remind me why I got into teaching. It reminded me of what is important. It was so significant that I've even determined to stay and put up with all of the crap. I got into teaching for the kids. I've always known that but I had forgotten until today how important it is. I know I won't be a great influence on every kid that comes through my door. Most of them will forget me and that's okay. Most of them won't remember the distributive
property, how to write a persuasive essay, or their Greek Mythology. Some kids will though. Some kids will leave my classroom with an increased love of learning. Some kids will learn why math is important or will leave with an interest in Science or a love of Theater. Those kids make it worth it. The kids who will make me stay in the profession though are the kids who need me. Even if one kid in my whole career is influenced for good then it is worth it. Some kids have such terrible things going on outside of school that my classroom is the only thing stable in their lives. For those kids I will learn the new reading program, collect all the useless data my district requires, and jump through every hoop.

Sharon Rinehart, Jordan School District

We are overworked and under appreciated. People say we only work 9 months but we work crazy hours after work and weekends and during the summer. I would like to feel like all the work I put in is being appreciated.

Nicole Stott, Jordan School District

Businessmen need to actually visit and experience a classroom especially in the rural areas and become acquainted with the plethora of pitfalls in education. Mostly home life and lowered expectations of students from parents and legislature. My teachers here at my school have a very high interest in the students and their success. Were here because we love kids but some want to leave to make more money in industry to support the family. The hugest pitfall for me is the lack of respect or expectations from parents, administration and legislatures. There are no consequences for children. They are not allowed to fail, can move forward without doing their work and they know it. They don't attend school even though truency notices are sent. They don't do homework because their either gone to sports which is more important or no one on the parents end to lay down consequences and expectations. Teachers can't parent every child 24 hours a day. We can present the material in a variety of ways, we can be empathetic to their emotional and mental needs to an extent, we can make consequences here in class but if these aren't supported outside of school. We are considered the failures. This country with the destruction of families and homes and the ability of everyone to receive welfare with no effort “entitled” is the root cause of poor education. Not your teachers. More testing of students is not the answer. It doesn't represent the efforts of a teacher but of natural ability and home life.

Teresa F Harris, Millard School District

The need for peer mentoring

Nancy Moss, Morgan School District

Teachers are hard-working, dedicated, intelligent individuals who are professionals. We need your support. We don't need to be managed in every tiny detail of our profession.

Tami Stevens, North Summit School District

I feel like education is so over the top hard on us as teachers. I feel like I am never prepared enough because there is so much to teach and so much expected. I am exhausted and overworked. I feel like I could work 24-7 and still not be fully prepared like I would like to be. I think there are way too many standards. It is unrealistic to think that there is time in our daily schedules to fit all of the standards in, especially in all areas. Students can't retain information if we keep throwing it at them at such a pace. Maybe we should focus on just a few skills and get really good at them, instead of the all the stuff that is expected. It is not good for students and it's very overwhelming for me as a teacher. I always feel like I am not good enough, and that is largely due to the ridiculous amount of information that I am supposed to teach. Especially with no help. We lost Core Academy and pretty much all of the trainings that used to help us feel confident to teach the Core.

Karen Burt, Nebo School District

Lower class sizes please.

Jeanette Dunn, Nebo School District
Workload / Classroom Support

Quality professional development for educators by leading educators through national and local conferences is critical to student achievement.

*Keri Huntsman, Nebo School District*

I'm a teacher, I don't have time to address everything that needs attention.

*Jamie Huston, Nebo School District*

Every few years I am asked to jump through a new hoop to prove that I am an effective teacher. I challenge you to come and chat with the teachers and students at our school to see how "effective" we are. There's a lot of busywork that I'm asked to do and hoops to jump through in order to justify the allocation of funds to teachers. But how often are doctors asked to PROVE how effective they are?

*Jak Kadish, Nebo School District*

Do something to improve teacher morale.

*Marlene Irons, Other*

Children learn when there is a caring adult in their lives, Too much time is spent managing large classrooms. Learning outcomes will increase with smaller classrooms.

*Diane Larsen, Other*

This is my 23rd year teaching. I am counselor, mentor and teacher, because students come to me in crisis all the time. I have students on my doorstep before school, after school, during my prep and during my lunch. They all need to feel listened to and loved, easy enough, but I need smaller classes so I can know each student better on an individual level. Along these lines, yet as a different issue, because of the increasing emotional fragility of teenagers today, it is becoming increasingly difficult and fraught with danger, to try to teach the emotional skills of meeting deadlines, taking responsibility for choices, etc. These kids fall apart and every one is jumping on the 504 bandwagon for their own extenuating circumstances. Are we perpetuating emotional fragility by allowing every student to adhere to their own exceptions? I would know the unique and individual answer to this serious question if I had small classes by which to know my students better individually.

*Melissa Nikolai, Park City School District*

I would truly like to invite them into our classrooms to see our day to day interactions with students.

*Liis Rametta, Park City School District*

Teachers are asked to do so much and the teaching of the students suffers because of it. We need more time to teach.

*Robert Bunker, Provo City School District*

Teachers have and will continue to work hard for the students regardless of what the legislature does, BUT it is time for us to be recognized for the hard work, the hours of donated weekly, the out of pocket donations, the long summers of prep, the struggles with challenging parents and students, the lack of support from administration and the minimal respect from the community. Teachers love the work but need to be able to quit their part time jobs to make ends meet.

*Donna Chantry, Provo City School District*

I spend on an average of 60 hours per week at the school doing my job. I am not the only one that works these kind of hours. As teachers, we are asked to do more and more things, seemingly without regard to the time it would actually take to get the tasks done. What can be done about the unspoken expectation that teachers have to work outside their contract hours?

*Andria Halbert, Provo City School District*
There is a lot put on us as teachers. We do all we can to help our students become successful. I know that for myself and others, we put in many hours in and outside of the classroom in order to ensure our students have the best learning possible, but with all the state and districts are requiring us to do, it's a little much, so I feel like things have to be let go of in order to meet requirements.

Richa Harward, Provo City School District

I would really like someone to address the issue of making certified qualified teachers sit out a year after they retire. If we could hire retired teachers immediately after they retire it would sure help with the teacher shortage and finding qualified teachers.

George Henrie, South Sanpete School District

I have been a teacher, a principal and now a teacher/principal. The work load and public expectations are unreal. Our students that are entering Kindergarten are not prepared to succeed in what has been the traditional learning environment. But it is not possible to meet these students where they are without smaller classes or an additional trained person in the classroom. The attention span of our students is very limited and they need to be taught a different way. But I can honestly say that flying the education plane in the classroom while trying to build it is not going to work.

Louise Willoughby, South Summit School District

I have taught in a self-contained functional academics classroom for the past four years. My first year, I only had one assistant and my students’ education (and my personal sanity!) suffered. I now am adequately staffed, but know of many cases where teachers lack classroom support because of the low wages for the position or underfunding of special education. Increased pay and support for special educators and the work we do is imperative to ensure better student outcomes and reduced future costs.

Amy Firestone, Salt Lake City School District

I became an official licensed teacher 6 years ago. Since then I have spent 1 to 2 nights a week taking ridiculous classes to get required endorsements. The endorsement classes we require for ESL are useless for upper level science teachers. I understand these courses are required but there should be some sort of summer session. Also I have to masters degrees in earth science yet the state doesn't deem me “qualified” teach gifted students. Again, one night a week for TWO YEARS of my time is being wasted on endorsement classes which really could be more effective if they were one or two classes taught in the summer or online. Teachers shouldn't have to pay for required endorsement programs like ESL that we have to take to keep our jobs. There needs to be equivalency granted for people who are highly qualified. Also ARL should be stream lined into one summer of 3 classes (9 credits) and two semesters during the teaching year of 3 credits each. Give those candidates a stipend for staying on staff for two years such as $1000 back and also the classes should be FREE or seriously reduced. We need to subsidize some faster ARL programs that still have pedagogy for new professionals.

Dina Freedman, Salt Lake City School District

They need to see the body of research showing that increased prep time and collaboration time for teachers increases student performance. There are national and international studies showing this.

Matthew Shake, Salt Lake City School District

I teach at a title one school and many of my students don’t have access to computer support at home. If I was able to give every student access to an ipad during the day I would be able to better differentiate my instruction and therefore further help my students be successful.

Anne Stewart, Salt Lake City School District
I am seriously considering leaving teaching. I am a special education teacher and it seems every year it gets harder. The extra time required to be in compliance with paperwork along with caseload size is draining. My groups have gotten quite large and it is hard to meet the kids needs when many have attention and behavior problems.

Elaine Tuck, Salt Lake City School District

It is hard to recommend the educational profession to others, when the respect for teachers and the teaching profession is low. Public Ed is blamed for many things that are beyond our control. With the pressures of class size, limited funding, meeting individual needs, testing, continuing professional development, preparing materials and lessons, grading, assisting ELL and Special Needs students, 504 accommodations, and more, this job can be overwhelming. Even with summers off, most of us are taking classes and workshops, and developing curriculum. We work hard to help our students succeed, and when all our work is judged by a test score, we often feel defeated. I want you to know that all classroom learning is not transferable to a graph or chart. Not all learning can be gauged by a standardized test.

Jean Vander Toolen, Salt Lake City School District

Public education is top priority

Marilyn Erickson, Sevier School District

My salary is good, but having to purchase items out of my pocket to have a well stocked classroom is what I have a hard time with.

Morgan Rivera, Tooele County School District

Certified public accountants, financial advisors, attorneys, and many other occupations would have much more time planning/working before the delivery of their service than teachers do for their classes. We strive to do the best to enhance students’ learning by creating engaging, differential lessons but we’d have to do a lot of planning off hours. It’s only fair that we either increase the ratio of planning time to class time or have our salaries increased.

Meme Kerr, Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind

You can say that the effect size of classes doesn’t matter to student learning, but it does affect the teacher’s emotional well-being. You don’t feel like you do anything very well.

Penny Flory, Wasatch County School District

I hope that you know how much extra time teachers put in without compensation. We spend our own money to provide for student needs. We come in early and stay late. Please remember to vote for funding for education.

Cathy McCann, Washington County School District

The need for support staff - title 1 aides, reading aides, etc. They are the lowest paid, first cut during reductions, last rehired, but make all the difference in giving 1:1 support to struggling children.

Diane Nay, Washington County School District

I spend much overtime after school and on weekends preparing for class and correcting work.

Heather Hales, Weber School District

Paid time to work on lesson planning before school. Allowing for time to collaborate with colleagues. We don’t have time to do this with out cutting into other time for planning.

Brenda Keegan, Weber School District

-Research exactly what a school is required to do -Learn first hand what a teacher is required to do -Experience what it is like to be in a classroom, and for several days

Gerry Sianez, Weber School District
Workload / Classroom Support

I am one of those teachers statistics show is unlikely to stay in the profession long. I have taught for five years, but am still teaching . . . at the moment. I love my job except for the fact that it is increasingly difficult to remember I love the problems the students cause and the overwhelming workload when I feel like I do not have any knowledgeable support from the legislature. People who run businesses and politics who have never taught a class should not dictate how my classroom is to be run. Instead, I would like support from the state and for them to recognize that more and more students are coming to classes all across Utah with sadder home-lives and more emotional and physical problems. Yet, we are still considered as sub-par institutions when these students don't "blow those tests out of the water." I would like policy to be more flexible for the backgrounds from which these students come.

Shae Tervort, Weber School District

Due the the complexity of student entering school with health concerns, more school nurses are needed.

