

Public comment on R277-700

WRITTEN PUBLIC COMMENTS RECEIVED AS OF OCTOBER 11, 2017

From: Mandi Martersteck [mailto:mandimo13@msn.com]
Sent: Monday, September 25, 2017 9:06 AM
To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: Middle School Requirements

To Whom it May Concern,

Please DO NOT take away the REQUIREMENT that children have the arts, health, and PE in their school curriculum. ESPECIALLY the arts but I feel strongly that each of these elements of childhood education are vital parts of a child's development mentally, emotionally, and physically and that they have a rightful place in public education. They are essential pieces of a developing person as a whole. Children should be exposed to the things that their circumstances might otherwise not allow (i.e. family life, income, and other issues) at this vital age of middle school when they are starting to discover their talents, passions, and capacities. The experiences that come from participating in the arts, health, and PE at this age are ALL catalysts to developing a well rounded, capable, emotionally strong, independent young adult. Isn't that EXACTLY what we are trying to do? ...To educate our children in a way so that they will be ready to take on real life and have it be a fulfilling one as well? This requires diversity, challenges, and opportunities. I FIRMLY believe taking away these elements in their required courses at school is a huge mistake and will be hindrersome to our children.

Sincerely,
Mandi Martersteck

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-----Original Message-----

From: Gina Knowles [<mailto:ginaknowles@hotmail.com>]

Sent: Wednesday, August 9, 2017 4:21 PM

To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: 7th and 8th grade optional courses

Making physical education and health optional in 7th and 8th grade to allow kids more elective options is ridiculous! I have a hard time understanding why you would do this when so many more students are obese and not physically active. Also, health covers topics relating to puberty that are much needed in these two grades. Having the arts optional in older grades is ok, but it is a good idea for them to at least have an introduction. They may find a talent they didn't know they had.

I have a hard time with these subjects being optional when one of the elective options they can choose is being an office or teacher's aid- basically an errand runner. How is that good enough to replace p.e., health, and the arts? This is not a wise decision. These courses are part of a well rounded education! As students get older, they have more choices in their learning. They do not need a large amount in 7th and 8th grade.

Gina Knowles

From: Wendell W. Ashby [mailto:AshbyWW@ldschurch.org]

Sent: Thursday, August 10, 2017 8:51 AM

To: Board of Education <board@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: Thank you for your returning more local control

Dear Board Members,

It is interesting that the media has put a negative spin on your recent vote to give districts and parents more control over their districts requirements (i.e. over health, physical education, etc).

As a professionally educated physical educator and as a family, we would like to thank you for your returning this decision the more local level of the districts and parents. THANK YOU!

Thank you,
Wendell W. Ashby
801-875-9111

From: Jeff and Pam Budge [mailto:JPBUDGE@msn.com]

Sent: Thursday, August 10, 2017 9:43 AM

To: Board of Education <board@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: Support for Rule R277-700

State School Board Members,

I wanted to thank you for voting as a Board to allow local districts and local schools the flexibility to decide their required classes for middle school students. I understand the vote was not unanimous, but I wanted to share why I strongly support this decision. I believe that local decisions are best because they are closest to the students. I feel that this gives me, as a parent, more opportunity to be part of these decisions.

Thank you again. I think we will see positive things from this change.

Sincerely,
Pamela Budge

From: Denise [mailto:denise@thecarmans.org]
Sent: Thursday, August 10, 2017 2:14 PM
To: Board of Education <board@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: Thank you for your vote on middle school electives

Utah State School Board members,

Thank you for your recent vote regarding middle school electives. What a great idea – to ask school districts to continue to offer elective courses, but to allow those districts, and the parents who send their children to the district schools, to decide which courses will be required of students. This is a great step in favor of parents making educational decisions for their own children.

Warm regards,

Denise Carman
Highland UT resident

From: Shellie G [mailto:pacificbeaches14@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, August 10, 2017 3:28 PM
To: Board of Education <board@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: Vote

Dear Board Members,

I want to thank you for the vote that puts education decisions back to the local level. We often hear talk about local control, yet we seem to be far from that.

All of my children differ in interests and capabilities and I appreciate the opportunity to make decisions for my children regarding their education. It has often been frustrating to meet with school counselors and be told that we, as parents and students, cannot choose the path but must take the one dictated by those who don't know my children.

Again, thank you for standing strong for what is in the best interest of students.

Shellie Giddings

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Shellie Giddings
LCI Certified Life & Business Coach
Certified Self-Talk Trainer
Change your programs. Change your life.

From: Oak Norton [mailto:oak@oaknorton.com]
Sent: Thursday, August 10, 2017 9:40 PM
To: Board of Education <board@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: I support your new policy

Members of the State School Board,

I just wanted to write in support of the policy change you enacted last week releasing middle schools from certain core requirements and I strongly encourage you to continue this trend of giving more control and flexibility to local districts where they can better meet the needs of local students. Please continue to build upon this move.

I would even encourage you to let districts set their own standards with only minimal benchmarks from the state. Particularly (and perhaps initially) charter schools. They were created to do something unique that wasn't being met by other district schools but they are stymied in this by being forced into the same mold district schools are in. Release them and if they sink or swim it will be because they either meet the needs of a segment of the population or they don't. Parents will either go to them or not, but it will be based on doing something truly unique. Freedom breeds innovation and education is in Clayton Christensen's "disruption" mode. Lets keep the disruptions local so they can be put to their best creative use, and not imposed on schools from above.

Sincerely,

Oak Norton

From: Melissa Butler [mailto:melissarncanyon@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, August 10, 2017 10:22 PM
To: Board of Education <board@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: Thank-you for voting for more choice and options!

I am a mother to 3 children, two of whom are currently in the public education system. (My youngest is not because she is 2 years old.) I want to thank-you for voting to make gym, art, and music classes optional in middle schools. I have seen with my 3 children that they are each different with their own unique interests, talents, and needs. I applaud anything that puts more freedom and choice at a local and parental level in education. Thank-you for allowing our family the option of choosing the classes we feel are best for each of our individual children.

-Melissa Butler

From: stampinjaime@yahoo.com [mailto:stampinjaime@yahoo.com]

Sent: Thursday, August 10, 2017 10:41 PM

To: Board of Education <board@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: thank you

I wanted to thank members of the board who voted on making some changes to how the required classes work for middle school. I think anytime that you can allow parents and local districts the ability to be more proactive in the education of their children, you will see great improvements. Thank you for having faith that we are capable of making those decisions closer to home. Thank you for your service.

Jaime Munns

Sent from Windows Mail

From: singyourwayhome@comcast.net [mailto:singyourwayhome@comcast.net]

Sent: Thursday, August 10, 2017 11:57 PM

To: Board of Education <board@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: PE and arts vote

Dear members of the State Board of Education,

Thank you for the vote to back off the state requirements and to free districts to make more of their own, local, decisions. I know that not everyone on the board sees eye to eye on this, but wanted to share my perspective.

I grew up in Utah in what many would call a "disadvantaged" situation. We were a very low-income family; I remember my dad saying that he'd make more money on Welfare than running the farm. \$12,000 per year was a low salary even in the late 80's. But we were rich in other ways, especially in the education we acquired.

We learned to exercise our bodies, and gained a very valuable work ethic to boot; a short day for my dad was 12 hours; during hay harvest he'd work 24 or 30 hours straight. We spent many hours alongside him fixing barb wire fences, hauling sprinkler pipe, feeding cows, and chasing sheep back into the pasture. When I was at college a couple years later, I could out-hike most anybody.

We learned to place a high value on the arts; we sang every day as a family, sang in community and church choirs, and found ways to barter for music lessons. Piano lessons were paid for in various ways: homemade batches of granola and whole-wheat bread were things I remember my mom bringing in trade. My babysitting hours paid for my younger sister's lessons. And I pulled weeds and did housework for a former member of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, in exchange for voice lessons.

Years later, with a degree in Elementary Education, I look back at what I learned in our poverty as something of the most value. I didn't become physically fit because of state standards. I didn't have music fill my soul because of mandates. And none of these came about because of the resources pulled from others statewide.

Thank you for recognizing that the most meaningful and customized education comes from levels more local than the state level.

Sincerely,

Rhonda Hair
South Jordan

From: Christel S [mailto:212christel@gmail.com]
Sent: Friday, August 11, 2017 11:45 AM
To: Board of Education <board@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: Thank you

Dear Board,

As a level 2 licensed Utah Educator and as a parent, I'm writing to thank you for your decision to let local control take place. It just makes sense to leave decisions about which classes will be offered, to administration and parents and teachers in each locality.

Thank you.

Christel Swasey
Pleasant Grove

From: Sheryl Nelson [mailto:sheryl2939@gmail.com]
Sent: Friday, August 11, 2017 4:03 PM
To: Board of Education <board@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: More Local School Choice

As a parent and grandparent in Utah, I was pleased to hear the Board is considering more local choice for Middle School students. What a great step for the freedom in our country that we give so much lip service to. Keep up the good work!

Sheryl Nelson
Heber, Utah

From: Sheryl Nelson [mailto:sheryl2939@gmail.com]
Sent: Friday, August 11, 2017 5:10 PM
To: Carol Lear Law <carol.lear@learlaw.com>; Board of Education <board@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: RE: More Local School Choice

I can see your concern but see this frame of reference as akin to dumbing everyone down to the lowest possible denominator.

On Aug 11, 2017 4:08 PM, "Carol B. Lear" <carol.lear@learlaw.com> wrote:

Sheryl—

I also want more school choice—for ALL children. The Board's decision will actually limit school choice for poorer children and less sophisticated parents. Gradually, these "optional" classes will be dropped. Smaller school districts and charter schools (remember, charter schools must have all of these offerings too) will not be able to afford specialized teachers and classes with only 5 or so students. Do we really want school choice only for those who can afford it? I know that I want it for all children—more counselors per school would also make choice meaningful and a reality for children whose parents may not be as informed or in families where there is a single parent.

Carol Lear
District 7

From: Sheryl Nelson [mailto:sheryl2939@gmail.com]
Sent: Friday, August 11, 2017 4:03 PM
To: Board@schools.utah.gov
Subject: More Local School Choice

As a parent and grandparent in Utah, I was pleased to hear the Board is considering more local choice for Middle School students. What a great step for the freedom in our country that we give so much lip service to. Keep up the good work!

Sheryl Nelson
Heber, Utah

From: wenwily1 . [mailto:wendi.shipley@gmail.com]
Sent: Friday, August 11, 2017 5:23 PM
To: Board of Education <board@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: Fwd: Thankyou for your vote!

----- Forwarded message -----
From: **wendi.shipley** <wendi.shipley@gmail.com>
Date: Thursday, August 10, 2017
Subject: Thankyou for your vote!
To: Board.schools@utah.gov

Dear Utah School Board members and staff,

I am writing to thank you for putting the power back to the local school districts to decide what courses outside of core academics they want to offer middle school students!

Hallelujah! Now parents and schools can work together to create course offerings they feel would benefit their communities!

Thankyou for being forward thinkers and helping to SAVE public schools by letting communities have more control!

Schools and school districts will be able to entice more students to attend their schools rather than charters or private schools, being able to now, really expand their horizons!

Sincerely,
W Shipley
West Jordan
Mother of 5 amazing humans

Sent from my T-Mobile 4G LTE Device

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~Wendi

From: kristine wagner [mailto:kristinewagner28@gmail.com]

Sent: Friday, August 11, 2017 9:42 PM

To: Board of Education <board@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: Letting local school boards and parents decide classes for middle school students

----- Forwarded message -----

To Whom it May Concern:

Thank you for voting in favor of freedom. Parents know what is best for their children and should be the ones making those decisions. The question is not, "what is best for the children?" Instead, it is, "who decides what is best?"

Thank you,
Kristine Wagner

From: Ashley Anderson <ashley.michelle.anderson@gmail.com>

Sent: Friday, August 11, 2017 4:43:50 PM

To: Dickson, Sydnee

Subject: Board Vote to Eliminate Health, Arts, PE, Careers.

Dear Superintendent Dickson,

I am writing as a parent and arts specialist to express my extreme dissatisfaction with the recent board vote to remove physical education, health, arts, and college/career readiness as core curricular requirements for Utah students.

I support the viewpoint of my Board Representative, Carol Lear, who suggested in the meeting that the USBE's continual valuing of "choice" should include valuing student choice to access opportunities across this wide range of curricular areas.

I think that eliminating arts, PE, and career education will disproportionately impact low-income and rural students who lack extracurricular access to these offerings. However, it's the removal of health that I find most unequivocally troubling. While many Utah parents believe we can educate our own children (particularly about sex) the high rates of suicide in Utah's secondary schools alone provide evidence that comprehensive health education is an absolute necessity. Even our most conservative representatives, like Orrin Hatch, know that Utahns believe suicide prevention is of extreme importance. It's imperative that the USBE recognize that a reduction in health classes will not only impact issues related to sex ed (i.e. STDs, teen pregnancy) as may be believed, but that it would also eliminate boundary education which addresses high rates of sexual abuse among this age group as well as other mental health issues including depression, anxiety, and disordered eating.

While it's up to school districts to further manage this decision, it is unacceptable for the USBE to make such a broad decision on such an expedited timeline. As a parent with children in PreK-6, I was not even aware of this policy change until after it was made, despite the fact that it will impact my children and family for the six academic years our kids are in middle school.

I have the sincerest hope that board revisits this decision which is sure to be remembered as hasty, shortsighted, and unpopular. In the meantime, I additionally hope that the USBE offers more legitimate solutions to address the teacher shortage which has perhaps led us to this point.

Thank you,

Ashley Anderson
801 842 5525
365 Center St. SLC, UT 84103

From: Dickson, Sydnee
Sent: Monday, August 14, 2017 10:16 PM
To: Robert Anderson <rande1172@aol.com>; Riebe, Kathleen <Kathleen.Riebe@schools.utah.gov>
Cc: Stallings, Angie <Angie.Stallings@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: Re: Disappointment in middle school curriculum

Meg,

Thank you for including me in your email and for reaching out to Board Member Riebe. We are collecting emails such as yours and compiling them for the entire Board. I understand that the Canyons parents who reached out to the Board are not representative of the entire Canyons Dist. Community. The Board vote was 8/7, which is likely representative of the Draper Middle School community as well. The conversation about local choice vs. what is equitable for all students, will continue to be an important and challenging conversation. We appreciate you being willing to take the time to be engaged.

With appreciation,
Sydnee Dickson

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From: Robert Anderson <rande1172@aol.com>
Sent: Monday, August 14, 2017 4:50:41 PM
To: Riebe, Kathleen
Cc: Dickson, Sydnee
Subject: Disappointment in middle school curriculum

Dear Ms. Riebe,

My name is Meg Anderson and I'm a resident in the Canyons School District boundaries. I was also a PE teacher in K-12 schools in the 70s and 80s.

I think it is a mistake to eliminate health, PE, arts, and career education from middle school curriculum. Parents who want more "local control" should not deny children of all backgrounds the ability to have a good and comprehensive education. Many do not have the choice to participate in sports or arts classes after school and none should lose health education when Utah has very high rates of sexual abuse and suicide among teens.

I do not support the recent USBE decision and will also be writing to my Canyons District representative. I have cc'd the Superintendent on this message so she can see that residents of Canyons are also not uniformly in favor of this decision.

Sincerely,

Meg Anderson

458 E. 8800 S. Sandy, UT 84070
801 561 9807

From: WENDY HART [mailto:wendyhart@alpinedistrict.org]
Sent: Tuesday, August 15, 2017 12:47 AM
To: Board of Education <board@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: Board Policy Removing Mandated Courses in Jr High

Dear State Board Members,

I just want to thank you for supporting increased local control last week in allowing us, as locally-elected school board members, to set the requirements for elective courses such as Band, PE, and CTE. Thank you for having the confidence in us, and the parents we represent, to be allowed the flexibility to legally make exceptions for students who don't fit the mold, who might have reasons for not needing PE, Health, CTE and so forth.

The biggest problem I see in education is we are trending toward more centralized control and more standardization. While we all acknowledge the individuality and uniqueness of every child, too often in a large system, such as ours, that individuality can be shut out and lost as we try to mandate all things to all people. And yet, the best answers are always those that allow more freedom for the individual to make the decisions that most directly impact himself or herself. In this case, that means the parents and those elected, most directly, to represent them.

For those of you who disagreed with the decision, I hope you will give us a chance, at the local level, to prove that we are worthy of the trust of our communities. I fear that our schools are becoming too aligned with testing and results and pushing for workforce skills and missing out on the wide variety of educational opportunities. So, be assured, that I will be on the front lines of making sure that we continue to offer a full complement of classes to meet our individual students' needs.

I hope going forward you will be inclined to look at the high school requirements, in a similar vein.

Additionally, it would be fantastic if you allowed districts to choose to adopt a non-integrated math option and to go with the traditional sequence of Algebra 1, Geometry, Algebra 2, pre-Calculus and then Calculus. An additional track that would allow for Algebra 1 to start in 8th grade like it used to be before we adopted the Common Core standards for math in 2010 would be fantastic. It would allow the average student to take Calculus as a senior without having to cram 4 years' worth of high-level math into 3 years. (I have heard that the concern is SAGE testing, and I'd be happy to address why that shouldn't be a big issue at all.) Personally, I would combine Intermediate 1 and 2 and pick the most important topics from both (the majority of Int 2 is of greater importance than Int 1, despite that the CC standards in the Appendix stated that you could start Algebra 1 in 8th grade after completing their 7th grade sequence. They are incorrect.) Even better, just restore the pre-Algebra standards from 2007. Of course, in my world of worlds, the 2007 math standards would be adopted in place of what

we currently have, but I digress onto my favorite topic. ;-)

Sorry for the length of my email. I am just so thrilled to finally see just a bit of control returned to our local boards and parents! This is something that people have wanted since I ran for the first time in 2010. When you knock on people's doors and talk to them, their concerns always center around what isn't working for their individual child. We need to allow greater flexibility just like this going forward.

Sincerely,

Wendy Hart

Mother of 3

Alpine School Board Member for Alpine, Cedar Hills and Highland

From: ammisco@comcast.net <ammisco@comcast.net>

Sent: Tuesday, August 15, 2017 8:56 PM

To: Austin, Lorraine

Subject: sorry I pushed send , please forward this one

Dear Utah State Board Members;

I am writing to you about your recent decision to change the middle school requirements, and no longer require fine arts, health or PE. As a parent and a teacher, I am incredibly concerned about this decision. I have heard the arguments, and it seems that this decision came about to make scheduling and/or staffing easier for Canyons School District and charter schools. I work in the Salt Lake City School District as a music teacher. I have seen countless students become amazing musicians by being "forced" to take a fine arts credit. They never would have known that they would be interested, let alone talented, if they hadn't had exposure in the first place. I am quite sure our teachers who teach art, theater and PE would day the same thing.

Middle school is the most important time in a child's life, as far as shaping who they will become in high school and beyond. If they do not begin music soon enough, they will find it incredibly hard to be a beginner in high school while other have played for years. They may never discover they have a wonderful voice, or an acting talent, or an amazing ability to draw or paint. That is the saddest thing I could ever imagine for any child. To never know. To never be offered the chance to try. As you know, if never forced to try many things, kids that age may just opt out and never even try.

My own children have art, music, choir and orchestra, as well as language and PE.

My daughter, who never really liked PE very much, found out that she loved volleyball this year and even joined a team! I was so glad she tried and enjoyed it, because I never did that in school.

I also do not understand why you would even consider eliminating health class. I can only imagine how many parents do not discuss healthy habits, healthy lifestyle, obesity, smoking, drugs, and mental health with their children. In middle school, I know that our students often rely on the health teacher when they need help. She can get them to open up about depression, drug use and other things that you know impact many of our young people. It is irresponsible to believe that students just get this information at home. I know I didn't get reliable information, and my health class was very important to me growing up.

Middle school is a time to educate the whole child. They need to know where their strengths lie, as well as how to be physically and emotionally healthy.. They will carry that knowledge with them into high school, and will help to shape the adults they will become. It is a true dis-service to our children and parents of Utah to allow schools to eliminate these important requirements. Already today, I was told that the Salt Lake Science charter school is no longer offering choir, even though they had a wonderful program with many students involved. A student from this school was asking about where she could sing in a choir since she can no longer do so at her school.

Please listen to the parents and teachers and students who support these important programs. If you leave the door open for schools to eliminate them, many will do so just to make scheduling or staffing easier. Is easier what is best for children? Is convenient what is best for children? We need to remember that children need to have opportunities to be more than they know they can be. To become the best version of themselves. I do not expect my students to all become a musician for a living, but I expect they will live as a musician in some sense. I know that my own children will have art in their lives, and physical education, and music and health and languages, and they will be better people for all of that. Every child deserves the same, don't you think?

Thank you for your time, and I hope that you may consider this decision and the impact it may have on the children of Utah.

Sincerely,

Michelle Misco

From: Ryan Rocque [mailto:rkmrocque@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, August 17, 2017 2:14 PM
To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: Great change

Dear members of the board,

I have been a teacher for 12 years. My eldest daughter just enrolled for 7th grade this year. I am a French teacher.

There are of course pros and cons to the recent vote, eliminating classes that have been required, in favor of allowing more parental choice.

Choice is always great. As a parent, I was frustrated that my daughter, who does dance all year, still has to take P.E. That doesn't make sense. Even though, I know that she will be getting some good learning in P.E., it shouldn't be required. Now that being said, every student should be involved in some type of physical activity all year long, especially from 7th-12th, because we don't want children to learn patterns that lead to obesity, an epidemic in America.

As a teacher, I'm frustrated that in some schools art is required, but it's not in others. If my student doesn't like art, then why force them to draw. Let them be a coder or a musician, or something else. Again, I would say that every student is benefited from doing something right brain sometime, or at least by exploring that option during junior high. But, parents and students should be able to choose.

Finally, as an elective teacher, I appreciate the politics of core vs. non-core. Honestly, I think that we shouldn't put value on any subject matter by labeling it one way or another, but of course, that is way too radical for this state or any state. However, by keeping just the 4 core classes, it does help elective teachers, like me, be able to have strong programs. Now, all those kids that didn't want to be in P.E. or didn't want to take art, etc. can take French, or choir, or whatever they choose. I think that's good. Why should they be forced to do something they feel can be learned elsewhere. Parents and students should be able to determine the value of a subject, not the schools.

It goes back to the parent thing again. Every one of my kids is different. Every student is different. I think we do families a disservice when we eliminate choice. Families will be able to more carefully adapt the education their children need and require to each individual with this move, and that is important. Will every teacher impacted now start to say, "Hey, but my subject matters and so on"? Yes, but every subject can say that. It's not for the teacher to decide. It's the family. It's not even the society. It's the family. If a family wants complete freedom, they can home school. Utah embraces that idea.

One final idea here. I think this will open up a host of new and innovative electives that students will be able to gravitate towards. There are jobs that keep going to overseas markets, because we don't have students prepared to do them in America. We have so many options now, when we open up the electives.

I support the vote and hope it stays in force. Thanks for all you board members are doing. Keep it up.

Sincerely,

Ryan Rocque

From: HAYLIE MILLER [mailto:millerha5@wsdstudent.net]

Sent: Thursday, August 17, 2017 11:24 AM

To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: Why I believe we should have Art, P.E., and Health classes

Hello there. My name is Haylie Miller and I attend Wahlquist Jr. High. My aunt works at Copper Hills High School and has had me compose this E Mail telling you what Art, Health, and P.E. mean to me.

For one, I believe that art is a huge help for when I go to my classes. For the actual drawing and creating art classes, I always feel like it helps me with focus. It is a little reliever for me before I go to my other classes. It gives us a chance to be creative and express what we feel. It also helps with hand, eye and brain coordination; and we still use math in it. I also feel like it gives you a chance to relax a little and be social in a class. For example: One of my friends was never really talkative or social; he was just a little awkward. However, he is one of the smartest students I've met! Once he has started his art classes he started to talk more and be a part of the conversations. He has a lot of friends now too. All of this came from that class, which I thought was amazing! He went from this little shy guy that I knew to a really funny and smart, outgoing person.

Another thing relating to arts is the performing arts [Choir, Drama, Band, etc.]. I know so many people who have had those classes and ended up coming out with better attitudes and more self confidence. Take Drama for example. If you really don't feel comfortable doing public speaking or doing a presentation from stage fright, Drama has several warm-ups and class objectives that helps. I used to think that I was never all that shy, but after taking Drama class, I've noticed that I am definitely a whole lot different. Especially with presentations and talks. I used to have such bad stomach butterflies and I would feel scared until it was over, but now I don't have that problem as much anymore. I have also started putting more expression into how I talked.

I know so many kids that seriously live off of some of these classes. Especially if they don't have a stable family. Many of those students have a harder time focusing and getting through the day with a smile. I find that many of them only come to school because of the teachers and classes at the schools. Both my aunt who is a gym teacher, and my mom who is an attendance secretary, know this. They hear these stories and can only imagine what is happening. That is why art is such a great thing to have. I've seen so many students personally gain more and more confidence every day! It is awesome to see.

Now onto the P.E. and Health classes. I understand it isn't many students' s or one of my favorite classes, but I see why it is a necessary class for our schools to have. P.E. is a great way just to get moving and not just sit in a chair all day long. Many of us students get impatient and start to become wiggle-worms. We need the exercise and the chance to move. Plus the fact that our obesity percentage has moved up in the U.S., we need to be taught how to keep our body in shape. P.E. keeps us fit and we need that. Especially since our hormones are still trying to figure out what is going on. It is really easy for us, teenagers, to gain and lose weight. Now is the one of the best times to make it a habit.

As for health, we NEED that class. It isn't all just sex-ed. Now that we are in Jr. High we are still trying to figure out what we are in the world. Like I said earlier, our hormones are kind of wacky at our age. Too many students, not just at my school, but at other schools, are suffering with depression. As that is a mental illness that our generation is struggling with, we need to know how to keep it under control. There are ways of preventing it, and being depressed does cause many health issues. Also, not every student has the, 'Safe UT' app on their phone. I don't even have it due to storage space. Even if they did have the app and were having suicidal thoughts, many of them won't think twice about the app. They most likely won't use it. After our school assembly where they had the students download the app, I guarantee that most of the students didn't download. Even if they did, when I got back to class, you heard people saying that they were deleting the app. This is why taking this class can hopefully save so many lives.

Not only do we need to know that, but we also need to understand why we need to stay fit and why it's important to exercise and all the science behind it. We need to understand what we eat or don't eat. We also need to make sure we are making healthy decisions and we need to know what the dangers of drugs are.

I know far too many students who come to school just for some of these. We need these classes to help us out. Sure, we may not be thankful for a few of the health and P.E. classes now, but we will in time. These were a few of my thoughts as to why these classes are and can be essential.

I hope these words from an actual Jr. High school student will help you out on why we should have these classes. I will also be the first to tell you that there are several other students who adore these classes. Also, Matt Damon even says that if it weren't for those classes and teachers, he would not have been able to make it to where he is today. Thank you for reading this. I hope that what I have been able to say will help you decide if we can keep these classes as a part of our education core. 😊



--

Haylie Miller

"Ask Of God, Not Google."

-Al Carraway

From: E Dransfield [<mailto:elained12345@hotmail.com>]

Sent: Thursday, August 17, 2017 2:59 PM

To: Austin, Lorraine <lorraine.austin@schools.utah.gov>

Cc: jef.cress.nielsen@gmail.com

Subject: Change in Middle School curriculum

Please pass on to members of the board that it is totally unacceptable that arts, health, physical education have been removed from the core curriculum of middle schools. Art has been PROVEN to affect the brain to help it to function to it's fullest capacity. Students will not have the 'choice' of taking orchestra or art or any other class which might be offered if it is not in the classes being offered! They already have difficulty signing up for one of these as their class schedule is so rigid.

Are funds being withheld from school districts as the 'freedom to choose given to local school districts...choice for students more than choice for parents.' I have no problem with students choosing, school is for them after all, but parents are paying the taxes (mine continue to rise year after year with what I feel is very power representation) and should have a clear voice in these curriculum options.

Let's get back to actually running schools where actual learning takes place and remove the need for teachers to 'teach for the end of school testing' rather than actually teaching. This also allows teachers to actually teach as well as given them the ability to be involved in the lives of their children to catch and help with advocacy for children who need it.

Elaine Dransfield
Nibley, UT

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

Sent from my T-Mobile 4G LTE Device

----- Original message -----

From: ROBERT ELIZABETH STEELE <steele8114@msn.com>

Date: 8/24/17 3:19 PM (GMT-07:00)

To: carol.lear@learlaw.com

Subject: New policies on education

I am troubled by the districts plan to reduce health education, p.e., art and music in the schools. This seems like a huge step backwards. Eliminating these subjects is so contrary to child centered policy. With the suicide rate so high in Utah and childhood obesity being a current national problem, how does this make sense? Eliminating arts from schools is criminal. It has been proven that music and art improve a childs ability to learn and create. Shame on the district. This makes the arts something available to wealthier families only. How can any of this possibly be good policy for educating our children? As a mother and future grandmother I am appalled. Please reconsider!

Sincerely,
Liz Draper Steele
2304 Stringham Avenue
SLC Utah 84109

Sent from my T-Mobile 4G LTE Device

From: Amy Young [<mailto:amyyoung@dmail.net>]
Sent: Wednesday, September 6, 2017 9:33 AM
To: Austin, Lorraine <lorraine.austin@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: Removing State Requirements for Arts in Education

Please send this email on to every board member:

I wanted to send an email regarding the school board's recent decision to remove the arts, PE, and Health from the middle school requirements. It was extremely disappointing to read this news, and very disheartening as an educator to hear about this decision one week before school was to begin.

I'm sure you understand how this decision would affect hundreds of Utah students, parents, and educators so I do hope it was not taken lightly.

I have watched how these required classes have put so many students into a classroom setting that they normally would not have selected, and can tell you that they literally save and change lives! This is not an understatement. The arts give students an opportunity to discover hidden talents, self-worth, how to work affectively in group settings, and teach them how to empower themselves by setting and achieving goals. T

I feel fortunate to live and teach in the Davis School District - a district that has always supported the arts. But what about the students who aren't so lucky? What about the smaller districts who are fighting for funding and support every year? You are the Utah school board! What you determine to be required and not required affects the education of all Utah students. By not requiring the arts, PE, and health be taken in middle school sends a distinct message to Utah schools and communities. It is too late in a student's education to not require these classes until high school. You know how important education is to our youth, and the younger they are exposed the better. STEM is important but does not reach all Utah students. Scientists over and over again have stated that arts in education cannot be dismissed. Creativity and curiosity fuel the sciences and are taught within the arts.

