



PRESS RELEASE

Utah System of Higher Education

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Utah Wins Grant to Encourage High School Students to Take Rigorous Curriculum *\$300,000 will help students focus on core classes*

SALT LAKE CITY – Utah is one of eight states to win \$300,000 in federal funding over two years to increase the number of students who take a rigorous curriculum in high school. The Utah System of Higher Education partnered with the governor’s office, the Utah State Office of Education, the Utah K-16 Alliance and four school districts to apply for the State Scholars Initiative (SSI), which is administered by the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE).

“Data show that students who take a more rigorous core curriculum in high school are more likely to go to college, do well in their classes, and graduate sooner,” said Richard E. Kendell, Commissioner of Higher Education. “The largest indicator is math – students who take math their senior year dramatically increase their ability to succeed in higher education and in the workforce.”

The Utah State Scholars Initiative will encourage all students in participating school to take:

- four years of English
- four years of math (including algebra II)
- three years of science (biology, chemistry, physics)
- three and a half years of social studies (U.S. history, world history, geography, economics, or government)
- two years of language other than English.

The following schools will be participating in the initiative:

- Granite School District
 - Granger High School
 - Valley Junior High School
 - West Lake Junior High School
 - Academy for Math, Engineering & Science (AMES)
- Jordan School District
 - Hillcrest High School
 - Midvale Middle School
 - Union Middle School
- Park City School District
 - Park City High School
 - Ecker Hill International Middle School
 - Treasure Mountain International Middle School

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The Utah System of Higher Education includes the University of Utah, Utah State University, Weber State University, Southern Utah University, Snow College, Dixie State College of Utah, College of Eastern Utah, Utah Valley State College, Salt Lake Community College, Utah College of Applied Technology.

- Provo City School District
 - Provo High School
 - Timpview High School
 - Centennial Middle School
 - Dixon Middle School

The Utah System of Higher Education plans to connect this initiative with its Regents' Scholar Award which will grant students who are successful in completing the recommended core curriculum and who pass with a "B average" (3.0 on a 4.0 scale), automatic admission into any one of Utah's ten public colleges and universities without presenting ACT/SAT scores and also an opportunity scholarship of \$1,000 (funding not yet secured).

SSI grant funding will be used to hire a project director, to implement marketing materials, to develop an interactive video, to train school counselors, and to deliver presentations (from both the academic and business world) to students and parents.

Other winning states include: Colorado, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Nebraska, North Carolina, Virginia and West Virginia. Fourteen other states already participate in the SSI.

For more information about this award, please visit www.wiche.edu/statescholars or call (303) 541-0222.

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