Karen Thorsted, Weber School District
Other Issue(s)

In our school our kindergarten class size is 26 children, which is 52 children with two sessions to progress monitor. The expectations for the teachers are to teach a 3 hour block of literacy that doesn't include time for recess, computers or math. It also doesn't allow for time to help connect with students, especially ones that have very little time with parents.

_Lorri Case, Alpine School District_

I stopped teaching when I stopped getting the support needed from administrators (who were too over-pressured by those above them) to maintain a classroom where students were not held accountable for poor behavior. It was a unique year when we had many transitory students who came from self-destructive homes. Those kinds of students need support before and after school so they can succeed in the high pressure environment of today's schools. We will never succeed with students whose everyday needs are not being met either because of poverty or lack of adequate supervision in the home.

_Anita Price, Cache County School District_

First, I feel there is a definite need for more full time professionals to be positioned at one home school, which are trained to deal with mental health and wellness. In addition, Special Educators are being inundated with so many referrals it takes months of tracking data and testing and then those special education teachers are not full time at one school because they are so far and few between. This, in my personal opinion, creates a lack of consistency. Camaraderie between general education and special education teachers plays a key role in student gains when collaboration and consistency are prevalent. Full time teachers are not equipped or trained to deal with the rising amount of children experiencing adverse childhood experiences. It is extremely difficult to teach and learn with so many outside obstacles and emotional barriers. In many cases, the heightened demand on teachers and school communities to help students rise to academic achievement becomes an unattainable accomplishment for not only students but all stakeholders. i.e. teachers, parents, administrators, districts because of these influences. In turn, both students and teachers taste the bitterness of defeat and failure. We are trying everything to overcome so many of the hardships students face but it is a daunting task - but done with love and trust. However, it is exhausting! Often, as an educational cohort, we look at the academic aspect of children, but it seems as though we forget to ascertain whether or not our students are in a healthy socio-emotionally stable frame of mind to learn what we as educators are trying to teach them. Sure we can do clubs, and have an open door/open teacher-parent dialogue, have food pantries, wash clothes, give children gloves, talk to them when they have a rough day, and deal with the overwhelming effects of poverty on their brains and physical toll of their body, but then am I educating them academically or mentally and emotionally? Why isn't there an assessment that asks about the whole child, not just the academic child. This MAY or may not have an impact on their successes in other areas of instruction and curriculum. Secondly, teachers should be treated with respect as professionals and many in society forget the life-long impact of fabulous teachers. I still have not come to any sure conclusions as to why such a huge shift has happened ultimately giving teachers a bad reputation, but even as a first year teacher I feel the affects of this from districts, administration, parents, legislative decisions made on our behalf, and all of these people’s views trickle down through student points of view. How do we change this?

_Kim Dillingham, Granite School District_

There are a lot of talented special education teachers. The students in special education classrooms might not score the highest on testing, but there is a lot of amazing progress that takes place in self contained special education classrooms. These teachers and students work very hard and should not be forgotten, set aside or told to work harder to get the students up to grade level. It is our intent to work with our students to their own unique abilities and to celebrate their successes no matter how small.

_Heidi Henderson, Granite School District_

Homeless youth prevention. Teacher Salary vs. Administrative Salary. A voice for teachers

_Patricia Honey, Granite School District_
Other Issue(s)

It is time to fund education. Education powers our economy, helps children climb out of poverty, and enriches our cultural environment. Please, let now be the time to fund education in Utah.

Susan Jones, Granite School District

Feeling supported and safe should be the right of every teacher in the classroom. It is sadly getting to the point that every teacher I know is planning their exit, whether leaving the profession or counting down to retirement. It is becoming a burden that we don't know if we can bear any longer.

Jenny Morris, Granite School District

The legislator should be ashamed of themselves. knowing that the teachers in Utah are the lowest paid in the nation and we have a rainy day fund. That could pay off the national debt!!!!!!!!! And what happened to the day that teachers taught. learning was fun and everyone got along. This consent use of testing is useless What a joke..

Federica Gallegos, Salt Lake City School District

Before you write and pass a bill into law affecting education, spend significant time in the classroom teaching and working with children with the ideas in the bill. Use and test your ideas in the classroom before writing them into a bill. Write your bills with significant teaching experience, not your own student experience. Learning and teaching are night and day different. You need to know what teaching children today is like in Utah to be able to craft effective bills to help children learn and teachers to be able to help children learn. Law like the Sage test burden our children and teachers with a wasted and poor use of time. Let's empower, not burden.

Bryan Jenkins, Davis School District

Use the science and real rational of the educating process to direct your decision making and money directions. Testing is not the solution to success of students. Neither is school grading. Class size affects student outcomes. Parents and communities need to be held accountable for their children not just an educator, their administration or the school. Where the money is spent needs to be directed to these issues not charter special interest groups.

Johanna McMullin, Granite School District

I'm still a provisional teacher, so I don't have a wealth of stories just yet. But what I do see in my schools are teachers who are giving up on students just a few months into the year because they're not equipped to give that student the work they need. They have 30+ other students they have to ensure meet certain benchmarks, and they're unsure of how to deal with certain behaviors so those students who need the most care and extra help get tossed to the SpEd teachers and generally forgotten. That's something that needs to change. Children shouldn't be falling through the cracks.

Maren Holmes, Granite School District

Special Education has been on the back burner long enough

Kathleen Lamborn, Davis School District

PLEASE - consider kindergarten when you are planning state tests. If you are requiring state testing for kindergarten, then we need support --- small class sizes (30 SHOULD NEVER BE ALLOWED - I HAVE HAD 33 IN A CLASSROOM BEFORE -------- THAT JUST BECOMES CROWD CONTROL AND BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT EVERY DAY). We need all day kindergarten and teacher aides. If they want us to meet all the standards that are required, WE NEED THE SUPPORT.

Denise Lindberg, Alpine School District

If I could share one message with legislators it would be to put your feelings and biases towards public education to the side and focus on the wonderful children/students of our state. Be more supportive and less critical of teachers. Many times, our hands are tied and we are doing the best that we can. Our voices often go unheard, but as some of the people who have entrusted our vote to you, it is your job to represent our voices instead of special interest groups. There are no perfect teachers or parents or legislators for that matter, so let's work together instead of
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against each other in doing what's best for the children of our state. Also, I would like to thank those legislators that support teachers. They are those legislators who know that teachers didn't go into teaching for the money. We are here to provide our students with the best quality education that we can give. We have no ulterior motives other than to see our students' smiling faces each and every day. When we feel valued as professionals in education, it encourages us to do our very best. And when I say professionals, we have earned that right by earning a degree in education which should be a fundamental requirement in any society. So, thank you for your monetary and emotional support. ??

Kammy Hanson, Davis School District

The public education system is dying. We have neglected it so long that we as citizens are lucky that it is still intact. We are losing teachers at such an alarming rate and if we are not careful the education system will crumble right before our eyes. Please invest in education, by decreasing the work of teachers and giving them implement time, giving us other school staff a live-able wage. Please look at how you are compensating teachers. I work in a low income area with students with severe Autism. My students make progress much differently than others and I fear that merit based pay will only stack high quality teachers in more affluent areas with students without exceptional needs. Please look at laws that protect special education teachers. I have had multiple head injuries and a broken bone from school and that's not to include the daily bumps and bruising. Provide money for protective equipment. I shouldn't have to fight for my right to work in a safe place. Before you make another law in education, spend some time in the schools. I am frustrated that those making the judgement calls have never walked a day in our shoes. Please treat us as respected citizens of society and not a fall back career. If you want the state of Utah to succeed in the future then you must invest in it, by decreasing class sizes, giving us implementation time, and letting us decide what is important to teach. Stop standardized testing, it is so very harmful to our education system in so many ways. Take a good look at Finland's education system and find ways to go in that direction.

Camille Gregory, Granite School District

Teaching 4 different lab based science classes, makes it very difficult to disaggregate data generated through tests and collaborate effectively with teachers in my school teaching the same subject, much less peers more than 20 feet away from my classroom. Attempting to prepare lessons, lab activities and stay caught up with grading is impossible without devoting 5 hours a day out side of class every day including weekends.

Jana Barrow, Davis School District

If we can stop the schools are broken stance and instead be dazzled that they work at all considering the size of the task, we might be able to tweak a few things here and there instead of lurching from one fix-all to another with no measurable, positive results, ever.

Liz Sharp, Davis School District

As an early childhood educator, I have witnessed a "push-down" of academic expectations. Our system has ignored the vast knowledge we have of child development and we are expecting young children to perform academically above their capabilities. I have witnessed students shutting down and becoming negative towards school in kindergarten and 1st grade because the expectations are unattainable for them. We need to reevaluate the core as written and use research based knowledge to determine best practices for early learners.

Connie Sorensen, Other

It is important for us to attract and retain good teachers. I have friends who have quit teaching because, though they love the profession, they feel that they can no longer afford the luxury of serving our students. Not only is it a matter of salary, but of health care benefits also need to be improved. Too much of my salary is simply handed over to my health care providers -- I have less "available" money now than I did five years ago due to my increased health care and prescription costs. One co-pay for a life-saving medication that I have to take is over $400.00 on my current health care plan, which is the best plan available in my district. Last year the co-pay for this same medication was $150.00 under the same plan, while the previous year, it was $75.00. The pharmacists actually apologize to me when
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I get the prescription for this medication filled, explaining that my school district’s health care plan has the highest co-pay for this particular medication that they have ever seen. Something has to change!

Victoria Muehlberger, Salt Lake City School District

Why is Utah ranked so low in average spending per pupil and test scores? I have now taught 5th grade classes with 28, 37, 34, 30, 31 students in each of the past 5 years. How can I effectively teach with so many students in my class? How come charter schools receive money from the state, but they aren’t held to the same standards as public schools?

Peter Haslam, Salt Lake City School District

The three computers we have for a small student lab in the classroom are old and not supported by the district. They are being taken away with nothing to take its place. The teacher is expected to do something like write grants to fix the problem.

Helena Langford, Davis School District

There is a huge disparity of resources, teacher training, and needs amongst the schools in Utah. Rather than focusing on test scores and school grades that label minorities and economically disadvantaged students, and therefore the teachers of these students, as “failing”, use the data that you have collected to provide resources to teach life skills and sociable behaviors to students in need. Stop building the school to prison pipeline. Start caring about the people in need, they are part of your community no matter how high on the hill you build your house.

Nichole Hillburn, Granite School District

This year has been the most frustrating year for me. I feel like have no support from parents (they are unable to be reached or working 2 1/2 jobs and can’t be contacted to talk them about their student), if I send a student to the office they return to me (issue solved for a minute). I’m told by administrators their hands are tied as there is no attendance court/rules anymore. I have students that are constantly tardy and interrupting my lessons. I go home feeling beat up emotionally and mentally daily. I’ve taught 22 years. If someone asked me if they should teach...I would answer no! We have no support, no help, and no appreciation. Why? I do appreciate the raise we got last year. It was great!!! There is more to our job than teaching. We are parents, cops, counselors, life coaches, care givers, planners, and the list goes on....thanks for listening.

Shellie Anderson, Nebo School District

I shared with Lisa: Teacher salaries Teacher expectations Problems of Alternative License Route Science curriculum expectations without textbooks or supplies Mentor/student teacher expectations

Patricia Gotberg, Jordan School District

As far as I’m aware, teachers are the only full-time government employees that do not receive holiday pay. Teachers should receive holiday pay. Additionally, it is impossible to support a family on a teacher’s salary. Administrators are abusing their power and treatment of teachers who would do well are being pushed out by poor work environments. We should be able to take “personal days” without the punishment of paying $45, which, to my understanding, is not to pay for the sub, but is punitive to deter teachers from taking personal days.