I implore you to reconsider this decision with the board. I ask you to ask yourself once again how the education system in Utah can more effectively change lives and our future world. Humanity is needed now more than ever, and that is what the arts teach.

Amy Young
Syracuse Jr. High Choral Director

“A school without a choir is like a body without a soul.” – John Rutter

From: Hansen, Linda

Sent: Sunday, September 10, 2017 10:42 AM

To: Stallings, Angie <Angie.Stallings@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: Fwd: PE, health, arts no longer middle school core requirements

Input for your collection.

Linda Hansen

Begin forwarded message:

From: Kacee Weaver <kaceeb19@gmail.com>

Date: September 10, 2017 at 8:55:22 AM MDT

To: brittney.cummins@schools.utah.gov, carol.lear@learlaw.com,
linda.hansen@schools.utah.gov, jennifer.graviet@schools.utah.gov

Subject: PE, health, arts no longer middle school core requirements

Dear USBE board members,

In regards to the article <http://www.deseretnews.com/article/865686321/PE-health-arts-no-longer-middle-school-core-requirements.html>

Please explain the budgetary cuts that will happen due to this "freedom of choice" for LEAs. Will these programs continue to be funded by the state?

85% of the jobs that will be present in 2030 have yet to be invented. Where will we end up if students are not introduced to pe, health, arts, music and CCA courses?!

My son's greatest learning experience was in 7th grade was when he went to the OWATC with his CCA class and learned about welding. He now understands *why* the math and science content is so important and is now invested in learning so he can become a welder.

Please help me understand why all of the educational research about whole brain learning, 21st century skills, Executive functions, and more aren't being considered.

Was parental and teacher input requested prior to this board decision? What are your long term goals for the students of Utah? Where do you see us in 15 years?

Thank you for your time in answering my questions. As a concerned parent and teacher I am outraged by this decision.

Thank you,

Kacee Weaver, M.Ed.

From: Steven Kiefer [mailto:smk10_6@yahoo.com]
Sent: Saturday, September 16, 2017 11:31 AM
To: Austin, Lorraine <lorraine.austin@schools.utah.gov>
Cc: Peterson, Mark <Mark.Peterson@schools.utah.gov>; Wheeler, Emilie <Emilie.Wheeler@schools.utah.gov>; staff@utahculturalalliance.org
Subject: Arts, PE and Health Credit Requirements

Board Members of the Utah Board of Education,

Your recent decision to eliminate art, health and P.E. as required curriculum for junior high students prompts me to write this letter.

I am the Executive Director of an Artist in Residence and K-12 outreach program in central Utah. I also have educator credentials in several jurisdictions, in the U.S. and abroad, and have been hired as a consultant to many Prefectural/State Boards of Education to provide pedagogical direction, teacher training, policy development and meta-evaluations of teacher and student assessments. In short, I believe I'm qualified to respond to your decision.

I can only imagine the reasoning behind the policy revision (and the reasoning behind not having a public dialogue before making the decision), although I cannot agree or empathize. You may think that removing those three subjects as credit requirements provide students and teachers room to focus on STEM, LA and core subject matter, and theoretically may give more time for test preparation. I can also understand that our State's schools' performance is under scrutiny and current methods of evaluation are problematic in their ability to accurately attest to the readiness of our students for college entrance and/or employment. Additionally, SAGE is not pegged to any standardized testing for college admission, and only measures "proficiency," in terms that are highly subjective. On its face, this new policy certainly appears to free up resources to aid in refining testing and improve students test scores in basic subjects, but in reality this policy would bring about catastrophic consequences to the students test scores, their ability to compete nationally and globally with schools that retain arts, health and PE as requirements, would drastically impede their individual development, put us farther from those measurements that enable us to determine whether Utah's students are truly college ready (and motivated to attend) and ultimately be detrimental to them and society. Here is why:

1. Student interest in these subjects would diminish and enrollment in those areas would decrease. This would, in turn, reduce the opportunity for exposure to these critical subjects, and when they took these subjects in high school (if they were still required to do so), they would be unfamiliar with basic concepts, practices and methods that students in other states who would have a jump start...of up to three years!

Ultimately, student readiness for high school and college would diminish.

2. Studies show that involvement in the arts and PE has a direct positive influence on academic foundations and performance. Reducing the exposure to the arts and PE would result in poorer testing scores.

3. Removing health as a required subject would also negatively impact readiness for high school and college level courses in health related course, but the biggest issue may be that students may not have opportunity to gain critical knowledge at a point in their lives when their bodies are developing. The end result may be more than mere deficiency in academic readiness...it may negatively impact their health, increase teen pregnancy and even increase the chance of contracting illnesses.

Our organization is working hard to prepare supplemental K-12 art programs to assist our nine school districts to replace that which has already been lost from various budget cuts and policy. Currently in our part of the state, we already are experiencing critically low exposure to the arts. In fact, there is on average only 1 art teacher for every 1050 students...but at least these students *are* all getting *some* exposure to the arts, even if the teacher has to serve two or three buildings and all grade levels. This new policy change may mean a better teacher/student ratio in arts, as it will likely remove the mandate to provide classes, if there is not a teacher for the junior high. The policy, would also have the additional result of removing incentives to take art even if a teacher was made available to the students. This would put them further behind their counterparts in other States. Our mission would have to expand...thus this policy change would just push the burden elsewhere.

We believe that the evidence is clear:

- arts increases IQ development...(there is an average of 12 points difference between those with regular exposure as opposed to those with little or no exposure)
- arts increases academic performance, and actually aids in, and improves retention of other subjects
- arts increase self-awareness, higher EQ, improved social skills, greater involvement in the community, less delinquency, less truancy and less criminal behavior.
- Higher capacity to adapt to new environments, people and situations, such as college, military or career life.
- Physical Education keeps us healthy, encourages teamwork, cooperation, loyalty, sportsmanship and leadership.
- Health education keeps us aware of our bodies, physiological needs, but also is a direct lead-in to biology, chemistry, medicine, pharmaceutical, energy production, automotive industry, medical devices, architecture and other subjects and careers, including those in STEM areas.

Removing these subjects as required courses, also removes the incentives to learn these subjects, will decrease the numbers taking them, will put our students at an academic disadvantage, and will ultimately damage future prospects for many.

We urge you to reconsider the removal of these subjects as required credit subjects, and instead investigate the effectiveness of their delivery.

Respectfully,

Steven Kiefer, Musinia Art Center

From: amber louder [mailto:blackburn.amber3@gmail.com]

Sent: Monday, September 18, 2017 3:23 PM

To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: R277-700

Please at least wait until the pilot program has ended before making a decision either way. It is hard to swallow that the people over education in Utah would make an uneducated ruling.

Thank you,

Amber Louder

From: Marty Davis [mailto:marty.davis@nebo.edu]

Sent: Monday, September 18, 2017 3:34 PM

To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: In regards to: Administrative Rule R277-700 The Elementary and Secondary School General Core

Dear Utah Board of Education,

When my son went into 8th grade he had absolutely no music background whatsoever. He was an average student with his main interest being video games and Magic the Gathering. He enrolled in a music class (playing viola) and absolutely fell in love with music. 4 years later, this young man has participated in orchestra, band, Nebo Philharmonic Symphony, All State Band and Drum Corps International. He has learned to play (not yet mastered) viola, violin, trombone (slide & valves), tuba, Marimba and the symbols. Alex's mastery of his main instrument, baritone/euphonium has earned him a full tuition college scholarship. His long term goal is to become a music educator.

Without a music requirement in Jr. High, my son may never have discovered his love of music. He would have taken the easiest classes possible and put forth the minimum amount of effort in order to eliminate his need to do homework. Because of that music requirement, Alex is now a dedicated musician who uses his free time to practice his instrument.

When young teenagers begin Junior high, they may not have enough experience in arts, music, PE, health, college and career awareness, digital literacy and world languages to know where their interests may lie. Requirements in those areas give the students the opportunity to experience new subjects. There is more to life than English, math, science and history. There are a multitude of careers they could aspire to, if they only had the chance to experience them.

Please don't eliminate these requirements. Our job as educators is to help our students explore the world, find their talents or interests and then succeed (and sometimes fail) to the best of their abilities. We need to give them the opportunities to become well rounded, not well tested.

Thank you, Marty Davis

--

Marty Davis

Kindergarten Teacher, Spring Lake Elementary

A Teacher's Prayer

Lord, Please help me to strengthen their voices, bodies and minds... To express their feelings & control them sometimes...

To explore what is near & venture afar...

But most important,

To love who they are.

-----Original Message-----

From: ANGELA TANNER [<mailto:angelatanner@alpinedistrict.org>]

Sent: Sunday, September 17, 2017 10:28 PM

To: Austin, Lorraine <lorraine.austin@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: Art/Health/CTE Middle School Cuts

Hello,

I recently found out that there has been a decision to cut out many of the required elective courses in Middle Schools. First, As a teacher of twenty years in the Arts I am horrified. Our students live in a world that is becoming more and more focused on becoming a spectator of Media at Home instead of being a participant in art or physical activity. It is easy to become zeroed in on one particular idea and to reenforce ones belief in that particular value. Whether or not it is valuable to the development of that person. I see kids today having less exposure to a variety of things and hyper exposure to only one trending passion. A well rounded and diverse student is very valuable to a future employer. I have found many of todays teenage students lack 21st Century skills of being creative, collaborative, innovative and imaginative. I feel that students will be better equipped if they are exposed to a variety of thoughts, processes and learn to see that there are a variety of solutions to be found in life.

Secondly, Middle School is such a trying time in an adolescents life. Having a safe and creative outlet within school is crucial. It allows a student to explore a variety of new topics and ideas that have not been touched on in Elementary school. Elective courses allow students to personalize some of their daily curricula. How many kids really have a dedicated PE teacher in Elementary school? Or truly an art or drama teacher in Elementary. It is so very beneficial to teach to the whole child. Students have the opportunity in a Junior High to try a variety of topics at low risk. They can explore and experience new concepts. It will not affect their GPA and if they like it they will develop some of those passions in depth in a High School setting. I hope you will reconsider this decision and see that it actually removes opportunities for growth that many child will not receive at home.

Sincerely,

Ms Angee Tanner

From: Lisa Robinson [mailto:lisahrobinson@gmail.com]

Sent: Monday, September 18, 2017 11:16 PM

To: Austin, Lorraine <lorraine.austin@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: REVERSE Administrative rule R277-700 The Elementary and Secondary School General Core

Dear Lorraine, Please forward this to all state school board members

Dear Utah School Board Members,

We are concerned about the recent ruling which removes the arts requirement from the Utah State Junior High Curriculum.

Without these minimum standards, there's a serious risk that students will not have opportunities to participate in the arts music, and all of those things that contribute to a well-rounded education.

All six of our children have participated in vocal and instrumental music programs starting in junior high and all have gone on to be excellent students in all additional academic subjects. They have received both academic and music scholarships and all have pursued higher education. Three of our six children have chosen professions in music education, music production/sound engineering and in opera performance. All four of our sons are state and regional champions as part of their participation in the American Fork High School Marching Band, and have represented Utah multiple times in national marching band competitions.

*Aside from the talents, opportunities and personal fulfillment that our children have enjoyed as a result of the musical abilities that they have gained as part of their education, they have developed additional critical attributes which have shaped their individual character and prepared them to be productive and independent adults, who make a significant contribution to their communities and society in general. They have learned **personal responsibility, accountability to others, persistence in the face of challenge, consistency in preparation, respect for ensemble members and competing ensembles, respect for authority and peer leaders, principles of effective leadership, sportsmanship in competition, and to expect excellence in themselves and those around them.** These attributes are not learned from books or from sitting in a classroom, or even from media and recordings. They must be learned first-hand, by experience.*

These attributes are often attributed to students who participate in school sporting programs, which also need to be continued and supported. Without these arts and music programs, students will not experience a well-rounded education which will prepare them to contribute to society. Many - or most - will not choose to challenge themselves beyond the minimum required, which will not serve them well in higher education or in the adult professional world. They will not have the opportunity to push themselves beyond their perceived limits or to grow in the ways described above.

We believe that it is a fundamental duty of the state Board of Education to set minimum standards, and In enacting this rule, it's essentially a lowering of those standards.

We ask you to reconsider and REVERSE this ruling, for the sake of all Utah students and all Utah communities.

Sincerely,

Russ and Lisa Robinson

Pleasant Grove Utah

From: Tracy Rogers [mailto:trogsec@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, September 18, 2017 10:17 PM
To: Austin, Lorraine <lorraine.austin@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: RE: message to school board members

Sorry for the error in my greeting line below. This isn't for ASD board members, but the state board members.

Best wishes,

Tracy

From: Tracy Rogers [<mailto:trogsec@gmail.com>]
Sent: Monday, September 18, 2017 10:01 PM
To: 'lorraine.austin@schools.utah.gov'
Subject: message to school board members

Dear ASD board members,

I am concerned about the recent ruling which removes the arts requirement from junior high curriculum.

Without these minimum standards, there's a risk that students won't have those opportunities to participate in the arts and the music and all of those things that contribute to a well-rounded education.

I think it is a fundamental duty of the state Board of Education to set minimum standards, and in enacting this rule, it's essentially a lowering of those standards.

I urge you to reconsider your decision. As a self-professed well-rounded student who fell under such a requirement at American Fork Junior High School and went on to AFHS and eventually got a Masters degree, I firmly believe that my junior high experience which exposed me to the arts and music played a SIGNIFICANT role in my education from that point on, all through high school and college. Without such encouragement to try the arts and music in the form of a requirement, I may not have enjoyed the opportunities and rich education that I experienced that helped fill out my educational experience.

The arts and humanities have been under attack for some time, but it is clear from countless studies as well as my own experience and that of my children that exposure to the arts at such a tender age can help students grow in ways that they cannot otherwise enjoy.

I have signed the petition sponsored by the Utah Cultural Alliance and STRONGLY urge you to reconsider for the betterment of our children and our community.

Best,

Tracy Rogers
326 W 900 N
American Fork
801-756-5230

-----Original Message-----

From: Kim Garrett [<mailto:kimberleegarrett@yahoo.com>]

Sent: Monday, September 18, 2017 8:54 PM

To: Austin, Lorraine <lorraine.austin@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: Arts in Education

Dear School Board Members,

I am concerned about the recent ruling which removes the arts, health, and physical education requirement from junior high curriculum.

Without these minimum standards, there's a risk that students won't have opportunities to participate in the arts, music and all of those things that contribute to a well-rounded education. I have three teenage students, all of whom have benefited greatly from their physical education and music training. I believe that those classes have helped to make them better, more well-rounded students and citizens.

I think it is a fundamental duty of the state Board of Education to set minimum standards, and in enacting this rule, it's essentially a lowering of those standards. It is placing students in smaller school districts at a distinct disadvantage, as they are more likely to see a reduction in these programs. While I feel that there is sense in having local control in how these classes are administered, I feel that giving districts the option to get rid of them all together does our education system a huge disservice.

Sincerely,

Kim Garrett

Concerned Parent and Voter from American Fork, Utah .

From: rheathut@comcast.net [mailto:rheathut@comcast.net]

Sent: Tuesday, September 19, 2017 11:25 AM

To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: Written comments for Utah State School Board meeting, September 20, 2017

To whom it may concern,

My comments are in the body of this email as well as attached as a PDF. These comments were submitted as an op-ed and were published in the Deseret News a few days ago.

Thank You,

Richard M. Heath,

Retired Music Educator, Percussionist, Public Education Advocate,

Grateful Husband, Amazed Father.

Why are the arts being de-emphasized (not core, or central to the Junior High/Middle School curriculum) by our state school board? I can't even come up with a reasonable answer.

Please understand that I am speaking mainly about the fine arts, being a former music educator however, there are also relevant arguments that can be made in favor of physical education and health being returned to their former status as core subjects.

I find it quite ironic that Japan and China are racking their brains to get increased fine arts training for their children so they can be more creative like their American counterparts. We, on the other hand, are passing our Asian counterparts moving the opposite direction.

Several years ago, I attended a lecture by David McCullough (at Northridge High School), the author of *1776*. McCullough alluded to an event that happened some time ago in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. For some reason, probably budgetary, arts programs in their public schools were on the chopping block. Eventually, the issue ended up in the courts and a judge was left to make the decision as to the fate of the arts in Massachusetts schools.

The Constitution of Massachusetts states: "...it shall be the duty of legislatures and magistrates, in all future periods of this commonwealth, to *cherish* the interests of literature and the sciences, and all seminaries of them; especially the university at Cambridge, public schools, and grammar-schools in the towns..." (Italics added.) The judge's decision to save the arts in the schools in Massachusetts dealt with one word... *cherish*. One can't learn to cherish without the arts.

Instead of looking forward to some utopia where all children can pass cookie-cutter tests in cookie-cutter schools, we should look back to the time when American schools were the envy

of the world. Then, children were nurtured and allowed to be creative. English was "language arts." Math and science were the gateway to innovation and discovery.

In the social sciences, the students were given time to explore the past, analyze the present with an open mind and dream of the future. The arts were more than "filler" to plug in a student's schedule when there is nothing else to do.

Aesthetic experiences are elusive, wonderful, magical, amazing, powerful, spontaneous and essential. The elements that form aesthetic judgment cannot be measured, but they must be nurtured. They cannot be touched, but they can be felt.

If we forget how to feel, the true meaning in our lives is diminished. The aesthetic experience is as real and vivid as taking a breath and to some, as necessary. Please remember that arts educators were the first to develop national standards. But where has it gotten them?

Even if all students do not choose to take extra arts classes for elective classes, *the fact that they have been required to take a few of them will enrich their lives.* My fear, is that the students who would like to take more than the required arts classes as electives may be having those opportunities severely limited as well. That would certainly be a shame on us. Opportunities for artistic (aesthetic) growth throughout society enrich all parts of society, even if not all people choose to participate directly in them. All students are enriched either directly or indirectly when a full and unfettered fine arts curriculum is available to all students, even if they don't take those classes themselves.

However, in the world of test, test, test, true creativity and aesthetic understanding is not a valued commodity sometimes because it doesn't generate data.

Richard M, Heath, Retired, 35-year, Music Educator
Kaysville, Utah



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Joshua Stavros
Utah Shakespeare Festival (Cedar City)

Monday, September 18, 2017

TO: MEMBERS OF THE UTAH STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

FROM: UTAH CULTURAL ALLIANCE, UTAH EDUCATION ASSOCIATION, UTAH MUSIC TEACHERS ASSOCIATION, AND THE FOLLOWING SIGNERS

(Inclosed with this petition are letters from CEOs and Executive Directors of a number of cultural institutions from around the state)

We are parents, voters, and Utahns who care about the success of our state's children. We know that a well-rounded education is vital to their future.

As your constituents, we ask you to reverse your August 4th decision to remove the Middle School credit requirement for health, arts, physical education, college and career awareness, world languages, and digital literacy.

The benefits to children of a well-rounded education that includes arts, health, and PE education are many:

1. **Better academic results, better workforce opportunities, and more civic engagement, especially for at-risk children.¹**
2. **Improved performance and grades in reading, math, writing, and other subjects.²**
3. **Increased creative thinking and problem solving.³**
4. **Increased positive attitudes towards school and learning.⁴**
5. **Less aggression and violent tendencies.⁵**
6. **Improved cognitive ability.⁶**
7. **Improved community cohesion.⁷**
8. **Improved graduation rates.⁸**
9. **Improved motor skills and self-discipline.⁹**
10. **Improved social interaction.¹⁰**
11. **Improved mental health and dietary choices.¹¹**

Eliminating the credit requirement for arts, health, physical education, college and career awareness, world languages, and digital literacy suggests that state standards and oversight for these vital programs could disappear. These



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are subject areas that are proven to close the school achievement gap. Lack of standards and oversight prevents fair and equitable services statewide, and puts at risk our State's commitment to ensure that a healthy and productive generation is ready to lead our future.

We thank the six board members who voted against this change: Janet Cannon, Brittney Cummins, Jennifer Graviat, Carol Barlow-Lear, Kathleen Riebe, and Spencer Stokes.

Utah is a wonderful place to live, work, and raise families. We believe that our state public education system should be a light to the rest of America and the world. When policy changes occur that negatively affect children's education -- such as this credit change -- our state educational system suffers, and our children suffer. We ask you to reverse your August 4th decision.

Sincerely,

The board and staff of the Utah Cultural Alliance, Utah Education Association, Utah Music Teachers Association, and the undersigned.

Crystal Young-Otterstrom
Executive Director // Utah Cultural Alliance

(petition signers are at the end of this document after organizational letters)

¹ Sources note, some of the articles below are links. All links can be found at: http://www.utahculturalalliance.org/school_board_petition

<https://www.arts.gov/file/2684>

² A 2002 report by the Arts Education Partnership revealed that schoolchildren exposed to drama, music and dance are often more proficient at reading, writing, and math. & The 2006 Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum study on art education showed a link between arts education and improved literacy skills. & A 2011 study called "Reinvesting in Arts Education" found that integrating arts with other subjects can help raise achievement levels. & Active Education: Physical Education, Physical Activity and Academic Performance. & An Evaluation of the Relationship between Academic Performance and Physical Fitness Measures in California Schools



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Katlin Spas

Pioneer Theatre Company (SLC)

Joshua Stavros

Utah Shakespeare Festival (Cedar City)

³ A study (<http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/champions/pdfs/Learning.pdf>) of more than 2,000 middle-school students by researchers at Columbia University found that students who had participated in at least three years of in-school arts instruction scored significantly higher on an instrument measuring creative thinking and that these students self-reported much higher rates of positive attitudes towards school and learning than did their peers who had experienced less arts education.

⁴ Same study as 1.

⁵ Evaluation of a six-month program that involved youth in drama reported that these participants demonstrated less aggressive and violent tendencies, while also exhibiting more pro-social behaviors like cooperation and self control compared to before participating. http://www.traumacenter.org/products/pdf_files/jsv5_2_2006.pdf & A study of Missouri public schools in 2010 found that greater arts education led to fewer disciplinary infractions and higher attendance, graduation rates and test scores.

⁶ A study by research kinesiologists found that students showed improved cognitive ability after participating in moderate exercise. <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0306452209001171> & A meta-analysis that took into account 44 studies that had sought to identify correlations & between physical activity among children and their cognitive performance concluded that there is a significant relationship. & The Association Between School-Based Physical Activity, Including Physical Education, and Academic Performance

⁷ A 2005 report by the Rand Corporation called "A Portrait of the Visual Arts" argues that art education does more than just give students a creative outlet. It can actually help connect them to the larger world, ultimately improving community cohesion.

⁸ The Center for Arts Education published a report in 2009 that suggests arts education may improve graduation rates.

⁹ <http://www.phitamerica.org/Page1139.aspx> & Physical Education in Kindergarten Promotes Fundamental Motor Skill Development

¹⁰ <http://www.livestrong.com/article/529108-what-are-the-benefits-of-physical-education-in-school/>

¹¹ Do the Duration and Frequency of Physical Education Predict Academic Achievement, Self-concept, Social skills, Food consumption, and Body Mass Index?

Paul Meecham
President & CEO

September 18, 2017

Thierry Fischer
Symphony Music Director

Utah State Board of Education

Christopher McBeth
Opera Artistic Director

250 East 500 South
Salt Lake City, UT 84111

Dear Members of the Board,

Board of Trustees

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Bob Wheaton
Kim R. Wilson
Thomas Wright

Mark Davidson
Lissa Stolz
Utah Symphony Musicians

Margaret Sargent
Utah Symphony Guild

Dr. Robert Fudge
Ogden Symphony
Ballet Association

On behalf of the Musicians, Staff and Trustees of Utah Symphony | Utah Opera, we urge you to reverse the Board's August 4th decision to remove the Middle School credit requirement for health, arts, physical education, college and career awareness, world languages, and digital literacy.

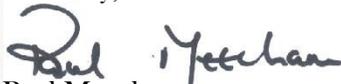
Eliminating the credit requirement for these areas suggests that state standards and oversight for these vital programs could disappear. These are subject areas that are proven to close the school achievement gap and encourage student attendance.

As the largest arts organization in Utah, and one that focuses on music, we will speak to these points. Through music, children develop observation, concentration, creative thinking and communication skills that translate into a lifetime of productive endeavors in all professional and avocational pursuits. The achievements of instrumental and vocal performers demonstrate for children the rewards of long-term dedication to a personal and professional goal. Even if they do not choose to play an instrument or learn singing techniques, early exposure to music cultivates the appreciative audiences of the future. Through these personal benefits to each child, music education enhances the overall quality of life in Utah, and its desirability as a place to live and visit.

With the current very strong focus on competency in core subjects such as language arts, math, and science, resources for arts instruction vary greatly from school to school. However, studies have shown that experiences in the arts strengthen children's academic motivation, self-confidence, and cooperation. The arts invite new ways of understanding and problem-solving, allowing the freedom to explore and experiment in an arena in which there are not necessarily right and wrong answers. By maintaining arts as a requirement, you ensure access to, and awareness of, these invaluable life skills for every child.

Utah is a wonderful place to live, work, and raise families. We believe that our state public education system should be a light to the rest of the United States of America and the world. When policy changes occur that negatively affect children's education -- such as this credit change -- our state educational system suffers, and our children suffer. We ask you respectfully to reverse your August 4th decision.

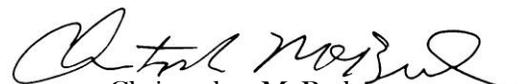
Sincerely,



Paul Meecham
President & CEO
Utah Symphony | Utah Opera



Thierry Fischer
Music Director
Utah Symphony



Christopher McBeth
Artistic Director
Utah Opera

Ticket Office
801.533.6683
Fax 801.869.9048
usuo.org

Abravanel Hall
123 West South Temple
Salt Lake City, Utah 84101
801.533.5626
Fax 801.869.9026

Production Studios
336 North 400 West
Salt Lake City, Utah 84103
801.736.4605
Fax 801.869.9051



AT THE
UNIVERSITY
OF UTAH

September 18, 2017

The Utah State Board of Education
250 East 500 South
Salt Lake City, UT 84111

Dear Utah State Board Members:

As an arts leader in the State of Utah and an arts professional with thirty years' experience in art museums and museum education, I write today to urge you to reverse your August 4 decision to eliminate the middle school credit requirement for health, arts, physical education, college and career awareness, world languages, and digital literacy.

Quality arts education is vital to ensuring our children's success by improving critical thinking and problem solving, self-discipline and social interaction, and classroom performance across all subjects. Access to good arts programming—as well as information about the importance of physical education, good health, and college/career awareness—provides kids with a world of possibility, opening their minds and hearts to all that they might pursue in life. These subjects must remain as part of the required curriculum to assure that every student, regardless of economic status or background, has access to a well-rounded education, especially at such a crucial time in their development.

At the Utah Museum of Fine Arts, a central part of our mission is to inspire creativity, curiosity, and critical thinking in our growing and diverse community. We engage visitors in dynamic programs, exhibitions, and experiences and encourage active participation in conversations that celebrate multiple perspectives and voices. We believe that all people learn together by asking questions, experimenting, and collaborating through open exchange of voices and ideas.

We raise our voice with those of arts professionals and educators around the state—including the Utah Cultural Alliance, Utah Education Association, and the Utah Music Teachers Association—in asking that you accept the substantial evidenced-based research that proves the value and importance of this kind of learning and teaching. Arts, health, and PE support and improve academic results and success in math, reading, and writing and help students develop a heightened sense of empathy and compassion for other people.

As the mother of middle-school age children, as a dedicated and experienced arts professional, and as a citizen who values arts, health, and creativity in all areas of life, I'm alarmed by the vote to eliminate the middle school credit requirement for these essential areas of study. Please reconsider this potentially disastrous decision and ensure that all of Utah's students have access to great arts and health programming.

Sincerely,

Gretchen Dietrich
Executive Director



September 18, 2017

NOVA Chamber
Music Series
PO Box 520962
SLC, UT 84152

info@novaslc.org
novaslc.org

Jason Hardink
Artistic Director

Kristin Rector
Executive Director

Board of Directors:

Frank Hanson, Pres.
Hillary Hahn
Craig Miller
Glenn Prestwich
Richard Sheinberg
Kathryn Waddell
Janell Weinstock

Dear Members of the Utah State Board of Education,

On behalf of the NOVA Chamber Music Series' music education initiative, *The NOVA Music Project* We are writing to you to reverse your August 4, 2017 decision to eliminate the credit requirements for arts, health, physical education, college and career awareness, world languages, and digital literacy.

There are many benefits to students with well-rounded education experiences such as; improved performance and grades in reading, math, and writing, more civic engagement, less aggression and violence tendencies, and increased attitudes towards education.

The NOVA Music Project has been delivered to thousands of students in our community. Here is some recent feedback we received from our program.

"I want to send you my deeply felt thanks for the opportunity to have Aspen Winds visit our classroom. It's a fantastically multi-dimensional experience to have live performers playing music close up. Our students can see, hear, and emotionally open up to it in ways far beyond a recording. We are grateful for your work, for your dedication to education, and for taking the time to visit us. I don't believe the students will forget this experience."

Kimberly Marsden – International School of Utah

"Thank you for your visit! The musicians were wonderful and they captured my students' attention and sparked their curiosity. Thank you for engaging with them and allowing them to ask questions. I'm still smiling about how you answered the 'If you could create your own instrument what would it look and sound like?' question. So wonderful!"

David Asman – Rose Park Elementary

Thank you for considering this information in the reversal of your decision of August 4, 2017.

Sincerely,

Kristin Rector
Executive Director

Jason Hardink
Artistic Director



September 18, 2017

Dear State School Board of Education,

In light of recent decisions to minimize the required credits for arts, health and PE in middle school, I would like to share an impassioned plea for reversal. The arts have absolute benefit for all of us, but most especially in each student's well-rounded education. The students' in middle school and jr. high are at their most vulnerable point and are in particular need of quality arts instruction to navigate this world. Each adolescent is searching for what they have to offer and bring to the world. Without being able to work through their personal identity in safe and productive ways, such as discovering their place within the world through quality arts (and humanities) in education, it is a very disadvantaged journey.

