



May 13, 2026

For Immediate Release

Contact: Marie Denson, communications & media relations officer  
385-454-2664 · [marie.denson@schools.utah.gov](mailto:marie.denson@schools.utah.gov)

## **Utah State Board of Education Responds to National Academic Recovery Report**

SALT LAKE CITY, Utah – The Utah State Board of Education acknowledged today new academic recovery data from the Education Scorecard, which examines trends in national student achievement and absenteeism among students in grades 3 through 8 following the COVID-19 pandemic. The report, a collaboration between Harvard, Stanford, and Dartmouth, ranks Utah 32nd out of 38 states in math recovery growth between 2022 and 2025.

The report reflects both the challenges schools continue to face and the meaningful progress educators, students, and families across Utah have made in recent years.

According to the report, Utah students have shown modest improvement in mathematics achievement since 2022, while statewide chronic absenteeism rates have improved significantly, dropping from nearly 30% in 2022 to 23% in 2025. At the same time, the data indicate that student performance in several areas remains below pre-pandemic levels, mirroring trends seen nationally.

“Utah’s educators, school leaders, students, and families have worked hard through one of the most disruptive periods in modern education,” said State Superintendent of Public Instruction Molly Hart. “This report highlights real areas of progress while also reinforcing that academic recovery, especially in core subjects like mathematics, is ongoing work. We remain committed to supporting our

schools as they continue helping students regain momentum.”

The report also highlights variation in recovery rates among districts across the state, underscoring the importance of local leadership, community engagement, effective instructional practices, and strong student support systems. Specifically, the report identifies "Districts on the Rise" within Utah that have utilized professional learning communities to outpace national growth trends. Utah schools and districts have implemented a wide range of strategies to address unfinished learning, improve attendance, strengthen literacy and mathematics instruction, and support student well-being.

Of course, statewide and national reports provide only one snapshot of student recovery and do not fully capture the daily efforts occurring in classrooms throughout the state.

“Behind every data point are educators and students who have shown resilience, adaptability, and determination,” Hart said. “We recognize there is still important work ahead, but we also recognize the dedication and progress taking place in Utah schools every day.”

The pandemic’s impact on education continues to be felt nationwide, and recovery efforts remain a long-term priority. With the expiration of federal pandemic relief funds (ESSER), USBE will continue partnering with LEAs to improve student outcomes, address chronic absenteeism, strengthen evidence-based instruction, and ensure resources are directed where they are needed most.

Utah has continued to invest in educator support, early literacy initiatives, student interventions, and data-informed improvement efforts as part of its broader academic recovery strategy.

USBE reiterates its commitment to transparency and continuous improvement.

“We believe it is important to acknowledge both our progress and our challenges,” Hart said. “Families, educators, policymakers, and communities deserve honest conversations about where students are succeeding and where additional support is needed; this is how we ensure that we are all rowing in the same direction.”

The full Education Scorecard report is [available here](#).

[www.schools.utah.gov](http://www.schools.utah.gov)