Spencer Saluone, Alpine School District

I would like my legislators to consider the following things: 1. One-to-one tech is pointless without teachers who are trained (and trained WELL) to use it. 2. Admin Rule R277-531 (the PEER framework) feels extremely controlling for such a Republican congress. Its micro-managing language makes me certain you don’t trust me as far as you can throw me...I can’t imagine how it makes lifelong teachers feel. (Some kindness and validation from your direction would go a long way.) 3. When you consider points 1 and 2, hopefully you can easily see why young, tech-savvy teachers like me are never going to stay longer than a few years. Fifty percent of my prep time is taken up helping my older peers figure out how to use their tech and the other fifty percent is like forced A.D.D....I can’t get anything done because you have me way too hyperfocused on my PEER plan and all of the other EYE requirements. I could have a
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higher paying job that is less time-consuming with like-minded peers who don't require constant help and a boss who trusts and respects me...why does anyone stay longer than 3 or 4 years? I mean, would you?

*Chaela Mcdonald, Provo City School District*

We need to address chronic absenteeism. Students are required by law to attend school, so why are we unable to hold parents accountable for getting their children to school? I have multiple students that miss one or more days per week and I am the only one being held accountable for their lack of achievement. I can't teach them if they are not in class.

*Judy Wright, Logan City School District*

Special education teachers are overworked and underpaid.

*Tanielle Carter, Davis School District*

you're not listening to the people who voted you in. You come in with your own agendas. Our state's growth in family sizes that affect schools and quality education can be the last thing funded. You can't squeeze anymore blood out of the turnip you've squeezed over the past decade. Wake up and make a significant difference in the lives of people.

*C. Kirkham, Davis School District*

Every child in Utah should have a safe, public school in his neighborhood he can walk to. Parents should send their children to the child's neighborhood school, a public school, which has a solid basic educational curriculum - even though they feel the school is not good enough for their child. If improvements are needed they should work together with other parents in their neighborhood, at the school level, to insist the school to become "good enough” and thereby help their community and all children. The legislature can work toward the goal of a safe, appropriate neighborhood school for all children. (This can also have the added bonus of reducing car emissions to clean the air around us.)

*Kathleen Rice, Granite School District*

Human social issues

*Chelsie Acosta, Salt Lake City School District*

I ask for more balance in the system. If we hope to supply Utah with more skilled workers, we need to draw more elementary age students into education by helping them and their families to negotiate the system. Research demonstrates the need for early childhood intervention, and for trauma sensitive schools. Hill Walker demonstrated how these foci can alleviate the tax burden related to putting people in prison 20 years ago.

*Jaynan Chancellor, Cache County School District*

As dedicated as the teachers are at a school like mine (high poverty, refugees, violence/trauma/PTSD, not a neighborhood school, high stress/demands on teachers, etc), we are losing teachers every year because the work environment is not emotionally, mentally, and sometimes physically safe for teachers or students. We do not have the resources to help these students; we are teachers, not licensed social workers or psychologists. The climate of this type of school, should be trauma sensitive, however, what ends up happening is that teachers are experiencing tertiary, or second-hand trauma themselves. Affects of the trauma is absent-mindedness, being late, forgetfulness, depression and anxiety, stress-related illness, weight gain, losing interest and not motivated in personal life activities, mental health care and medications. We don't have the power or resources to support the teachers, or the students. With larger class sizes, the situation has worsened 10-fold. This is one reason we are not able to keep teachers, or attract new teachers.

*Heidi Jensen, Granite School District*

Teaching is rough. Teachers teach because they want to and not because they aren't educated enough to do something else with their education. Whenever you vote on anything that impacts education, think about if it will make life easier or more harder on teachers. If it will make it harder, then you will lose good teachers, bottom line.
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Don’t use education as a way to get people to vote on more taxes. Look at programs you have going and say “is this more important than the nurse I have in 4 years knowing what they’re doing?” or “would the state benefit more from this or from adults who know how to problem solve on their own?”

*Jenna Meeks, Jordan School District*

Depression and anxiety is on the rise among our students. We have too many students in our classes to be able to really know them, let alone notice who among them is struggling and contemplating suicide. They just get lost in the shuffle. I am teaching 38 students in AP BC Calculus, this class should be capped at 30 so that I can provide the help and support that they really need.

*Tracey Meade, Davis School District*

There are more demands and less time. Students are coming with more social and emotional issues that have to be addressed along with additional educational needs.

*Kim Vorwaller, Weber School District*

As an elementary school counselor and a former classroom teacher, I have found that over the years both children and teachers have lost some of the joy or education. Standards are needed and help to create goals but when there is no time to savor the moment and create “joy in the journey”, as well as reinforcing social-emotional skills, because of the academic pressures it is not as healthy an experience as it should be.

*Kristine Pritchett, Davis School District*

Look at the load you are putting on teachers! If we are to be successful in all the areas we need fewer students! I work in a title 1 elementary school. My students need to learn the basics with their teacher. The teacher is often their only appropriate interaction during the day. Since so much responsibility has been taken away from parents teachers teach many of the social and early childhood skills throughout elementary school. So many of our students do not see print before they enter school. Children do not have piggy banks to learn counting, they do not cook from scratch or build. We have to build background as well as teach concepts. These students know how to play with devices but not how to interact with each other or adults. Put finding into smaller class sizes and not technology especially in elementary schools!

*Kathy Johnson, Davis School District*

I teach 7th and 8th grade math. I have 35 students per class, including students with learning disabilities. I have a paraprofessional in only one of my classes. I can’t get to every student to give them the help they need. Last year I spent over $1600 on my classroom. I haven’t totaled my receipts this year, but I know I have spent over $1000. The supply budget of $150 isn’t nearly enough. Not even close. In our district, teachers have very little freedom. I am a creative person with a Masters degree working a factory job. I am handed a curriculum map created by the district personnel (who haven’t been in the classroom for over ten years) for every single day of the year. I am told exactly when and how to give feedback, what I need to focus on in my teaching (which is the same for everyone, not tailored to me or my students), exactly how to grade, which tests to give and when, and the district chooses which textbook we use and how often it’s replaced. I wish the district’s power could be limited so that I had time and freedom to teach.

*Shallin Squire, Duchesne County School District*

I’ve been an educator in Jordan and Granite School Districts for 42 years and this will be my last year. I love my profession, but worry about what I see on the horizon. Wonderful, qualified teachers are leaving the classroom because so much is demanded of them. We need parental involvement and holding parents accountable if we are to make a difference. We need to not put so much on the plates of these teachers that they don’t have time or energy to TEACH!

*Lanea Sampson, Granite School District*
Something needs to be done in the community to help parents learn to support their children. Some of our students most likely will not go to college and would benefit from learning skills during high school that they can use to make a living. Change the graduation requirements or have two different diplomas so that learning a skill (mechanics, etc) would be enough to graduate or earn a diploma.

Juliann Bales, Logan City School District

The Public Education System in Utah is in crisis. This is not a political issue to be thrown around as a campaigning pawn. Public Education must be addressed by all leaders, citizens, and businesses. We all have to be committed, be on the same page and act in the best interest of our community; society.

Alma Taylor Brown, Logan City School District

Get with the times...don't make any legislation 're education until they have been in the classroom at least a week. No one tells an attorney, doctor or even a mechanic how to do their jobs, why is it that everyone else has a say in what and how we teach? Pay us for our time. Utah is getting to be more expensive to live in. I know of teachers - teachers who are sole breadwinners or who are divorced, widowed or single having to work two jobs to make it here in Utah.

Mary LeCheminant, Canyons School District

There is a lot of talk about why we are losing or not attracting new teachers. From my experience it comes down to that the demands on teachers increase every year. The students become more difficult every year, the principals and districts demand more every year and so much time is spent in meetings rather than actually preparing, and the pay doesn't make it worth the stress and hassles. For double the pay it might be worth all the stress and unpaid overtime. We also definitely need more support and options for unruly students. I've had 5 year olds curse me, yell at me, and hit and bite me. And I have a very structured well run class. It is not that I'm not doing my job. We have emotionally disturbed children in the regular classroom and 5 min with the counselor doesn't fix it. In years past they'd be expelled. Now they want to fix the teacher, not the kids. When I meet a young person who says they want to teach, I warn them that teaching is a small part of what you actually do.

Jean Doty, Washington County School District

Ask a teacher about what teachers and classrooms needs. And, commit to spending time with teachers and as teachers before deciding up issues that affect students and teachers. I choose to teach, but to do so has been expensive in so many ways: I often PAY to do my job, PAY to keep my job, PAY with my a decline in my health due to rising expectations on my part and a lowering of understanding and support on your part.

Cassie A Cox, Weber School District

I am a highly qualified and certified teacher. I love my job. I advocate for students to do their best.

Katie Wilkinson, Canyons School District

We are getting a lot of varied technology in classrooms but we need more employees at the school to support the technology and coach teachers in the use of that technology. At least one person per school in Elementary schools and two in secondary schools.

Lois Crawley, Davis School District

The benefits of implementing arts programs at our school, specifically our school choir, yearly play production, opera by children. The arts matter!

Cynthia Szymanski, Davis School District

Come visit our schools and look at the dynamics of our student body. We have great kids but we also have parents that do not parent and students who only want to cause havoc and have no accountability. We need a way to deal with those few so that the many can learn and recive more attention.

Carol Cabanillas, Granite School District
Last year I had a VERY out of control child. He was in counseling but we still had to deal with him. He kept leaving my room, disrupting the class by making noises, crawling around the classroom, throwing things on the floor, roaming around the class during lectures and activities, then other kids started copying him. For 38 years I have been able to control my classroom so it was not lack of trying on my part. I was constantly having to stop my teaching to deal with this child. The class test scores were down that year, we did not get through the curriculum like we should have and sometimes had to leave the room because this student was out of control. This year I teach next to a teacher who has an autistic boy who hits her, licks her, body slams her, bites her and throws scissors, etc. at other students that are in the class. She has had to evacuate her classroom for the safety of the other students and the safely for herself as the student attacks her when he gets upset. They come into my room so I now have 62 students crammed into my class. We try to keep class running as usual but it is a disruption. These are the kind of students that are hampering the learning of the 30 kids in the class. PLEASE help find a solution for these kinds of problems.

Robyn Walsh, Granite School District

Businessmen need to actually visit and experience a classroom especially in the rural areas and become acquainted with the plethora of pitfalls in education. Mostly home life and lowered expectations of students from parents and legislature. My teachers here at my school have a very high interest in the students and their success. We are here because we love kids but some want to leave to make more money in industry to support the family. The hugest pitfall for me is the lack of respect or expectations from parents, administration and legislatures. There are no consequences for children. They are not allowed to fail, can move forward without doing their work and they know it. They don't attend school even though truency notices are sent. They don't do homework because their either gone to sports which is more important or no one on the parents end to lay down consequences and expectations. Teachers can't parent every child 24 hours a day. We can present the material in a variety of ways, we can be empathetic to their emotional and mental needs to an extent, we can make consequences here in class but if these aren't supported outside of school. We are considered the failures. This country with the destruction of families and homes and the ability of everyone to receive welfare with no effort “entitled” is the root cause of poor education. Not your teachers. More testing of students is not the answer. It doesn't represent the efforts of a teacher but of natural ability and home life.