We at Utah Festival Opera & Musical Theatre have been working for the last 20 years with Opera by Children and other arts education programs providing in-school and after-school arts experiences. We see evidence every single day that arts in education works. Teachers too, see the difference the arts make, "This isn't just learning, teaching or guiding. It is really something every student should experience! Students in my class were more willing to try new things and take learning risks in their personal life. Some tried out for student council the following year, some tried for 7th grade officers, a few joined choir, and others took art classes. Students were able to put themselves out there and succeed and were more likely to keep trying and 'revise' their previous effort. As a class this solidified friendships, made new friendships, and as a whole class there were less behavior problems, because of this bonding experience they all shared."

The arts and humanities are part of a well-rounded education, and cannot be separated from life and the need for creativity. Our humanity shows in self-discovery and in outward communication of ideas when any art medium is used to comprehend boundless topics like war, love, spirituality, philosophy or civic duty. Without a safe way to seek for understanding of self and others, there are fewer tools to encourage compassion, compromise, or tolerance.

The arts are the most inclusive way of ensuring an education is meeting the needs of the individual. Without clear state leadership in the area of providing equitable access to arts education for each student regardless of socioeconomic status, school districts may not regard the arts as necessary, or schools may completely end the opportunity for arts learning. The risk is for students to drop out of school and not progress toward high school graduation or studies in vocational school or college. Statistics show middle school is where they are lost.

Please endorse legislation and create policies that increase these opportunities and provide revenue for school districts and utilize funding, such as Title I, in order to champion the arts strategies that provide the opportunities our students need to flourish. Support and inspire educators to teach innovatively. This is what will support our students and carry them into a future with endless opportunities in a world we have not yet lived in as it has yet to be imagined.

Sincerely,

Pamela L. Gee
Opera by Children Director
Utah Festival Opera & Musical Theatr

Elisabeth Nebeker

Utah Film Center letter

To: Crystal Young-Otterstrom

Inbox - CYO @ UCA 12:40 PM



Updated contact info found in this email: Elisabeth Nebeker enebeker@utahfilmcenter.org

update...

Dear School Board -

On behalf of the Utah Film Center we ask that you reverse your August 4th decision to remove the Middle School credit requirement for health, arts, physical education, college and career awareness, world languages and digital literacy.

We work with students and educators to use digital media arts and film in the classroom to think critically, develop storytelling skills, and create an engaging learning environment.

A well rounded education should be a priority for our State that values the importance of the arts for a lifetime. We need to commit to the benefits that have been documented by numerous studies.

As a mother of high schoolers I know the importance of giving our children opportunities to explore, build confidence and empathy through arts, health, PE, language especially in the middle school years when the challenges they are facing personally and socially can be difficult. Please vote to reverse this decision.

Kindly,
Elisabeth Nebeker
Executive Director

--

Elisabeth Nebeker
Executive Director

Utah Film Center
50 West Broadway, Suite 1125 | Salt Lake City, UT 84101
utahfilmcenter.org
enebeker@utahfilmcenter.org

o: (801) 746-7000

c: (801) 694-9110

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Culture in Motion.



September 18, 2017

Utah State Board of Education

Dear Member of the Utah State Board of Education:

We, at the Ririe-Woodbury Dance Company, believe that the arts are a vital part of K-12 education. Arts as an elective rather than a mandatory requirement of middle school students will undermined the very heart of developing well-rounded individuals.

The arts can be an equal playing ground for many students. They bring students together to not only develop creative thinking, team building, social skills, cognitive ability, but of course physical ability. Our education programs include bilingual and anti-bullying performance demonstrations as well as celebrating the similarities and the differences that each child brings to the community. We have found the arts and specifically dance, has been able to engage many students that no other STEM subject has been able to achieve.

All students should have access to the arts and the arts should be required at all grade levels.

Thank you for your consideration.

Jena C. Woodbury
Executive Director
jena@ririewoodbury.com

Ai Fujii Nelson
Education Director
education@ririewoodbury.com

PETITION SIGNERS

1. Crystal Young-Otterstrom
2. Jason Myers
3. Michele Swanan
4. Chantel Myers
5. Aimee Myers
6. Brian Nicholls Brian Nicholls
7. Emily Wilson
8. Rosanne Henderson
9. Kimberly Sorensen
10. Hana The Mundi Project
11. Rachel Olsen
12. Coila Robinson Students need the arts to help develop creativity, a tool for the future in their lives, to find better ways to make the world better.
13. Joshua Sohn JOSHUA SOHN
14. Michelle Cloud
15. Angie Keeton
16. Melissa Bearden Our children deserve a complete education - with artistic options for expression and understanding.
17. Karen Ho
18. Ruth Ann Nielsen
19. Karalie Clark
20. Gwen Brewton
21. Jennifer Peterson
22. Connie Nay
23. Rebecca Udy
24. JoAnne Hinkle Arts are important! The cultural connection fosters the application and thereby better understanding of knowledge. There needs to be a reason for students to learn, which is provided by arts. It is short-sighted in the extreme to cut them out.
25. Theresa Hinkle
26. Erica Wangsgard Today's education world is adding MORE arts not less. Full STEAM ahead! Please reverse your decision to move Utah backwards. I'm pretty sure our biggest arts advocate in Utah history, Brigham Young ,would be appalled to learn you eliminated the arts for children.
27. Marilee Coles-Ritchie
28. Janna Lauer
29. John Tuitupou
30. Donna Chin
31. Charlotte Bell
32. Jill Hansen Snow College has just begun to see improvement in students' math and science knowledge bases. Please do not set progress back 20 years!
33. Cassie Burton
34. Lindsey Wright
35. Amelia Overbye
36. Oreta Tupola You've taken away more than enough from our children. Don't take away this!
37. Carol Beck
38. Caroline Jennings
39. Doug Mayor
40. Kristin Amundsen
41. Amren Patterson Amren Patterson
42. Sheila Johnston Sheila Johnston
43. Roman Lopez Art was important in my development. PE helped with competitiveness, drive and a healthy lifestyle. Art should remain a core component since it can make children think in new ways.m to solve solutions.
44. Elisabeth Luntz We need more flexibility with PE, we need more investment in health and arts.
45. Aubrey Lewis
46. Heather Johnson Gutierrez
47. Tiffin Brough
48. Ashley Anderson
49. Debra Day Olivier Very important statewide, in rural counties and urban ones.
50. Kathryn Prater The State Board of Education should not be making things easier for charter schools. They are receiving public funds and should be held to the same standards as all the other public schools. These classes are necessary for a well-rounded student and should be required for all students. Charter schools need to change the way they are running or close if they cannot meet the standards and requirements that public schools follow.
51. Roma Myers
52. Paul Boruff Without the arts we are limiting the tools to reach our potential
53. Elizabeth Payne
54. Anita Massey-Kaelin Anita Massey-Kaelin
55. Toni Pollack
56. Katie Lieberman
57. Suzanne Johnson The arts and physical education are what our society needs more of!
58. Lauren Cameron
59. Sarah Franco
60. Christine Fedor What are most major companies asking for in the workforce? Employees who are creative and have problem solving skills. Where are these skills learned? In arts and humanities classes. How about requiring more than taking them away? It makes no sense to take away these credit requirements!
61. Karen Conder
62. Marie-Ann Harris
63. Carolyn Ewell Carolyn Ewell
64. Diane Kelly
65. Jennifer Parsons The Arts are TOO important to take away from our kids in school, especially those that can't afford supplemental arts education. Arts programming teaches problem-solving, follow-through and critical-thinking skills that are vital for their future success in education endeavors and careers.
66. Raymond Kahoonie Please keep this education alive
67. Amanda Perez Can I just ask what's left? These cuts are insane and will not enhance our standings in the United States nor increase our chances of our kids understanding healthy well-rounded, diverse living and how to maintain a healthy lifestyle. This decision needs to be reversed immediately. There are other ways to make cuts and it is your job to find them. That's why you have been voted into your position. Very disappointing!
68. Cynthia Wright Cynthia Wright
69. Jeneanne Lock
70. Karlyen Tan
71. Michelle Ormond
72. Lois Matthews Countless studies have linked increased IQ, coordination, focus and motivation to Music Study. Why would we want to deny students the opportunity to not only learn more efficiently but to enjoy the journey that comes through the arts? Studying the arts has also been shown to boost social skills.
73. Michele Medina
74. Danielle Jacketta
75. Andrea Bailey
76. Jarmila Janatova
77. Jillian Guilmain
78. Tara Oveson
79. Suzanne Cole
80. Marilyn Syra
81. Joshua Wright
82. Amelia Kenworthy If it weren't for the arts requirement my daughter wouldn't have the chance to be learning an instrument. We can't afford private lessons, she gets to have that amazing experience through school! Why would you want to take that away?
83. Janice Pyper
84. Mary Ann Battle
85. Jaymie Fellows
86. Gina Morgan Through music my son found connection, leadership, and passion. He ranked top in his class through most of school, achieving honor roll and other awards. Music was a catalyst for his success.
87. Cheryl Rytting
88. Kiersten Honaker
89. Carole Straughn
90. Rebecca Browning
91. Linette Sheffield
92. Debbie Gibson
93. Lindsay Bastian
94. Sandefur Schmidt Sandefur Schmidt
95. Sara Chatelain
96. Amanda Finlayson
97. Tracie Price
98. Lezlee Bishop
99. Charlie Erickson
100. Jarlene Halford
101. Sarajane Fife
102. Igor Iachimciuc
103. Karen Allbor Karen Allbor
104. Camille Pockrus
105. Jonathan Miles
106. Alyssa Ridge
107. Christine Anderson
108. Sandra Preysz
109. Jackie Biskupski
110. Brittany Reese Brittany R Dew
111. Paula Manwaring
112. Carrie Evans
113. Heather Smith
114. Margaret Bowman
115. Kathy Davis
116. Adele Swenson
117. Jessica Weiss
118. Alysa Revell Providing students with opportunities to express themselves and get their bodies moving is CRITICAL to the development of mentally/emotionally/physically healthy citizens!
119. Emma Dugal The formerly required subjects are crucial to a well rounded education. Participation in these subjects enhance learning in the core subjects and provide students with broader and more effective avenues toward self actualization, confidence and well-being. Emma Dugal
120. Anna Topham
121. Mecqae Knight
122. Nefeterie Nunley
123. Eldon DeHaan
124. Anne Ashworth
125. Barbara Yost
126. Lisa Kirchenheiter
127. Heidi ElHalta Some children's only exposure to these subjects are through school. Eliminating them will only increase the disparity between those whose circumstances provide the means for private music and other instruction and athletic opportunities and those that do not. Utah is better than this!
128. Liesl Hanson
129. Paula Crockett
130. Rondalee Rose
131. Jerry Kaplan
132. James Landeen I am an engineering student. In middle school I took band. It is amazing how many college students don't know what middle c is when we discuss frequencies. Don't take music/arts away from schools. They are so beneficial to the world later on.
133. Sylvia Gray
134. Stefanie Slade
135. Korie Bouldin
136. Michelle Misco
137. Jill Duncan
138. Kathryn Hurn
139. Leland Benson Leland Benson
140. Dawn Oughton
141. Katherine Dayton-Kistler I'm a retired LCSW, worked with middle schoolers and teens during my 36 year career. They need all our help to develop their critical thinking skills and understand today's world. Exercise builds brains. Music and art build brains. Math and science scores grow in relation to music and arts and exercise. Research proves this. Pardon the pun, but restoring these programs to middles schools is a "no brainer."
142. Julie Allen
143. Rachel Cook
144. Kathy Gale
145. Misty Morris
146. Kimberly Dalbu
147. Michael Rhodes
148. Lisa Dengg The arts are critical to the school system. Our children need the access to the music & art classes because they foster discipline & creativity in a that the other core classes do not.
149. Sarina Ehrgott
150. Lenora Brown
151. Marnie Dolan
152. Heather Maxine Smith
153. Sandra Davis Kaplan
154. Scott Rowley
155. Donnel Lamb daniele white
156. daniele white
157. Kevin Moore
158. Angela Roberts
159. Mary Conrad
160. Alexis Davis
161. Michael Criquelion
162. Carolyn Chambers
163. Katelyn Christensen
164. Elizabeth Wiser I assume that special interest groups pushing STEM education are trying to free up class periods to teach those subjects. While these classes are valuable to many students, there is a connection to the well being of very vulnerable and impressionable youth in Junior High schools that needs to be made. They are best able to learn about themselves, their strengths, and their humanity by participating in art, music, PE, and other exploratory classes. To take away the current requirements will be pulling out the rug from underneath them. They will end up more lost and more frustrated than before.
165. Georgia Hancock
166. Wendy Jensen
167. Lenni Stratton
168. Carol Spackman Moss! don't think the reason for the change has been clearly articulated. Additionally, what is the desired outcome?
169. Anne Haacke
170. Heather Sather
171. Marie Dippolito
172. Suzanne Thompson
173. Danielle Dallas As a lawyer and a musician I feel strongly that there is a critical place for the arts in every child's education. The arts encourage an exploration of another's ideas without judgment and ultimately an expression of self. Both parts are critical to developing a whole person. Likewise physical movement is vastly important to cognition (consider the research and

- arguments in the book Spark). If these opportunities are not included in schools then it will only be those in the higher socio-economic strata who can afford complete education. Don't we want this for all our children and youth? You're smart people: please use your intelligence and influence as our government officials to figure out a way to make it happen.
174. Lynne Whittier
175. Laja Field
176. Ingrid Baron "It baffles me that this subject continues to pop up! First off, why do you even bulk DIGITAL LITERACY, PE and MUSIC/ART in the same category? They're completely separate from one another. Ok, look. You've successfully put a computer screen/pad in front of every student; they're sick of Lexia and ST Math; they are becoming a bunch of zombies with all the screen time they have at school. How about we take that away, or remove Computer Lab out of the curriculum? Are you really worried that kids aren't computer literate? As if. On the other hand, have you ever been to an Elementary or Middle School CHOIR Class? Their faces are about to explode with happiness! When was the last time you've been to an Art Show put on by the ENTIRE school? Again, pure giddiness abounds. Give up PE? Why not take away Lunchtime while you're at it and feed them intravenously while they read. How about bringing a bit more BALANCE to the curriculum? It's a wonderful time to be on a school board and reinvent how we do school in a new age! But please don't be so hasty and panicky. Put some serious thought into what needs tweaking and tweak it. But don't throw away the baby with the bath water.
177. Julie Mangum I'm a high school art teacher. I have seen on countless occasions the need of creative release of the young teens in today's world. It has been proven, the positive impact the arts, health, PE ... have on students and their learning. (In all classes) The move to remove these credits is baffling to me. If we care about the students of Utah, we really need to rethink this decision.
178. Heidi Essex
179. Loretta Whicker Studies for years have shown that students perform better academically when they exposed to the physical, mental, emotional benefits of the arts and physical education. For some students these classes help them survive the more difficult academic curriculum. We have known that throughout my 40+ years of teaching. Education is about creating a well-rounded person. As for the others courses, they are very necessary in preparing and helping young people begin making wise choices, developing necessary and useful skills, and again being more mentally developed to face a changing world.
180. Star Place
181. Kristal Rasmussen
182. Rick Baldassin
183. Susan Bowlden As a retired elementary teacher, I say students need health, P.E., art, and music.
184. Jamie Hollingshead-Barrett This ruling exhibits elitist and yet highly ignorant thinking. The countless flaws in the ruling indicate that the State Board of Education is neither focused on or nor understands the basic tenants of education. Though the ruling applies to countless subjects, the loss of Art alone is a travesty - not to mention Health, Language, and Technology. These subjects are not a luxury - they are necessity. They teach in the most hands-on and practical sense - complex problem solving, abstract thinking, fine motor-skills, and innumerable other critical life skills. This is BRAIN DEVELOPMENT at its peak. Few people beyond the age of 18 remember an iota of the specific learning in their K-12 years. This has little to do with forgetfulness or the lack of value in specific topics. It does however, have more to do with a general sense of knowledge and systemic learning. We come to understand processes as a whole and build informational resources incrementally. We start with Kindergarten and the basics of information and eventually develop by grade 12 the basics of how to learn. Whole brain development is what is at work here. If we fail to exercise and develop the whole brain - we have failed the majority of our children. Likewise, this ruling rather forcefully implies that children of wealthy or educated parents are the only ones deserving of greater brain development and informational exposure. Wealthy and educated parents will always provide ways for their children to access world languages, music, fine arts, technology, and college exploration. However, these opportunities are still lacking in WHOLE brain education and are subject to the caprices and/or fascinations of individuals. We committed as a society to educate ALL of our children and not just quantitatively but qualitatively as well. This constitutes an inexcusable failure.
185. Karen Andersen
186. Brooke Horejsi
187. Daphne Marchant
188. Jessica Jenkins
189. Deidrien Booth
190. Angela Algarin
191. Shannon Diotaiuti
192. Linda Erwin
193. Marti Ashby We need these subjects for our children.
194. Karen Walter I feel like this is a huge mistake. We are slowly seeing our society becoming less and less focused on the arts which is leading us to become a society of heathens. The health of our society is also becoming alarmingly poor. Too much focus is being put on what will make us richer and not on what makes us better human beings.
195. Jeremy Acker
196. Becky Stone
197. Andrew Maguire
198. Kelly Winslow
199. Angela Roundy
200. Michelle Ludema
201. Jackie Ricks
202. Pat Annoni
203. Jennifer Elzey
204. Sherry Bonham
205. Ann Makin It's the arts that bring enjoyment to all the rest of the curriculum in school and later in life! Some children have little or no exposure to all genres of music and art except in the schools. The removal of these programs will make it easier for this students in the short run, but a detriment to society in the future. Please reverse this short sighted decision.
206. Kelsey Garner
207. Jennifer Taylor
208. Kristi Jones
209. Laurie Miller
210. Laura Scott
211. gustav hartel
212. Anne Cullimore Decker
213. Brooke Kowalczyk
214. Kirk Robinsons
215. Marianne Allen
216. Jackie Ward
217. Karel McDonough
218. Jeanette Woolsey
219. Madison Moore
220. Lynda Gutierrez
221. Pat Watts
222. Tami Youngman With childhood obesity at an all time high, why wouldn't an establishment, such as the schools, try to do their part to prevent that? I want my kids to have PE. I want my kids to have access to art and music. If this is allowed to happen, less and less PE and art classes will be offered, and replaced by more and more by classes that relate to math science and language arts. School districts will throw in mandatory reading, mandatory study hall for tested curriculum
223. Jennifer Kalm
224. Anita Bennion
225. Jill Ingles
226. Kristin Jenkins
227. Channa Riley
228. Cheree Rowley
229. Ashley Andreason I don't know why dropping these classes as requirements is even being considered. Another reason I refuse to have or raise kids in Utah. This state is going at least 10 years backward. Utah is behind many other states. Lagging and most of the blame lies in our lawmakers here making poor decision after poor decision. Students need these classes.
230. DeAnn Kettenring
231. Whitney Montandon
232. Nicole Young
233. Steve Williams
234. Joy Khader
235. kathie covington
236. Katelyn Anichini
237. Tanya Smith
238. Merla Little
239. Patti McConnell
240. Ruth Jentzsch This would be a huge disappointment if you choose to go forward with taking out these important learning opportunities. And job opportunities. I know that having art, health, P.E., college learning made a difference in my life. It kept me healthier in my mind and physically. This is an important age to teach them about making healthy choices. These subjects are important. Please reconsider.
241. Hayley Clark
242. Sheri Rivera
243. Erica Endo
244. Laura Kettenring
245. Natalie Taylor Natalie Taylor
246. Chelsea Cook
247. Brigid Giles
248. Taylor Thomas
249. Lareta Reynolds
250. Shaunty McMillin Shaunty McMillin
251. cameron comer
252. Marty McMillan Eliminating the requirement for these classes is not a good idea. While it may be seen as an advantage of flexibility in the schedule, the adverse effects will be felt most strongly in our more vulnerable communities, where we need the arts and health education most.
253. Bonne Kelly
254. Jennifer Gardner
255. Corina Crutchfield
256. Monique Pratt
257. Becky Mercer
258. Lisa Cox
259. Taylor Layton
260. Laura Bandara
261. Lanay Page "Students need other classes besides Math, English, Science and Social Studies! Research has show that students who understand music do better in Math. Art allows students to understand social studies better. Art has been around forever and has been used to tell stories and provide evidence of a history of people who lived before. Science is found in the College and Career Awareness classrooms. These classes can aide to student learning and understanding. How science is used everywhere. So much focus in adulthood has to do with being healthy and living longer. Why are we taking classes away from students that teach them about their health in their youth. With all the technology that we have students are not moving. Students play with their phones instead of playing outdoors. Students need to learn about sports and how fun it is to play a sport. I know students cannot sit in class after class without being tired. Students need to have classes where they can move and discover other subjects besides core classes. Required classes open doors to understanding and learning that a student may not get other wise. Please allow students to learn other subjects besides their core classes."
262. Myrna Layton The arts and humanities are ESSENTIAL--they are what make a civilization. And PE--without health, we have nothing.
263. Leslie Peterson
264. Conner Covington
265. David Dee
266. Erin Svoboda
267. Kathleen Sykes
268. Aaron Garrett
269. Andrew Wilson
270. Robert Trujillo Robert Trujillo please keep these programs in our schools they are so import to our civil society.
271. Mercedes Smith
272. Shanna Bott
273. Faith Myers
274. Sydney Cheek-O'Donnell
275. Phillip Kalm
276. Cynthia Rees
277. Casey Romero
278. Kirk Huffaker
279. Tiffani Allen
280. Julie McBeth I strongly believe that the humanities are crucial to development of young people in our society.
281. kirstin ropser
282. Waylon Prince
283. Kristal Christiansen
284. Mandy Williams
285. Linda Smith "Linda Smith
286. Repertory Dance Theatre has served Jr and Middle school students for over 50 years. Using the art of dance, we have contributed to their growth, their self esteem and have helped them develop life long skills that encourage good citizenship, intellectual curiosity and a love for learning. Please continue to give these students the gift of the arts which will enhance their ability to understand and value the world and one another."
287. Jerry Rapier
288. Amy Young
289. Diane Parisi
290. Mary Johnson The arts are the

- foundation of education because all learning begins with the senses. not the cognitive part of the brain. Every person begins the life learning journey by things he/she senses and those senses continue to be the foundation of learning throughout life.. That includes sports as a kinetic sense. Arts and PE MUST be retained for Middle School students!!!
291. Sydney Husseman These classes provide lifetime skills!
292. Victoria Bourns
293. Bruce Lee
294. Steven Labrum
295. Cynthia Roberts
296. Brady Allred It seems counterintuitive to eliminate such important opportunities for our children. Do our representatives on the Board of Education know about any of the research supporting arts education?
297. Tara Shupe
298. Betty Graupe
299. Jennifer Hewlett
300. Giles Larsen
301. Sarah Snelson
302. Anne Lee
303. Darci Lewis
304. Amy Shaffer I kind of can't believe that this is even being considered for elimination, let alone that it already was put in motion with no public feedback. To lose the emphasis and value placed on this kind of learning would be a tragedy.
305. Michelle Sulley
306. Ruth Ann Davenport
307. Edward Fedorov
308. Jennifer Belz Jennifer Belz
309. Turner Bitton
310. Meg Anderson
311. Brian Thompson
312. Paul Meecham
313. Jesse Sheets
314. Genette Williams
315. Catherine Standiford
316. Christian Ruske
317. Matthew Wallace Get rid of the middle school credit requirement for health, arts, physical education, college and career awareness, world languages, and digital literacy? No!!! These are precisely the topic areas that are really important for young people to be exposed to so that they have an appreciation for the world around them. I concur that all of the benefits that are listed in this petition are vitally important. I strongly urge the Utah Board of Education to reconsider the August 4th decision and not do away with the middle school credit requirement for these topics!
318. Karin Larson
319. Glenda Staples
320. Alison Olsen
321. Rachelle Thorpe
322. Pamela Gee "The purpose of holding districts and schools to a unified expectation of offering Fine Arts, PE and health education for all students ensures equitable access and whole child learning. To disband the requirements at the state level diminishes perceived value. The arts connect us. The arts diminish barriers of language, culture and bring greater understanding."
324. Lynnette Owens
325. Talia Stivender
326. Ai Fujii Nelson
327. Mikayla Herndon
328. Barlow Bradford Barlow D Bradford
329. Janelle Johnson
330. Harris Simmons
331. Blythe Enke
332. Melissa Stettler
333. Brooke Lambert Proponents of the plan to end requirement of art and PE classes are pushing a false narrative of wanting to give parents more freedom and choice in their education. The freedom is already there! A parent can opt a student out of PE or art class simply by signing a paper at the district office. So please don't use freedom of choice as an argument! This plan will hurt students who need these programs the most. It is short-sighted and shameful.
334. David Thomas The decision to remove art, music, and p.e. from the curriculum is ill-conceived. For a well rounded graduate, experience with this areas is a necessity. The relationship between the arts and better academic performance is well documented in respected peer-reviewed studies. Do not take action that would label Utah as anti-intellectual and anti-physical fitness. Reverse this action.
335. Elizabeth Wolfer
336. Ranae Greene "Ranae T Greene
337. A well rounded education is not only vital for our students academically, but also socially and emotionally. We are involved in helping students grow into thinking, acting, healthy community members. The arts especially help students connect to who they are and to the broader sense of belonging to a larger community. Please take time to look at the research! "
338. Patricia Harris
339. Rebecca Evans
340. Janis Ferre
341. Robert Baldwin
342. Kathleen Cottle
343. Terry Mitchell Our kids deserve an education that includes arts and physical education. Our brains need the right and left side working together, logic and creativity work best together.
344. Carol Stringham
345. Caitlin Jakositz
346. Nick Velis Nick Velis
347. Kay Jones
348. Jenny Ostraff
349. Jean Marshall Jean Marshall
350. Celine Downen
351. Jonna Ramey
352. Katherine Manousakis
353. Susan Cheney Susan S. Cheney
354. Misti Moberly
355. Cecily Cook
356. Sunny Johnson
357. Lucinda Kindred
358. Kathie Webster
359. Nicole Marriot
360. Luke Pfeil
361. Andrew Scovoronski
362. Georganne Arrington
363. Jacqueline Fisher
364. Ben Lobrot
365. Leslie Timmons
366. Mark Bailey
367. Jessica Alpers
368. Margaret Garr
369. Amber Murray
370. Doris Trujillo
371. Jessica Liu
372. Christine Gailey Christine Gailey
373. Andrea Himoff Andrea Himoff
374. Jessica Wiley
375. Shalee Schmidt
376. Justine Sheedy-Kramer
377. Debbe Wong
378. Autumn Linsley
379. Jim Follett
380. Cami Mower
381. Rebecca Cox I am an arts educator and have seen firsthand the impact that the arts can provide for a youth. Please keep the creative options available!
382. Neil Viertel
383. Kimberly Stewart
384. Tori Schaffer
385. Meghan Ramirez
386. Margaret Sargent Please don't make the arts optional! They are so valuable to our community and to society and need to be taught in the schools!!
387. Janet Blackmer As a lifelong musician, trained partially in school programs, I can definitely say that much of my success in all areas of life I owe to my many years of musical training. I am better at problem solving, concentration, planning and executing goals, and I have greater self esteem than if I had not had the arts in my life. Please do NOT take this gift away from our children.
388. April Ellis
389. Michele Visarraga
390. Sandra Allen Sandra B. Allen
391. Randi Henderson
392. Chris Busch
393. Dustin Nay
394. Louise Mathews These are essential for a quality education.
395. Alexandra Hurst
396. Stephanie Arceneaux
397. Shelby Woolf
398. Richard Scharine
399. Kody Goldsmith
400. Lacie Liu
401. Ryan Tommer As a music teacher, I see the positive impact music can make everyday on my students. Every student deserves the chance to succeed in life, and music makes that happen.
402. Ilse DeKoeyer-Laros
403. Rachel Mills Music was my life in school. I want others to experience the arts in the future.
404. Rachel Kelson
405. Erin Major As someone who teaches the arts, I see how they change students and provide a lifeline for them through their teens years. Removing the requirement at the middle school age will ruin that experience for many people.
406. Jenny Mauro
407. Carol Harrington I am a former Utah educator and I am very concerned by this move on the part of the Utah State Board of Education.
408. Nathan McDonald
409. Karin Steed
410. Katie Anderson
411. Janine Sheldon I had a superb art teacher in 8th grade at Clayton Jr High, Joseph Wixom. Everything I knew about art I learned from him. I worked as a fundraiser at the LA County Museum of Art and at the University of California, Berkeley Art Museum for a total of 20 years, earning a very decent living. I returned to Utah 7 years ago and continued to work in fundraising for the arts. It's ridiculous to think that the arts do not prepare students for lucrative careers and productive citizenship. I am sad that Utah would take such a backward step.
412. Rachel Horman
413. Cheryl Ann Blackley
414. Cora Smith
415. Stephanie Lobrot
416. Becky Durham The arts help people find commonalities and they help
- develop critical thinking. A reverence for beautiful things brings people together. If not encouraged to appreciate music, theatre, literature, dance and visual arts, a huge component of one's humanity atrophies. These classes - art, health, P.E. - offer variety and a place for one's emotional and physical growth to flourish during very formative years. They are the building blocks of a healthier and mature society.
417. Nanci Shino
418. Kira Tafoya
419. Melanie Rollins
420. Becky Roberts The idea of eliminating these topics & activities is insane. Parental and community input is essential to this very wrong decision.
421. Jessica Nield
422. Vedrana Subotic
423. Daniel Featherstone
424. Sarah Shippbotham
425. Candi Mickiewicz
426. Leslie Ireland
427. Krys Comstock
428. Maddy Ashton
429. Rachel Mince
430. Michael Anderson
431. Renee Fitzpatrick Renee Fitzpatrick
432. Mojdeh Sakaki
433. Julie Wood
434. Kate Bechthold
435. Alisha Larson
436. Nicole Coppin
437. Amelia Landay
438. Erik Memmott
439. Michele Dieterich Michele M Dieterich
440. Reed Lobrot
441. Richard Clegg Please reverse your August 4th decision!
442. Erin Thompson Arts, PE, and Health Education are essential to student learning in middle school. I would like to see college and career awareness not required at this age.
443. Kimberly Tanner
444. Laurie Flores
445. Juan Carlos Claudio I taught an entire semester at Bryant Middle School on Cultural Diversity, Equity, and Democratic Thinking through Dance and Movement with teacher Miss Andrea Butterfield, under the direction of Principal Mr. James Yopias. The results were incredible. Not only were the students able to share common experiences about their heritage and culture, but became advocates at their school and communities by providing performances, classroom exhibit, and power point research presentations. They were able to share ideas through movement, drawings and public speaking. They integrated their knowledge and experiences with their daily lives and future dreams in higher education. This allowed them to better understand the inner struggles in the adolescent years. At Bryant middle school we were able to find solutions that helped them thrive and succeed in school and in other particular subject matters. This is the kind of work that the Arts provide to our students in Utah. Dance and other Art forms are not just what most people think of as a form of entertainment, perhaps wasted time, or even for that matter belonging to the elite. But Arts in Education are a true disclosure of ideas, thoughts and aspirations our students have. These are experiences our students are interested and willing to invest and to share with the rest of the world. Please help to open

