

HIGHER ED MATTERS

Utah System of Higher Education

April 2014

2014 Legislative Session Report



The 2014 Utah legislature has shown substantial commitment to the state's public colleges and universities by approving a higher education budget increase of slightly more than 11 percent.

Going into this session, USHE's institutions were educating students with 27 percent fewer state tax funds per student than in 2008. By approving this significant increase in state support for higher education, the legislature has helped further the statewide goal of having 66 percent of Utahns earn a post-secondary degree or certificate by 2020.

One of the many great successes of this legislative session is the \$50 million acute equity funding appropriation, which will ease long-standing capacity issues at our most rapidly growing institutions and will help to balance their state funding per student with other institutions. This appropriation will be used for such efforts as additional faculty, expansion of facilities and IT infrastructure, increases in student services, and need-based aid programs to broaden access for Utahns.

"This year the state of Utah made an historic reinvestment in higher education," said Dave Buhler, Commissioner of Higher Education. "We are grateful to the legislature and Governor Herbert for their leadership and support on behalf of current and future Utah students."

2014 – 2015 USHE BUDGET OVERVIEW

- 1.25% Increase in Compensation
- \$50 million for Acute Equity
- \$7 million for Mission-based Funding (Distinctive Mission)
- \$1.5 million for Performance Funding
- \$1 million for College Readiness

CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT

- \$57.4 million for a new science building at Weber State University
- \$26.5 million for instructional buildings on the Brigham City and Price (USU Eastern) Campuses of Utah State University

2014 ImPACT Subgrant Project Examples

Utah State University Expansion Grant: (\$49,772) Innovative Mentoring, Partnering and Access to College and Technical Training

USU–Eastern Blanding Campus serves one of the poorest counties in the nation. The ImPACT project will solidify and expand successful programming developed during its startup year, including streamlining access to financial aid vehicles; broadening financial literacy programming; improving career guidance delivery; doubling the College Launch summer bridge program; and further developing CTE and academic pathways.

Southern Utah University: Planning Grant (\$10,000) Stopped-out Students

Southern Utah University has seen the need to reach out to students who have “stopped-out” on their progress towards degree completion. To determine where efforts and resources might be most effective, a self-study and prospective student needs assessment are needed. Within the self-study, best practices of peer institutions will be identified and internal practices/policies will be reviewed.

Salt Lake Community College: Startup Grant (\$75,000) Bridge Project

The Salt Lake Community College Bridge Project will provide information to students and families on postsecondary education with the purpose of increasing the rates of low-income, first generation and underserved students participating in and completing a higher education program of study. The six-week Bridge Program will target approximately 200 students and will be implemented twice a year.

Weber State University: Planning Grant (\$10,000) Making Math Meaningful

This initiative focuses on academic college preparation for under-prepared secondary students, particularly around math. In collaboration with key stakeholders in Ogden, Weber and Davis districts, WSU will look at the targeted academic needs and best practices to assist in addressing college preparation challenges around math for their students. These may include targeted mentor/tutoring support, skill-based workshops and collaborative work with partnering schools on test preparation.



Photo credit: StudyGroupAus 2011 (www.flickr.com/photos/59300785@N04/5890200346)

Utah Valley University: Startup Grant (\$74,462) Utah Rural Tribal ImPACT Outreach

UVU’s 2014 ImPACT proposal targets low-income/underrepresented Pacific Islander and rural Native American students and families throughout Utah. Dynamic partnerships with Wasatch Front districts, UHEAA and cultural community partners will be initiated and leveraged. Project components will include student/parent workshops and seminars on college awareness, access, FAFSA and financial aid guidance, cultural presentations, orientations, and direct mentoring for academic advancement of these populations.

University of Utah: Expansion Grant (\$50,000) Refugees Exploring the Foundation of Undergraduate Education in Science (REFUGES)

REFUGES provides hands-on science workshops and tutoring for minority, woman, immigrant and refugee students in two middle and high school after-school programs located around the Salt Lake valley. Students and their families also receive social services .

ABOUT ImPACT

The ImPACT subgrant, which stands for “Improving Preparation, Access & Communities Together,” is designed to issue fiscal support to Utah institutions of higher education to establish and strengthen programs and services to significantly increase the number of low-income and underrepresented students who are prepared to enter and succeed in post-secondary education. This competitive subgrant process has been made possible by the College Access Challenge Grant from the US Department of Education.