Teresa F Harris, Millard School District

I have taught in a self-contained functional academics classroom for the past four years. My first year, I only had one assistant and my students’ education (and my personal sanity!) suffered. I now am adequately staffed, but know of many cases where teachers lack classroom support because of the low wages for the position or underfunding of special education. Increased pay and support for special educators and the work we do is imperative to ensure better student outcomes and reduced future costs.

Amy Firestone, Salt Lake City School District

I am in an older school and technology is not equal from school to school. We are charged with preparing students to go out and succeed but lack the technology to help them succeed in a world driven by technology.

Janys Hutchings, Alpine School District

Supply & Demand. Return Pension Benefits and increase Teacher pay then the Teacher shortage will go away.

Emmanuel Kepas, Canyons School District

I feel like teachers and legislators are on the same team. We both want what's best for the students in the state of Utah. We want to see our students achieve as high as they can. Sometimes, it feels like well meaning legislation undermines that team goal. We have an end of year test that is intended to help assess students and inform teachers of their teaching. By law, those same tests cannot be included in student grades and students can opt out of them for no reason whatsoever, yet teacher effectiveness is graded on those test results. We both want to see every student succeed in school, but parents can pull students out of school at any point of the year (for family vacations that could be scheduled during calendared breaks in the school year) and it is up to the teacher to get those students back up to speed again or we are the ones who have failed. We want to allow parents to have more of a choice in their
student's education, but not all charter schools are held to the same standards with each other, let alone public
schools. We want the best teachers in every classroom in the state. We want people who will go to whatever lengths
necessary to reach every student in every chair in every classroom in every school (I'm not going to talk about
compensation at this point, that is already a well know problem). We then allow people in the classroom with no
knowledge of how to manage a class of 30-35 students (or more) because they demonstrated content knowledge on
a test and they have taught Sunday School for years. Meanwhile we have seasoned teachers who spent years in
college programs learning not only the same content, but how to engage learners of all levels and from different
cultures. This seems to undermine that same vision of hiring and retaining highly qualified educators. Again, I firmly
believe we are on the same team. I know that every legislator wants to see Utah schools and students lead the
country in every aspect. It feels like there are unintended consequences with some legislation that has been passed
in recent years that we, as a team, could address to better help Utah students live up to their potential and become
the future leaders this state needs. We all want a better future for our children. I think that our team can do that. I
know we can.

James Eric Perkins, Jordan School District

The new attendance laws have crippled the high schools. Students and parents are not accountable for much and all
responsibility has been put on teachers with little backing from the districts or state. Students need to be accountable
for their actions. The grading system of schools often punishes schools and teachers for the actions of students and
parents

Arlene Herrick, Alpine School District

Teachers are inadvertently being held accountable for students attitudes toward testing. Many times, students know
more of the content than mandated tests indicate. Students are not motivated to do their best, just to complete the
task.

Kristine Davies, Granite School District

For more than three decades educators have been disproportionately held accountable for student learning,
lambasted in the media, and "teacher proofed" by district approaches to assessment and curriculum. Multiple factors
have contributed to this deprofessionalization of the teaching profession, but many of these factors can be traced to
one focal point in time: In 1983 "A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform" exploded onto the
educational and political scene. At its heart was a deficit-based approach to educators and students, calling teachers
"beleaguered" and students "at risk," and providing five broad recommendations for improving our nation's schools.
Embedded within these recommendations were imperatives that laid the foundation for the reforms that still drive
education today, including the standards and accountability movement, standardized testing, and alternate routes to
licensure.

These reforms, which are now the norm, have been embedded into our national policies throughout the years, as
evidenced by No Child Left Behind, the Obama-era Race to the Top initiatives, and most recently the Every Student
Succeeds Act. The message of "those who can't do, teach" is pervasive throughout society. In order for education to
successfully retain teachers and positively impact student learning, it must transform the profession into a place
where talented people of all races, cultures, and identities wish to come. In order to achieve this lofty goal, public
education must tap into its internal capacity for change at a systemic level, and public policy must support public
education in this endeavor, not undermine it. When considering bills this session, please consider this: increased
competition, increased accountability, and other "innovative solutions" are no longer innovative and were never
solutions.

More than thirty years of lackluster results are testament that these quick fixes are not fixing anything. At the end of
the day, it is the capacity of those who enter our state's classrooms each and every day that will transform education:
not technology, not external pressure, not external solutions. Bills that treat teachers from a deficit perspective only
exacerbate the problem. Teachers enter the classroom with strong intrinsic motivation to succeed and help their
students do the same, but deficit-driven measures slowly erode this commitment to excellence. Instead, consider that
every teacher has something to contribute. Every teacher has something to bring to the table. Build on public
education's strengths, and public education will not disappoint. In creating public education, the United States
created one of the most innovative systems in the world. Please consider carefully how your efforts will serve to either support or undermine this amazing feat of our democratic society. Thank you.

Cindi Dunford, Granite School District

More focus on the whole child and not on testing.

Olynn Elliot, Salt Lake City School District

I will tell you first that I love my profession, my students, my principal, my colleagues, and living in Utah my entire life, but we have had some issues that need addressing as of late. Salary is a huge issue in Utah education! Every human being has to go through an education for his or her profession, so we should value the teaching profession the most. Many teachers, myself included, have over 20 years’ experience with Masters Degrees and several other endorsements, which give us extra years of college education. Most of these added courses are to benefit our students in the classroom, yet, sadly, our salaries do not reflect our knowledge or experience. Our state should respect and appreciate those educators who have continued to teach and worked to increase their personal education by giving them increased pay. Many states hold dear their teachers who are highly educated and show appreciation in higher salaries. Consequently, Utah college graduates are turning away from the education field because of low pay, little recognition for their skills, and no respect. In addition, I cannot begin to tell you, how many teachers give much of their salary in supplies to their under-privileged students, without expecting anything in return except a smile and a thank you. Now, I understand that the small supply stipend teachers receive from the state is going to be axed. Utah’s Governor Herbert said in his state address, the Utah sales tax collected from Amazon purchases would go toward education. Where did it go? Currently, our education system feels more like “Life Depressed” than “Life Elevated.” The school attendance is important! Since legislation has changed our laws for student attendance, we do not have students/parents held accountable for education. In our local schools, we see an increase in absences in several students, and our high school teachers believe there will be a decrease in high school graduates. Teachers and schools should not be held accountable for testing scores when students do not attend school. Students will always miss school if they can because they underestimate the value of education. If our youth fail their complete education, Utah will have a future society of illiterate people, unable to live in a functioning society. This will increase our welfare population, homelessness, and crimes because they will not have any proper job skills or be able to attend college. We must bring back mandatory education. Instead of being “Life Elevated,” Utah will become “Life Deflated.”

Michelle Fidell, Carbon School District

Veteran teachers are not given the respect they deserve!! We need more planning time. We need people who can do data analysis all the data and then show the teacher the results. We don’t have time for all that data. We are doing data and tests more than we are teaching. This teaching gig is for the children. I was a child of the 50’s. I can read do math and have a Masters degree all without the data. We were learning not taking tests, teachers were not taking a good amount of the day putting in data. We were kids and we excelled.

Cyndy Mikesell, Jordan School District

Our students are tested to death and need real-world skills taught in elementary schools (I am not an elementary school educator) including coping and resiliency skills and how to be a student....skills they are not seeming to learn. By the time they get to Jr and Sr High--it’s too late.

Michele Belmore, Granite School District

Please stop demonizing teachers. We work hard and are doing our best. It is hard to teach when we spend the bulk of our time administering mandated testing. One of the biggest challenges with teacher shortages is the substitute shortage. Limiting their hours to 29 a week is crippling our schools’ abilities to meet the needs of students because interventionists are being pulled to substitute.

Rachel Sorensen, Granite School District
Other Issue(s)

Students deserve highly qualified teachers, small class sizes to meet individual students needs, that if it's not broken don't fix it. Students need a variety of classes and for students to be college ready they need to have a full schedule of credits all 4 years and middle school curriculum needs to continue to have a rigor to prepare them for high school.

Denise Dewsnup, Millard School District

I work in a school building that is getting close to 100 years old. No earthquake proof. No sprinkling system. It is literally sinking into the ground. Yet the east side wealthy got priority (for the most part) with the last bond. The population of the school is 70% free and reduced lunch and bout 37% Hispanic. The political activity of senate leaders does not prioritize the citizens of my area. With the continual funding of charter schools our district has diverted money for years to fund its failed experiment. We perform well as a school with the population we serve. The charter school only takes the upper middle income indirectly segregating the cities population with the busing policy of the school. That sounds like segregation to me. Fund public schools in the districts and dissolve the charters into the districts to help districts diversify where the money goes and maybe equalize the monster that our state has created with charter schools. Senator Hatch has the idea as many of the other legislators that we take only the best and the brightest. “Part of what makes America so special is that we welcome the best and brightest in the world, regardless of their country of origin.” Well guess what? We don't. We take every student that walks through our doors. Charter schools do not do this, they are selective and kick out those who don't fit. Public schools take everybody, regardless of being the best and the brightest. The state legislators need to get off of their elitist high horses and start thinking about everyone and how we can all make it work rather than segregating in charter school mentality.

Robert Lyman, Provo City School District

No everyone can teach or lead teachers -- it is a highly skilled profession. Teachers impact all future careers through the work we do. Treat teachers like the professionals we are and support our work and efforts as we care about children and their futures.

Jenn King, Park City School District

Come on another day when something needs to be addressed, such as teachers being held accountable for SAGE scores, yet they cannot hold the child accountable. Teachers being held accountable for student progress, (really just held accountable for scores), but parents and students are not accountable for attendance and other such issues. I come from a "Blue Ribbon School" and I believe I could represent my faculty well. Also, look to best practices for student learning, not for parent happiness when you are writing or voting for legislation. Don't patronize teachers.

Heidi Briscoe Holmes, Davis School District

The biggest issue I face with my students this year has been trying to get them to buy in to their education. While trying to hold teachers and schools accountable, we have forgotten to hold students accountable for their own learning. Students are not self driven to learn and perform well on assessments, and face no risks or rewards for working hard and doing their best. We need an assessment system that engages students, challenges them to do their best, and rewards them for their progress. Many of my students favorite activities are game based, wouldn't it be cool to have a game based system that made students want to succeed rather than just sit and stare at a test and click to be done. Students need to be held accountable for their learning.

Jared Newbold, Granite School District

There is a strong correlation between student achievement and SES. Rather than blame teachers and schools for poor student achievement, why doesn't the state look at the factors outside of the school that are contributing to school failure, and try and address those needs first? One day I called a student's home because his family did not show up to SEP Conferences. The chaos in the home was so loud, that my colleague sitting across the office from me could hear the yelling, screaming, and crying through my phone as I tried to converse with the parent. This student's learning is inhibited because of the chaos in which he lives. If society truly wants to help this student succeed in school, we need to address the factors outside of school that are preventing him from succeeding.

Kristen Pearson, Granite School District
Other Issue(s)

I believed the increased focus on charter schools is a mistake. In order to truly benefit the majority of Utah students, emphasis needs to be placed on supporting the public schools. Charter schools don't have to play to the same rules, can toss students and teachers out at will, and yet still dip into the pocket of public schools. The charter school system is not a system that will benefit all of Utah students, and continued emphasis on this may leave many students hung out to dry, especially those with lower socioeconomic status.