- Utah education to the world of imagination, entrepreneurial, problem solving, healthy, creative and uncomplicated minds. Movement is the embodiment of thought; thinking directs action; action creates change. -Juan Carlos Claudio, MFA (Dance Artist, Educator, Advocate and Mentor)
446. Suzann Heiner
447. Margo Turner
448. Pamela Jones
449. Michael Murphy Michael H Murphy
450. Danell Hathaway
451. Renee Sass Creating a well rounded person is what our education system should be creating.
452. Deb Sawyer
453. William Byrnes As a former Utah resident and former Dean of the College of Performing and Visual Arts (CPVA) at SUU, I urge the Board to reconsider the August 4 decision to remove the Middle School credit requirement for health, arts, physical education, college and career awareness, world languages, and digital literacy. The students who studied in our college often had their arts awakening in Middle School. I can see how giving less value to these multiple educational pathways will have a negative impact on arts education in Utah and in the long run, it will diminish the quality of life in its communities.
454. Nicole McDermott
455. Rebecca Maddox
456. Scott Huntsman
457. Carol Edison
458. Theresa Sanford
459. Jay Nolan
460. Charice Carroll
461. Susan F Fleming The arts provide a different kind of learning experience than regular subjects and are critical to helping students find their "voice". Some students respond to the arts very strongly at this age and can be motivated just because ART is offered. A visual and musical education is fundamental to our humanity and to creative and disciplined expression.
462. Emmy Thomson
463. Jesse DeHay
464. Brandon Cressall
465. Erin Patrick
466. Liza Whiting
467. Nicole Willmore
468. Tamara Burnside
469. Harmony Button
470. Virginia Catharall
471. Gregory Rigby
472. Cindi Arnold As a music educator, I plead with you to reconsider this decision. The effects will be devastating, especially to children in poorer districts!
473. Monica Campbell
474. George Nolan Do what is best for the students.
475. Alyssa Burrows
476. Mike Tobin
477. Leona Blackbird
478. John Nielsen John Nielsen
479. Brian Vaughn
480. Lydia Pohly
481. Nathan Cunningham
482. Stanford Neering Stanford Neering
483. John D'arcy
484. Whitney Wilde
485. Jillian Shipman
486. Britta Hughes
487. Chris Roberts I have been an elementary school teacher for 36 years and I have always taught the arts, brought arts experiences to the school and brought my students to art experiences (museums, dance performances, theatre performances, music performances). The arts are a critical part of a student's education.
488. Marie Van Rosendaal
489. Yebel Gallegos
490. Victor Neves The "don't publish this" should tell me if you're going to publish my name or all of my address details
491. Kevin Cassidy
492. Megan Woods
493. Anne Hansen
494. Megan Norton
495. Michelle Field As a parent I know that the ARTS, Languages, and Physical Education have been an important part of my children's education. Please don't take these opportunities away from them.
496. Todd Field
497. Garrett Collins
498. Amanda Wilkins
499. Michelle Giardina
500. Steven Kiefer I see this as a matter of just another erosion of the quality of education available. It also is typical of what I consider "transparency failures" or obfuscations by this Board, in what appears to be a lack of willingness to tackle the the root issues.
501. Sara Gardner
502. Sierra Christensen
503. Eric Devey
504. Cally Flox
505. Carrie Larsen
506. Aimee Holt
507. Carol Johnson
508. John Clay John Clay I was a teacher for over 25 years in the Salt Lake City School District. Since retirement I have been a tutor for first generation kids at East High School. I have watched hundreds of students register for classes and wonder what to take. Art, Health, and PE have always been needed classes that students enjoy. Students need a diverse understanding to enjoy school and learn the tools that help them become productive citizens. The students I have seen often have no idea what classes to register for and having these required subjects has provided the structure they need to take classes important to them. Often students just take the "easiest" classes and that is a shame. They need to be challenged with classes that are important and structure to guide their choices.
509. Brianna Larson
510. Katie Jessop
511. Ronni Adams
512. Janice Carlsen
513. Jeremy Harris It is ridiculous to think that this conversation is still happening. Please reverse your decision.
514. Emma Steuart
515. Renn Butterfield
516. Tiffany Pickett
517. Megan Smith Both the arts and health education are two factors that help students learn better, and retain information for much longer. Let's move away from school for grades and move toward school for better people who walk away with real life skills that will help them contribute positively to community and country.
518. Holly Fowles
519. Nick Harker
520. Jonathan Griffin
521. Stefania Battezzato
522. Reese Johnson
523. Briana Farr
524. Jim Tozer Arts in the schools of the state is a key ingredient in the special recipe that makes Utah so special. Do not mess with it
525. Jill Gubler I strongly urge you to put the arts back into the schools. I have taught music lessons for 48 years and the kids who have music in their life are not only great musicians, but better at math and learn to do hard things. It makes them better people. They learn to listen better. To solve problems in small chunks. They learn that they can accomplish something huge with a daily dedication to their craft.
526. Teresa Love Thanks, Janet Cannon, my rep for voting against the change!
527. Windi Hall
528. Diana Belka The human mind is a wondrous thing and studying music helps develop and achieve higher academic skills. In one study, music participation was shown to account for 36 percent of the variance in academic achievement. Students who study music develop faster physically, mentally, emotionally and socially. It can lead to increased learning in mathematics and science and improve reading ability in slow young readers. What on earth would motivate our leaders to do away with the one thing that can enhance a child's developing brain. This is a ludicrous and thoughtless decision and must be overturned for our children's future educational benefit.
529. James Rees
530. Judy Wilkerson
531. Loa Kay Bowthorpe
532. Maria Lee
533. Katie Tozer
534. Chauncey Secrist
535. Lindsey Taylor
536. Karen Anderson Karen Anderson
537. Shalynn Gibson
538. Victoria Savage
539. Cyndalynn Tilley Cyndalynn Tilley
540. Patricia West
541. Susan Schofield
542. Jason Purdie
543. Melisse Grey
544. Amanda Mills
545. Diane Asay
546. Kaitlyn Curry
547. Nathan Bennion
548. Michael Halverson
549. Holly Burton This decision is only hurting the children of Utah. How did this ever get passed? The decision needs to be reversed!
550. Wendell Hurst FINANCIALLY, narrowing the curriculum is a very bad strategy. When you take out the classes that many children love, that keep them coming to school until they graduate, you get more dropouts. Dropouts become a drain on society, in elevated social services costs, and diminished tax revenue. If a \$3 million music program in a school system keeps FIVE children from dropping out of school, it pays for itself in reduced costs for welfare and increased tax collection due to higher earnings by those FIVE children - \$600,000 over a lifetime for each one. Instrumental music, choir, drama, oil painting, watercolor, sculpture, cooking, sewing, auto mechanics, wood shop, and even athletics, are just a few of the school classes that short-sighted legislators are over-anxious to cut because they think they are too expensive. THESE CLASSES PAY FOR THEMSELVES!
- Students who have a reason to love school will get their math and English homework done, and do better in all subjects, instead of just quitting, because all reading and math is stifling. We should just shell out the money now, and get happy, productive GRADUATES instead of paying through the nose later to build more prisons and shelters for dropouts.
551. Julia Ashworth
552. Penni Eads I understand that you think it may be easier for parents and students to choose what classes/ career path they want to take, but junior high students may not have been given the gift of music and art before junior high, and parents may not realize it's benefit in their children's lives, so it is imperative that the arts be required. It is also important to learn about health, physical education, languages, and digital literacy to increase world and career awareness. I do not agree with the state school board making such an unwise decision. It makes me wonder if the Utah State Board of Education has not been educated in music and the arts, nutrition, exercise, and the importance of cultural awareness through language training. Does the Utah State Board think children will gain digital skills on their own to prepare for high school? Is there a hidden agenda along with Common Core? Please take the people of UT seriously and remove Common Core and leave these important core classes. Does the Utah State Board of Education realize that music and the arts change the world by enlightening the world, that languages, that digital skills increase communication, and that physical health improves quality of life? Music, Art, Languages, Physical Education, and Digital Literacy are all important sciences. Do what is right.
553. Blair Lyon
554. Olivia Godfrey
555. Cherie Kahmann
556. Rebekah Hartsthorn
557. Angela Avila
558. Karla Hartle
559. Anna McNamer
560. Shelly Bills
561. Autumn Harding
562. Elizabeth Loveridge
563. Rachel Leber
564. Julianna Gylseth "The arts are vital to a healthy culture. Physical Education is vital to a healthy community. Middle Schoolers are still in their formative years, and it's vital that we expose them to learning that will expand their view to higher virtues, and cultural refinement. The belief that children can choose on their own to enroll in arts activities during or after school is short sighted, and only provides such opportunities to families who have the money (or foresight) to enroll their children. Children / students from all walks of life deserve a quality education, including exposure to the highest forms of creativity, and personal health. We owe it to our future population and state-wide community to fill their souls with high ideals! Please see beyond money, and ensure that our students receive an arts education! As a side-note, I have personally seen countless students of mine who have left the elementary school, and found themselves enrolling in a required band or orchestra only to find out that they had a gift/ability to play an instrument that they never knew they

- had before. The effects in self-confidence, self-development, intellectual ability, discipline, relationship building, and life happiness are immeasurable. They come back to me thrilled about what they have accomplished! The arts provide joy, and perspective in a world that is impoverished in human spirit. Honestly, we should be doing more than simply providing classes (required classes are just a start) to help our communities be rich in culture, and it is the job of our community leaders to have greater vision of how we can encourage cultural beauty, and strength in our state. "
565. Wendy Bruce
566. Camille Kilpack
567. Laura Dickey This is about as dumb as things we do in Kentucky. You like that comparison?
568. Jaime Clement
569. Rebecca O'Boyle
570. Lori Higbee
571. Linda Seamons Music helps every student. Keep it as a requirement in the middle schools.
572. Rory Scanlon
573. Marni Neslen
574. Becky Modderman
575. Deanna Lee
576. Jorge Rodriguez
577. Sue Nielsen
578. Patrice Hunt Sometime we don't see the profound negative affect governmental decisions have on us, our children, our society until many years down the road. I think this would be a BIG mistake to remove the arts requirement from the middle school and all public schools for that matter.
579. Rebecca Montgomery
580. Lennie Swenson
581. Cynthia Richards Cynthia Vance Richards
582. Suzanne Attix Suzanne Attix
583. Melissa Livengood Melissa Livengood- It is impossible for me to comprehend how the Board of Education could think that it was a good idea to remove PE, Art, Music, etc. from Middle School curriculum. It is a shockingly misguided move. The arts help us explore what it is to be human, to look and listen with open eyes and ears. Orchestra, sports, choir, music theater... They all teach us to work together to create something wonderful. Haven't today's events shown us the importance of this?
584. Liz Edwards
585. Brady Manley
586. Rebeca Wallin
587. Crystal Young-Otterstrom
588. Sara Penny Arts enrich our lives and many students will not have access if public school programs are weakened. We value the skills of cooperation, creativity, and discipline that are involved in choir, band, orchestra, dance, and other art forms. Just for the listening skills we should have more students involved in music. If a child can hear the difference between a B and a B flat then they certainly have a much better chance of hearing the chemistry assignment. Attention to detail and so many more skills are developed through the arts. The requirement encourages the students to pursue an art form of their choice and is an essential part of being an educated person.
589. Erika Gerhards
590. Lori Samuels
591. Cassandra Broadhead Cassandra Broadhead
592. Marlene Kay After all the work that has been done in the state I to integrate the arts into the elementary curriculum, I am shocked and saddened that our state leaders would take such a backwards and short sighted step. We know better and our children deserve all the enriched education we can give them. Please don't do this!
593. Lynda Broadbent
594. Cathy Kemp
595. John Newman Removing the arts requirement could effectively eliminate drama, art, music, and dance courses in middle schools throughout the states. The requirement is one of the few balancing forces that keep middle schools from teaching reading, writing, and mathematics exclusively at the expense of the arts, humanities, and sciences.
596. Brett Finlay I suppose if the the board of education wants a bunch of chubby, unhealthy robots to teach then they should continue with this action. PE encourages healthy activities team work and is just fun. The arts encourage critical thinking, creativity and free thinking. Oh wait, ok so chubby unhealthy robots are what the board of education wants. Save a buck somewhere else Board of Education.
597. Molly Cannon
598. Amanda Whitaker
599. Sheri Gibb
600. Kaitlin Mills
601. Julia Barrientos
602. Jamie Sigger
603. Aubry Dalley
604. Cindy Hansen
605. Krista Perkins
606. Autumn Montgomery Autumn Montgomery
607. Suzanne Geyer I believe that having the arts is very important for our young people growing up.
608. Jessica Baynes
609. Kathy Thompson Kathy Thompson
610. Molly Schurig Why did you even take it away in the first place? Are you morons? So many students need those classes to let off steam during the day and to cope with a lot of anxiety piled on them from core classes. Put those classes back in our schools!!
611. Valerie Evensen
612. Kenneth Cannon
613. Aubri Elder
614. Debora Escalante Debora Escalante
615. Heather Francis
616. Jesse Larsen
617. Kerri Hammond
618. Gabriela Zabka Gabriela Zabka
619. Karina LeBaron
620. Benjamin Peterson
621. Laura Wirthlin
622. Michael McAinsh Th School Board is making a serious mistake by eliminating art from the credit requirements for middle school. An artless society will make our country no different than the Islamic State (ISIS) which also wants to eliminate art from schools! Michael J. McAinsh
623. Cary Edwards
624. Lola Taylor
625. Emily Strobell
626. Devin Brennan
627. Jessica Scott
628. Camella Talbot
629. Rob Swenson
630. Spencer Duncan
631. Jocelyn Soderstrom
632. Naomi Evans
633. Heather Talbot
634. Melissa Brown
635. Elizabeth Skabelund
636. Dianne Amesse Dianne Amesse
637. Nikole Rios Health especially needs to be offered and required; middle school is when puberty strikes. I can't believe kids in Utah might not have the opportunity to learn about what is happening to them during this difficult and awkward time. Although parents can (and arguably should) teach their children this, that simply doesn't happen enough.
638. Roger Miller I would like to hear the reasoning of those who voted to eliminate these subjects. Are the arguments anecdotal, financial, prejudiced toward other subjects deemed more helpful to young minds? Having taught "general music" in Utah public schools for several years, I know that poor curriculum design can be a problem, but it is also true that well-designed courses taught by skilled teachers can be very interesting, attractive, and valuable to young people. And, of course, all serious studies indicate the value of the arts in achieving positive educational outcomes. As for world languages, I think it should be a requirement that every member of the State School Board be fluent in at least one non-English language. The ability to speak a foreign language is the mark of any well-educated person and a central element in intercultural understanding. We Americans have a shabby record in this area and should be concerned with more and better effort in this area, not less. PE courses should include not only physical activity but education in basic nutrition. We are killing ourselves and our children with our poor eating attitudes and lack of understanding about how what we eat shapes every other aspect of our health and well being. The result is astronomical health insurance costs related to diseases and conditions that are totally preventable. Where is our common sense?
639. Alex Barlow
640. Marie-Luise Smith
641. Joel Wallin Joel R. Wallin
642. Sylvia Nibley
643. Lynden Emerson
644. Vivian Gubler
645. Vicki Wartman
646. S Rivka Levy The arts are a critical component to development AND JOY.
647. Michiru Onizuka
648. Katherine McDonald
649. Anna Lucero
650. Cooper Wilt
651. Cynda Nygaard
652. Shoni Hansen
653. Mindy Young
654. Midge Rhodes
655. Erin Taylor
656. Hanna Gemperline
657. Patty Tobin
658. Jenifer Blackner
659. Colleen Nerdin
660. Bryce Chamberlain
661. kathleen koprowski
662. Tamara Hill
663. Natalie Terry
664. Erin Bjorn
665. Jessica Benson
666. Wanda Hatton We need to keep progressing in our education system...and that means the arts, health and PE. Arts are extremely important as creativity increases brain health and function.
667. Katherine Poulsen "The benefits of keeping arts in the schools, penetrates all areas of study.
668. Katherine Poulsen"
669. Farran Brown
670. Kristin Bennett
671. Colleen Uhl
672. Susann Spencer "These classes develop other parts of our brain that lead to resourcing and perceiving more creative and diverse solutions to even our technology driven workplace issues. These classes connect us with our unique humanity and emotional heartfelt responses to the world around us so necessary to be able to participate and offer support and solutions to make the world a more supportive, healthy, functional place for everyone.
673. Tyler Pack
674. Emily Smith
675. Lori Grant
676. Julie Hill
677. Robin Tenbrink I am a PE and Health teacher. This is a horrible move by USBE that will negatively affect our children. Please read the research and reverse your decision.
678. J. Ryan Waddoups
679. Sara Mann Children need the arts to become well rounded contributing members of society.
680. Robby Garrison
681. Brenda Baker
682. Scott Perry
683. Karen Kendall What more can you do to gut education in this state? The arts, PE and Health are essential components to a child's mental and physical health. Art, in particular, is often the one thing that a student that doesn't fit in anywhere else can find him/herself, the thing that connects them to school and to others, and they often find this connection in middle school - a time when self esteem is forming and bullying is rampant. To take away Art and PE from students at this age is a travesty. Do the right thing, and keep art, PE and Health in middle school curriculum.
684. Elizabeth Beebe This decision is embarrassing to our state. We need to invest in our children. They are our future.
685. Andrezza Richardson
686. Carrie Kim Deamer
687. Ann Fouts Lack of requirement equals lack of funding. These programs will not survive.
688. John Wisser
689. Heather Bunker
690. Suzanne Wagner Suzanne Wagner
691. Lacey Gatherum
692. Valerie Littleton
693. Christine Gibbs
694. Erin Noble
695. Janet Alcala
696. Demarie Long
697. Mariah Bavaro
698. Erin Ellis
699. Janae Warren
700. Rachel Arteta
701. Fahina Tavake-Pasi Fahina Tavake-Pasi
702. Lynda Bonner We already have one of the lowest standards of education in the country, why would we strive to make it worse?
703. Cynthia Micken
704. Marjann Hicken
705. Tori January
706. Jessica Hearst
707. Melissa Longhurst
708. Debra Larsen
709. Holly Horton "Students often

- don't recognize an interest or talent they have until they are introduced to it and allowed to participate. Art and music classes not only teach an appreciation for the different genres of those fields, they often open doors students would never have gone through in their own. Physical exercise is something we need for our entire lives. The PE classes teach correct forms, variety, and also help discover some interests or talents for students. Not all students afford club sports or have parents willing to kept them try the different ones offered. The classes they take give them opportunities and exposure they otherwise would miss. Many students will not take these classes as an elective and they will miss valuable and necessary training and exposure which could change the direction of their lives for the better."
710. Steven Purcell
711. Mackenzie Hyer
712. Kimberly Opunui
713. Paul Sorenson "With obesity becoming a national serious problem, how can we take exercise out of our schools. Keeping The arts in schools is critical to our children. The arts provide an important roll to our children's lives. The all of arts stimulate our brain's creativity that affects every part of the brain. The arts also provide an outlet and diversion to every day issues and problems. It enriches every day life.
714. Stephen Voorhees
715. Duane Hill
716. Erica Womack
717. Teagan Davis There is nothing more important in middle school than learning how beautifully large the world is, and what you can do to experience it. Taking away arts and P.E enforces an attitude consistent with underachievement and being "just good enough", while also destroying the very difference between elementary and middle school; that you can learn whatever you want and excel at the subjects you enjoy the most. Don't take away that which broadened my horizons and made me the person I am today.
718. Keri Graybill
719. Michael Crookston Our thinking about education is missing the point so much. Look at history. Many of the cultures with the greatest mathematicians and engineers also highly valued the arts. Just because a student may not become a professional musician doesn't mean it's study doesn't have enormous merit. Learning to read, play, express, listen, collaborate, and do the mechanics of playing an instrument or making music is some of the most engaging and stimulating things in a students day or even life and has enormous amounts of evidence to support that. Our kids need to learn to be human, and therefore they need the humanities. With an effort to put more and more technology time in for our students I would argue that the exact opposite would be better for them.
720. Judy Cox
721. Shantel Hansen Shantel C Hansen
722. Amy Jones
723. Thomas Wm Taylor "I'm a retired partner of the Boston law firm Ropes & Gray. I'm an honors graduate of Harvard Law, a Founding Fellow of the American College of Bond Counsel. I was first brought to Utah for a few weeks by two law firms who needed my expertise in tax exempt finance deal involving the University in Provo and the city's plans for a trash incinerator. I solved their complex financing problem and I fell in love with Salt Lake City and the Wasatch. I am now a full, voting citizen of the State, resident in the city, living in a house straight across 1300 from the McGillis School. I'm something around 74 years old and I am principal trumpet with the not-for-profit Utah Philharmonic Orchestra. I was followed to Utah by my son (now a Research Geologist on the faculty at the University) and his family.. Without reservation, I join in the petition: "As your constituents, we ask you to reverse your August 4th decision to remove the Middle School credit requirement for health, arts, physical education, college and career awareness, world languages, and digital literacy." I CAME TO UTAH BECAUSE OF THE EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL RICHNESS OF THIS BEAUTIFUL STATE. PLEASE DON'T GIVE IT UP!!!!!"
724. A.J. Martine My daughter-in-law, Kat Martinez whom is getting very involved with political and social issues, brought this to my attention.
725. Jemina Keller
726. Rick Meier
727. Tom Stillinger
728. Stacey Jackson I am a veteran mathematics teacher. Students need a well rounded educational experience. Life is more than just math, science, and language arts. Having a variety of required courses positively impacts kids. Aren't we trying to educate the whole child?
729. Teresa Conway
730. Yolane Rodriguez
731. Claudia Marsden Please reinstate the requirements for Health, P.E. and the arts. Society is in need of individuals who are health minded. A large component of a culture is its arts. Without this we miss out on the experience, the ability to calm our own souls, to interact and perform and present through the arts.
732. James Daley
733. Ryan Wauer
734. Troy Hagemeyer
735. Christian DeYoung
736. Pamela Batista
737. Dave Lamb
738. Jason Lemmon Jason Lemmon
739. Shane Slagle
740. Kristine Marble As a former student of public education, the ONLY thing that had my full attention was the break from the monotony. My favorite subjects were always after recess, music, art, and PE. I realize this was because my mind was refreshed. As a former teacher, I can see this is true in almost all students. Good luck trying to capture the attention of those whose imagination is unlimited.
741. Chris Bautner
742. Warren Kunz
743. Melissa Martinez
744. Melanie Watson
745. Josh Coombs
746. Paige Fox I would not have survived High School nor succeeded with out the arts department. My saving grace through the battles of high school and junior high was the orchestra program. I met all of my friends there, it was the one class I felt comfortable in. Those subjects allow for students to find what part of society they will fit into. And people in the arts are desperately needed. It the cuts to the arts continue eventually there will be no more symphonies to attend in each area, no plays on smaller levels for the everyday man, tv would lose many actors with practice. I understand the need for the stem, English and history based subjects as I am workbig towards a mathematics major. But all of those subjects need the arts to complete them. English with out creativity is boring. Creativity is. Required for everything and the way main subjects are taught, creativity is not allowed. Without creativity from the arts society will never move forward.
747. Christopher Herrera
748. Emma Jones If you want this generation of students to grow and make our community a better place then they need to be given the chance to do so. Music, art, sports, and language are what set students apart from others. They can excel beyond common core and make something better of themselves. Give them this opportunity.
749. Marcus Daley
750. Sandra Vander Wilt
751. Aileen Duong
752. Katelynn McKeeth
753. RuthAnn Boteman
754. Casey Koldewyn
755. Ashley Magaffin
756. Heidi Bautner
757. Madison Foulger
758. David Thalmann David Thalmann
759. Sara Wilson
760. Raquel Carrillo Raquel
761. Lacie Shirley
762. Rick Hendricks
763. Melanie Gearig
764. Lisa Bergantz
765. Lisa Lamb
766. Lawon Nolan Remember the value of teaching the whole child and not just training them to be workers. A child is more than the 40 hour job they will work some day. They are humans that need to be taught to have cultural experiences that will allow them to be compassionate, thoughtful and intelligent adults.
767. Max Ishihara
768. Michael Bautner
769. Patricia Clay Children need to be exposed to all the areas of education. Do not leave up to the districts!!! Have a backbone and don't hand your responsibilities away.
770. Miguel Chuaqui
771. Joseph Hutchison
772. Barbara Scowcroft
773. Denise Keller
774. Bonnie Mortensen
775. Amanda McKibbin
776. Kirsten Darrington
777. Brian Bennett The arts are every bit as important as all other school subjects-what makes life worth living!
778. William Marsh I believe it is important to have the arts, health, and PE in the middle school curriculum to provide a more rounded education for the students.
779. Emily Nelson
780. Klaudia Nelson
781. Brian Despain
782. Bridgett Johnson
783. Jennifer Murphy
784. David Clay Please, if our state board is going to use statics to back their decisions, they also have to give credit to the research that has been done to defend these subjects in school. You can't just ignore them.
785. Annalise Egan
786. Cara Pomeroy
787. Abby Clay
788. Nachele McEwan
789. Monica Kelly
790. Kelly Ball
791. Jaynanne Nauman
792. Annette Spainhower
793. Angelina Arnold
794. Sam Dixon This should not be an issue. It should always be part of the curriculum.
795. Tammy Drager Tammy Drager
796. Daniel Stringham Getting rid of PE results in more fat people.
797. Jennifer Hinchman The arts and physical education are so important! They help transfer learning of all other subjects. PLEASE do not take these classes away.
798. Darren Saunders
799. Jana Willhite Middle schools arts classes helped me through a difficult time of loneliness and discomfort. Middle school is hard. Classes in the arts and PE can help students become comfortable with themselves, and all of these classes will prepare them for the future.
800. Mariah Mellus I'm very disheartened and disappointed that the State School Board would cut the requirement for classes like Heath, P.E, Arts and College and Career Readiness. Those classes are essential in providing coping skills for adult life. Talking the weight of these classes away is a societal tragedy that will have serious ramifications for generations.
801. Clara Lee
802. Renel Rytting
803. Clive Romney
804. Ashley Clark
805. RuthAnn Taylor
806. Leo Beecher
807. Caitie O.
808. Dawn Blood
809. Jerry Clark
810. Cherie Beach
811. Kathy Bekkemellom
812. Joseph Cochran
813. Sandy Krueger
814. Alisha Hagey
815. Leslie Brock
816. Susan Earl
817. Gayle M
818. Eric Noyes
819. Jody Reid Education is best accomplished when the entire person is considered. The elimination of these requirements will lead to lasting detrimental effects upon the children as indicated by abundant research.
820. Cassidy Ludeman
821. Ian Ludeman
822. Jennie Ruth Alvey
823. Eve Garcia My two boys, ages 8 and 13, would never choose to take a class in the arts. They don't think that they're good at it. But as their mother, I know that they need it is part of their education. I want them to experience doing something outside of their experience. Whether they love it or hate it, the arts teaches students to see the world and themselves in a whole new way. That perspective building experience is worth so much to their education.
824. Rachelle French
825. Christina Jacobs
826. Nila Wootton
827. Jenny Aguilar
828. Kathi Lamb
829. Leland Doller
830. Nancy Andersen
831. H New
832. Corinne Apezteguia

