

# **Joint Legislative Committee**

Utah School Boards Association & Utah School Superintendents Association

## **TALKING POINTS**

### **Appreciation & Acknowledgment**

- Express gratitude for the committee's time, effort, and difficult decision-making responsibilities.
- Recognize the challenge of balancing fiscal stewardship while meeting the needs of students, educators, and communities.
- Acknowledge the committee's ongoing commitment to supporting Utah's public education system.

### **Protect Programs That Directly Impact Students**

- Encourage prioritizing funding for programs that have a direct and meaningful impact on student learning.
- Emphasize that investments in students strengthen Utah's communities and economy long-term.
- Highlight that reductions to student-facing programs often have immediate and lasting consequences.

### **Special Education Needs - JLC Priority**

- Stress that special education services support students with diverse learning and developmental needs.
- Note that funding helps districts meet federal and state requirements while providing appropriate services.
- Emphasize that underfunding shifts financial burdens to local districts.

### **Support Funding for At-Risk Students - JLC Priority**

- Highlight the importance of programs that support students facing economic hardship, academic challenges, and/or language barriers.
- Emphasize that early intervention and targeted support improve student outcomes and graduation rates.
- Reinforce that these programs help close opportunity and achievement gaps.

### **Reinstate \$17.5 Million for School Fees - Funds Allocated Last Year**

- Stress that eliminating school fees reduces financial barriers for families.
- The original three-year phase-in elimination enabled districts to have the resources to plan for the elimination of school fees.

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- Allocating the funding and then taking it away mid-year has caused hardship for many districts.

## **Preserve Flexible Allocation Funding**

- Encourage maintaining flexible allocation funding without cuts or restructuring.
- Highlight that these funds are used to directly pay teachers.
- Emphasize that district could lose high-quality teachers if they are unable to pay them competitively.

## **Closing Message**

- Encourage thoughtful, student-centered funding decisions.
- Reaffirm appreciation for the committee's leadership and dedication to Utah's students.