_Erica Boyer, Nebo School District_

I don't think that legislators take into consideration everything that happens in a class/School when they decide to grade schools. Not once on any of my testing results sheets do I get an asterisk noting that normally my brightest students opt out of testing, my students that have missed 29 days of school during the year, or my students with active DCFS cases. I would like a legislator to come to my classroom for one day and see what it's like before they put anymore requirements on teachers because we are burning out our best teachers with testing and paperwork.

_Heidi Dimmick, Nebo School District_

Students need to be in class to learn. We need more support for attendance policies that still allow parent autonomy but also communicate the importance of quality education for youth. Utah seems to have a negative perception towards public education. We need our legislators to prioritize it and speak positively about it to help the culture of learning together as a community.

_Becky Beckstead, Nebo School District_

I have a student who repeatedly threatens teachers, students, anyone in his way though vulgarity and insults daily. He writes kill lists and tells students he has guns and is going to kill other students. He affects every ones teaching time daily through his daily issues. But, there is nothing we can do, because he is in special aid. He screaming for help, but the district won't listen. Something bad is going to happen and I am very worried for my students and yet the district won't listen. My school isn't the only school dealing with this. Schools need more support with disciplinary issues. I am doing everything I can. We have a social worker that comes to our elementary school twice a week. We need more support. I have been teaching for 15 years and the amount of social issues has increased exponentially. Please help.

_Celeste Ratto, Granite School District_

Something needs to be done about defiant children that will not behave. There needs to be more qualified rooms, schools, places to put children who do not fit into general education classroom. Demands are too high for many of these students to succeed.

_Amanda McCullough, Jordan School District_

Utah has a very large, very young population. We cannot continue to educate our population, with the standards and levels necessary to compete in a global economy at the level at which we are currently working. The public must understand that if they want their children educated, then the legislators need to raise taxes or cut the tax exempt status for larger families.

_Annie Wallace, Park City School District_

It is time for people who know nothing about education to stop making all the decisions regarding education. It is time for our legislators and their family members to stop getting rich by building charter schools. It is time for teachers to have the same retirement benefits as other professions and it is time teachers were treated as professionals. It is time for Utah to spend the same amount of money per student on education as the top spending states in the country...it doesn't matter that we have more students.

_Candace Peters, Davis School District_

That the pay scale this year was very unbalanced!

_Carolyn Videtich, Jordan School District_
Other Issue(s)

Career and Technical Education and its role in APPLYING educational skills for students in real-life situations is important. Keep funding it!

Monica Milburn, Alpine School District

Find another way to get funding for schools other than using property taxes.

Sarah Ahlander, Granite School District

Public Education is under attack, nationally. Utah has been known for its support of community-strengthening organizations. Please put our resources in line with that! Also, the fine arts, health, and PE are just as ESSENTIAL as math, language arts, and science (maybe more).

Andrea Butterfield, Salt Lake City School District

If we invest in our education system, especially our grades K-3, it will have a more long term benefit for our state.

Amelia Ostler, Cache County School District

standard based grading not working; higher salaries; more teacher funds so we don't have to pay out of pocket; moral in our districts

Carlina Corun, Duchesne County School District

I am a mentor and instructional coach who supports Special Ed teachers who are just starting out or dealing with difficult situations. It's hard for me to see how much is expected of them, especially how much time is required outside of contract time, for the amount of compensation they receive. Many of our new teachers are not fully licensed, which adds an extra burden on their mentors and schools to get them up to speed while they work on their licensure. In order to help our most vulnerable students, additional funding is needed.

Julie Beckham, Nebo School District

I am tired of having on the weight, responsibilities, restrictions, regulations and educational red tape. We are currently told by legislators what we should be doing, how we should be doing it, and then how we are not doing a good enough job. Anyone that has NOT been teaching in a classroom, directly infront of studentw within the past year, doesn't understand or appreciate the REALITY of education. I have been on both sides, the classroom is where the magic happens, yet so many players that aren't in the classroom seem to THINK that they know more than the people that are actually working on the front lines everyday. When I worked at our district office, I didn't have to do lesson plans, prepare for a sub. I did do many important things but nothing that comes close to being back in my classroom now! I am sorry but I am using faith and respect for people at the top, they are losing good teachers, they are all patting themselves on the back becuase Utah teachers do soooooooo much with soooooooo little. To people on the outside that is just wrong! Utah legislators, and local school boards are "Selling the students of Utah OUT!"

Lorie Rasmussen, Box Elder School District

I'm tired!!!! I'm tired of fighting for my students. I'm tired of supplying my classroom out of my own funds. I'm tired of fighting standardized testing that doesn't actually test what students have learned. I'm tired of legislators, who have no knowledge of a classroom environment, deciding what should happen in my classroom. I'm tired of rural schools being segregated from the Wasatch Front schools. In my 26th year of teaching, I'm tired of fighting for the same things year after year.

Kate Carney, North Sanpete School District

Teaching is a profession with wonderful intellectual challenges and the opportunity to make a difference. Innovation and taking learning forward can happen through teacher leadership. However, the approach to licensure, position descriptions and access to innovative PD that models the future of learning is limiting potential. STEM learning and the new SEED standards need to be funded and teachers supported with curriculum, PD, materials budgets and coaching.

Wendi Laurence, Salt Lake City School District
Other Issue(s)

Just because our students have grown up around computers does not mean they know how to effectively use computers. Also, the biggest thing that holds students back in my class is attendance. Every student who fails does so because they are consistently absent. My "lowest" students are earning decent grades because they are in class working each day. I am happy to stay late for as long as is necessary to help them understand and complete the work. What gets frustrating is when I am taking time away from student has put forth effort to help a student who wants to do just enough to earn credit and hasn't shown up to class for weeks. They might make it through high school, but they will lack the habits employers want in their employees.

Monica Earl, Alpine School District

I love teaching. I have spent over 100K to be a teacher, taking out loans to go to college as a single mom. I have dedicated a lot of my "down" time to preparing daily for my classes. Tighten up the rules for children to miss school in Utah. The pull-outs for extravagant trips are many and trivial.

Sheila Harding, MEd, Alpine School District

Success of CTE Programs, continued support

Jo Leigh Porter, Alpine School District

I have taught for 13 years. My father taught and retired as a teacher. My grandfather and my great grandfather were judges. I am so happy and blessed to be a teacher and follow in my father's footsteps. I love being a teacher and working with young men and women. Please do what you think is necessary to improve the quality of life for students, communities and education employees. I trust your judgement at the end of the day I believe that you have the best interest of students in your hearts. I for one have seen some great changes and have endured some real challenges. I will always be a teacher regardless of what you do.

timothy david jones, Box Elder School District

I have had many students return to visit with me after completing high school or in their senior year. One student, who had formerly decared that school didn't matter, told me recently that he stayed in school and that he "finally got it"...that being in art class had made him want to stay in school. He also said that he was an honor student and was on track to graduate with high grades. Elective classes in middle school are sometimes the glue that holds these students in school. Sometimes that is all it takes, because when they mature enough to really see what they can do for their future (and sometimes it is in the arts or health field or P.E.), they are able to step up and be a participant in their own destiny.

Shelley Smyka, Box Elder School District

It's hard to know where to start. I feel like we jump through hoops constantly trying to leave no child behind, but our best efforts are useless unless there's some buy in from parents and students. We have no recourse, even if a child fails a grade level, and they know it. Education is a privilege and should be treated that way, not like an unnecessary inconvenience that gets in the way of vacations.

Cynthia Woodward, Davis School District

More and more teachers and aides are being physically abused by their students. Many are leaving the field. Schools are NOT safe places for students or teachers, so we should stop promoting them as such. If teachers are allowed to be bullied or physically abused by their students without having consequences for their actions, what kind of message is this sending to the rest of the students? We are only breeding the next generation of criminals. They will believe that if there are no consequences at school for such actions, then there will be no consequences in society, either. ALL students should have consequences, even if they are special ed students or students with autism, ADHD, etc.

Julia R. Henkes, Granite School District
I teach 3rd Grade in a Title 1 School. I also have students write letters to either Santa or their parents (their choice). This year one of my students asked Santa in her letter to not bring her any presents, just keep her family together, no fighting like the past year. All kids are really good, no matter what school or area they come from.

Kathy Lyman, Granite School District

Thank you for your continuing support for educating the next generation of citizens.

Joanne Ribeiro, Granite School District

Did the education bills passed over the last 10, 5, 3 years have the intended results? If not, what actions have you taken to correct matters? If so, what can be done to maintain or increase the positive results? How have you used teachers as a successful resource when making decisions related to public education?

Crystal DeMass, Jordan School District

Public education is vital to our society.

Ruth Ann Weight, Millard School District

I would share how difficult it was for me to move to Utah. Removing some of the fees was a great step, but I am a highly-qualified former state teacher of the year that is nationally recognized and you put me on a level 1 license as if I'm straight out of school and took 4 years of my experience away. That's not how you attract and retain good educators.

Meghan Everette, Salt Lake City School District

The obsessive focus on family in Utah detracts from a school's ability to put every CHILD first. Not every child comes from a stable and loving family. By supporting parent efforts to open extraneous charter schools, home school without accountability, an not enforcing attendance laws, many children without family advocates suffer. When you put "family first" above all else, you put children last.

Mallory Goodman, Uintah School District

I love my job! I would like to be treated like a professional and not made to blame for all that is wrong when students are not passing. Students are amazing and resilient, but many have no support at home. When we are trying to be teacher, parent, and friend we need to meet the needs we can, with the best of our abilities.

Monique Fausett, Wasatch County School District

Teachers need to be able to address negative situations without fear of retributions. There needs to be consequences for students negative behavior.

Mindee Welchman, Weber School District

I am a mother of a child with special needs and a special education teacher. My child is considered a mild/moderate student. She struggles with school on a daily bases. There is rare chances for her to feel successful and enjoy school as she gets older. She is currently in 7th grade and she knows she is behind all the other students. She hides her school work from me because she does not understand it and feels embarrassed. She is not the only student who does this. I also run a parent support group monthly to talk about our students struggles and parents are feeling this across the board. In middle school they are expected to sit in a general education classroom for math and reading with peers who are a lot higher than them. They feel humiliated most of the time. Then instead of going to an elective class, which is a chance for them to feel successful, they are told they have to do ANOTHER math and reading class because they are too low and need the extra time. Why can't they have just a reading and math class that is geared toward the struggling students so they can not miss the one opportunity they have to feel successful. I am very frustrated and I speak on behalf of many, many parents and students. We need real solutions to meet or special education students. We need real testing solutions for them so they don't dread the test but feel excited to see themselves grow. We need real solutions so they don't drop out of school.

Jennifer Shepherd, Washington County School District
I have been teaching for 16 years. I love my profession. However, I can see why we are having the lack of teachers coming into and staying in our profession. The lack of pay and the amount of requirements we are required to do isn’t worth it to many. I am all about raising expectations and giving students a quality education, but expectations and requirements need to be realistic. If you want to attract and keep quality teachers...make the profession more attractive. Society has changed, therefore, changing some of the student behaviors we experience in classrooms. That alone makes teaching more difficult than it used to be 10 years ago. Teaching has shifted to data driven based on assessing. I have no problem assessing and analyzing the data, but there is a point when it starts to effect the amount of time you actually have to give instruction. It sometimes feels like assessing is the only thing you doing. It’s getting to the point that it’s taking out the enjoyment of learning and teaching.