833. Laura Decker Everyone learns differently. In fact, most people learn best through interactive education like the arts. This ruling falsely claims that parents can make informed decisions about their students' electives and can supplement what they don't get at school with extracurricular activities. This assumption privileges students whose parents are active in their education and who come from families who can afford extracurricular activities! I work in education and know you cannot undervalue options!
834. Thomas Durham The GREEKS understood the importance of the arts, and particularly MUSIC as it was part of the ancient curriculum for all those who called themselves civilized and educated. It was taught alongside grammar, arithmetic, logic, dialectic, astronomy, and geometry. THIS was the bedrock core of Western Civilization's educational origins.
835. Katie Jepson
836. Porter Sproul A diverse education is critical to developing well-rounded members of society. We thrive when we allow education to be experimental and expose our young people to a variety of subjects.
837. Paul Krueger
838. Jayna Stark
839. Wendy Tyler
840. Sara Susov As an educator, I recognize the importance of keeping these classes in our system. These are the classes that students come to school for. These are the classes that help my ADHD kiddos get their energy out. Making these classes optional is not only a bad idea for teachers, but also for students. This will allow students to do a half of day of school and then leave, since they're not required to be there all day. The students in elementary, middle, and high schools are generally not intrinsically motivated, and removing these classes will give them an excuse to skip school, or not graduate at all.
841. Kathryn Gailey
842. Annie Hanks
843. Brendon French
844. Jeanette Nicholls
845. Nancy Wilhite
846. Janet Laureiro
847. Karl Behling The arts are vital to a complete education. We are preparing the next generation of leaders of industry and leaders of nations. If they fail the world tomorrow, it's on us today.
848. Katie Clegg
849. Mara Kellogg The arts teach kids how to be human and how to express themselves in creative ways. We need more of that in the world, not less.
850. Melinda Hilyard
851. Melissa Lander
852. Mari Keller Mari Keller
853. Chase Mullen These things are vital in everyone's development.
854. Donna Radmall This is too important to let drop through the cracks of public opinion. No one I have talked to is in favor of this law. Many are just shaking their heads in disbelief!
855. Janet Fericks
856. Kristen Hughes
857. Jackie Poll
858. Christine Graham
859. Alondra Melendez
860. Kelly Stanton
861. Miles Rytting
862. Alondra Diaz
863. Annie Azevedo
864. Isaac Azevedo III
865. Camilla Frank
866. Beth Blackburn
867. Joanne Rowland
868. Cristina Reyes
869. Lyssa Epperson
870. Donald Buchanan Arts and Physical Education are simply not optional.
871. Gordon Epperson To get rid of arts credits in junior high is the dumbest idea since common core. The best way for kids to learn math and even history is music! Music has brought about revolutions. People are going to lose their jobs because you idiots won't give more funding to schools so you can fill your own pockets. You legislators are fired.
872. Bobi Taylor
873. Sarah Scriver
874. MacKenzie Largent
875. Diane Morrell
876. Anna Smith
877. Shawn Stringham
878. Kim Ayala
879. James Perkins
880. Gaby Galvan
881. Angie Paskett
882. Diann Shields
883. Robert Lemmon
884. Patricia Lambdin Horrible decision for our students!
885. Kristene Searle
886. Samantha Farr
887. Jennifer Lee
888. Angee Tanner
889. Alexia Crandall
890. Laurel (Lark) Galli Laurel Galli
891. Kraig Varner Study what Finland has done and stop screwing around!!!!!!
892. Shelli Smith
893. Lynda Roper
894. Kevin Talbot Knowledge of Arts, Physical Education, and Health are vital to being a well rounded individual. I hope that the School Board can find a way to provide for building a full and rich experience for our growing young people.
895. Kalista Leggat
896. Debbie Ditton
897. Laura Cannon
898. Rich Lambert
899. Amanda Elton
900. Jill Rindlisbacher
901. Melanie Bateman
902. Erin Davis
903. Gemma Grover
904. Giselle Rasheta
905. Kristin McQuivey I feel that these classes are incredibly important for our youth. Please reconsider your decision. Art, Health, and PE add great value and are integral to a complete and well-rounded education.
906. Madeleine Homer
907. Matt Fields
908. Abby Wilson
909. Rebecca Vail
910. Rachel Lewis
911. Lizzy Ungerman
912. JoLin Cook
913. Jeanine Reeves
914. Kristen Nichols
915. Deborah Brey
916. Lexie Corbett
917. Alyssa Horton
918. Catherine Gentry
919. Rachel Williams
920. Nicole Howard
921. Shae Bunker Don't reverse historical progress.
922. Chase Dalton
923. Stacy Goulding
924. Ron Andersen Raonald W Andersen
925. Caitlyn Smith I think health and pe are some of the most valuable subjects kids could be taking in school. They affect kids life decisions and over all well being.
926. Christen Anderson
927. Dave Harris
928. Whitney Marcum
929. Nichole Young Clarke
930. Lammett Veenstra At 70, I still benefit from the instrumental music of junior high (middle) school.
931. Ann Larsen
932. Ashley Axley
933. Niels Hansen
934. Colette Sawyer
935. Elisabeth Nebeker Elisabeth Nebeker
936. Claudia Killian
937. Cindy Rosenlund I can't believe this was ever removed in the first place. Junior high is a tough transition age anyway, why would you not want to give them every advantage for success and better outlets for their changing and overactive hormones. Thank you for reconsidering this decision.
938. Shelly Christensen Shelly Christensen. As a certified teacher in Canyons district, and mother of, 5 I can assure you that P.E., arts and music classes are essential to the well being and balance of developing young students. Many may say that students can get this kind of education outside of public education but that is an elitist belief. Students who are not exposed to or have opportunities to participate in Arts and P.E. at school may never have the opportunity due to financial restrictions.
939. Benjamin Phillips
940. Denise Wad
941. Taylor Jennings
942. Janice Bentley There is too much pressure on our students already and they need to learn healthy ways to cope with stress. PE allows students to move freely and learn about themselves in a way that a classroom environment cannot. Health should be mandatory for all students. Our country has the highest rates of obesity in the world and our children need to be educated on healthy nutrition and choices. Utah also has one of the highest suicide rates for teens - Health classes cover healthy coping techniques and helps to eliminate the stigma surrounding mental health issues.
943. Evelyn Partner Evelyn Partner
944. Jennifer Morgan
945. sharon fletcher sharon naomi fletcher
946. Laura Taggart
947. Patrick Hubley
948. Janet McIntosh As a middle school math teacher, I feel it is critical to provide our students with a well balanced education. These classes offer students a creative venue to explore and develop their unique talents. It gives some students a reason to succeed in their education. It is a detriment to our youth not to educate them in what a healthy lifestyle entails and show them through physical activity that is provided through P.E. classes. This is the only physical activity some students receive. In an increasingly sedentary society, it is critical that we at least provide awareness to students on the health effects due to healthy or unhealthy living so they are able to make better life choices.
949. Sonja Chesley
950. Rachel Bates
951. Stephanie Verdoia
952. Patricia Legant Participation in music, art, and PE fosters friendships across social class, ethnicity, color, and religion, potentially creating more tolerant adults.
953. Sarah Howe The Arts are extremely important. Students cannot be fully educated without P.E., Health and the Arts. The loss of these three areas would have a tremendous impact on our students. Schools today retain students who may have dropped out had it not been for the Arts and Sports. This does not help the public education system, but rather disservices everything that public ed represents.
954. judi morse top the corruption in the school system
955. Monika Jones
956. Samantha Robison Samantha Robison
957. Felicia Baca
958. Janel Williams
959. Jena Woodbury
960. Elayna Pedersen
961. thomas Hoffman
962. Anna Podwys
963. Kandace Steadman Kandace Steadman
964. Emma Siddoway
965. Gretchen Dietrich
966. Chris Conard
967. Cheyanne Anderson
968. Erin Call
969. Tiffany Horrocks
970. Charlotte Hurley For some of our children, this is the only time during their day that they can relax and not feel like they are running in last place. These credits are essential for a well rounded education.
971. Jeff Horne
972. Ann Gibson
973. Kristen Neilson
974. Leslie Parrott
975. Jorge Rojas
976. Aaron Anderson If you remove health, arts, physical education, college and career awareness, world languages, and digital literacy what remains to be taught; Reading, Writing, and Arithmetic? What would they read and write about if they don't have they arts or world languages. As far as I'm concerned, cut PE. I hated it in elementary school, I hated it in Jr. High, I hated it in High School and I still hate it. But the moment you start cutting one program, others have to go too. Where does this lunacy end?
977. Amberly Lambertsen
978. Bryan Romney If this requirement is deleted from the requirements of Junior High School Education, it represents a GIANT step backwards to our society. What a disservice to our future generation this represents. How will these children appreciate these vital elements in their lives unless we require them to at least be given the chance to experience these vital aspects to life. If deleted, this tells our future leaders that it isn't important to us so why should it be important to them. What a legacy we'd leave them. So sad that this would even be talked about yet alone to be considered an option.
979. Emily Jorgensen I am a former music teacher, now parent. I have seen the effects music and the arts have on young minds and it is astounding. It baffles me that with all research done that you have made this decision. I strongly suggest you reconsider, for the

980. benefit of our children.
981. Sara Lambrinos
982. Christine Boczek
983. Becca Keel
984. Randeel Lloyd
985. Britta Bourdaghs
986. David Hawkins There are hosts of peer-review research (some conducted here at our own U of U) demonstrating the value of creative studies and structured physical education on children's development, academic performance, and overall well-being. Please restore funding to these vital areas for our middle school children.
987. Craig E. Ferrin, Ph.D. "In the future, anything that can be turned into an algorithm will be outsourced to computers or if the algorithm requires human interaction it will be outsourced to other countries where it can be done with substantially less expense. Thus, where does that leave the United States and the State of Utah. We must do what we have always done, we must be the creators, the designers, the innovators. The only jobs left will be "creative" jobs and service jobs. Therefore, by eliminating arts from our children's we are literally cutting their economic throats. Being creative takes knowledge and skills that are not learned in Science, Technology or Math. I do have to make my nod to engineers because they will be part of the creative class. When it comes to PE and Health. I can hardly wrap my head around this one. What is the school board thinking? We have an obesity epidemic that is crippling our children and they are eliminating the instruction to live healthy lives and the space to exercise and live happy lives now. The people on the school board need to be more concerned about how people make a life, not just on how to make a living."
988. Patricia Richards Research supports the value of music in wiring the brain for learning, creativity and future success. Music and the arts are central to modern education
989. Sara Hultberg
990. John Leonard
991. Jared Covington
992. Linda Price
993. Mindy Wilson
994. Christopher Nolan
995. Jessica George
996. Lacia Ashton
997. Rachel Marie Kimball We need to be concerned about educating the WHOLE child, which includes their ability to create and to be in touch with their WHOLE being! Eliminating the requirement for students to engage in health, arts, physical education, college and career awareness, world languages, and digital literacy is a disservice to those in the rising generation (as well as those to come!) Our nation craves understanding, innovative citizens who care about their own well-being as well as the well-being of others. The courses previously mentioned are designed to create such individuals as they help address areas of the child that would go untouched and unlearned in their other various courses.
998. Colleen Hodgkinson
999. Kirsten Elliott
1000. Ocea Coy
1001. Richard Laughlin Richard Laughlin
1002. Elise Butterfield
1003. Cheyllynn Hayman
1004. Molly Janke
1005. Linda Burbank
1006. Suzi Montgomery This is a move in the wrong direction. Arts and sports and health are essentials. Adults always talk about the importance of a life/work balance... what are we doing with our children?
1007. Sarah Mohr
1008. Michele Brimhall
1009. Dennis Busch
1010. Nancy Rivera
1011. Kelly Baisley
1012. Lisa Poppleton Arts education is a critical component in creative thinking, problem solving, and developing communication skills. Physical education provides the movement needed to energize the brain and body for better learning, and introduces children to sports and other activities they can pursue for good health throughout their lives. Obviously, children need to learn principles of a healthy lifestyle; they may not have healthy role models at home. Eliminating the credit requirement for world languages is a serious mistake in this interconnected world, and will contribute to Utah becoming a provincial backwater. Learning a foreign language is most easily achieved at a young age. No requirement for digital learning???? Seriously? The decision to eliminate credit requirements for these subjects is a blow to the quality of Utah schools that will impact the future of the state's students, and make the state a less desirable place to re-locate for those considering to move here. Boy, am I glad my son is already grown and out of here.
1013. paige wightman
1014. Barbara Murdock
1015. Sarah Bailey
1016. Sara Neal
1017. Kristina Robb
1018. Emma Ryder
1019. Katelynn Killian
1020. David Barney
1021. Matthias Westwood
1022. Catherine Rockwood
1023. Bruce Brinkman
1024. Katie Benson
1025. Whitney Hill
1026. Maria Zandrea
1027. Nikki Shelton
1028. Anne Bowen
1029. Kayla White Kayla White
1030. Kelsey Hale
1031. Lynne Larson
1032. Olivia Talley
1033. Jessica Sabey
1034. Roberta Schlicher
1035. Tara Putnam
1036. Emma Holt
1037. Nancy Wood
1038. Julia Fabyan
1039. Jill Sheinberg Education must address the whole child. Children learn through different ways. The arts and physical physical education reach some children in ways that traditional academics do not.
1040. Sonja Lunde Sonja Lunde
1041. Maria Carrasco
1042. McKenna Miles
1043. Alyssa Dalton
1044. Alex Walker
1045. Rosa Steed
1046. anita murphy
1047. Scott Tarbet If our purpose in teaching school is to prepare well-rounded adults to be contributing members of society, how can it possibly be the right thing to do to cut College & Technical Education (including College & Career Awareness, computer literacy, etc.) from the required curriculum? Of the several negative effects of this change, this seems the most wrong-headed on its face.
1048. Hannah Owen
1049. Jill Johnson
1050. Kristin Goeser U-Fit Adapted Physical Activity Program
1051. Curtis Dunford
1052. Brandon Huntington
1053. Anna Moore
1054. Mesa Weidle
1055. Joan J Woodbury
1056. Carly Nelson
1057. MaKell Staley
1058. Daniel Adams I am an advocate for the Arts in all public schools. The benefit of the Arts for our family of six children is obvious in their lives and the lives of our grandchildren.
1059. Monica Harrison
1060. Jordann Franks
1061. Kirsten Rond
1062. Roachel Waters
1063. Brianne Bailey
1064. Madeline Conlee
1065. Diane Nichols
1066. Adrian Lambrinos
1067. Julie Lewis
1068. Victoria Bailey
1069. Sherri Hutten In whatever career or passion young students migrate, the lessons found in the arts is unparalleled. Problem solving, creativity, working in a group, public speaking, thinking outside the box - whether going into engineering, art, law, or any field - these skills and more are essential. And this reason is merely the tip of the iceberg.
1070. Christine Hendriks
1071. Emily Izzo
1072. Sydnee Stokes
1073. David Davis
1074. Benjamin Wright These classes are so important
1075. Katherine Potter
1076. Karen Shepherd The arts underpin the harder skills children learn, especially math and reading. They change the way children's minds work for the better...we need them in all our schools!
1077. Rachel Black
1078. Barbara Richardson
1079. Elly Baldwin
1080. Matthew Davis
1081. Rachel Formica
1082. Lori Edmunds Lori Edmunds
1083. Jeanette Sawaya
1084. Diane LeBoeuf
1085. Heidi Mortensen
1086. Joshua Stavros
1087. Kami Terry Paul Kami Terry Paul
1088. christine martindale
1089. Alexis Watts
1090. Jon Clark Arts are the only reason I finished high school. I've made a career in the arts. Three careers, actually.
1091. Jana Palmer My 7th grade drama class changed my life for the better, and theatre continues help me learn and grow. As a junior high drama teacher, I have seen drama make a difference in the lives of students, and I would like my children to have the opportunity to learn from the arts as well.
1092. Jodi Brewer "Not sure how taking away arts, language, physical education and health education is supposed to help the next generation to be better world citizens (and isn't that the goal of education at all levels?) Take those things away and what are you leaving behind? Fat, lazy kids who don't know how to eat properly, talk to people in other countries, learn about other cultures or know what to do with their excess creative energy. Don't we already have enough of that? Jodi"
1093. Brandon Burk
1094. Danica Ingram
1095. Gina Dalton Gina Dalton
1096. Philip Hermansen
1097. K'Lani Weston
1098. Darlene Bruchez Darlene Bruchez
1099. Tracy Ficquet
1100. Lori Lee
1101. Tamra Phillips
1102. Josh Hopkins
1103. Jenny Grosh
1104. Patti Turner
1105. Tracy Fisher Removing the arts, health and PE requirements is a travesty. I was a shy teenager, not the most popular, and the arts - specifically band and drama - gave me a safe haven where I flourished and came out of my shell to end up First Chair Clarinet my whole high school career as well as pick up the Saxophone my junior year to help out the jazz band. It gave me the courage to take dance in college and to test and get my silver, bronze and gold medals in International Latin. Through the arts, I gained confidence, social skills, and made it so I could relate to others in my profession as a market research professional.
1106. William Sadler
1107. Nicole Marriott
1108. Paige Fletcher
1109. Lauen Hoover
1110. Kari Schreck
1111. Marilyn Salguero
1112. Rachel Young
1113. Patricia Miller
1114. Tara James Tara Evans
1115. Doug De Bry
1116. Brian Hoyt
1117. Clint Felton Obtaining physical health is a prerequisite to any college or career choice. Either make time for health/wellness or take time for illness.
1118. Tomica Boehrer
1119. Leslie Bangerter
1120. leslie Anderson
1121. Keven Prusak Before taking this step, you would do well to learn of the recent research about the academic benefits of physical activity in the public school settings. Healthy kids learn better. Active kids concentrate better. Brain functions are stimulated. Creative centers in the brain are augmented. Solution seeking and social skills are honed. It would be very shortsighted to remove PE and recess from our children's school day. Indeed, more would be beneficial.
1122. Laurel Summerhays
1123. Andree Close
1124. Zach Murray
1125. Staisha Stratton
1126. Brooke Clyde
1127. Ashley Starr
1128. Alison Arndt-Wild For all of the research supported reasons presented in this position, arts, health, and physical education should be required in all of Utah public education.
1129. Susan Phelan Susan Phelan
1130. Marcia Harrison
1131. Krystal Weier
1132. Danielle White
1133. Katrina Andrus PE is critical as children are becoming more and more sedentary. They need to learn different ways to be active and healthy so they can grow up and be positive contributors

- to society.
1134. Nicole Katsos
1135. Robin Telesco
1136. Becky Stucker
1137. Kayla Richmond
1138. Jacquelynn Tietjen
1139. Kori Emerson
1140. Lise Arias
1141. Meghan Flint
1142. Christina Jones Thinking back to the tumultuous developments and transitions that middle school held, I can't imagine how I would have gotten through it without the creative thinking involved in art class. It was the one time of day where I was able to feel like I was achieving something tangible, and it encouraged me to persevere through the more difficult subjects. Eliminating arts, health, physical education, college and career awareness, world languages, and digital literacy would be detrimental to all students' education, and takes away the aspects of school that allow them thrive the most.
1143. Penny Stubbs Penny
1144. Kaela Lunt
1145. Rebecca Burrage Rebecca Burrage
1146. Carol Allred " I am a professional singer and voice teacher because of the music classes that inspired me in school. This was also where I found like-minded friends, felt a sense of belonging, developed my ear (which must happen early in life), and built my confidence and identity as a performer. Please don't remove this crucial part of a child's education. For many it is where they feel happiest and most at home in school, and the place where discipline and self-esteem truly are allowed to flower. For me it brought unparalleled joy and made me look forward to school every day. Sincerely, Dr. Carol Ann Allred Assistant Professor, Lecturer, Voice University of Utah"
1147. McKenzie Stowell
1148. Kerri Hopkins This is a backwards move, Utah. Our students deserve better!
1149. Nila Jane Autry Nila Jane Autry
1150. Hillary Hahn
1151. Rosalie Davis
1152. Christine Mills
1153. Kassie Whittaker
1154. Eric Burton
1155. Krista Bulloch
1156. Heather Garrett Heather Garrett
1157. Robert Morphis The ARTS are as essential as food and air -- they spur creativity, encourage problem-solving, and help young people appreciate the contributions and perspectives of others. They help build character traits such as patience, empathy, self-worth, and determination. The ARTS, along with HEALTH education and PHYSICAL education round out individuals as they learn to become good citizens of the community. The ARTS are what ignited my own interest in learning -- far beyond the "3 Rs"!
1158. Aileen Luu
1159. Jennie Nicholls-Smith
1160. Jennifer Shelley
1161. Linzy Coonrad
1162. Charles Brandt
1163. Natalie Bass Please leave these subjects as a requirement. It is very important and these subjects have great benefits for the students.
1164. Tracy Rogers
1165. Landon Troester
1166. Jyl Shuler
1167. Susan Alldredge
1168. Sara Goertner
1169. Tara Wardle
1170. Darcy Marvin I don't understand the decision to remove these important subjects from the required courses. There is so much research showing how much they are needed to improve the other core subjects.
1171. Annie Nielsen
1172. Tammy Bell
1173. Trevor Kunkel
1174. Siobhan Jolley
1175. Raegan Scharman
1176. Shari Troester
1177. Pam Campbell
1178. Gary Kroll
1179. Nancy Veit
1180. Whitney Hunsaker
1181. Kayla Pontius
1182. Kiersten Smith Are we educating the whole child or not?!
1183. Jenna Dye
1184. Lindsey Heinig
1185. Jo Ellen Shaeffer
1186. Meghan Tanner
1187. Kristi Critchlow
1188. Beth Goldberg
1189. Stephanie Norton
1190. Mackenzie Coffey
1191. Emily Sanders Please keep the arts as a requirement. As a teacher, I'm working to help educate students in being a well-rounded person.
1192. Robyn Hoth
1193. Tammy Hanson Tammy Hanson
1194. Jacquelynn Morgan
1195. Barbara LaCru
1196. Kathryn Lipscomb
1197. Coralee Karmazyn
1198. Sara McAfee
1199. Amanda Mahoney
1200. Kami Garcia
1201. Bonnie Cooper
1202. Katie Hackett
1203. Cassandra Stephens
1204. Kristy Carter
1205. Janet Massimino
1206. Mary Boyer
1207. Julianne Goss
1208. Connie Stone
1209. Sandra Fife
1210. Angela Adams
1211. Tashia Eldred
1212. Jamie Hoffman
1213. Leanne Paulsen
1214. Kristin Rector The NOVA Chamber Music Series music education initiative, The NOVA Music Project has enriched thousands of students education experiences resulting in improved proficiency in reading, writing, and math. Please reverse your August 4th decision.
1215. Kim Rimmasch
1216. Natalie Nielsen
1217. Nicole Lavelly
1218. Jan Smith
1219. Melissa Deletant
1220. Arielle Altenburg
1221. Martin Briggs I've been a classroom teacher (2nd grade, Spanish dual immersion) for several years, and have just begun teaching PE this year. I understand how important academic time is, but to make better use of it, students truly need the arts and PE as a support to their academic learning. By allowing the arts and PE to still be taught, students will perform better in the classroom. Just check the research.
1222. Kristine Alder
1223. Samuel Averett
1224. Carmen Flores
1225. MikKae Osborn
1226. Camille Warkentin
1227. Heather Miller
1228. Wendy Temple
1229. Tori Dunkley
1230. Linda Davis
1231. Kim Gerun
1232. Kristi Wilson
1233. Michele Jones It is important that we provide a high quality, well-rounded education to all of our children.
1234. Heidi Jensen
1235. Susan Briggs Bring back Health Ed. PE, and Art. We need these classes in the schools...I am shocked with children as obese as they are that Physical Ed would be taken away...Health Ed. should be taught every day! I taught Health and it is vital!!!
1236. Cindy Kohler
1237. Christine Stone
1238. Carol Pearson
1239. Kristina Wilson
1240. Shanna O'Curran
1241. Maurie Jones
1242. Kelli Knight PE, health, and art are critical to the development of the mind. Excluding these from the curriculum is a disservice to our children.
1243. Heidi Henderson
1244. Corey Hansen Save the Arts!
1245. Michael Viera
1246. Janice Olsen I can't believe that the importance of the arts and PE classes are not being recognized! These classes are beneficial to all students and should NEVER be eliminated as classes that earn credit.
1247. Julianne Basinger
1248. DeAnn Neal I'm a science teacher but these programs are vital to the development of the "whole person" and actually add to my ability to teach science.
1249. Shannon Sanders
1250. Betsy Spiegel
1251. Emily Larsen The arts are a vital part of every student's education. They are imperative in teaching creativity, critical thinking, and communication! Please bring back the arts & PE requirements.
1252. Jan Baker
1253. Paula Fowler The arts, health and PE are part of a well-rounded education for students, and provide variety in the school day for young brains. Additionally, it would be difficult for high school programs to continue to serve students with classes in these curriculum areas when they miss introductory learning in them during middle school years.
1254. Rita Osborne
1255. Barbara Faust Music and arts education has been an invaluable addition to my education and also for my children. We have all chosen to enter the medical field and having a "whole education" fosters critical thinking, interacting appropriately with others, and engaging the mind to enhance learning of all subjects.
1256. Ashley Firth
1257. Reid Anderson
1258. Sheri Barber
1259. Katherine Devenport
1260. Malinda Probst Art education is extremely vital in the public school system.
1261. Irina Gushin
1262. Samantha Laubacher
1263. Cami Russell Of course we need these programs!! Students need the Arts in their life as well as P.E! This is why America is so overweight, because we stupidly cut P.E. Students, kids, need
- to be able to get up and run around, play sports and games, and not just sit behind a desk all day! And the Arts!! Music, theater, art, these are skills needed in life! This is a way to express yourself. PLEASE DO NOT TAKE THIS AWAY FROM OUR KIDS!!!
1264. Cali Wilkes
1265. Ali Pack The arts are so critical at this age. This is the time when students will discover a passion for music, or dance, or drawing. These skills learned in the arts will teach students to think critically and creatively, and how to address and respond to problems that may arise in their lives. If they are not required to take these courses, the passion may very well go undiscovered - a true tragedy. Utah has such a rich heritage in the arts, please bring it back and help our young students ignite the fire and carry on that legacy.
1266. Melissa Shelton
1267. Jessica Chamberlain
1268. Mike Nascimento This was a foolish mistake and I hope it is rescinded shortly.
1269. Amanda Cornwell
1270. Jenna Rhodes
1271. Claudia Kirby
1272. Loretta Orgill I believe keeping the arts and physical education out of the curriculum is a huge mistake. It is important for children to learn where their strengths and interests lie. They are not going to necessarily get that if the curriculum is narrowed to reading, writing, math, and science. Many households cannot afford to enroll their kids in private lessons, so the exposure the kids get at school is very important. Also, many research studies (see references above) have shown that arts and physical education enhance a child's learning. The participation also helps kids get involved socially and make friends in a way they may not if just participating in academic classes. I was involved with music much of my junior high years and performed very well in my classes. Some of my best memories from junior high school (they didn't have middle school then) are of performing with and playing for choir and band.
1273. Charisse Baxter
1274. Rebecca Knudsen
1275. Mark Stephenson
1276. Shelby Hooley
1277. Madison Nielson
1278. Lela G. Christensen
1279. Janell Jacklin
1280. Wendy El-Bakri
1281. Connie Wyckoff
1282. Elise Bailey
1283. Kathy Larkin
1284. Laura Haynie I am a PE teacher and know the value of requiring physical education. There will always be "the athletes" that choose this course but the ones that need it the most are the ones that usually think they don't like it and would choose another course. Don't take away the requirement to work out our bodies, to keep them moving, to learn coordination. Our bodies need to move and taking away this course will be detrimental.
1285. Brooke Barrigar
1286. Connor Rodrigo
1287. Stephanie Hunt Students need this programs to be successful at school!
1288. Allegra Garrett
1289. Brenda Thurman Brenda Thurman
1290. Amanda Spackman
1291. Rebecca Cheney
1292. Allison Cowdell

1293. Jacki Andrus
1294. Anna Cox
1295. brady schvaneveldt As a history teacher I can say these subjects are DESPERATELY needed. School is about so much more than becoming STEM robots. They need to learn the skills and have the experiences to become AWESOME PEOPLE!
1296. Valerie Plowman
1297. Jane Morain
1298. Marci Welcker
1299. Kassey King
1300. Connie Eastman
1301. Redge Palmer
1302. Audrey Norton
1303. Shauna Peacock
1304. Cammie Seal
1305. Katherine Hogan
1306. Mayra Sanchez
1307. Ashlee Urry
1308. Lalani Warr If you're trying to cut costs, this isn't the place to cut! Our youth, more now than ever, need the arts through Physical Education as well as the Fine Arts! We are stripping our younger generation of valuable and essential foundational skills and benefits that come only through these avenues. PLEASE RETHINK YOUR DECISION!!!
1309. Barbara Thornley Children need a well-rounded education!
1310. Amy Crane
1311. Thomi Liebich
1312. Cassie Montano
1313. Cassie Reese
1314. Lisa Craghead
1315. Kari Heaps
1316. Paul Hill
1317. Vivian Gayol
1318. Rebecca Holm Please don't take away the arts from our children- especially music. Kids need to have a well rounded education and that includes opportunities for artistic expression.
1319. Germaine Morazan
1320. Bonnie Bennett
1321. Ashley Bassett
1322. Annette Francis Annette Francis
1323. Lori Lancaster
1324. Sarah Andersons
1325. Karen North Art encourages creative thinking and problem solving. Art opens imaginations and allows for individuality. Art makes the world a more interesting and visual place. Art opens hearts and minds and produces citizens who are more engaged with society.
1326. Ashtyn Turville Physical Education and Health are crucial classes to be taught during the adolescent age. Growing up, gym was a dumb class that made you sweat and look gross through out the day and health class was a joke. PE and Health classes should be taken seriously by the administrations of schools. If PE and Health classes were more science orientated verses the easy A you get just by showing up, they would become more effective and taken seriously.
1327. Mathu Crandall "Dear legislators and board members, As a parent, educator, avid runner and one who suffers from ADHD, it is important to me that PE, health and the arts remain junior high and high school requirements. I was a poor student and did not excel in traditional academic areas. Being "forced" to take required arts classes I found my success in drama and photography. PE allowed me a place to unwind, refocus and recharge. I was never an athlete, but since I was required to take the class I
- did better during the day on PE days verses non-PE days. As a parent I am appalled that this is even being considered. We are a very active family as well as one rooted deep in the arts. My children will end up taking these classes any how, but as we've been discussing this in my classroom with my students, most don't plan to choose these classes. The number one reason being, they claim they are not good at sports, are uncoordinated, unartistic, can't sing, never tried it before... the list like this goes on and on. Please keep PE, art and health classes as requirements for all students, I hate to see those kids miss something they may end up loving and succeeding with. Regards, Math Teacher - Granite School District Parent - Salt Lake, Canyons & Jordan school districts Avid runner and ADHD sufferer/ survivor"
1328. Marci Ashcroft
1329. Hannah Wallentine
1330. Terrie Rauzon Please do not pass this. Kids in middle school need Health, PE, & Music
1331. Jani Myres
1332. Sherise Longhurst Please, please make sound decisions that support our Utah students' needs.
1333. India McDougle
1334. Wendy Western This decision is the stupidest thing I have EVER heard!!! What is happening??
1335. Melinda Durrant
1336. Alissa Wiser
1337. Sidney Huntington
1338. Jennifer Nudd
1339. Konie Murray
1340. Leslie Clawson
1341. Angi Cummings
1342. Madi McCann
1343. Rachana Patel
1344. Jessica Jeppson
1345. Carly Donahue
1346. Rodney Butters
1347. Emily Horne
1348. Zack Beddoes
1349. Christine Selander
1350. Rebekah Wakefield
1351. Mindy Nelsen Please listen to the citizens and those who actually know the value and importance of the arts. Also its absolute necessity in helping students problem solve, communicate and think critically. Don't sell students short of the education they deserve and the benefits of arts education found in countless studies.
1352. Kathryn Howes
1353. Barbara Ferrin
1354. Emma Mark
1355. Jodi O'Farrell Keep these subjects in school
1356. Shaina Skinner
1357. Jennifer Martin
1358. Cortlee Austin
1359. Amin Haq
1360. Natalie Lewis
1361. Hayley McKown
1362. Rebecca Crandall
1363. Amanda Asbell
1364. Hadley Rampton
1365. Barbara Christensen
1366. Brittany Olsen
1367. Jani Bell
1368. Clark Nielsen
1369. Erin Decker
1370. Kelly Stevens
1371. Lance Mecham Please don't take this away from our children they have enough distraction with modern technology that keeps them unfit. This
- generation must have this they MUST MUST. Thank you.
1372. Delyse Downey
1373. C Frandsen
1374. Melissa Crandall
1375. Katie Hammond
1376. Kadie Stokes
1377. Richard Hopkins, Jr.
1378. Desirae Smoot
1379. Lisa States
1380. Maria Sandbakken
1381. Christy Nielson Christy Nielson
1382. Cheri Maughan
1383. Teresa Crockett
1384. Aubree Clark Education is about more than STEM!
1385. Yolanda Jensen
1386. Christine Silvester
1387. Christina Ogrin
1388. Lynn Kilpatrick "Arts, Health and PE are vital aspects to being a well-rounded, well-educated person. Every person deserves to learn these subject areas, not just those who can afford enrichment programs.
1389. Jeannine McDonnel
1390. Jessica Stoneman
1391. Ann Hogensen
1392. Kim Ashdown
1393. Catherine McCann
1394. Brittney Romney
1395. Paul Larsen My children have benefited from both a rigorous STEM curriculum and a rich arts curriculum. I have a son now employed in finance and a daughter now employed in the arts. Eliminating arts education deprives those whose talents lie in the arts from the full development of their abilities. It also robs our society of that which enriches us. I shudder to think about watching engineers try to perform Shakespeare. Why do we believe that those who provide arts in our society are any less professional or valuable than those who crunch numbers? Please reconsider your decision to remove the middle school credit requirements in health, arts, physical education, college and career awareness, world languages, and digital literacy. This move will only make our children less competitive in an increasingly competitive world.
1396. Phillip Torres
1397. Morgan Stubbs
1398. Stephen Jones
1399. Stacey Fisher As a graduate of Brigham Young University, in the arts, I find this unacceptable. Quit being so cheap with your education. These kids need and deserve the arts in their lives. What an embarrassment for a state that should be leading the way in education. Hold a hearing with your parents, find out if this is acceptable.
1400. Sean Newell
1401. Garity Line
1402. Sherri Dove
1403. Patrick Kilboy
1404. Brittney Thurman
1405. Abe Kimball
1406. Amy Mikkelsen
1407. Sara Alyea
1408. Serenity Kimball This should be a no brainer. All of the research points to the benefits of both the arts and physical activity for overall development.
1409. Connie Wallis
1410. Sonja Decker Studies show that the arts are essential for learning. As a teacher I often integrated art and music tie study of literature, social studies, and even math.
1411. Ali Avery
1412. Diantha Treadway We previously lived in an area of California where it was removed from the schools. The results were not positive. Please keep in the schools!!
1413. Kristen Bayles
1414. Amy Huppi
1415. Meran King
1416. Cassidy Sonderegger
1417. Juliene Withers
1418. Amelia Huppi
1419. Tami Rowley I honestly cannot believe this!
1420. Laura Klingenstein
1421. Jasmin Britt
1422. Lilon Dray
1423. Robyn Palmer Steele It has been proven that music helps the brain process math. Music and the arts are vital to a civilized society. We need to provide for both in our schools.
1424. Jennifer Souter
1425. Jeffrey Britt
1426. Carly Maloney
1427. Lauren Billings
1428. Shannah Miller
1429. Suzanne Wilson I have been teaching in the public schools for 26 years in 2 different states and I have seen the Arts reach students that otherwise would have been lost!! Please don't take those enriching experiences away from those students that have a hard time excelling in other areas! The Arts enrich all students and bring out talents and heart!!!
1430. Brooke Vlasich
1431. Shaun Kremers
1432. Jennifer Boucher
1433. Brian Hartmann It is imperative for middle school students health and welfare to continue taking PE and understand about their health. Also through art, students learn to solve problems visually and creatively and to express themselves in a healthy way. All parents I know see value in all three subjects the that were dropped as middle school requirements at the State School Board level. It is important to bring all three back!
1434. Ryan Rose
1435. Julia Hall
1436. Ashley Raucci As a physical education teacher and a graduate student at the University of Utah in special physical education, I will strongly advocate for PE and Adapted PE for my students, as it benefits their physical health, mental health, confidence, personal and social responsibility, and overall well-being throughout their lifetime.
1437. Rose Branch
1438. Sam Nielsen As a student who benefited from these programs in school I believe that they need to stay.
1439. Audrey Drury
1440. Jennifet Tourangeau
1441. Michael O' Curran
1442. Carolee Taggart
1443. Amber Jaques
1444. Anna Fowler
1445. Tami Schwalbe It would be a dis-service to middle school students to NOT educate the whole child! In the age of childhood obesity, mental health decline, and the increase in technology, taking physical education out of the required education is unheard of!
1446. Shauna Vernon
1447. Cory Sullivan
1448. Doreen Nielson
1449. Alan Groves
1450. Holli Thornton

