



March 2010

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## Wasatch County School District

101 East 200 North Heber City UT 84032

### 2010 Legislative Summary

SUPERINTENDENT TERRY SHOEMAKER



#### Attention Teachers:

##### Lane Changes

If you are planning on a 2010-11 Lane Change, you need to notify the District Office of your intent to do so by **April 10, 2010**. Proof of additional college credits in courses numbered 300 or higher or approved inservice hours for the lane change must be filed with the District Office on or before September 10, 2010.

#### Calendar

- Apr 1 **End of 1st Term**
- Apr 2 **Professional Day**
- Apr 12-14 **SEP/SEOP**
- Apr 15-16 **Spring Break**
- May 31 **Memorial Day**
- Jun 9 **Last Day of School**

At midnight March 11, 2010, the Utah Speaker of the House Dave Clark and Senate President Michael Waddoups banged their gavels and ended the 2010 Legislative Session. I wish to share what I consider to be the most important items for you to be aware of from this session.

##### 2010-11 Fiscal Year Budget.

Public Education's goal this session was to have the Legislature provide public education with the same dollar amounts as this current fiscal year. However, the Legislature had a very difficult task of trying to close a \$650 million dollar budget shortfall for next fiscal year, and very few of us believed that we could reach our intended goal. During the session, each appropriations committee made recommendations to Executive Appropriations, who in the waning days of the session, finally put the whole budget together for the Legislature to pass.

In comparison to other state agencies, Public Education did very well. The value of the WPU remains the same (\$2577), but enrollment growth did not receive additional funding. The Social Security and Retirement line item was reduced to zero and \$13.4 million dollars (what had been in the Social Security and Retirement Line Item this fiscal year) was transferred, along with over \$200 million dollars of new funding, into another new budget

line item entitled Flexible Allocation. When you examine the whole of the budget, the State Office of Education estimates the total reduction to be around 2.9 percent. Other state agency cuts were far more significant.

Retirement Changes. The Legislature dramatically altered the future of the Retirement System. One bill now requires retirees (beginning July 1, 2010) who wish to return to work to wait one full year. After the year, a retiree may return to work and retain his/her retirement and new salary.

The other bill changed the retirement system for all new employees hired after July 1, 2011. It created a two-tiered system. New employees could either select a defined contribution system (like a 401K), or they could select a new hybrid defined benefit system that provides a 1.5% per year benefit and full retirement after 35 years of service.

Current employees remain on the system as they currently are (with the benefits as they currently exist), but obviously, these are significant changes for future employees. There are too many details to explain in this newsletter. Please see the URS web site for the changes or call their office.

Legislative Teacher Supply Money. The Legislature re-

duced the monies that they have provided teachers for supplies by 50%. The \$10 million dollar allocation used in this fiscal year will be reduced to \$5 million next fiscal year.

Career Status Requirements. The Legislature passed a bill that allows school districts to extend the provisional status of employees an additional two years. Currently, provisional employees remain in that status for three years. This law allows the Wasatch Board of Education to extend the provisional status another two years for a total of five years.

School Criminal Background Check. Also passed was a bill requiring school districts to do periodic background checks of all employees and volunteers who have significant unsupervised access to students. The law allows for employees to pay the costs associated with those criminal background checks.

Reductions to Education Mandates. The Legislature made an effort to eliminate some mandates that we currently operate under. Eliminated were CRT testing in grade 2; UBSCT testing for high school students; Activity Disclosure statements until 2012-13; Disposal of textbook requirements until 2012



[www.le.state.ut.us](http://www.le.state.ut.us)

Senate Bills 43 & 63 passed in the 2010 Legislative Session. Learn how this legislation may impact you as a member of the Utah Retirement System:

<http://www.urs.org>

**“Who dares to teach must never cease to learn.”**  
John Cotton Dana

### Legislature Update (cont.)

(textbook adoptions). There were also other mandates eliminated.

**Amazing Process.** Nearly 100 bills dealing with educational issues were debated, discussed, and voted upon during this past session. Of that, a third of them were able to secure enough votes to become law. It is an amazing process to watch and I am constantly surprised at how much gets accomplished in so little time. I have great respect for those involved and want you to know that the legislators who represent us were outstanding at trying to gather information prior to them having to cast votes. I appreciated their seeking out my input on many, many issues.

As you know, we are required to implement the new laws and will do so with fidelity. During these difficult times, I encourage us to stay committed to doing all we can to helping our students succeed. We are, all of us, Wasatch County School District!

It is a pleasure to work with and for you!

### Dan Hill, the one man Art Show



In his first year as the art teacher at Rocky Mountain Middle School, Dan Hill is rocking the house.

“Dan has been awesome,” said Principal Jim Judd. “He has really lit a fire of excitement under our students.”

Mr. Hill puts together an art show each semester for students to display their creations. It is becoming one of the highlights of the year for many students.

His program is an introductory program, with students who may or may not know if they have a talented bone in their bodies.. But when they get into the class and work through the projects and lessons designed to stimulate their imagination, they suddenly discover that not only are they able to create art, they actually enjoy doing so.

Mr. Hill is also deeply involved in the district’s PLC program. As the only art teacher at his school, he does what he can in house, but uses the opportunity to attend the vertical collaboration meetings with the high school art teachers.

“It is wonderful having a teacher whose excitement for his subject rubs off so readily on his students,” said Mr. Judd. “Mr. Hill is a vital part of our team at Rocky Mountain Middle School.”

### Tough Love Bill Cosby talks about what teachers need to do better. By Denise Kersten Wills

#### Recent newspaper accounts said you had attacked teachers for not doing enough to help kids.

They heard me, but they didn’t print what I did. What came out was, ‘Well, he’s at it again, and now he’s after the teachers.’

Let me describe for you the whole scene. I was talking to 2,500 people. ... I said, ‘How many of you are school teachers?’ There’s applause. I said, ‘How many of you teach math?’ And one of the fellows on the panel applauded.



So I turned to him and I said, ‘What math?’ So he said ‘Algebra.’ I said, ‘Perfect. I’ll be the kid.’ He looks at me. I said, ‘You’re the

teacher.’

I looked at him and I said, ‘Why I gotta know this?’ And he stared back at me. I said, ‘You teach algebra?’ He said yes. I said, ‘Why I gotta know this?’

I turned to [the audience] and I said, ‘If you can’t out-argue a kid about your passion, the discipline you’re in, then you might as well take the job, put it down, and go on over to the post office. You’ve got to be able to tell these children the beauty of your passion.’

#### So you didn’t mean to criticize teachers?

You’ve got to be able to defend your passion. If that’s a critique, then let it be that. I’m not afraid to have it called a criticism.

#### How should teachers answer students who ask why they need a certain subject?

The answer that is in your heart and soul is the best answer, because somewhere in your heart and soul, you fell in love with something. You liked it. And if you can describe the feeling of liking something, which makes you feel good, then—once again, you don’t have to be Sammy Davis Jr.—just be able to explain to the kids, or that kid.

There’s a challenge that I always mention in my talks. And that is, I challenge you to the fact that there’s no better high for your body and for you emotionally, mentally, than when you study something, to know it all. ... There’s no better feeling on the face of this earth than looking at [test] questions and knowing, yes, I know the answer to this. In fact, sometimes you can feel downright arrogant at the stupidity of the question because you know so much. And I challenge them to know that.