Emily Farr, Weber School District

I would like them to know how much our special education student count has increased over the last few years. These students are coming with more and more deficits and more and more intense behaviors. We have rooms the sizes of closets with an average of 11 to 14 students per group. Our small group instruction is a thing of the past. We have been very creative in making sure that all student needs are met but feel that we still fall short. We are told that there is not funding for additional support in our classrooms, we are told that the norm for special education student case load is 40 to 50 students per one teacher. We are the last group thought about when it comes to new technology. Between two full time special education teachers we share 11 ipads for 55 students. The technology we do have is usually the oldest in the school but we are grateful to have any! We constantly take on student teachers just to have additional bodies in the rooms for support. We have little to no prep time due to the amount of students needing to be seen and the services that need to be provided. The motto is do more with less and we magically make it work but only to the best of our abilities. Support public education but in doing so also support special education and realize that those students count too!

Samantha Johnson, Davis School District

Special Education paperwork is prohibitive, not helpful.

Nicole Harmon, Sevier School District

I hear of money getting to the districts but because it doesn’t have specific earmarks it goes where the district sees fit, without any accountability. I disagree to all the trips to out of state place and single hotel accomadations and wasted expense.

Jennifer Chandler, Uintah School District

Teaching is my passion. I take it very seriously. I continually strive to keep my education current. Everyday I show up to my classroom with excitement for the day and stay energized and organized so that my students can be engaged and fully invested in their own education. I spend hundreds of dollars in my classroom on curriculum and incentives for my students. Most of the time my class has over 30 students. Frequently we have to share supplies or I need to buy them. I create my own social studies and science curriculum as I do not have the supplies and resources available to me. I work many hours overtime and many extra days as my planning time isn’t efficient. I teach in a school with portable 7 full portable classrooms while the charter school down the road is building a new Jr. High. This charter school has a high turnover rate and I personally have taught several students that come back into my classroom. These students have a big learning curve as they adjust to our classroom (both behaviorally and academically). Every student I have had from there has been a couple or more grade levels behind. They are darling students just like all my students, but it takes more effort to teach them what they need to learn. The charter school’s Sage test results are far below the other local public schools (by half or third). Every single student in my classroom grows. My low kids progress and so do my high kids. It’s an environment of community, respect, and a growth mindset. Teaching students is an important job as it sets the future for all these incredible, brilliant children. Our students need more. They need a teacher that has time to adequately plan, a classroom size that is smaller so they can receive more attention, and rigorous programs and incentives.

Jenifer Allen, Weber School District
Other Issue(s)

I've noticed with smaller classes (25-30), I can talk to each student every day. When my classes are large (40 or more), I don't get to have the one-on-one interaction that I feel helps students be successful. Larger classes also have more discipline problems.

Valerie Aubrey, Granite School District

Teaching children is getting harder every year. So many of our students struggle to get to school and focus on learning because of problems at home. Is there a way we can be a better support to parents so they can better parent their own children?

Lorna Young, Granite School District

I have a classroom of 35 kids with all sorts of needs - special and emotional and behavioral. I do the best I can, but there are not enough hours or energy to do all that needs to be done for these kids. And in order to help them, their academics can't always come first! But if you saw their struggles and how far they have come in just these few months with the uphill battles they've been climbing, you would NOT call them unsuccessful - no matter what the tests scores say!

Stephanie Brandner, Ogden School District

There has been an increase in demands in education over the past 15 years. These changes have been for the good but need additional supports. At the same time students needs and gaps have become harder and more diverse. We need training, resources, staff, and professionals to help meet the needs of these students.

Julianne Christensen, Weber School District

Well seasoned and experienced teacher here (19 yrs. public, 5 yrs. my own preschool) with serious requests for your attention. 1. Please consider specific funding for paid personnel to cover morning/recesses/after school duties so that teachers have time for further class prep, and TIME TO USE THE RESTROOM. (Having no a.m. recess or having recess duties, makes it IMPOSSIBLE to maintain a healthy urinary tract system.) Specific improvements and an increase in overseeing per grade level can happen, and happen more quickly if teachers were supported with paid peer planning/consultation time.

Wendy Wright, Granite School District

Our 3rd grade team is diving deep into data and increasing the rigor and student expectations. We need time to prepare and plan while we get paid. There is never enough time "on the clock" to get things accomplished. We work hard during our weekly 1 hour collaboration and regularly spend and extra 1-1 1/2 hours more each collaboration day, on our own time, to meet our own expectations to raise the bar. Also our 4 classes share a chrome book cart of 30 computers, which is more than some, is not realistic when it comes to the expectations that are placed on educators. Technology needs to be increased in ALL schools, not just the new builds, the wealthy schools, or even the most stricken schools. Those of us who work in the middle economic areas are suffering from lack of technology.

Katherine Ferre, Alpine School District

This last year I have done 4 all-nighters in addition to my normal work hours AND staying late at the school just to keep caught up on paperwork required by IEPs. I am getting paid the exact same amount as any other teacher, yet my efforts to comply with regulations and support my students are ignored or taken for granted. The shortage of teachers is a huge issue, and the shortage of special education teachers is even greater. I want to continue to support my students, but I don't see how I can sustain this amount of effort at substandard pay. I am working a part-time job just to make ends meet. My wife is also working a full-time and part-time job. In short, if you want to solve the teacher shortage, and especially the special education teacher shortage, stop taking us for granted. Yes, have high standards, but stop making us jump through stupid hoops just so can do our jobs. When I have a choice of doing some stupid paperwork or help my students, I WILL ALWAYS HELP MY STUDENTS FIRST. Why? Because I got into this job because I believe in what I do. It's about time that legislature realizes that their well-meaning regulations have unintended consequences. Consequences like taking support away from students for paperwork that does nothing to help said students AND drives teachers out of the profession. Something that I wonder about every time I
sit in front of my computer I bought with my money because the district was not able to buy a computer capable of handling the IEP program we have without it lagging and making the paperwork take even longer... And don't even get me started on how much of a waste of time summative testing is, or how it makes it harder for students to succeed. From the bottom of my sarcastic teacher's heart, thank you for saddling us with SAGE. A test that isn't a good test of knowledge and is instead a behavior test since we can't even remind our students to take their time or stop them from clicking through. We teachers have to make data-driven decisions. Something I love, by the way. Why is it that legislature don't bother to read the research on the negative impacts of summative testing on student success and graduation rates. This isn't football people. Schools should not be in competition with each other. They should be driven instead to improve the success rates of students. To UEA, please feel free to share my comments. Although I would prefer to remain anonymous since I am very candid about my feelings.

_Brian Middleton, Iron County School District_

When I am pulled out of my class for teacher training, my students suffer. Substitutes are not as effective as the professionals. They don't know the curriculum or individuality of each child's needs. Students will attempt to get away with negative behaviors when a sub is in the classroom. (Please remember...they are children.)

_Denise McMasters, Davis School District_

Paraprofessionals increase of pay

_Rachael Wilson, Granite School District_

Rural students matter too

_Ursula Mackay, Sevier School District_

I am an ARL candidate. This is my third year teaching. I'm learning to teach, planning lessons, teaching AND taking classes all at the same time. This is overwhelming, and the classes that I'm required to take do not directly apply to the CTE class that I am teaching, which is a frustrating waste of time and money. It is costing me approximately $3500 to get my ARL, why? There is a teacher shortage, and I fulfill the requirements for my endorsements to teach the classes that I teach, I think there should be either free education for new teachers, and it should not be during the school year... this is really hard to balance with an active family, too. I understand why so many do not finish this process and leave the profession.

_Rebecca Stone, Jordan School District_

The textbooks of Chinese Immersion program have been changed several times. Teachers need to make new flashcards and new materials often and put the old ones aside. It is kind of wasting educational resources and wasting teacher's time and efforts. Because the workload is heavy, this makes teachers frustrated.

_Liu-I Fu, Alpine School District_

Class size in kindergarten and first grade needs to be drastically reduced so that needs are being met to reduce interventions later on in the students school years.

_Jessica Fausett, Carbon School District_

Teachers need time and support. So many things are changing so quickly and it is hard to keep up. One great investment would be an instructional coach in every building.

_Donna Hunter, Jordan School District_

Quality professional development for educators by leading educators through national and local conferences is critical to student achievement.

_Keri Huntsman, Nebo School District_
Other Issue(s)

I teach at a title one school and many of my students don’t have access to computer support at home. If I was able to give every student access to an iPad during the day I would be able to better differentiate my instruction and therefore further help my students be successful.

Anne Stewart, Salt Lake City School District

If you really want the students to have the technology skills to succeed in the world today, give us (teachers) the tools to teach the skills. One-to-one devices are really the only way to make sure we can integrate technology into everyday teaching in a meaningful way. If you expect them to excel on the end-of-level computer tests (SAGE) you must give us the tools to help them be comfortable working in a computerized environment.

Sara Weston, Davis School District

Legislators need to be in the schools and in the classrooms of their constituents! Policies are being made by people who have NO IDEA what the day to day is like in Utah schools. Problems won’t be solved until there are conversations with people in the trenches of education. We have many ideas for you from how to address the teacher shortage, to class sizes, to testing concerns.

Ellen Cox, Davis School District

I would really like for legislators to understand how difficult and under-appreciated teaching really is. I have 200 8th grade students (about 35 per class) this year. Dozens of them have accommodations through IEP’s or 504’s, and I am held responsible for the individualized instruction of 200 students whose reading abilities range from a 1st grade level to college level. When you make standardized testing mandatory for teachers, but not students, you send the message that teachers are to be judged solely on test scores and that teachers are to blame for low test scores. What about student, parent, and community responsibility? If our focus on test scores is going to continue, those tests must be mandatory and must come with some sort of accountability on the part of students. The second issue I would like to address is the huge push to focus on IT education and future careers. I would ask that we keep in mind the fact that the job market shifts and fluctuates. IT jobs are not the only jobs out there, and we would be remiss in any effort to focus too strongly on STEM-only curriculum. Utah students deserve a well-rounded education that opens their eyes to possibility and gives them a chance to choose their own path. Finally, I ask that you consider the state of “compulsory education” and attendance in Utah. Now that the courts systems will not deal with attendance issues, we can not say that education in Utah is compulsory. Essentially, a child can drop out of school at any age that their parent/guardian begins letting them stay home. Parents should be held legally accountable for providing an education to their children. If they wish to homeschool, they should provide evidence of homeschooling. A free public education is something that all children deserve. Utah should do its part to show that we value education by once again enforcing attendance laws.

Chera Fernelius, Davis School District

I feel like responsibility is being taken away from students. If students don’t learn to take responsibility for their own learning, what kind of citizens will they be? Example: It’s nice that we pay for them to take the ACT once, but shouldn’t a college bound student take this responsibility on themselves instead of relying on the schools to give them an opportunity to take it. There are other examples of removing responsibility from the student if you look for them.

Marie Condie, Nebo School District

I have taught for 33 years and love every day that I go to school. I appreciate the one to one technology that my school has embraced and encourage other schools and districts to do the same. Teaching is easier now than it was 10 years ago due to the one to one and my denotation to bring my content online. I am saddened that the SAGE testing has been reduced to just the sophomores in my district. Lots of money and time were spent in creating the quality testing in science and I am not getting the information from testing that would provide me the data to improve my instruction.

