

# EDUCATOR JOB SATISFACTION

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Educators from six high teacher-retention Utah schools expressed three major themes that contributed directly to job satisfaction, all of which directly related to the role and actions of administrators.

### Central Davis Junior High School

Davis School District  
Tawna Smith, Principal

### Layton Elementary

Davis School District  
Melissa Pendergast, Principal

### Highland High School

Salt Lake City School District  
Jeremy Chatterton, Principal

### Uintah Elementary

Salt Lake City School District  
Bruce Simpson, Principal

### Viewmont High School

Davis School District  
Travis Lund, Principal

### Youth Educational Support School

Granite School District  
Jason Rosvall, Principal

## THEMES

Satisfied educators consistently attributed their fulfillment to administrators who

### 1. trusted teachers as professionals

### 2. valued teachers' time and

### 3. positively mediated conflict

While these themes manifested as different specific practices from school to school, teachers consistently cited them as direct influences on their level of professional satisfaction.

## IMPLICATIONS

Included in this report are broad discussions of these themes as well as specific examples of how administrators can operationalize them.

While none of the themes or practices in this report will be revolutionary, they are significant. Focus groups revealed that

**teacher satisfaction is less linked to institutional factors like compensation, class size, or curriculum and more linked to attitudes between administrative leadership and faculty.**

Of course, shifting attitudes of administrators and teachers is no easy task, but the practices outlined in this report are low or no-cost, making them applicable to any school.

# ABOUT THIS REPORT

Utah Leading through Effective, Actionable, and Dynamic (ULEAD) Education was created to find, research, and highlight proven practices in Utah schools for replication statewide. ULEAD partners with practitioners, researchers, and education organizations to develop and curate resources, foster collaboration, and drive systemic change for improved student outcomes. The ULEAD Clearinghouse is a growing repository of innovative, effective, and efficient practice resources and tools to support educators.

The ULEAD Steering Committee, composed of current Utah educators and stakeholders, meets quarterly to inform the focus priorities that ULEAD will research. ULEAD uses data to find positive outliers in each focus area and create reports, such as this one, illuminating the practices and policies that resulted in positive data. At the time of this report, these priorities include: Student

Attendance, Educator Retention and Job Satisfaction, Academic Achievement through Strategic Engagement through Technology, and Academic Success through Social Emotional Supports Grounded in Academic Classroom Practice. This report addresses Educator Retention and Job Satisfaction, with a particular emphasis on Teacher Job Satisfaction.

ULEAD collaborates with Institutes of Higher Education and education practitioners to develop Innovative Practice Reports. This report was developed in partnership with the Utah Teacher Fellows as a culminating activity. Fellows worked to identify outliers and complete field research resulting in thematic evidence of influential practices in Utah public education settings.

## UTAH TEACHER FELLOWS

The Utah Teacher Fellowship Program aims to improve the teaching and learning conditions in Utah's public schools and provides educators in the program with a chance to refine their teacher leadership skills.

## PRACTITIONER RESEARCH TEAM

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Interested in creating a practice report, or know of a successful practice that should be shared? Practitioners, researchers, and graduate students are all welcome partners. Contact us to initiate a report or research partnership: [ulead@schools.utah.gov](mailto:ulead@schools.utah.gov)