1450.	Mandy Lyons		1503.	Kaley West		1557.	Sara Smith	Sara Smith	Winston Churchill may not have actually spoken this but... it sure rings true.		
1451.	LeAnn Peterson	Our children have the right to a full and balanced education!	1504.	Charlene Roetzel		1558.	Brooke Mays		1620.	Stephanie Griffin	Stephanie Griffin
1452.	Kate Kidd		1505.	Justin Morgan		1559.	Patricia Nelson		1621.	Carolyn Kocherhans	
1453.	Bryan Boothe		1506.	Donna Johnson		1560.	Harold Short		1622.	Jonathan Collett	"The Earth without art is eh."- Matt McWilliams"
1454.	Amanda Petersen		1507.	Gabriella Noble		1562.	Jill Fischbeck		1623.	Nikita Petersen	
1455.	Dave Johnson		1508.	James Schaub	"Why are we even in this situation? Who is on the state school board? That needs to change.	1563.	Erolynne Wood		1624.	Brooke Bryson	Brooke Bryson
1456.	Amber Espanet					1564.	Whitney Duhaime		1625.	Colleen Stewart	I firmly believe as both a parent and an educator that middle school is the time to expose students to as many things as possible. Removing these requirements is a disservice to our children and their education.
1457.	Jeff Schwalbe	Jeff Schwalbe	1509.	Kara Richardson		1565.	Cecilia Garduno		1626.	Veronica Echeverria	
1458.	Jacelyn Lyon		1510.	Jane Willie		1566.	Deborah Kooring		1627.	Chantry Olsen	
1459.	Erin Brown		1511.	Michelle Marziale	Ask your pediatrician or your local PE teacher how the rate of obesity in adolescents has increased over the last 10 years. Taking away this much need resource will only hurt!! And art and music are irreplaceable in allowing a young mind to grow. The Utah State School board is ridiculous if they can not see the benefits of these classes.	1567.	Harleigh Poulson		1628.	Chris Schafer	
1460.	Lindsey Oveson					1568.	Sarah Ginnett		1629.	Darren Seamons	
1461.	Yvonne Jessop		1512.	Ross Christensen		1569.	Jude Ruelas		1630.	Sheri Klaich	
1462.	Debra Cope		1513.	Janine Knighton		1570.	Matthew Lindahl		1631.	Julie Edwards	
1463.	Sam Brito		1514.	Catherine Schulthies		1571.	Katherine Deneris		1632.	Travis Estes	As a CTE educator, I find it very upsetting that these sorts of decisions are made without public input. The material covered in College and Career Awareness courses is crucial to helping 7th graders start on the right path. Eliminating these credits is not a good decision.
1464.	George Gorton		1515.	Brandi Talmage		1572.	Blaine Haacke		1633.	Alyssa Palfreyman	
1465.	Janet Bice		1516.	Brian Packer		1573.	Kathryn Merrill	As an educator I wholeheartedly support the arts in our public schools. They make a tremendous difference for the better.	1634.	Nikki Carver	
1466.	Chris Streicher		1517.	Amelia Jackson		1574.	Michael Davies		1635.	Katherine Winegar	
1467.	Wendi Whittaker		1518.	Hilary Ripley	Hilary Ripley	1575.	Sara Jordan		1636.	Donna Thacker	
1468.	Krista Sanders		1519.	Jamie Cooper	I think the scope and focus on students education has been lost!! I think we need to focus less on a test score and focus more on individual students. I feel what is important in a child's education has taken the wrong direction in so many ways!! Something needs to change, people need to be removed and replaced or reconsider what their priorities are.	1576.	Madeline Adkins		1637.	Annette Harris	Please don't deny Utah's children access to the arts and physical education!
1469.	Meredith Schramm		1520.	Aubrey Bailey	Aubrey Bailey	1577.	Shirly Foltz	Shirly G Foltz	1638.	Alan LaFleur	Please don't cut the arts! Almost (if not every) every aspect of our lives is affected by the arts in some way, shape, or form. Taking them from children whose brains are going through a critical change will do more damage to their development than drugs, and will affect society for generations!
1470.	Gabriella Loureiro		1521.	Ann Cutler	Sign the petition: UT State Board of Education, bring back the Middle School arts, health, & PE credit requirements!	1578.	Crystal Chamberlain		1639.	Carina Dillon	
1471.	Melissa Madden					1585.	Becky Pepito		1640.	Kristi Owens	
1472.	Glorjean Beardall					1586.	Elyse Johnson		1641.	Jill Nielsen	
1473.	Gregory Peay					1587.	Lindsay Beardall		1642.	Stacey Jo McLean	As a school nurse I believe that PE, Health Education and the Arts are critical to the health and welfare of our students. Please reverse your decision.
1474.	Julie Dortzbach					1588.	Gloria Edwards		1643.	Melanie Romero	The better and well rounded our childrens education the better they will grow to become viable assets to our community and overall success as human beings. We need our children to have all the best chances they can get in education. Why wouldn't we invest in our kids?? To not bring back the middle school arts, health, and PE credit requirements is a shame!!!
1475.	Lauren Williams					1589.	RaMay Allen		1644.	vanessa vicente	
1476.	Michelle Larsen					1590.	Rashell Ainsworth		1645.	Pam Kelley	Teaching to a test is no preparing them for the world.
1477.	Jamie Cheney		1522.	Steven Swenson		1591.	Leslie Pilling-Smook	Public education is very important to the well being of our country.	1646.	Scott Sprenger	These subjects are vital and sometimes that main pathway for some students to other subjects. Music and arts education is a must and is NOT in opposition to science. I understand the idea of cutting costs, but not at the expense of music and physical ed.
1478.	Lacey Hunter		1523.	Brooke Virgen		1592.	Jamie Craythorn		1647.	Shelbi Jorgensen	
1479.	Amberly Welker		1524.	Candice Jorgensen		1593.	Haley Peck		1648.	Tena Rohr	
1480.	Jaeden Tamaura		1525.	Hayley Wilkins		1594.	Rebecca McPartland	Rebecca E	1649.	Tia Riddle	Tia Riddle
1481.	Carlos Sanchez		1526.	Eloaine Thatcher		1595.	Tricia Nielsen	Yes. Ring this back and take away some of that stupid math that these kids will never use in their life unless they go in chemistry	1650.	Grimm Eric	
1482.	Janet Wagner		1527.	Matt Fullmer		1596.	Sherrie Simpson	Research has shown the importance of a well-rounded education	1651.	Arianne Glick	
1483.	Valerie Olson		1528.	Jeffrey Stone		1597.	Kelly Paul		1652.	Lori Sanders	
1484.	Tiffany Smith		1529.	Chantel Williams		1598.	Susan Graves-Henneman		1653.	Alisha Hashimoto	
1485.	Brent Baranko		1530.	James Jenkins		1599.	Susan Graves-Henneman		1654.	John Wunderli	John Wunderli
1486.	Melaina Morales		1531.	Alesha Schulzke		1600.	Alison Peterson		1655.	Katherine Anderson	
1487.	brenda gregory		1532.	Dee Treadway		1601.	Kristin Miller		1656.	Rebecca Rich	
1488.	Larry Waite		1533.	Mark Ziegler	Mark Ziegler	1602.	Wendy Egbert	Wendy Egbert	1657.	Tonya Aikens	
1489.	Brandon Pack		1534.	Joel McKee		1603.	Nicole Smith				
1490.	Angie Gardiner		1535.	Laurie Blake		1604.	DerAnn Ludlow				
1491.	Sienie Sneddon	One more thing to keep kids active and get them away from electronics for at least an hour! Kids need this!	1536.	Sara Sorensen		1605.	Elizabeth Johnson				
1492.	Monica Hansen		1537.	Emma Lund		1606.	Rebecca Strelben				
1493.	MarGene Anderson	MarGene Anderson	1538.	Makenzie Mathesius		1607.	Kelli Nelson				
1494.	Karen Green	Arts and PE are crucial! They never should have been taken from elementary schools and absolutely never removed from middle schools! I speak from experience as a teacher, mother, and grandmother.	1539.	Sharon Kearns	Sharon Kearns	1608.	Stephen Mossbarger				
1495.	Jenni Arnell		1540.	Amanda Bell		1609.	Anne Easton				
1496.	Micah Ross		1541.	Sharrisa Turnbaugh		1610.	Alex Traini				
1497.	joe alexander	IT IS WELL PROVEN HOW THE ARTS IMPROVE BRAIN DEVELOPMENT. IT GIVES THE KIDS A SENSE OF SELF CONFIDENCE. PHYSICAL EDUCATION IS VITAL I STRONGLY AGREE THAT THESE PROGRAMS CAN NOT BE OPTIONAL, BECAUSE IT WILL LEAD TO NOT HAVING THE PROGRAMS AT ALL. THANK YOU	1542.	Martina Shaw		1611.	Chris Bowler				
1498.	Heather Foltz	Heather Foltz	1543.	Sean Jordan	Physical and health education, music, and art is important for society and the individual.	1612.	Steven Gayol				
1499.	Bailey Jarvis		1544.	Alexandra Snyder		1613.	Lori Hoban				
1500.	Clint Malnar	If the Utah Board of Education is of the opinion that Junior High School kids are going to make educational decisions that are in their long term best interest or the best interest of the country and world, they are sadly mistaken. Instead of arts, perhaps time for the deprived teenagers to play video games or chat on their phones would be a reasonable suggestion. Get your act together Board, you are looking life fools!!	1545.	Sophia Chartrand		1614.	Rebecca Hurst				
1501.	Cathy Buckley		1546.	John Adamson	Hear, hear!	1615.	Sydney Creer				
1502.	Annette Stonehocker		1547.	Brenda Rivich		1616.	Lora Sorensen				
			1548.	Aubrey Anderson		1617.	Sandy Drury	Please don't jeopardize this most important part of our children's education!!			
			1549.	Adri Quarry		1618.	Pamela Foster				
			1550.	Michelle Tobian		1619.	Kim Driggs	When Winston Churchill was asked to cut arts funding to support the war effort, he replied: "Then what are we fighting for?" -			
			1551.	Alyce Lawrence	Children NEED exercise, and creative arts to be able to create a beneficial, and awesome future!						
			1552.	Julie Ban							
			1553.	Nicole Martineau							
			1554.	Rebecca Belka	Music, the arts and PE should NEVER be taken from our schools! It's strange to me that the notion was ever even considered.						
			1555.	Danielle Short							

1658. Jon Wilson
1659. Blake Crestani
1660. Justice Ferguson
1661. Laurie Williams
1662. Dilworth Strasser The Arts are very important for being a wonderful City.
1663. Cynthia Christensen
1664. Chris Manwaring
1665. Katelynn Tyler Taking away health, art, and music as requirements show students that these aren't important enough. When you know they will use the skills learned in health more than they would in geometry.
1666. Nina Hoyle
1667. Jeanette Seamons
1668. Mark Maxson Do the right thing!
1669. Alyssa Wall
1670. Michelle Cox
1671. Leta Allen
1672. Anna Davis The arts develop problem solving skills, develop learning structures in the brain, teach collaboration and add rigor. These have been noted as the most important skills for a 21st century students
1673. DeAnn Price DeAnn R Price
1674. Bryce Nielson
1675. Jennifer Sharp
1676. Tyler Curtis As a music major the arts are my life! I have learned so much from being a musician that I never would have otherwise. It made THE difference for me in high school and I wouldn't have done it in high school without first having started in middle school.
1677. Braden Smart
1678. Brooklin Walk
1679. Julia Wamboldt
1680. Stephanie England Stephanie N England
1681. Jennifer Christensen
1682. Parker Anderson
1683. Jillana Butler
1684. Ralph Vanderbeek Prisons will fill up faster if young people are not given healthy outlets for creative activities. Arts elimination will have dire consequences in the future.
1685. Nikki Farnsworth
1686. Susan Burris Susan Burris
1687. Shailey Woodward
1688. Melanie Maxfield It is critical for the development of our children to have the arts, health, and PE included in their lives. Shame on you for thinking differently. Do your homework!!
1689. Cary Youmans The arts are essential to any complete national life. The State owes it to itself to sustain and encourage them....Ill fares the race which fails to salute the arts with the reverence and delight which are their due.' - Winston Churchill
1690. Natalya Johnson
1691. Anna Christiansen
1692. Caryn Porter
1693. Gina Hall
1694. Aubree Roskelley
1695. Kathryn Peacock
1696. Sherry Tombo
1697. Ashley Gunnell
1698. Haley Grimm
1699. Joshua Campanella
1700. Mona Jager Mona Jager
1701. Bridger Bush
1702. Grant Sunada As a public health professional and researcher, and as a father of 3 young children, I support evidence-based approaches to education that includes arts, health, and physical education. This helps our children be prepared to be full contributors to society and reach their full potential.
1703. Katie Robinette
1704. Chad Murri
1705. Lorilee Roskelley
1706. Gwyn Schmidt
1707. Jenny Thompson
1708. Karen DeMille
1709. Mandy Thorne
1710. Gina Williams
1711. Lee Ann Brocius
1712. Shannon Lambert Shannon Lambert
1713. Megan McKenna
1714. Susa Lindsey
1715. Sarah Madsen
1716. Lauren Resendes
1717. Chris Brower
1718. Kari Gonsalves Keep it required in the middle school!
1719. Elizabeth Brown The arts are a critical part of learning and developing the whole child. This new decision undermines the importance and value to our students.
1720. Emily Voorhees
1721. Darby Freeland These courses are needed for our middle school students. It allows them to explore options they wouldn't do on their own.
1722. Elizabeth Rawls
1723. Fiona Van Leeuwen
1724. Hannah
1725. Bobbie Philabaum
1726. Devyn Corey
1727. Shannon Herbert
1728. Terry Linares
1729. Sara Elder
1730. Harsha Stevenson
1731. Emily Jensen
1732. Riley Park
1733. Jane Binns
1734. Angela Allen Angela Allen
1735. Cindy Hedenstrom
1736. Jennifer Johnson
1737. Jessica May
1738. Kelsey Hawkes
1739. Kimberley Young There are many studies that show classes such as PE and the arts support a student's ability to learn and be successful. Providing creative and physical outlets and opportunities for self-expression, team building, etc. just seems like common sense. In addition, I worry that this type of policy will widen the gap between the "haves" and the "have nots" because the children in wealthy districts will continue to experience PE, arts, etc. in school because their parents will insist on it, or their parents will provide these experiences outside of school. If we really care about our children and their futures, we will continue to provide a robust, broad education and teach them how to think, problem-solve, nurture their creativity, and live healthy lives.
1740. Shirene McKay
1741. Lonise Tauoa
1742. Samuel Dickson
1743. Emily Sorensen
1744. Paul Hetzel "I have been an Art teacher for 17 years in Title One, at-risk schools. It is proven that students engage more deeply in regular, tested core subject areas when they have these courses that educate the whole body and mind. Connections are made to learning and growing in alternative ways for students to see the dynamism of learning, conversely reinvigorating learning in the tested core subjects. Pushing for education to evolve without also studying Health, Physical Education, and the Fine Arts, would neglect from tens of thousands of contributing Utah citizens the right to a full and dynamic education. This country stays strong
- through shared freedoms, equity, and ingenuity fostered by a respect for all learning, not partial. I sincerely hope this is read and resonates deeply into this provocative and disconcerting decision. The affects of leaving these key subjects out of education of our citizenry and youth would be very grave, misguided, and negligent.
- 1745.
1746. In hope for a bright future! Sincerely, Paul Hetzel"
1747. Jessica Chappell
1748. Madeline Julian
1749. Boyd Christiansen Physical education and the fine arts are very important. These educational programs need your support, not your indifference.
1750. Sam Evans
1751. Sean McKinney
1752. Rachelle Wall
1753. James Barnes James Barnes
1754. Jessica Hoopes
1755. Annicka Richardson
1756. Geneva Boland
1757. Laura Herzog
1758. Mark Catmull
1759. Danielle Lyons
1760. Sierra Walters
1761. Kandice Knoelk Kandice Knoelk
1762. Liz Knight
1763. Ali Limburg
1764. Savannah Steed
1765. Emily Stewart
1766. Rachel MacKay
1767. Lori Jensen
1768. Jordan Osborne
1769. Darla Davis
1770. Maria DeGroot
1771. Spencer Young
1772. Becky Banks
1773. Jade Martin
1774. Kristy Jensen
1775. Kristen Crockett
1776. Kira Anjewierden
1777. Alexander Pierson Music is my life. It allows me to cope with my Aspergers Syndrome and made it so I was capable enough to be successful in my academic classes. Arts are vital for so many people like me, and vital for us as a society. It gives purpose to life. And we must not take away our reason to live.
1778. Zachary Potter
1779. Catrin Mead
1780. Dayna Richards
1781. Anna Hunter
1782. Erin O'Donnell
1783. Danielle Skaggs
1784. Courtney Vavricka
1785. Carol Gwynn Physical exercise and arts education are critical elements of a child's education. It is proven that students who study music have better outcomes in math. Music study impacts organization of the brain, self-discipline, and a multitude of other critical skills. There are children who can be reached through arts, drama, and P.E. that cannot be reached any other way. If your goal is to raise test scores, keep the classes that will help children be successful and motivated to come to school.
1786. Deborah Gulleddge Deborah Gulleddge
1787. Julie Walker A
1788. Kelly Norton Our children need the arts and PE in Middle School. We are already becoming a lazy, sedate people and need to encourage our children to stay active. They need PE to teach them them healthy activities and skills that they will need to stay healthy for the rest of their lives. They also need an outlet to expend energy from sitting in core classes all day. As for arts, Middle
- School is where many of these children find a life time love of art and music. It is essential in their lives. These class foster a more a well rounded child. They find talents that they may have and these classes actually help in there academic classes. I know that my child's saving grace in Middle School was band! Please don't take away these essential classes. We need more well rounded children not just academics.
1789. Hannah Collins
1790. Elise Brimhall
1791. McKenna Boman
1792. Missy Tucker
1793. Hannah Steed
1794. Todd Pennington
1795. Jaqueline England
1796. Amanda Proudfit
1797. Ashley Pollock
1798. Kade Clark
1799. Seth Keeton
1800. Elise Gunnell
1801. Chaz Lundquist
1802. Alex Reid
1803. Susan Dearden
1804. Sumiko Martinez
1805. Kara Atchison
1806. Melissa Goertzen
1807. Lane Weaver Educating the mind without educating the body and the soul leaves a person 2/3 empty and a society unable to cope with life. It is all important.
1808. Neil Clifford
1809. Malcolm Harvey I fulling support retaining the programs in this petition
1810. Kim Perry
1811. Rebecca McFaul
1812. Laura Boyer
1813. Tara Roche
1814. Amanda Justesen
1815. Eric Walker "There is nothing more critical to a student's well-rounded education than involvement in the arts. The cognitive, social, and emotional benefits of participating in the arts extend to every facet of life and are invaluable.
- 1816.
1817. Any self-respecting member of a board of education who has any basic knowledge of education and claims to take it seriously would never allow arts to be cut from our schools. The Utah Board of Education should be ashamed for even entertaining the thought!"
1818. Mary Rehn
1819. Barbara Hansen Eliminating these credits from our schools is a sad commentary on a lack of understanding of what creates a well rounded, well educated, and contributing member of society.
1820. Kayla Smith
1821. Drake Jennings
1822. Josh Nelson
1823. Dallin Lewis
1824. Heather Larson As a teacher I feel their is no better way for my students to succeed in math than to be physical active and to have exposure to the arts. As a mom I could not imagine a school without a music program. I have seen my own kids grow mental and socially through band. I think that kids need a well balanced education and if you put too much emphasis on the core classes you will loose a majority of the students.
1825. Ashley Taylor
1826. Gus Garcia Reinstiute the arts.
1827. Bryant Reyes
1828. Abigail Erickson
1829. David Pace Studies show that Dance education provides kinetic learning

1830. which is the on-ramp to education for many kids who are hesitant (or even find it impossible) to access their education through traditional classroom modalities. Children who are emotionally disturbed, who are on the spectrum of autism, who are hyperactive and/or who do not speak English as a first language all benefit by learning through movement. For one thing, it builds confidence so that they can enter the classroom more motivated and clearer about how they are part of something larger than themselves. This is just one example of how arts education can be a critical player in the lives of our students. Thanks for hearing me out.
1831. Chayce Martin Suggest getting rid of football, baseball, soccer, etc. Those are far more expensive and dangerous to our children's health/future than anything listed.
1832. McKay Hall Middle school's already hell, don't take away one of the few good parts
1833. Sera Reconczone
1834. Alden Mikkelsen
1835. Tresa DeVore We need Physical Education!!! It is proven that exercise HELPS the mind!! Be smart and KEEP Physical Education as a requirement for kids!
1836. Katie Prusak
1837. Susan Duehlmeier
1838. Meghan Horner I am a parent of two children in Utah's public education system. The ruling that eliminates credit from health, arts, physical education, college and career awareness, world languages, and digital literacy in middle school seems incredibly, woefully short-sighted, knowing how children benefit from access to and full support of these programs throughout their education. Kudos to the board members who understand this and voted against this measure. I hope the board will reconsider this ruling.
1839. Emily Kerr
1840. Scott Brown
1841. michael hoover
1842. Shannon caldwell
1843. Camilyn Vach
1844. Brian Young Please offer arts and physical education in our schools!
1845. Danny Stephens
1846. Tremayne Gillis Eliminating the listed curricula will eschew depth and humanity from the learning environment, preparing students to enter into a world which doesn't exist, one that doesn't hold things like personal care, aesthetics, and social well-being to a high standard. The educational system should try it's best to foster well-rounded, intelligent students, and I don't believe that can be achieved if we begin limiting our institutional outlets.
1847. Tyler Vach
1848. Matthew Johnson
1849. Nathan Campbell
1850. Michael Carnes "The idea of 'relevancy' often drives the curriculum of schools. At its worst, it turns public schools into vocational schools--focused on the skills of today and missing the future completely. The arts have shown themselves time and time again to increase the capacity for abstract thinking. As a musician with a long career in technology, I give music much more credit for my success in this field than anything related to computer training.
1851. Physical Education is also hugely important in setting the groundwork for a healthy life. A healthy, inventive mind depends on the foundation of a healthy body. Not everyone has to be a star athlete to benefit a little physical activity. These good habits can last a lifetime--and can extend that lifetime."
1852. Hillery John This change is very disheartening. Our school systems are struggling enough as it is, so why degrade the level of education even further? Our education system should be focusing on what's best for OUR CHILDREN and not what's best for ARBITRARY TEST SCORES. Please reverse this decision and restore the faith of many parents and citizens in the school system's ability to prioritize quality education for our posterity.
1853. Wendy Robbs
1854. Brendon MacKay
1855. Allie Patton
1856. Todd Egbert
1857. Rachel Frandsen
1858. Kartika Aposhian
1859. Suzanne Allred
1860. Emily Hase
1861. Cassidy Ricks
1862. Keri Hedman
1863. Heather Bennett
1864. Connie Johnson
1865. Jacob Johnson
1866. Kevin John Next time, try a public hearing first.
1867. Rosalie Gurule
1868. Kyle Burton
1869. Leslie Bourque
1870. L Clark
1871. Kathleen L Lundy "Elimination of these classes affects the emotional and mental health of students, tomorrow's leaders. Do you care so little about the health of the most vulnerable, the future of the community and our leaders that you would strip them of these classes? You act like the Taliban or Ultra Orthodox/Fundamentalist leaders which I thoughty were only in other countries...STOP IT!!!!"
1872. Whitney Koyle
1873. Sara Burton
1874. Brooke Huebner
1875. Hayley Kerkman
1876. Melissa Walton
1877. Kelsey Barton
1878. Vanessa Shannon
1879. Carolee Adams Education isn't just about regurgitating information. It's also about finding connections with different parts of the brain! Utilizing movement, creativity, music, theatre 🎭 develops both sides of the brain, enhances and magnifies our ability to present, preform, develop problem solving skills through a variety of means. Not all students relate to basic skills. Love of music enriches students to read symbols created by music scores or to learn to read by listening to words in song. Passion for the arts create avenues for learning and connections between mathematical equations in written scores. Dissecting Education into basic skills will limit student's ability to explore and discover the creative side of the brain We live in a world that creates and expands beyond the basics. Our educational system should reflect a creative approach!
1880. Patricia Serbousek
1881. Jane Hatter Arts are in integral part of a basic education. They stimulate connections between creative and logical thought processes as well as
- being important motivator for attendance and participation for potentially at risk youth. PE and health are also incredibly important for the development of well-rounded citizens. These requirements must not be eliminated from middle school programs here in Utah.
1882. Michelle Reese
1883. Cristina Lettig
1884. Josh Bone
1885. Angelica Blair
1886. Mary Ann Kirk
1887. Kat Fuller
1888. Robert Jones
1889. Rhonda Pierson
1890. Patricia Doty
1891. Alisha Upwall
1892. Paden Hansen
1893. Cameron Abaroa
1894. Zinna Eaton
1895. Lindsey Hazelwood Please don't allow our 13 and 14 year olds to NOT be introduced to mental health help and information on suicide, as in where to get help and to use the app SafeUT. Students need to learn risk behaviors and how to say no, how to use refusal skills in peer pressure situations. And how to stand up for themselves using I statements, they need to learn communication skills and nutritional information. And so much more as young people.
1896. Kate Whitbeck'
1897. Chase Thomas
1898. Joanne Slotnik
1899. Beth Foley
1900. Rhonda Halliday
1901. Karen Traini
1902. Clark Bullen
1903. Courtney Marden Courtney Marden
1904. Jean Tokuda Irwin
1905. Trevor Rasmussen
1906. Nathaniel Eschler Perhaps the declining cultural importance of arts education is contributing to the lack of cultural sensitivity; the need to share in joy with our neighbors, our children; to help, and to work together for a common goal. Some part of each of us must exist in the present moment; for each other.
1907. Rebecca Merald
1908. Brooker King
1909. Sandra Jacobs These courses are very important for helping to develop well-rounded young adult citizens.
1910. Tanner Bennett Too much emphasis has been placed on the STEM fields, and while yes, they are important, we can not forget the importance of our culture and our arts programs.
1911. Rachel Kimball
1912. Peter Nicholas
1913. Chelsey Stephens
1914. Michele Bennett
1915. Camille Hansen
1916. Jessica Young
1917. Noriko Kishi
1918. Barbara Burt Students need these subjects. Too much obesity going on around here and students need to think outside the box, and these subjects help them.
1919. Annie Burbidge Ream
1920. Caesar Perfidio The arts, health, and PE programs make a difference in student's lives. These programs should be necessary in every school program because they only benefit the student.
1921. Kaitlynn Wesley The arts are so important. It makes you think different and appreciate other things in life. I just graduated highschool, and if I didn't
1922. Jim French I am at a loss as to why the Utah State Board of education would eliminate the Middle School credit requirement for health, arts, physical education, college and career awareness, world languages, and digital literacy. Is the intent to send Utah's children back to the Dark Ages? Please tell me your reasoning. Thank you, Jim French
1923. Ceri Steele
1924. Shelbie Brereton
1925. Anne Young
1926. Kate Hansen
1927. Lincoln Jacobs Lincoln D. Jacobs
1928. Kenneth Woolley
1929. Jim Woolley
1930. Madison Hayes "Sometimes school is the only place kids will have exposure to these creative outlets or health education - eliminating such a requirement deprives them of this crucial exposure. As a huge choir nerd, I can personally speak of how singing in a choir as a middle schooler improved my confidence, gave me a creative outlet, and helped me realize the value of team work!"
1931. Donni Pay
1932. Melissa Steagall
1933. Rosie Gurule
1934. Veronica Wagner
1935. Melinda Smith

From: Rachel [mailto:rstreeter@gmail.com]
Sent: Tuesday, September 19, 2017 11:41 AM
To: Austin, Lorraine <lorraine.austin@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: Concerned Parent on the Recent Policy Decision.