Linda Walter, Nebo School District
Other Issue(s)

Pay teachers better for all of the work that is added to our workload each year and you would retain more teachers. I am a special education teacher who is being required to complete a math certification in order to be “highly qualified” when I had met the requirements years ago by completing the English (ELA) Praxis. The math certification for secondary special education teachers currently requires 2 classes which you must complete Calculus 2 prior to taking, but Calculus 2 is not a requirement for the certification. Inconsistency and requirements like this are very frustrating and discouraging to desire to continue as an educator.

Angelina Freer, Canyons School District

Please support education of our students! 1.) If we want our students to learn, then our students need to be in school. In order for students earn credit for a class, they need to be present a minimum number of days. 2.)If Charter schools are going to receive state funding, then the charter schools need to have the same regulations and educational standards that all public schools are held. For example, charter schools that receive state funding need to provide the special education plans required for all public schools, and need to be equally available to all students regardless of ethnicity, religious belief, socioeconomic group, learning ability, or any other discriminatory practice. As the minimum requirement, Charter schools need to teach the core subjects at the same breadth and depth of knowledge required by public schools in the state of Utah. 3.)Schools need funding in order to help our students have the equipment, resources, and technology to allow students to learn to the best of their ability. This includes having experienced and knowledgeable teachers to help challenge our students to think and develop. However, most teachers have to have a second job in order to pay our bills. Imagine what teachers could do if they made enough money to support their families with just one job, how much their energy and attention would increase if teachers could focus their time on their classroom.

Melissa Usher, Jordan School District

Most teachers go into the teaching profession because they want to help our youth. They are interested in investing time, energy, money, and love for starters into educating our youth to be good, productive, law abiding citizens of the future. However, this can't be accomplished by the school system alone. Parent and community involvement is needed. Parents need to be held more accountable for their children. Teachers should not be "graded" on how successful students are. There are many factors that determine a student's success. Many teachers I have spoken with get discouraged. We are asked to add more and more to our responsibilities for no or little extra pay. I know many who have left the field due to the pay. Yes, many are willing to sacrifice, but some must also look to the financial needs of their own families. When looking at other states' pay scales, Utah seems to be far behind. I have been teaching over 20 years with a Master's Degree. My income is about $3,000 to $4,000 more than other teachers in many states who have been teaching only 5 - 10 years. I have often said I would be willing to pay more in taxes to have a better public school system in UT. (My own children attended private Christian schools, (which I paid tuition for), and I paid my taxes willingly).

Nikki Bachman, Weber School District

56% of our students receiving Ds or Fs in their coursework are at risk because of poor school attendance.

Julie Palmer Gnotta, Canyons School District

Kindergarten teachers are held to the rigor of all other students but we have no recourse when student's do not attend school because it is not required. I can usually get my students on grade level (except for learning deficits) when they attend school regularly.

Wendee Johnston, Granite School District

I have been a professor at a university, a school counselor, a teacher and finished a 4 year apprenticeship in and now am a journeyman carpenter. I received an excellent education for all of the career paths I have had. However, my education for carpentry wasn't in this state and from what I have seen at our Technology centers in Utah the education one receives is all over the place. It ranges from excellent to pathetic. This is due to the entire educational emphasis being put on our "core" curriculum, rather than paying much attention to the actual curriculum being taught. You can not focus on what is written in "the books". You need to actually create a system for checking on what is
Other Issue(s)

being taught. As long as we place our "skills based" learning at the bottom end of our focus, and continue to falsely listen to academics at the university level who are very narrow in their personal experience and view of skills based learning, then you will the disparity between educational outcomes at the applied technology centers. Our children are often made to feel like outcasts, losers, or reprobates if they are sent to a technology center. Because counselors are from the world of academia the majority of kids that are sent to Technology centers actually fit the "outcast" definitions. Many of our parents who are actually from the "blue collar" world feel bad about themselves and either insist their children don't end up their (because the think that somehow a university degree is the answer to all economic strife and don't understand that they are often earning more than many university grads) or they feel like they need to bad mouth our schools because they were made to feel like second class citizens when they attended. Please consider some of these thoughts that the truth that is embedded in these feelings. I have been on both sides of this issue and know what I am talking about.

Matt Edwards, Iron County School District

Art education is not an elective or add on curriculum. It is the vehicle that gets creativity, innovation, risk-taking, and choice making into a content area. It builds 21 century thinking/collaboration skills by allowing a student to explore his/herself as well as the world around them...building empathy and self awareness.

Lisa DeFrance, Salt Lake City School District

This year, our school lost $500,000. As a result, we lost 3 teachers. Our class sizes in 4,5,6 grades averaged 32 students at the beginning of the year. There have been no other changes in positive programming. As a result, our behavior has TRIPLED!!! Kiddos who fight to be noticed at home struggle when they have to fight to be noticed at school as well.

Amber Woodward, Granite School District

Please fund early childhood education, especially full day kindergarten for all students. Please lower class sizes and fully fund salaries.

Susan Turpin, Canyons School District

Although I work in a relatively affluent community in the Davis School District, our resources and technology are very limited. I realize that we are luckier than many schools in the state, but funding is still our main issue. I only have four computers in my classroom for students to use, which definitely is not enough for my classes of 32-35 students. We do have mobile labs we can use, but even once a week is not enough time with the lab, especially if we're working towards blended learning and relying on Canvas and other online resources to support our instruction.

Kyla Cannon, Davis School District

Teachers are doing their best under trying conditions. I'm a veteran teacher concerned with teacher turnover. Younger teachers aren't making it too long and teacher turnover is hurting our schools and children. Retired teachers might want to come back if some restrictions on pensions and "sitting out a year" were changed. Teachers care about their students.

Brian Preece, Provo City School District

Refugee students learning English and contributing to our state.

Renate Brunsvik, Granite School District

I teach special education- resource- in an elementary school. I have students in grades K-6. I have to be aware of curriculum for every grade. I have 34 students on my case load. I am responsible for all the federal paperwork for these students along with teaching them. IEP meetings take 30 minutes to an hour or more. I have mainly students who have learning disabilities, however I also have a blind student, a student with Down Syndrome, students with autism, a few who are intellectually disabled, and behavior disorders. I have a half day aide. I would not be able to serve my students without the aide. However it also makes more work for me as I have to plan the groups she teaches. So on top of teaching, and planning my own groups, I am planning hers, and instructing her on how to
Other Issue(s)

Teach. I have too many students for her to just be an aide. I also maintain all the IEP files- federal paperwork. Some of my files are in binders of 4+ inches. I am regularly at school long after my contract time of 3:45. I rarely in 20 years have been able to actually schedule in the planning time I am supposed to have due to the high number of students. I would have to have groups of over 10 students to do that. There needs to be more help in special education.

Christine Wilkinson, Nebo School District

Teacher salaries are low for the rigorous job we have. There is not enough technology for each student to be successful in a technologically progressive society. Too many charter schools are taking funding and students from public schools. Class sizes are difficult to organize, and makes it harder to differentiate instruction.

Sharon Emmert, Ogden School District

Step into a teacher's shoes before you make any decision.

Lisa McMullin, Alpine School District

I currently teach at a very large school where each third grade class has 33 or 34 students. We share a computer cart among 6 classes. There is not enough computers for us to use them very often. It would be nice to have more computers available for daily use instead of weekly use. Also, with the class size being so large, some activities are difficult to teach to so many students. Teaching 1:33 is ridiculous! I rarely have enough time for individualized instruction. Smaller class size is critical!

Nicole Park, Alpine School District

Early childhood education is critical- a policy to address truancy and absenteeism

Louise Jorgensen, Duchesne County School District

Increase test score through smaller class sizes. Charter schools are trying but they lack the resources or direction to provide quality training. They have too many responsibilities to meet all their needs. A school district is much more organized and manages the needs of the students much better than a charter school. I know because I have worked in both settings.

Lisa Scheid, Ogden School District

If we really, truly want to improve public education, we need to start with drastically reducing elementary class sizes, and hire more reading specialists for 1st through third grade. I would also require parent "classes" to educate them on the importance of supporting their students however they can, and attempt to empower them.

Jennifer McCoy, Salt Lake City School District

We need more pay as teachers, and to not cut programs such as PE, Art, Music, and Health but invest more money into said programs.

Brock Phifer, Davis School District

I am a first year teacher and I am doing my best to incorporate blended learning because studies have shown this helps create the most success for students. However, since not all of my students have access to technology in the classroom this process has been made quite difficult. It would be a huge help if there was an increase in funding to try and address this need.

Zak Erickson, Davis School District

Utah students deserve to have their education fully funded. In the past Utah has relied on parents to subsidize their schools and teachers. The system has also relied upon families with a stay at home parent who has time to prepare children for school and work with them on basic skills. As the demographics change for Utah there needs to be a recognition that all day Kindergarten needs to be the norm not the exception. If this is not addressed Utah's prized SAT scores will decline.

Deborah L. Golde, Davis School District
Other Issue(s)

If the legislators could increase funding for students in special circumstances, that would be awesome. I think most teachers agree that there are still some students who are not getting the educational opportunities they need to be successful.

Daniel Bracken, Granite School District

We want to keep up but rural school do not have the funding for technology that we need to keep up with the other schools

Lynne Cook, Washington County School District

Addressing the teacher shortage will require teachers to be treated and paid as professionals. We are a highly educated profession but we don't come close to others who are less experienced and trained. No wonder this profession does not attract young professionals. It is difficult to live on a teacher salary as a single adult, let alone support a family.

Julie Gurr, Alpine School District

Charter schools are currently failing look at the school grade most of them are below a D

Christofer Lutz, Jordan School District

Education is mired in the mid 1900’s. We need to take a good, long look at our practices and what we can do to make education work in our modern society! We can do this if we work together and listen to the right people!!

Nate Crandall, Alpine School District

There is an increased amount of issues due to social media and phone use.

Bucky Holmstead, Alpine School District

Charter schools should have more accountability if they are going to use public funds.

Deena Hunt, Alpine School District

I work as a teacher on admin. assignment. I see so many children who seem "lost." They need more attention and also have adult-like issues to face. (Divorced parents, death of loved ones, parents not at home when they get home, social skills need work, etc.) We need more aide supports at school to help arrange activities to help the students have new opportunities. Many of our poorer students can't afford to play local sports, attend music or dance, or do much except play Nintendo.

Joan Jensen, Alpine School District

I come from a school that strives to pull itself up by its bootstraps. We are not poor enough to qualify for Title 1 funds. However, we are not rich enough to have large donations from generous patrons. We are stuck in the middle with not a lot of help from anywhere. We're desperate for technology. Yes, we have a computer lab. We even have two carts of chromebooks. But it is not enough. Even sharing the cart between 4 classes requires large amounts of rescheduling and revamping. Add into that any time the chromebooks are needed for testing. It's not about letting the computer teach my children. It's about giving them the tools they need to be successful in today's world. Today's world is growing far above and beyond the limited technology we do have. In two years our technology will be obsolete and there still won't be any funds to replace it.

Michelle McManus, Alpine School District

Education is our future, we need to look at were we want to be and plan our children's education accordingly.

Kayla Nichols, Alpine School District

I have been teaching for five years, and cannot afford an apartment by myself if I ever want to get a Master's degree. I will be in my 40s before I can get a Master's degree and even begin to think about owning a home. However, I work in a field where Mastery's degrees affect my salary. Without a second degree I will "cap out" my salary in six years.
and no matter how much more experience I receive, I will never be able to make more money. I would love to see programs that make it more feasible for teachers to invest in their own learning while they are teaching. As is, I can easily be funded if I quit my job and go to school full-time, but I do not want to leave my students while I seek further education.

