

UASSP Legislative Update

December 16, 2021

Secondary Administrators,

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all of the wonderful Secondary Administrators in Utah!

Please make note of the following as we head into the holiday break:

1. Legislative Update

This week, the UASSP Executive Board, Legislative Council, as well as other UASSP members met with Representative Dan Johnson, a member of the Education Appropriations Committee. Dan is a former UASSP member, therefore, has a great perspective about educational needs. Thanks to Dave Swenson for arranging the meeting and for our UASSP State Rep, Todd Quarnberg for facilitating.

Representative Johnson updated us on things that are already in the works for the 2022 legislative session when it comes to education. His presentation can be found [here](#).

We also shared our UASSP priorities for this year. Remember, each of us need to take the opportunity to *CONNECT AND COMMUNICATE* with local legislators and state board members about our priorities:

A. **Support Staff** - Schools are short handed when it comes to support staff; aides, lunch service workers, bus drivers, etc. We are supportive of the push to recruit and retain the best teachers, but feel we need to do the same for support staff. This means extra funding so that we can pay them more as well as have incentives for recruiting.

B. **Social and Emotional Support** - It is an understatement to say that it has been a challenging couple of years. We need a continued focus on support for administrators, teachers and staff members (in addition to students).

C. **Attendance** continues to be a challenge since the law was changed a few years ago. We need some accountability for both students and parents. Representative Johnson is very supportive of helping with some change in this area.

D. **ELL Support** - As we see an increasing number of refugees in many parts of our state, we need additional funding to help support the new students.

E. **Alternative Schools on Turnaround Status** - The fact that our alternative schools are held to the same standard as other schools when it comes to graduation rates doesn't seem reasonable. Most of our alternative schools are CSI Low Graduation

Schools, which means they are on turnaround status. This is causing some of our alternative schools hesitation in accepting students because of the need to get off turnaround status. We are advocating for a change in the standard for alternative schools.

A reminder that last year the Utah Legislature passed Amendment G during the special session, which provided a separate "rainy day" fund for education. It is important that we have school level administrators at the table when decisions are made about specific needs when it comes to the financial assistance from the state.

Thanks for reaching out to your local legislators, and local/state school board members about these issues.

2. Mid-Winter Conference Reminder

We hope to see each of you at our UASSP Mid-Winter Conference on January 24-26 at the Dixie Conference Center in St. George. We have some amazing presenters, topics, collaboration opportunities, vendors, food, great company, and prizes. We are looking forward to celebrating.....you! The theme this year is *Time to Thrive*. Register now at uassp.org. Note the following agenda:

[Mid-Winter Conference Agenda](#) [Breakout Sessions](#)

Please take the opportunity to relax, enjoy, and refill your bucket over the next couple of weeks. Bring on 2022. It is going to be another great year at our secondary schools in Utah!

Have a great holiday!

Rhonda