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314 Classrooms Added Across Utah as Parents Embrace Full-Day Kindergarten Initiative

SALT LAKE CITY – The Utah State Board of Education (USBE) is excited to report that there were an additional 314 kindergarten classrooms during the 2022-23 school year as compared to the 2021-22 school year. This means that Utah schools served 7,226 more students than the previous year. The increase follows the passage of H.B. 477 during the 2023 legislative session. H.B. 477 opened up full-day kindergarten opportunities for all LEAs, with an option for half-day kindergarten. USBE anticipates that the number of full-day kindergarten classrooms will continue to grow as more parents take advantage of the opportunity to cultivate a comprehensive foundation for their children’s academic journey.

“We are excited to see this level of demand for full-day kindergarten in Utah. Parents who choose this option are undoubtedly witnessing the advantages of extended learning hours for their children's academic and social growth,” said State Superintendent of Public Instruction Sydnee Dickson.

H.B. 477 is a testament to the state’s dedication to the strength of its educational system and to its future generations. Full-day kindergarten has been one of USBE’s top priorities, as students in full-day kindergarten are less likely to need academic interventions in later grades. Additionally, full-day kindergarten provides an opportunity to identify learning challenges early on. If a student is struggling with a specific skill or concept, a teacher has the time to provide extra support. It takes 15-30 minutes over a short amount of time to close a learning gap in kindergarten, compared to 90 minutes to three hours a day over a long period of time to close a learning gap in third grade. Students enrolled in full-day kindergarten also tend to progress in mathematics and reading at higher rates than their half-day kindergarten peers.

USBE looks forward to measurable achievements as more districts embrace full-day kindergarten. This legislation reflects the state's understanding that the foundation for lifelong success is laid during a student's early years, making the provision of full-day kindergarten options not just a policy, but a promise to the families of Utah, and to Utah’s future.

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