Anna Robison, Alpine School District

I am an early childhood teacher and a few years ago I convinced my principal to purchase iPads for my team because the rest of the school had access to a system that allowed the older grades to test, write paper and submit them all online. We got 25 to begin with but had to share them with the entire school. We now have around 50 to 60 in our school but with the change of administration they have been placed in specific grade levels and are difficult to access. This is frustrating because I feel that as an early childhood teacher if we focus on the younger children with technology to make they're learning enjoyable they will develop a love for learning early.

Eliesa Solorzano, Alpine School District

It is so hard to obtain a teaching license with all the hoops you have to go through.

Kensi Limb, Beaver School District

Do you really know what is going on in the classrooms?

Greg Nichols, Cache County School District

I can not teach students that do not attend. Changes in the law last year sent a message to students and families that school attendance is not important.

Craig Yeager, Cache County School District

Because of the lack of any accountability, there has been a significant rise in absenteeism and this will have direct impact on graduation rates.

Bruce Bean, Carbon School District

After a high school boy attended the Northern Utah STEM Expo he couldn't sleep that night because he couldn't wait to change his schedule for the next year. He wanted more math and science so he could go into a "cool" field.

Chadley Andeson, Davis School District

Stop making only teachers accountable for students grade. Where is the accountability of students and parents?

Helen Heiner, Davis School District

Public education should be our top priority. Please don't allow charter/private school entities to have such an impact on reducing effectiveness of public schools.

Lori James, Davis School District

I am a Speech-Language Pathologist currently serving nearly 80 students with diverse communication needs. While there is talk of reducing class size, my caseload has increased by 20 students in the last 2 years. While there is talk of increase of classroom supply money, I am given no money for therapy materials beyond the legislative money. While there is talk of increased paid time for planning time, I am asked to attend Special Ed meetings, on-line trainings, IEP meetings that are during planning time and often extend beyond contract time. While there is talk of increases to retain quality teachers, I am asked to supervise an Assistant or possibly a Tech serve students. I feel invisible.

Sandy Johnson, Davis School District

My son has struggled to read his whole life and has received services through the sped department since 2nd grade. My husband said he didn't learn to read until jr. High and felt confident that our son would as well. In jr. High the bullying got worse and his self esteem plummeted. He was talking about killing himself to end the pain. Those who
Other Issue(s)

should have advocated for him shamed him. We got him tested by a neuropsychologist and found that he has
dyslexia and dysgraphia. He started working with a tutor using a program specifically for dyslexia and his reading
level has improved 3 grade levels in 6 months. The school system had him for 8 years to reach a 3rd grade level. 1 in
5 people have some form of dyslexia and the school system is failing these students. We need to do more to educate
our university students, our current teachers and administrators. We need to put the materials in their hands that will
actually work. Otherwise, we are wasting time and money and failing our students.

Angela Olson, Davis School District

I am a teacher specialist who supports elementary mild/moderate special education classrooms. I have lost at this
point in the school year 3 fantastic teachers due to the fact that they have felt like the work no longer making an
impact for students with multiple mental health needs which result in high levels of physical aggression. These
teachers are willing to endure the aggression daily and provide high quality educational and behavioral instruction if
they have the support from mental health professionals.

Kimberly Rich, Davis School District

We need more programs available in rural areas for transition students to become more career/trade ready.

Melody Gardner, Duchesne County School District

I am a licensed teacher who is a mentor to a teacher who is not. I can see the struggles she has because she has
not gone through the education program. I have also seen the assessment data from the students in her class, which
is significantly lower than that of the other licensed teachers. We are doing a disservice to our students, because we
have teachers who don't understand or take seriously the complexity of this profession, and it shows in the data.

Kerrilyn Miles, Duchesne County School District

Last year a student came to me terrified that she would have to be put into foster care if her parents were deported,
despite the fact that she herself is a natural-born US citizen. No child should ever have to fear being separated from
their parents at such a young age. It is crucial that we let our students know that they are safe and supported, and
ensure that they have other adults in their lives--namely educators--that they trust enough to talk about their fears
with those educators.

Anna Bessesen, Granite School District

I have many students who are new to the country who are working hard to learn the language, cultural norms, school
expectations, the academic content, and navigate poverty. They deserve our support.

Thomas Clayton, Granite School District

As a former employee of American Preparatory Academy, I strongly discourage the continued, unregulated spread of
charter schools.

Rachel Giddings, Granite School District

I work at Granger High, one of Utah's only Title One High Schools, and my students do not have access to many of
the things that students on the east side have. I think the most important issue that we should be addressing is
equitable education.

Sam Gunther, Granite School District

KEEP NGSS OUT OF THE ELEMENTARY SCIENCE CURRICULUM. It's HORRIBLE for little children and was
written by people who haven't spent five minutes with elementary age children. NGSS sucks the JOY out of science
and discovery. It tries to turn children into science fair displays. It's AWFUL. It's great for 6th grade up to high school.
But please fight to keep it from TORTURING children who actually LIKE learning about the world around them.

Gabrielle Roh, Granite School District
Other Issue(s)

Too many students enter kindergarten at risk. I have seen too many 5 year olds with little to no academic and social preparation prior to starting school. (I call these affectionately “closet children” because they have had no exposure to life besides the inside of a closet or so it seems). These students often have poor attendance in kindergarten especially in half day programs. This exacerbates the problem and they move into 1st grade woefully behind. So many families nowadays need the consistency of a full day kindergarten class and students also need this full day of exposure to help them “catch up” and be prepared for 1st grade. Kindergarteners are expected to achieve high academic standards, but they also need to have good social skills not only to be successful in school but also in life!

Janel Ruzzi, Granite School District

Most teachers work very hard. We come in early, we stay late to help our students. We use our own money when supply money is gone.

Kelly S. Stevens, Granite School District

Our children have to deal with so many things, especially our youngest ones, that are completely beyond their control or abilities. Too many parents are too young or too unwilling to provide necessary emotional, physical, financial, support for these little ones.

Marianne Stoddard, Granite School District

address the growing population of students that need and require SpEd services and increase funding to support the need, higher paid SpEd teachers and staff

Natalie Thompson, Granite School District

Technology is part of the answer but only if teachers know how to use technology effectively and if there is enough technical support to keep the technology functioning. New technology and old tech infrastructure do not always work well together.

Janet Hoffmann, Jordan School District

I stayed in school because of elective classes, specifically music classes. Please continue to make electives a high priority in education.

Nickolas Pulsipher, Jordan School District

Not all charter schools are evil or bad. Pulling my teenager out of the local junior high and sending him to a charter school likely saved his life. He is transgender and the bullying became severe. Additionally, he was not academically challenged in the neighborhood school. I never thought that as a public educator I would be a “charter school parent” but I am!

Jacy C Morgan-Barnum, Ogden School District

Stop using money to penalize teachers and look to increase support so they can be more successful. Stop taking away resources to give to Charter Schools.

Thais Rodriguez, Ogden School District

A previous student (around 40 years old now) said, I am the man I am today because of you.

MaryKay Becker, Park City School District

Teaching is such a people oriented profession, it is difficult to quantify the effects. I wish you could see more of the moments when a child walks into the room and the class spontaneously goes crazy with applause because they are so proud of that student's choices and accomplishments. Those moments can't be planned, but when they happen, they are the very best moments in teaching. :)

Dani Beck, Provo City School District
Other Issue(s)

Use the media to get the word out to parents that talking, reading and interacting with their children will help increase their (students') performance in schools SUBSTANTIALLY!!

Sherma Johnson, Provo City School District

College Prep is not for everyone. A large number of students would be better served with vocational training

Gerald Wayman, South Sanpete School District

It is getting harder to afford teaching with the increased cost of Medicine and medical care.

John Clinton, Salt Lake City School District

The economic difference between schools dramatically affects student performance and teacher morale. Bedsides the federal Title I money the state needs to recognize the severity of these affects and pour money into Title I schools with significant reduction in class size and other resources to level the playing field.

Carol Flowers, Salt Lake City School District

Thank you for supporting National Board Certification. We need to encourage more teachers to certify because it has a great impact on student learning.

Melody Francis, Salt Lake City School District

One to one technology has great potential, but it will be a huge waste of money if it doesn't come with training in how to use it effectively and tech support to keep it working, as well as ongoing funding to deal with the devices becoming obsolete over time. Also, a lot could be accomplished even at a 1:2 or 1:3 level.

Daphne Marchant, Salt Lake City School District

The best results for students happen to be the how well the teacher is trained. When you invest in teacher training from EXPERTS not from district people, you will see a difference in the outcome of student scores.

Sydney McDonald, Salt Lake City School District

We (public education) must address the individual needs and provide opportunities to our students who are danger of being at-risk based on financial factors or learning disability factors. Our students at-risk do not have a learning gap, they have an opportunity and equity gap.

Ana Park, Salt Lake City School District

Foreign countries for example, South Korea and Finland don't need expensive technology to be ahead of the technologically advanced United States students.

Jonny Holliday, Salt Lake City School District

The value of CTE programs, which directly lead to careers.

Jason T. Goble, Sevier School District

I have worked for the same district for the last 10 years. My jobs have ranged from substitute, reading tutor, math tutor, classroom aide, office secretary... However, I have been able to afford to put myself through college for only the last 4 years. I will FINALLY graduate in May. I have been serving as an Intern (Teacher of Record) for the last two years. I have only been paid 5/8 of a teacher salary during these two years. This frustrates me. I do all of the same work a regular classroom teacher does. I attend all of the same trainings, professional developments, ect. that a certified teacher does. I cannot figure out why on earth I have to be paid less because I am not certified and at HALF?? I could see maybe 7/8 but 5/8?? I am the last to leave the building at the end of everyday and am paid less. I just don't understand. I am also frustrated at the fact that the state of Utah would allow alternate route to licensure teachers who are sometimes not even closely certified in anything realted to education to come into the classroom, AT FULL PAY, and allow them to take three years to certify as a teacher. Also, statistics do show that those alternate routed person(s) usually walk out of the classroom or do not return the following year. But, someone like myself is
Other Issue(s)

CHOOSING to certify as a teacher…. I would think that the great state of Utah would rather pay a person full wages who is actually becoming certified in teaching a full wage when they are CHOOSING to enter the classroom and learn while attaining a degree that they are specifically choosing to do for 30 years or more. Not an alternative candidate that doesn’t like their chosen field or cannot find work within their certification and is like “oh yea I’ll just try teaching and they’ll pay me to do it”?! I am also frustrated with the fact that I have worked for the same school district for 10 years and no retirement?? Thank you kindly for your time.

Teah Landon, Uintah School District

I need more time with my students. Kindergarten students are expected to be able to read by the end of the school year. This used to be a first grade expectation, and they are in school for a full day. We are being asked to do this same task in half the time. It’s just not realistic. Also, make kindergarten mandatory.

Laura Bautista, Washington County School District

The research is clear (Hattie, 2015) (https://thelearningexchange.ca/collective-teacher-efficacy/), one of things that has the greatest affect on student learning is teacher collaboration and preparation time. I gratefully acknowledge that the legislature has put in place the option for districts to use a few days each year for this purpose. However, for this to be truly effective time is needed on weekly basis to engage in collaborative work with other teachers.

Brent Ludlow, Weber School District

Stay out of the education business. In other words, consult educators before making decisions for them. Even though a decision might sound good coming out of someone’s mouth, take a good look at it before voting on it. Blocking websites and educational online tools because they won’t sign an agreement has hurt teachers and students.

Trudy Sportsman, Weber School District