Utah State of Board of Education Members,

Posted on USBE website is your vision concerning student education: *"The Utah State Board of Education will set the general statewide conditions in which each student can excel, including equity of educational opportunities and culturally responsive practices to promote each student's academic success and well-being. Resources and Board policies and practices will be aligned to high expectations and successful outcomes for each student"* ([Utah Board of Education: Educational Equity](#))

Yet it has come to my attention that the board has recently ruled to remove the requirements at the junior high level essential to the well-being of the students. The American Psychological Association states that a healthy child is grounded in these four aspects: Mind, Relationships, Emotions, and Body ([Link](#)). If this is in fact true, eliminating the arts, music, health, and p.e. as required curriculum is contrary to your mission statement of promoting each students well-being. The APA also states: *"Emotional health can lead to success in work, relationships and health. In the past, researchers believed that success made people happy. Newer research reveals that it's the other way around. Happy people are more likely to work toward goals, find the resources they need and attract others with their energy and optimism — key building blocks of success"* ([Link](#)). If this is the case it is even more crucial to require the arts, music, health, and p.e in fulfilling your vision of achieving student excellence.

It is crucial to keep the arts and music because, when properly taught, they have something no other discipline has: an understanding and appreciation of humanity, the diversity, struggles, and triumphs of it, their own place in it, and the capacity to practice empathy with those who are different. The humanities, arts, and music are foundational to a healthy student. It is crucial to keep health because, when properly taught, it gives students knowledge and skills to create their own mental, relational, emotional, and physical health. It is crucial to keep music and p.e. because, when properly taught, it gives students the opportunity to practice their knowledge and skills of mind, relationships, emotions, and body through interactions with their peers in achieving concrete goals--group work at its best.

These courses are the key to the well-being and success of students in Utah schools. The student's well-being is essential and foundational to their academic success. Their academic success is essential to fulfilling your vision of student excellence, including both academic success and student well-being. Please reconsider your decision to relegate these courses to electives. Instead, I invite you,

to fulfill your stated vision to "promote policies and practices that align with the high expectations and successful outcomes for each student."

A final thought, "Two cultures; a common aim. To build a world in which we not only draw upon economics, medicine, engineering, and science in order to lead longer, healthier, and more prosperous lives, but also never forget that it is the humanities and the arts that make those lives worth living. Let's supplement the quantitative rigor, the focus on policy, and the logic of economics with the empathy, judgment, and wisdom that defines humanities at their best." (p293, "Cents and Sensibility: What Economics Can Learn from the Humanities, Gary Saul Morson, Morton Schapiro)

Thank you,
Mrs. Rachel Streeter
An Alpine School District Parent

Living four hours from your meeting, I would like share my perspective for the hearing tonight. I am a retired school counselor and now the president of Garfield School Board and Boulder Arts Council. Any message sent by eliminating Art, PE and Health at this time with suicide rates so high and a national obesity problem and the need for all students to have more art would send the wrong message. The problem of all requirements fitting for some students can be dealt with through modifying requirements for individuals through counseling and guidance. The solution is giving counselors and principals the leeway to adjust requirements to meet the individual needs of some students not with blanket changes for all. Please consider the consequences of this action and do NOT pass the changes to requirements for all middle school students. Thank you.

Cheryl Cox via Facebook

From: Ilene Davies [mailto:ilene.davies@ccsdut.org]
Sent: Tuesday, September 19, 2017 10:05 PM
To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: LEA and curriculum

Our local board wants take advantage of the R277-70, but 35 years as a middle school teacher, I am concerned.

Our middle school kids need to practice skills and get wiggles out. They need art and music - this keeps many at-risk kids in school. We had a strong guitar program that reached such a population and it is being cut. Where will we be able to reach those that came for that course and stayed for the rest of school by default?

I am taken back at Cache County's reduction of 7th grade reading from a full year to one trimester. Thirty-five years ago I taught careers in Alpine District. Seventh grade students would explore their talents, skills, wants and desires and research careers they were suited for or desired. There were guest speakers from all vocations to offer real world advice to twelve-year-olds. Two trimesters College and Career Readiness over reading is concerning. The bottomline was careers was good in theory but a poor use of academic time when most of the kids needed to work on reading proficiency. I am one of the few middle school teachers with a reading endorsement and I am shocked at the large number of bright students who substitute the wrong word within the text when reading aloud. Seventh graders need to read more. College and Career Readiness will not make up for a strong reading background.

The social studies core demands more time than what our LEA is blocking out. It takes an entire year to teach the core and get kids to pass the required citizenship test. But our board wants to reduce US History to 2 trimesters and Utah History to one trimester. In our current civic chaos, history and civil rights must be a full year since the elementary curriculum has abandoned it.

R277-700 worries me. Our kids need time to practice skills so they can move to high school with fewer at-risk of leaving before graduation. Keep our arts, music, and core subjects

intact and our kids coming to school. An LEA's choice to have more College and Careers in middle school rather than PE and art may just add more anxiety than motivation.

Thanks for your time, Ilene

8th grade US History and Reading for Fun
South Cache Middle School, Hyrum, UT

*"It takes a sense of history to have a sense of purpose."
...knowledge is power, so keep reading!*

From: Kevin & Michelle Cook [mailto:kevandchelle@hotmail.com]

Sent: Tuesday, September 19, 2017 10:13 PM

To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>

Subject:

Please keep these subjects as a requirement. Students already have limited opportunities to move their bodies or learn about them. These classes are important to their well being and should be required. It is a time of growth and physical change and they need to have chances to learn about their health.

It is also a time self awareness and abstract thinking where they need opportunities to express themselves in new ways. Adolescent development theory also shows that new relationships and emotions need outlets that art, music, and other interactions provide. These courses should also be required.

One of the points of public education is to help students gain experience so they can have new perspectives and appreciation for others. All of these subjects help provide that.

Michelle Cook

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

From: Tori January [mailto:torisjanuary@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, September 20, 2017 5:19 AM
To: Austin, Lorraine <lorraine.austin@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: Keep the arts, P.E. and health as required credits in middle school

I am an educator with well over 25 years experience. My experience has primarily been in middle school and I can tell you that pulling the arts, P.E., and health (especially health) as required credits is going to cause more problems than it solves.

I wear many “hats” and will share my opposition to the current plan from each of my perspectives.

As a teacher:

We don't know what we don't know until we learn it. I have had many students take theatre because they don't like art and “can't” play an instrument. When they discover that theatre includes performance, building props, costuming, playwriting, etc., they discover a new world of opportunities. I'm sure art, music, and dance teachers have had similar experiences. I have had many students enthusiastically enroll in Theatre II even though they “had” to take theatre I. We are trying to educate well-rounded students. While removing the *requirement* doesn't mean schools will remove the *class*; we all know that is a possibility. We also know that some students will avoid the arts and that is detrimental to their overall development. There are plenty of studies done at the national level to provide evidence that a well-rounded education, which includes the arts, benefits students. <https://www.arteducators.org/research/studies-in-art-education>, <http://www.aep-arts.org/wp-content/uploads/Preparing-Students-for-the-Next-America.pdf>;

Teachers are encouraged to find real-life applications for our content. I can't think of any class that teaches real-life applications more than health. I consider health a “life skills” class.

At a time when obesity rates continue to rise, teen suicide is a growing concern, and opioid abuse is epidemic, we need health classes in the middle schools more than ever. I realize that students are required to have health in high school, but high school is too late for students to learn about healthy choices. I know parents don't want to think about this, but sticking our heads in the sand is a disservice to our children. While, on average, teens aren't having sex until 17, they are definitely thinking about it, talking about it, and spreading false information well before that time. One only needs to ask a few health teachers to hear anecdotal evidence to that effect. Would I like students to get comprehensive sex education in their homes?

Absolutely! Do I think that will ever happen? History tells us it won't. I fear that if we pull health as a requirement, students won't opt to take it as an elective. They will still get sex education in middle school, it just won't be from a trained teacher in a classroom; it will be from other 13-year-olds on the playground. This is not the time to remove health as a requirement. The things they learn in health will benefit them for life.

As a parent:

I have two middle school students. My daughter would take nothing BUT art if given the opportunity; my son would take nothing BUT computer classes if given the opportunity. If we take away P.E. and the Arts as requirements, that opportunity could eventually exist. Middle schoolers are too young to know what is good for them. A liberal arts education designed to develop well-rounded students with experience in a wide range of subjects is the best approach at the middle school level. In high school, when they are more developed and experienced, students can make better, targeted, choices in their coursework. Let's make sure they have to "try a little bit of everything on their plate" when they are in middle school, so they can figure out what their tastes actually are.

As a concerned citizen:

I have assurances from my employer and from my children's school that the current coursework will not change. However, I have concerns about students in other districts who will miss out on opportunities when their districts decide NOT to offer these courses because they don't have to. We need a populace that is educated in a variety of disciplines, it benefits all of us. In this digital age where we only see on our screens what data tells us we want to see, schools are our best bet for students to be introduced to ideas, people, and careers that they hadn't considered before. Let's learn from the past and be sure that all Utah students have the same basic opportunities in school.

Cordially,

Tori January

West Jordan resident, educator, and mother

From: Tori January [mailto:torisjanuary@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, September 20, 2017 5:56 AM
To: Board of Education <board@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: Bring back arts, P.E. and Health as required credits

We all bemoan the lack of human interaction amongst pre-teens and teens. It seems that all of their interactions are through screens. P.E. and the performing arts give them the opportunity to interact in real time, in real space, teaching them invaluable life and work skills.

Health addresses human interaction directly, including how to interact with friends and family in positive ways and how to recognize the signs that someone is suicidal.

The visual arts encourage students to put down the screen and observe the real world around them, or better yet, to create new worlds rather than consume them.

If these credits are not required, they WILL disappear from many middle schools, robbing students of the built-in opportunity to *engage*.

Please bring back the arts, P.E. and health as required middle school credits

Sincerely,
Tori January

From: Jacob Hoehne [mailto:jacob@issimo.co]
Sent: Tuesday, September 19, 2017 5:00 PM
To: Austin, Lorraine <lorraine.austin@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: Educational changes

Ms. Austin,

I read the [Trib](#) article about the proposed changes for middle school requirements. I am quite concerned both as a parent of children in the Alpine School District and as a business owner. As a parent, a lopsided education is not what my children need. As an employer, I look for well-rounded individuals. One skill set doesn't a good employee make. While I agree with the desire to promote STEP initiatives, it should not be at the expense of arts, gym, or health classes. I want to hire problem solvers who can think critically, express themselves in a variety of media. Frankly, the STEM-only students will be replaced by software and robots. The ones who can inspire people through the arts, leveraging the sciences, and have the people-skills to rally teams together are the ones who will always have high-paying jobs.

Even STEM graduates need and do better with a wholistic approach to education. The best, most qualified future employees can make connections between the arts and sciences. Ignoring physical activity is ignoring the reality of human development and performance. We can't shunt that responsibility of arts / music / physical education to outside of school. There is precious little time not already demanded of my children in school, even in 5th grade.

Please reconsider cutting arts and PE. It's not what parents nor employers want or need.

Respectfully,

JACOB HOEHNE
CHIEF CREATIVE OFFICER
O 801.443.4888
C 801.836.6298
ISSIMO.CO

ISSIMO
STORY AGENCY

From: Ilene Davies [mailto:ilene.davies@ccsdut.org]
Sent: Tuesday, September 19, 2017 10:05 PM
To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: LEA and curriculum

Our local board wants take advantage of the R277-70, but 35 years as a middle school teacher, I am concerned.

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Thanks for your time, Ilene

8th grade US History and Reading for Fun
South Cache Middle School, Hyrum, UT

*"It takes a sense of history to have a sense of purpose."
...knowledge is power, so keep reading!*

From: Kevin & Michelle Cook [mailto:kevandchelle@hotmail.com]

Sent: Tuesday, September 19, 2017 10:13 PM

To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>

Subject:

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It is also a time self awareness and abstract thinking where they need opportunities to express themselves in new ways. Adolescent development theory also shows that new relationships and emotions need outlets that art, music, and other interactions provide. These courses should also be required.

One of the points of public education is to help students gain experience so they can have new perspectives and appreciation for others. All of these subjects help provide that.

Michelle Cook

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

From: Brad Shuler [mailto:brad.shuler@nebo.edu]
Sent: Wednesday, September 20, 2017 10:29 AM
To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: Board Hearing Input

Dear State School Board Members,

I understand the intent is to give more local control and allow parents more flexibility to chose, but I still think that as mentioned in the letter to LEAs, most parents see these courses as important and will be taking the classes anyway. If this is true that the majority of parents see these classes as important subjects then why change the requirement for those few who might be the exception. It seems that if you wanted to create a simple appeal process for those few students who are the exception (want to take specific courses that are prohibited by the requirement, that would preferable to eliminating the requirement for all students.

The suggestion the school would still be required to offer these classes just not required to teach them does not make sense. So, it in a small district they only have 10 students who sign up for these courses, the district could just say, "Oh, too bad for you students, but we don't have enough students to carry the classes so you will have to choose some other class to take."

If this rule is implemented there is one thing for certain, there will be some students who choose not to take these courses and at least some if not many will opt to take electives that are not academically challenging. Is that direction we want to go?

How many students learn important things in health class right at a critical time in their life (reproductive health, drugs, hygiene, etc.)? How many kids find out they love art or music when they took that middle school class?

There also is the question of how this could potentially effect teachers? If you are a teacher in any one of these classes and you lose students because they are now no longer required to take them, what happens to you? Will teachers have start teaching electives or have their jobs threatened by RIF policy (Reduction in Force)?

I really feel this Board Rule needs to be reconsidered.

Thanks.



--

Brad Shuler
Salem Hills High School
Nebo Education Association

From: Tracey Watson [UT] [mailto:Tracey.Watson@myuea.org]
Sent: Wednesday, September 20, 2017 12:19 PM
To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>; Austin, Lorraine <lorraine.austin@schools.utah.gov>; Huntsman, Mark <mark.huntsman@schools.utah.gov>; dthomas@agutah.gov
Cc: Lisa Nentl-Bloom [UT] <Lisa.Nentl-Bloom@myuea.org>; Heidi Matthews [UT] <Heidi.Matthews@myuea.org>
Subject: UEA's objections to some parameters set regarding tonight's public hearing on R277-700

Lorraine,

Would you please see that Chair Huntsman and Assistant Attorney General Dave Thomas receive the attached objections regarding some of the parameters set for tonight's public hearing regarding R277-700. I have tried to email this document directly to Chair Huntsman and AAG Thomas but I'm not sure I have the correct address for AAG Thomas. I have also included the rule.comments@schools.utah.gov as we request these objections be made part of the hearing record.

Thank you for your assistance with this request.

Sincerely,

Tracey

Tracey M. Watson

Utah Education Association

Director of Legal Services & General Counsel

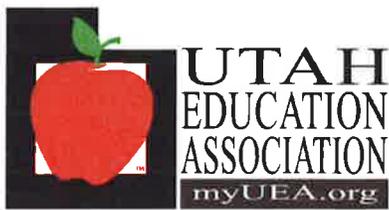
875 Pontiac Dr. Ste 3

Salt Lake City UT 84107

Tracey.watson@myuea.org

801-266-4461 x115

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875 E. Pontiac Drive
Murray, Utah 84107-5299
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myUEA.org

Heidi Matthews, *President*
Roger Donohoe, *Vice President*
Lisa Nentl-Bloom, *Executive Director*
Edward T Sanderson, *NEA State Director*
Michael Harman, *NEA State Director*

September 20, 2017

Mark Huntsman, Chair,
Utah State Board of Education

Dave Thomas, Assistant Attorney General and
Hearing Officer appointed for Public Hearing on R277-700

Transmitted via email only to: rule.comments@schools.utah.gov ; Lorraine.austin@schools.utah.gov ;
mark.huntsman@schools.utah.gov ; dthomas@agutah.gov

Re: Objections to additional parameters and limitations proposed in Utah State Board of Education
Memorandum dated September 15, 2017 and as applied to the public hearing on proposed Rule R277-700
The Elementary and Secondary School General Core scheduled for September 20, 2017.

Mr. Huntsman and Mr. Thomas,

I am the General Counsel for the Utah Education Association and I write on behalf of the Association and its members, one of the “hearing requestors” for the upcoming public hearing on R277-700. I write to place the following objections on the record with regard to the Public Hearing as noticed and scheduled for September 20, 2017 on Proposed Rule R277-700 The Elementary and Secondary School General Core.

The public’s and the Association’s right to request a public hearing is set forth in Utah Code Annotated, Title 63G – General Government, Chapter 3 – Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act, Part 3 – Rule Making Procedures, Section 302 – Public Hearings. Under this capacity, the Utah State Board of Education (USBE) is acting as a state agency charged with rule making responsibilities and such responsibilities require the agency to hold public hearing and consider public input under certain circumstances including those present at the hearing scheduled for September 20, on R277-700.

The hearing officer, Mr. Dave Thomas, drafted and published two memos on September 15 and regarding this hearing. In the first memo, Mr. Thomas advised parties reading the memo that he would be the hearing officer pursuant to R15-1-2(c). In both memos, Mr. Thomas outlined certain parameters to govern USBE’s consideration of public input on this topic and at this hearing.

This writing sets forth certain objections to the information included in those memos, including certain parameters set by the hearing officer that do not appear to be supported or authorized by statute or regulation.

Objection 1: **The public is without notice as to the specific regulations that will govern these procedures.** The memo appoints the hearing officer pursuant to R15-1-2(c); but fails to state what regulations or rules will be used to govern the hearing. It is presumed that this is a mandatory hearing required by statute and as such, if R15-1-2(c) is the hearing officer then all other regulations included in R15-1 should apply to the hearing.

Objection 2: **The parameters appear to focus on the limit of time permitted for public comment rather than encouraging or inviting as much public comment as is present and necessary.** The regulations require the hearing officer to open the hearing at the announced time and place and to permit comment for a minimum of one hour. R15-1-5(3). Neither the regulations, nor the statute require any limitation on the time permitted for public comment. To the contrary, the regulations permit the hearing may be extended or continued to another day as necessary in the judgment of the officer. At least five (5) groups, representing more than 10 members each, have requested a public hearing. Obviously, the public wants to speak to the agency regarding this rule. The UEA represents approximately 18,000 licensed public school teachers; yet each association/group is limited to 10 minutes.

Objection 3: **The additional parameters not required in statute or rule appear to create a chilling effect on public comment.** Because the hearing may be extended beyond an hour or continued to another day as necessary, and because the hearing officer is required to invite comment to be submitted at the hearing or after the hearing (R15-1-5(4)(c)), the additional limitations created by the hearing officer and published in the memo seem to be unnecessary and serve to chill or control public comment.

Objection 4: **The additional limitations, not supported by statute or regulation, appear to have a chilling effect and so we object.** The Utah Education Association, as an association who requested the hearing specifically objects to the following limitations being implemented in the memo and at the hearing:

Objection 4.a.: We object to giving preference to those who register to speak prior to the hearing. The concept of preference appears to indicate that should time run out, those who have not pre-registered to give public comment will be denied the same opportunity. We do not object to setting an order for speakers; but as written, the regulation only places a limit on the minimum amount of time – no less than one hour. Therefore, should more people want to speak, the regulations permit the Hearing Officer to extend the hearing or continue it for another day. The USBE should not have to choose from whom they receive public comment. If someone shows up to the hearing, they should be allowed to speak to the regulation and the USBE has indicated they would like to listen to those comments, or at least consider the same.

Objection 4.b.: We object to having to declare if comments are for or against the rule prior to speaking.

Objection 4.c.: We object to the prohibition on speaking time not permitted to be yielded by one speaker to another speaker.

Objection 4.d.: We object to the hearing officer encouraging written comment in advance of the public hearing – this may encourage some to put something in writing when they otherwise have the right to speak to the agency.

Objection 4.e.: We object to the instruction that encourages the public to avoid restating or repeating comments already made or reading written comments that otherwise could be submitted in writing. This limitation and instruction serves to chill speech that should be welcome and encouraged at a public hearing.

Objection 4.f.: We object to the unauthorized decision that charges the public speaker the time required for staff or Board members present to ask and answer questions. There is nothing in law or regulation that permits this restriction. USBE members in committee have voiced their preference to encourage public participation. This restriction also serves to chill participation by staff or Board members and the public from asking their elected representatives questions.

We reserve the right to place additional objections on the record at the hearing and as appropriate and necessary.

Sincerely,
UTAH EDUCATION ASSOCIATION



Tracey M. Watson
Director of Legal Services and
General Counsel

TMW: hs

cc: Lisa Nentl-Bloom, Executive Director, Utah Education Association
Heidi Matthews, President, Utah Education Association

From: Wendy Western [mailto:wendy.western@ccsdut.org]

Sent: Wednesday, September 20, 2017 10:55 AM

To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: The arts

To Whom it May Concern:

I never dreamed that we would come to this in our state!!! It is obvious that those on the board who voted against it are clueless to the research that the arts have on kids. I have been a teacher for 22 years and I can testify that music, arts, P.E. etc. are essential to a child's education. Please, please please rethink your decision.

Thank you!!

Wendy Western

Greenville Elementary

From: Johanna Fyffe [mailto:Johanna.Fyffe@besd.net]
Sent: Wednesday, September 20, 2017 12:45 PM
To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: Support for the arts, health and Pe in middle school

State Board Members

7 of my years teaching has been grades 7-9. I cannot express enough how important the arts, pe, health and collage career classes are during this time of their life and they should remain as a requirement. I can discuss for hours why these classes matter and what they do for the kids from personal experience and experience of other teachers with the research to back it up. I won't turn this into a 5 page essay because I'm certain you have already gotten a few. But the bottom line is this the arts, pe, health, and collage career classes need to stay a requirement at the middle school level. Please consider this from a professional teacher with the experience working with kids at this age level.

-Johanna Fyffe

From: Karla Anderson [mailto:kanderson@afconnect.com]

Sent: Wednesday, September 20, 2017 1:11 PM

To: Austin, Lorraine <lorraine.austin@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: Junior High Curriculum Requirements

Dear Utah Board of Education Members,

I am concerned about the recent decision made to eliminate the requirements for junior high students to take health, P.E., art, music, and college and career readiness courses. I really feel like all students should be required to take these classes. These classes provide a well-rounded education. Many studies show the benefits of studying music and that it really enhances brain development. Good health is essential for a quality life and P.E. and health classes teach individuals how to be the healthiest they can be. Many teenagers feel a lot of stress and anxiety. Depression and suicides rates are increasing. Health, P.E., art, and music classes can help calm anxieties and stimulate good mental health. I believe these courses greatly help teenagers learn how to cope with the challenges of life and help improve their mental health.

The college and career readiness courses are a great way to help junior high students look to the future and know what they need to do to be ready to begin a career. It helps them set their goals to go to college or to learn a trade so they can succeed as an adult. My children have taken these classes and have had their vision expanded as to what their future possibilities can be. They have learned that they have skills and abilities that they never knew about. They have found interests in areas that they otherwise would have never considered if it weren't for the exposure they gained in these classes.

I believe these classes improve the quality of life but I feel that many teenagers would not elect to take them because they may be classes that may be unfamiliar to them and teenagers do not like to go outside their comfort zone. The more information and experience students have, the more empowered they are to make good choices and to find success throughout their lives. I am also fearful if they are not required classes that many schools may not adequately fund such classes and the quality of the classes will diminish. If the individual students are required to pay more for these classes, many families may not be able to afford the additional cost of such classes and so students would not have an equal opportunity for a quality education. I would ask you to reconsider your decision and vote to keep the current health, P.E., art, music, and college and career readiness courses for junior high students.

Thank you!

Karla Anderson

From: Ellie BODILY_RN <ebodilyrn@alpinedistrict.org>

Sent: Wednesday, September 20, 2017 2:08:24 PM

To: Board Rule Comments

Subject: PE & Health Rule

Hi! My name is Ellie Bodily. I have worked as a school nurse in Alpine School District for over 10 years now. I also teach Public Health Nursing at BYU and have been a fitness instructor for over 30 years. I am currently working with the Utah Action for Healthy Kids Coalition.

I have been involved in PE and health issues at all levels of educational instruction from kindergarten to college aged students. I have seen a great decrease in physical activity and healthy lifestyles among all of these age groups in the past 10 years. This is the result of many factors present in our society but particularly by the limited education students get on these topics. It seems when educators have to choose between teaching core subject mastery and healthy lifestyle curricula, the former usually takes precedence. After all, those SAGE testing scores do define the schools success as a whole.

I have also seen a great increase in anxiety and depression among students. With the stressful lives their families live in, these kids need daily physical activity to help release the endorphins that make people feel better. There is a direct correlation between physical activity and a good mental health status.

Health and PE courses need to be required in our schools. If they are not required, many students will opt out of these classes in pursuit of other needed or desired courses. There is a great need for students to understand how to eat and live healthily as to create a life long habit for themselves. Many students are not taught these principles in their homes so unless they study these topics while at school, they will not know how to incorporate this essential information into their lives. This will result in the declining health of our population for people of all ages. This is a very serious issue that needs to be addressed early in life.

I implore you to consider the dire consequences that could result from altering this rule as it is currently written! We cannot leave the health of our students to the beliefs or desires of individuals who many not be qualified to determine the educational health needs of the populations they work with!!!

Thanks for your time and consideration in this very vital matter.

Ellie Bodily, MSN, RN

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Ellie Bodily, MSN, RN :)

School Nurse

Freedom Elementary

River Rock Elementary

Sego Lily Elementary

#sharelove

My email address has changed to ebodilyrn@alpinedistrict.org

From: Mark Holland <Mark.Holland@besd.net>
Sent: Wednesday, September 20, 2017 2:32:09 PM
To: Board Rule Comments
Subject: Administrative Rule R277-700

Utah State School Board,

I am dismayed and confused as to why this latest rule has been passed. As a Visual Arts and Foreign Language teacher, Rule R277-700 infuriates me. I tell every single one of my students how important their Math, Science and Language Arts classes are, but so are all the others. We need to offer our students and children a well-rounded education! At a time when students need to learn a love of learning don't direct them into thinking that school is only for four subjects. That will not instill in them the passion to learn. By doing this you have said the only thing that will ever matter is Math, Science, Language Arts and History. While needed and incredibly important there is so much to a rounded out and diverse society. Make them lifelong learners, help them cultivate a love and passion for everything. Change this rule.

Mark Holland

Adele C. Young Intermediate

Greetings State School Board of Education,

Although I've been an educator for all of my life, officially I've been an educator for 25 years in this great state of Utah. I have an undergrad degree in Health, Physical Education, Dance and Recreation and a graduate degree in the field of Exercise Science.

My viewpoint in regards to R277-700 (specifically Health/P.E.) is that our students should have flexibility in their education. I have no problem with that. We've always worked with students that have needed exceptions or couldn't fit a class into their schedule, etc. My concern is that R277-700 requires an LEA **to offer** fine arts, physical education, health education, college and career awareness and digital literacy but yet these courses for 7th and 8th grade students **are not required**. We are then implying that these courses aren't as important as required Math, Science, et al. courses.

Ask any parent what their utmost concern is for their children and the number one answer pertains to their well-being, whether physical or mental. R277-700 doesn't help parents with their main concern. Kids don't make friends in Math or Science class. Our state has one of the nation's top suicide rates amongst our adolescents. Social media has even romanticized suicides to a certain extent. There is nothing romantic about seeing a child in a coffin.

Our students need to have the conversation started with trained educators in regards to STD's, teen pregnancy rates and suicide ideation, in addition to the other content areas R277-700 will now turn into an optional choice. Health education *is* life skills education. Unlike any other curriculum area, every health education lesson has life skills implications. Thinking and reasoning, personal and social responsibility, personal communication (including refusal skills), advocacy for personal, family and community health, strategies for suicide prevention, resiliency, self-esteem and character development are all direct outcomes of the Utah State Health Education Core Curriculum.

We've finally seen a slight leveling and in some instances a reduction in childhood obesity levels. R277-700 sends a message that it's not important to take 7th or 8th grade physical education because it's deemed optional, unlike other required courses. Where will this decision take future obesity levels?

Lastly, here are a few figures from a 2017 Survey on Play that queried 1,000 parents on the subject of play. 96% of parents agree that play outside of the classroom enhances learning that occurs in school. 94% of parents agree that children who play outside are more likely to be healthy, well-rounded adults. 65% of parents believe children can learn more by playing outside than sitting in a classroom. 83% of parents believed that screen time activity was the same as play time activity. Culturally, the tidal wave embrace of technology and the use of cell phones is now an epidemic and screen time now competes with Mother Nature. So, if kids aren't getting outside to play unless it's on a screen and 7th and 8th grade physical education is an option, when will these students obtain needed physical activity? The very class where students can finally get away from screen time and social media shouldn't be optional. We don't need genius couch potatoes. Please remember who is most impacted by this decision, Utah students. It is my opinion that fine arts, physical education, health education, college and career awareness and digital literacy should be required.

