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Utah's K-12 Teacher Shortage Update *Follow-up research demonstrates Utah will continue to experience a significant shortage of teachers*

Dr. David Sperry, Utah System of Higher Education scholar in residence, presented his research Tuesday, Nov. 13, regarding the "2006-2007 Teacher Supply and Demand Follow-Up Study." His presentation was part of the annual Governor's Education Summit at Salt Lake Community College.

This research is a follow-up to Dr. Sperry's initial report, which he released in Dec. 2006. The initial report identified a growing gap (nearly 1,400) between the number of teachers graduating from Utah's colleges of education and the need for teachers in the public school system. Following the 2006 report, the state's K-16 Alliance appointed a statewide Teacher Shortage Task Force to generate ideas for addressing the state's teacher shortage crisis. The task force report was released in March 2007.

In May 2007, Commissioner of Higher Education Richard Kendell asked Dr. Sperry to repeat the original supply and demand study to determine what changes had occurred with respect to the teacher shortage. He has concluded that:

1. Teacher shortages in Utah remain critical.
2. Utah's colleges and universities need to be given the resources to recruit more students into education as well as the resources to train them.
3. Efforts need to be made to reduce teacher attrition (e.g., enhanced salaries, improved working conditions, and new mentoring programs).
4. The state needs to find ways to attract more teachers into the critical shortage areas (e.g., through differentiated salaries, efficiency scheduling models, and extended-year employment contracts).

Dr. Sperry's research resulted from an analysis of census and demographic data, along with data from local public school superintendents and the deans of the state's public and private colleges of education. His report will be available online at www.utahsbr.edu before the end of the day.

The results of the research are highlighted on the next page.

2007 Report on Teacher Education Supply and Demand Needs of Utah K-12 Education

- Utah continues to experience a significant demand for additional teachers due to a combination of growth in student numbers and high levels of teacher attrition. The annual gap (1,200 teachers) between teachers being trained in the state and those needing to be hired has not shrunk.
- School districts are having a more difficult time hiring new teachers than was reported a year ago (in four of the seven teacher licensing areas), with the biggest jump in difficulty occurring in the recruitment and hiring of early childhood education teachers.
- In secondary education, districts reported having more difficulty in recruiting and hiring teachers in six of the eight licensing categories.
- The number and percentage of teachers leaving after two (2) years of teaching has increased from 29.6 percent to 35 percent. The number of teachers leaving after five (5) years increased from 47.4 percent to 55.4 percent. Twenty-percent of teacher turnover can be attributed to retirement.
- School districts are increasingly hiring teachers from sources other than Utah colleges of education. New hires from Utah's colleges were reported as 34.2 percent versus 45.8 percent last year. Out-of-state hires jumped from 13.8 percent to 20.5 percent, and alternative certification hires rose from 4.5 percent to 8 percent.
- The number of reported vacant teaching positions on the first day of school in Aug. or Sept. 2007 increased 25 percent from last year. Districts with the largest number of teaching vacancies were Jordan, Alpine and Washington County.
 - In elementary education, the largest vacancy was in special education teachers, reported at 59.5 percent versus 25 percent last year.
 - In secondary education, the two areas with the most vacancies were mathematics and science.
- Utah colleges and universities produced essentially the same number of teachers in 2006-07 as in 2005-06, with Brigham Young University graduating around 30 percent of all teachers.
 - The number of elementary and secondary teacher graduates was up slightly, but the number of reported graduates in early childhood education was down significantly (127 vs. 191). Other categories were essentially flat.
- The number of Utah teacher education graduates from the six public institutions who took jobs in the state was down from last year (62 percent vs. 76 percent).
- The numbers of teachers produced in the critical secondary teaching areas of mathematics and science were up slightly (six additional math teachers and five additional science teachers).
- Secondary teachers electing to complete a secondary teaching minor have increased.
- The number of college/university students studying to become special education teachers has increased.
- The number of new school administrators has increased, while the number of school counselors and school psychologists has decreased.
- The number of known and reported minorities completing a teacher education program in Utah colleges and universities has decreased from 119 to 108 in the last year.