Thank you for your time and consideration.
Sincerely, Tim Best

-----Original Message-----

From: Sherry Lindberg [<mailto:wyobear@hotmail.com>]

Sent: Wednesday, September 20, 2017 3:40 PM

To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: Rule Comments

Too bad this meeting is tonight. Several main educators and employees are in a conference out of town. I am sure the comments would have made an impact. Please do not make Health, P.E. and art an elective. Too many reasons why students should be required to take a health and PE class. Both are required for improvement and sustaining a health body and a healthy mind. How can any one support the fact that the students not be required to take these classes? How else are students going to learn the correct information. Please reconsider this ruling. Thank You, S. Lindberg.

Sent from my iPhone

From: Carolee Wright [mailto:cwright@dmail.net]
Sent: Wednesday, September 20, 2017 4:24 PM
To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: More art in the schools

I am new to teaching Visual Arts this year and I can already see what the arts are doing for my students. I am watching students try something they say they are not good at and feel success. They are struggling to make the project look like what they want it to look like and feeling a sense of accomplishment that they could do what they previously thought they couldn't do.

As a mother, I have seen a whole other side of the story. One parent conference I went to school and found out my son was failing every class in Junior High, because he was reading novels in class instead of doing his work, yes, he was reading in PE also. The conference motivated me to get professional help for him, where we found out he had Asperger's syndrome. Getting a 504 for him did little to help, his teachers fought against the 504 saying that the equipment they gave him distracted the whole class, they thought because he was bright, he didn't need the accommodations. The thing that made a difference in his life is when his music theory teacher suggested he try out for the show choir. Yes, music theory was a required art class that I would not have suggested that he take.

I thought "Does she really know what she is doing" Asperger's kids have rhythm difficulties, and his older brother constantly was asking him to not sing because he was off pitch. I don't think I had heard him sing in 2 or 3 years.

He made the show choir. I found out he had a beautiful voice and she taught him how to stay on pitch and rhythm. By the end of the year he was singing solos frequently. It was about the same time that his grades started going up. He still occasionally forgot to turn things in, but he was no longer avoiding school, because he had something to look forward to.

In High School, he made it into 2 more show choirs and the school musicals. I worried that the time commitment for these would hurt his academics, but they did the opposite. He worked hard to stay caught up, he had a fun reason be at school, and experienced success that lead to other success. He ended High School with about a 3.5 Grade point average. If he had not have had music in his life, He wouldn't have done well in High School, and he definably would not have had the help with social aspects of the Asperger's that he was able to get in music. Many people with Asperger's struggle to make friends and participate in anything social. He made many good friends in the choirs and cast. By his senior year he was doing well enough to play one of the leads in the school play (Judd Fry.) The comment I heard most was "wow he did a good job of acting I know how nice he is, and he really convinced me that Judd was a scary man." I think most people have no Idea the huge impact the arts can have on a young person's life. The problem-solving skills they learn, and the trying new and hard things, we all could use more of. I think that there should be more of an emphasis on the arts, not less. I think these are the skills the next generation will need. I think cutting arts in an way is a mistake.

Carolee Wright
North Layton Junior High Career and College Awareness, and Visual Art teacher.

-----Original Message-----

From: C. Funk [<mailto:clark.funk@me.com>]

Sent: Wednesday, September 20, 2017 4:36 PM

To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>

Cc: raquel.fuller@hotmail.com

Subject: Public meeting comments

I speak on behalf of myself and another Physical Educator at my same school, Raquel Fuller,

We feel this change is a mistake and should be pushed the other direction to require schools to have more of Physical Education than was previously required. Studies show a direct link between physical activity/ fitness and reduced suicide rates and better student academic achievement. It doesn't make any sense to take away the emphasis by not "requiring" Physical Education at the state level for any grade. Do we want our state to decrease student academic performance and increase suicide rates?

Coach Clark Funk

Adele C. Young Intermediate

Box Elder School District

435-730-3598

From: Laura Belnap [mailto:lbelnap@utahonline.org]
Sent: Wednesday, September 20, 2017 5:20 PM
To: Board of Education <board@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: FW: Please share this support for your plan regarding arts and PE in middle!

I was asked to share this email with the board.

From: Melissa Butler <melissarncanyon@gmail.com>
Date: Wednesday, September 20, 2017 at 5:07 PM
To: <lbelnap@utahonline.org>
Subject: Please share this support for your plan regarding arts and PE in middle!

Laura,

Several weeks back, I e-mailed the State School Board to let them know of my support for your plan to put art and P.E. class requirements at a more local level of control. I still greatly support your plan, and plead with the other State School Board members to support this change.

I received a few e-mails back from board members, including one response that disturbed me. In talking with a few of my friends who care deeply about education and about their children, it seems that all those who'd e-mailed the board in support of this had received a similar response from Carol Lear. I've included a screen shot of her reply to me, and would like to share with you a few excerpts from e-mails my friends received.

"...children of color, children from disadvantaged families w/one parent working 3 jobs, refugee parents who do not speak English will not have the same guidance and additional opportunities."

"Who helps 12 and 13-year olds make good choices (not always easy choices) about courses that are critically necessary or once-in-a-lifetime opportunities (music, dance, pottery)? Certainly the engaged, 2-parent families and those with resources and sophistication. Often not the single-parent families with the parent working 2 or 3 jobs to pay for health care. Certainly not the refugee parents or those who do not speak English."

I am greatly concerned with Carol's replies as she seems to be of the mindset that certain groups of people, including single moms, immigrants, and people of color, are somehow less qualified to make good decisions for their children, and therefore, the School Board should not allow these courses to be optional. I hope that you, and the other Board Members, can see how offensive and wrong this is. Parents, regardless of ethnicity, race, or marital status deserve to have a greater say in their children's schooling. Putting the decision making power at a more local level shows respect for families, parents, and local communities. I applaud your efforts, and encourage the rest of the Board to support you in this measure.

Sincerely,

Melissa Butler

'Carol'



Carol B. Lear

to me
Aug 10 [Details](#)



I did NOT vote for the policy you describe. Though I respect your interest, I believe that this policy will limit the opportunities for children whose parents are not as engaged as you are to take the only music lessons, art experiences and PE training of their lives. Districts/charters will not be able to continue to offer classes when too few children enroll. Those children of white privilege will have outside opportunities that disadvantaged children will not. I think this policy (and the discussion is not over) will seriously disadvantage children with less sophisticated parents.

But I always appreciate concerned and interested parents . . . I am one also.

Carol Lear
District 7

From: Michelle Gneiting [mailto:mgneiting@gmail.com]

Sent: Thursday, September 21, 2017 6:13 AM

To: Austin, Lorraine <lorraine.austin@schools.utah.gov>

Subject:

Dear board members,

I am concerned about the recent ruling which removes the arts requirement from junior high curriculum.

Without these minimum standards, there's a risk that students won't have those opportunities to participate in the arts and the music and all of those things that contribute to a well-rounded education.

I think its a fundamental duty of the state Board of Education to set minimum standards, and In enacting this rule, it's essentially a lowering of those standards.

--

Michelle Gneiting

From: Carrie Harris [mailto:carriekharris@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, September 21, 2017 1:47 PM
To: Austin, Lorraine <lorraine.austin@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: Please Keep Music Programs

Dear Ms. Austin,

My name is Carrie Harris. I am writing today to add my voice to others who are asking to keep the arts and music programs in the junior high curriculum.

This is very personal to me because I have seen my daughters life improved due to these programs.

Our family has always been a "sports" family. Music classes were only taken because it was a requirement...until it literally saved my daughters life.

You see, my daughter has Type 1 Diabetes with severe anxiety. During her 7th and 8th grade year, the principals and counselors at American Fork Jr. High had to work with her almost on a daily basis to get her to stay at school. Her anxiety was so severe that she thought about taking her life so she would not feel the pain anymore.

At the end of her year, she was a part of a play (something she would never have signed up for except it was required). She ended up gaining a new insight for life and discovered skills she otherwise would not have discovered.

This gave her the courage to join color guard. This has given her new life and hope. She has met amazing individuals who have loved her and supported her in her challenges. Her doctor said that because she is so active in color guard her diabetes is doing better than ever and encouraged her to keep it up.

Please do not remove these crucial programs. They are instrumental to our childrens success and development physically, emotionally and mentally. The things my daughter has experienced because of these programs have not only changed her life but saved her life. She would have not have experienced them in any other way.

Thank you,
Carrie Harris

From: Peterson, Mark
Sent: Thursday, September 21, 2017 2:29 PM
To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>
Cc: brzygrl72@yahoo.com
Subject: FW: 7th & 8th grade policy changes

Dear Ms. Robinson:

Thank you for taking time to let your opinion be heard.

I have forwarded your comments to the "Board Rule Comments" e-mail contact so they may become part of the official record for the Board on this matter.

Mark Peterson | Public Relations Director | Utah State Board of Education

250 E 500 S | PO Box 144200 | Salt Lake City, UT 84114-4200 | 801.538.7635 | mark.peterson@schools.utah.gov
[USOE Online Newsroom](#) | [UT Public Education Twitter Feed](#) | [UtahPublicEducation.org Blog](#) | [Utah Public Education on Facebook](#)

From: Bree Lynn Robinson [<mailto:brzygrl72@yahoo.com>]
Sent: Thursday, September 21, 2017 2:20 PM
To: Peterson, Mark <Mark.Peterson@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: 7th & 8th grade policy changes

To whom it may concern, I am absolutely against removing PE, ART & MUSIC from this age of student or for the record any age of student k-12. These 3 classes are essential for the health of the student both physically and mentally. There are countless studies to prove there are kids who have a better rate of success if they are given an opportunity for music and physical activity versus those that don't have these opportunities. I would strongly encourage the school board to keep these as a requirement and see to it they are ALWAYS available as elective classes for the older student body population.

Thank you for the consideration of my humble opinion! Bree Lynn Robinson

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

From: Mike Mcdonough [UT] [mailto:Mike.Mcdonough@myuea.org]
Sent: Wednesday, September 20, 2017 3:48 PM
To: Hansen, Linda <Linda.Hansen@schools.utah.gov>
Cc: Austin, Lorraine <lorraine.austin@schools.utah.gov>; Starleen Orullian [UT] <Starleen.Orullian@myuea.org>; Cindy Formeller [UT] <Cindy.Formeller@myuea.org>
Subject: please reconsider R277-700

Linda Hansen, Board Member
Utah State Board of Education
District 3

Ms. Hansen,

We are writing you today in advance of the public hearing scheduled for 5:00 p.m. today regarding R277-700 "The Elementary and Secondary School General Core." As representatives for educators employed by the Granite School District, we wish to make you aware of the concerns shared by many of Granite's middle school educators.

As you are most likely aware, Granite School District has one of the highest percentages of socio-economic disadvantaged youth in the Wasatch Front. Educators reach these students, many who suffer trauma from poverty, homelessness, refugee status, and destructive home lives. Coming to school every day allows them the ability to fill their bellies and their minds with sustenance. Free breakfast and lunch programs do the job in stemming hunger, and elective courses fill the need for beauty, music, creativity, play, and learning about healthy life-styles. Currently elective courses in the fine arts, physical education, and career-readiness offer choice for students to explore a more holistic education.

You may argue that the suggested ruling to eliminate the mandatory requirement for these courses gives districts and parents more local control, and this may be true for the wealthier families in the Mountain West – but for students whose parents either don't speak English, lack access to information, or work several jobs to make ends meet, the decision is taken out of their hands. Their children are the ones in the most need of fine arts, physical education, music, career-readiness, etc., because they cannot afford after school sports or programs to replace these options.

We held a social justice dialogue yesterday and the middle school educators attending expressed deep concern about USBE's proposal in R277-700, particularly for the marginalized students in their classrooms. When funding resources are scarce, and teacher shortages put strain on districts to fund basic needs, having the option to eliminate these subjects from the curriculum will be a huge detriment to all students. Students losing out on the very subjects that makes them feel alive and part of something bigger than themselves will, potentially, increase the drop-out rate for secondary students.

We believe it is the Utah State School Board's primary responsibility to set the standard for education in the state, and that preparing students for life requires a deep and wide selection of

opportunity in coursework. Please reconsider your vote on this issue.

Sincerely,

Michael McDonough, GEA President
Starleen Orullian, GEA Executive Director
Cindy Formeller, GEA Uniserv Director

From: Gayla Muhlestein [mailto:gaylamuhlestein@gmail.com]

Sent: Thursday, September 21, 2017 7:18 PM

To: Austin, Lorraine <lorraine.austin@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: Arts in school

I am a mother of 7, I have an BS in Education, and feel strongly that the arts should be a fundamental part of education. Not only does it give a holistic aspect to education, but I feel that it contributes to a student's intelligence. I do believe that our society's needs are shifting and it's healthy to evaluate our students' needs but feel that it would be to our detriment to do away with the fine arts as part of the curriculum. Also, youth are still discovering what their interests are at this age and exposing them to a variety of arts helps them in this process. I particularly value music for our students and have learned that there are great cognitive advantages that increase learning over all educational emphasis. Please consider the long term consequences in removing the arts as part of our student's curriculum.

Gayla Muhlestein

From: Carla McGee [mailto:cmcgee@dcsd.org]

Sent: Friday, September 22, 2017 10:14 AM

To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: specials in middle school

To Whom it May Concern,

If I understand, you have passed a ruling on having specials such as PE, music, art, theatre etc. in our middle schools. You are allowing the districts to decide if they want to provide these classes or do away with them. I am HIGHLY concerned about this move.

Coming from a family where my parents did not graduate and I being the first one to graduate high school in my family and out of 7 children only 3 of us did graduate, as well as I am the only college graduate in my family. Had I not been able to take these courses in Jr High I would not have taken them in high school or been interested in school at all. I know without these courses I would not have graduated.

Please reconsider this and rescind your previous approval. Research also shows that students perform better in their academic classes when they have access to the arts. Taking out the Physical education in our schools when it has also been researched to assist student in a healthy lifestyle when as a nation we are becoming more unhealthy seems like a really BAD idea.

Thank You

Carla McGee

Educator in Duchesne School District.

From: Kirk Jones [mailto:kirk.jones@washk12.org]
Sent: Friday, September 22, 2017 10:41 AM
To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: Arts Elective Essential for healthy, happy, kids and adults

Keep the balance in schools between the sciences and the arts.
Kids need to learn how to build healthy connections and relationships without a screen in front of them.
Keep creativity and the arts in schools.
If we lose it, it's really hard to get back, and it effects entire lives.
Sincerely,

--

Kirk Jones
Elementary Music Teacher
Diamond Valley ES
Horizon ES



From: Lisa Bean [mailto:lisa.bean@nebo.edu]
Sent: Friday, September 22, 2017 11:15 AM
To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>
Cc: Lisa Bean <lisa.bean@nebo.edu>
Subject: Health, PE and ARTs

Shall we do all we can to **reduce obesity rates** among young people in Utah? Then KEEP Health and PE requirements.

Shall we do all we can to **improve connectivity and creativity** in the face of increasing disconnection due to the overuse of media among young people in Utah? Then KEEP the arts as a required exploration in our middle schools.

Please.

Thank you for reconsidering this vital issue.

Lisa Bean



*Lisa K. Bean, PhD
Drama Curriculum Specialist
Nebo School District
801-310-5187*

-----Original Message-----

From: lenka@xmission.com [<mailto:lenka@xmission.com>]

Sent: Friday, September 22, 2017 11:09 AM

To: Austin, Lorraine <lorraine.austin@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: art credit

Hello,

My son is going to Middle School next year. I am very much in support of keeping the Arts, PE, health part of the curriculum. If anything the students needs more arts in the schools. Please do not eliminate these programs.

Thank you, Lenka Konopasek

-----Original Message-----

From: Heather [<mailto:hgateley@yahoo.com>]

Sent: Friday, September 22, 2017 11:41 AM

To: Austin, Lorraine <lorraine.austin@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: R277-700

Dear Ms Austin,

I am a parent & former teacher who is very concerned about the new rule governing Arts & PE in our middle schools.

I believe PE & Art education are essential components of our educational system & should absolutely be prioritized in our schools.

Unlike many other subjects, PE & the Arts address a wider variety of learning styles & have far reaching effects on motivation, stress relief & helping students to develop essential understanding of their physical & mental health.. With teen suicide rates & school violence at an all time high, we cannot afford to take away any health program.

Middle school is a vulnerable time for students & these courses help to broaden their awareness & provide them with exposure to things they may not otherwise be introduced to. The more interactive settings in Art & PE classes allow students to have greater interaction with their peers & serve an important, but unrecognized role in promoting friendships & community.

Thank you for your time.

Regards,
Heather Stoll
Heber City, Utah

Sent from my iPhone

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From: Michelle Gneiting [mailto:mgneiting@gmail.com]

Sent: Thursday, September 21, 2017 6:13 AM

To: Austin, Lorraine <lorraine.austin@schools.utah.gov>

Subject:

Dear board members,

I am concerned about the recent ruling which removes the arts requirement from junior high curriculum.

Without these minimum standards, there's a risk that students won't have those opportunities to participate in the arts and the music and all of those things that contribute to a well-rounded education.

I think its a fundamental duty of the state Board of Education to set minimum standards, and In enacting this rule, it's essentially a lowering of those standards.

--

Michelle Gneiting

From: Dave Harlan [mailto:dave.harlan@nebo.edu]
Sent: Friday, September 22, 2017 12:37 PM
To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: Keep Art Credit

Greetings: I wanted to take a short amount of your time to voice my support in keeping the Arts Credit as part of the Requirement for secondary students. My experience has been two fold both as a parent appreciative for the classes and experiences this brought to my 6 children as they fulfilled that requirement. Also as a Elementary Principal with a wonderful 6th grade orchestra program and a strong District Arts program in my school. We appreciate having a strong robust music and arts program at our Jr. High for these students to continue. I believe this would impact those opportunities and offerings.

It is already difficult for students to choose which electives they want as well as fit them in the schedule with the other required classes. By removing the arts credit this becomes even more challenging. I appreciate the hard decisions the State Board at times needs to make and wish you the best as you contemplate this difficult one. Thank you for your time. Sincerely, Dave Harlan

--

Principal Canyon Elementary
"It only takes a little to be big!"



From: Shad Roghaar [mailto:shad.roghaar@jordandistrict.org]
Sent: Friday, September 22, 2017 12:34 PM
To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: Art Requirements

Hello,

I am an art teacher at Oquirrh Hills Middle School. I have been teaching for over ten years in various districts in Utah and Nevada. I have witnessed the necessity, power, and importance of an art education in every student I have taught. Art is important to all of the human condition and is one of the fundamental aspects of our nature that separates us from other animals and illustrates that we are conscience beings. If you do not require students to take art, unfortunately some of them won't. This is detrimental to the formulation of a well rounded student, and it is my belief that without some exposure to the arts, people will never learn these principles on their own and be limited in their relation to the world around them, and the better principles of our nature as humans.

All that should be obvious. The other problems that I am concerned with, are the lack of input in this decision by parents of students, teachers, students, and any other stake holder within education. This dropped on almost everyone that I have spoken with like a bomb. I have not spoken to one of the above stakeholders that thinks this is a good idea, and I have a hard time believing that there was, is, or ever has been be an interest in pursuing this by anyone, except maybe people who run, or are a part of a charter schools system. Where is the research that states this policy would be beneficial to anyone? Who was asked about putting this policy in place, and who gave feed back that this would be a positive thing?

I am also very concerned with how many people within the arts community could lose their jobs due to this decision. Myself included. The arts are already being limited in education, and it is primarily due to poor decisions like this one, that no one thought out, or understood the long term effects of, before they were put into place.

I hope you seriously reconsider this policy before it is implemented.

--

Shad Roghaar
Oquirrh Hills Middle School
Visual Art/Ceramics

-----Original Message-----

From: Dennis [<mailto:baldytop68@q.com>]

Sent: Friday, September 22, 2017 1:03 PM

To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: Arts

I am a retired high school teacher. I taught for 40 years. I retired in 2015. I taught Social Studies. Two of the courses were AP European History and AP United States Government and Politics. I taught AP GOV. for over 25 years. Currently I serve as a faculty consultant for the College Board, (they are the folks who own the AP program.) In that capacity I have spent time each summer for the last 17 years teaching teachers how to teach AP Gov. I offer that introduction not to brag but to give a background for my comments.

My most successful AP students were also enrolled in instrumental music, vocal music and drama. They had the best study skills, the best ability to grasp complex issues and the best personal discipline necessary to succeed in higher level academic courses. In fact, if you took the music kids out of AP classes the decrease in numbers would probably not allow the course to continue.

The discipline necessary for learning and performing music and drama is the essence of the discipline necessary for academic success and for real learning. That the music kids tend to succeed academically a higher rate than other students has been evident for years.

As I work with teachers, in AP classes, from around the U.S. I find that the music student phenomenon is almost universal.

Performing requires that students take risks. They put it all on the line and risk failure whenever they perform. They work hard to make sure that the performance is flawless. The self confidence that stems from taking risks and succeeding is the essence of real learning. It makes them better students.

STEM programs are critical. Yet, I find myself wondering why we are going to throw the baby out with the bath water. Education "experts" tend to grab data or fads and try to change the world on a frequent basis. You can increase success in STEM programs and maintain the music classes. I would argue, passionately that music classes will dramatically increase the capacity of kids to learn anything.

Listening to a beginning violin student can be painful. But, encouraging that student to keep working, practicing and developing his/her skills will increase their capacity to learn everything.

Please do not destroy one of the most vital elements of learning and fostering the capacity to grow academically by taking the arts out of the schools.

Sent from my iPad

From: Janet Jolley [mailto:janetjolley1@LIVE.COM]

Sent: Friday, September 22, 2017 1:15 PM

To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: rule change (R277-700)

Please change the ruling to do away with Art, Music and PE requirements for 7th and 8th graders. I see programs being dropped in the less affluent districts. 7th and 8th grade is a critical time in the artistic development of your child. It's a time when the teenage brain is open to creativity and they can start learning to see as artists. Artistic (physical) learning is the only way some people learn, and if dropped, those children will be missing out on learning in general. It is also important for cognitive learning - the two go hand in hand, so if there's only one way to learn, the learning will decrease. Please keep these programs!

Thank you!

Janet

-----Original Message-----

From: Ashley Anderson [<mailto:ashley.michelle.anderson@gmail.com>]

Sent: Friday, September 22, 2017 1:15 PM

To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: Middle School Curriculum

To Whom it May Concern:

I have written about the middle school curriculum changes to both Superintendent Dickson and my representative, Carol Lear. Because I find this issue so concerning, I've opted to send an additional message here while also signing the UCA petition which was presented at the public hearing Wednesday.

As a Title 1 parent and arts educator I am troubled by the removal of curriculum which has significant academic, social, and emotional benefits for adolescents. I find the elimination of arts, PE, and careers to be an equity issue. With a teacher shortage, schools with low-income populations are most likely to lose offerings that children lack access to on an extracurricular basis. There is surely a way to provide waivers for arts and physical education opportunities, even career internships, for students with access without denying a whole education to students without the ability to pay for extracurricular programming.

Even with this aside, health education is an issue for all districts and, even particularly, those requesting this change. Utah's suburban districts have higher than average rates of suicide due to an extremely high pressure and competitive academic environment. This change eliminates the only course dedicated to providing mental health knowledge but also other courses which allow creativity, physical engagement, and other relief from high stakes coursework. Eliminating both is sure to negatively impact the already frightening suicide rate of the region. Again, it seems a simple waiver can be available for homeschool families or those who feel they have adequate mental health access. It's not necessary to eliminate for all students, especially when the danger is so significant.

Even if local districts can, in theory, preserve any of these curricular areas, in practice the teacher shortage makes it unlikely they will. It seems like the job of the State Board to set a reasonable standard and not to ask districts to go above and beyond to ensure a whole education is provided to all students.

Please reverse this decision at the October board meeting and work toward solutions that better meet the needs of parents proposing the change.

Sincerely,

Ashley Anderson

365 Center St. SLC, UT 84103
801 842 5525

From: Jennifer Purdy [mailto:jennifer.christensen.purdy@gmail.com]

Sent: Friday, September 22, 2017 1:17 PM

To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: arts, health, and PE should be required subjects

So many students don't know they will love something or be good at it until they try it. My son took band in middle school and learned to enjoy playing music as part of a group. He is now in his final year of college and writes songs for his own band, which performs around the state. His love of music began with his experience in middle school. I want all middle school students to take courses that may spark this kind of enjoyment that will last their lifetimes. When these classes are no longer required, countless students will go without ever experiencing art or music in their lives simply because they didn't think they would enjoy them so didn't elect to take them.

What 12-year-old kid is going to willingly sign up for a health class?! Most won't -- but should. There is so much information that students need to know at that age about substance abuse, suicide, and other important issues that could affect the rest of their lives.

If districts and schools are left to decide which classes to offer, they will take the easy and inexpensive way out. Finding ways to fund, staff, and supply music, art, PE, and health classes is not easy so these classes may gradually disappear from scheduling options.

Because of high stakes testing and numerous demands on elementary teachers, many Utah students never experience art or music in grades K-6. Making these courses non-required electives in middle school means students may never experience them in their K-12 Utah education. That is not a well-rounded education!

Please don't take away an opportunity for our students to learn from classes that make us more unified, more empathetic, more creative, more aware, more human.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Purdy
Salt Lake City, UT

-----Original Message-----

From: Joanne Slotnik [<mailto:jcslotnik@gmail.com>]

Sent: Friday, September 22, 2017 1:26 PM

To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: Arts, Health, and PE - DO NOT ELIMINATE THESE REQUIREMENTS!

Good Morning,

I write in favor of keeping state requirements for the arts, health, and PE. Every child in Utah should be guaranteed a basic well-balanced, well-rounded education, which goes far beyond the 3 Rs. While local control can be a good thing, in this instance it will mean that what a child is offered will vary dramatically from district to district. We know that Utah schools are poorly funded, so which classes do you think would be first eliminated when money is short? It's not going to be reading or math. Likely the arts will come first, then health and P.E. So many children flourish when it comes to art, music, drama, sports - don't they deserve to pursue their interests within the context of school? And other kids who haven't been exposed to these subjects, shouldn't they also have the opportunity to benefit? Some may argue that districts in wealthy areas may increase their offerings in these areas. The overall result, however, is to heighten the educational disparities that already exist. This isn't good for the kids or for the future of Utah.

Joanne Slotnik
70 W. Apricot Ave.
SLC 84103

-----Original Message-----

From: Travis [<mailto:travis@mymattress.biz>]

Sent: Friday, September 22, 2017 1:43 PM

To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: Middle school changes

I'm concerned with this ruling on the arts, health, and PE in middle school. It's disturbing to think that in a time of such obesity and lack of self confidence that there would even be a consideration of removing the things that help these kids overcome those issues. There is no lack of proof that the benefits of arts, health and PE are high, but the rewards of just accomplishing something beautiful should of its self be enough to not only keep these programs but to support them at all costs. Please reconsider this ruling and put the kids ahead of money decision. Travis Leonhardt

Sent from my iPhone

From: Cheylynn Hayman [mailto:cheylynn.hayman@gmail.com]
Sent: Friday, September 22, 2017 1:55 PM
To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: Fwd: R277-700 - Secondary Schools Arts & PE Rule Change

In order to make my comments accessible to all board members, I am forwarding an email I sent to Laura Belnap for inclusion in the public comment record. Please see below.

Thank you.

Cheylynn Hayman
139 Canyon Breeze Drive
Centerville, Utah 84014

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

From: Cheylynn Hayman <cheylynn.hayman@gmail.com>
Date: September 21, 2017 at 9:49:17 AM MDT
To: lbelnap@utahonline.org
Subject: R277-700 - Secondary Schools Arts & PE Rule Change

Ms. Belnap,

It has recently come to my attention that the Board has opted to revise its rules to make health, art, physical education, and career awareness optional for middle school students. Upon reviewing the Utah State Board of Education Meeting Minutes for August 4, 2017, I understand that you, as my District 5 Representative, voted in favor of the rule change.

I write to express my sincere concern for this action and to urge you to reconsider your position. While traditional math, science, and English courses are unquestionably important, art, health, and gym courses are equally important for different reasons. Such classes provide our children with an important outlet and avenue to explore and express creativity and dynamic thinking.

I have two children who currently attend Centerville Jr. High. As I have watched them grow, I have been struck by the growing societal and academic pressures on children to specialize early. In my view, such pressures are detrimental and damaging to our youth. School should be a place where children are encouraged to learn and participate in a wide variety of academics--from math and science to arts and health. Removing arts and health courses as mandatory

classes clearly signals (whether intentionally or unintentionally) that those classes are less deserving of resources, funding, and attention.

Our schools are already underfunded, and I seriously question whether school districts--and particularly smaller school districts--will continue to offer art, health, and physical education courses if not required to do so at a state level. I appreciate the desire to afford local education associations flexibility in setting curriculum, but I would respectfully argue that all students statewide deserve the opportunity to experience arts and health classes. That includes students like my son, who would take exclusively math and science classes if you let him. I am grateful that he has been required to take art classes, even though I know they are not what he would choose as electives if given the option. He is receiving a more well-rounded education because of those requirements.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Cheylynn Hayman
139 Canyon Breeze Drive
Centerville, UT 84014

From: Bill Gardner [mailto:utahbill@hotmail.com]
Sent: Friday, September 22, 2017 1:56 PM
To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: Cutting Programs

The Arts, PE and Health education is vital for the well rounding of this new generation.
Enhancing the ability to think diversely is so important for Middle School aged pupils.
Please do not cut any of these programs!

Respectfully,
Bill Gardner

Sent from [Outlook](#)

From: Jenifer Andrus [mailto:jenifer.andrus@washk12.org]

Sent: Friday, September 22, 2017 2:01 PM

To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: Fine Arts in the Middle Schools

I am usually for local control of requirements in our public schools, but in this regard, I have a concern. If the state determines requirements for non-art classes and lets the local districts determine what the requirements will be, how can we be sure as a district, that the state will even leave room for fine arts and other classes that the district determines are important? It seems that with this rule, we have little protection from the state eventually squeezing out the little time we have now in the school schedule for non-core subjects.

--



Jenifer Andrus
Lava Ridge

From: Jessica Ivie [mailto:iviejes23@gmail.com]

Sent: Friday, September 22, 2017 2:35 PM

To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: Require the arts, health, and PE

Dear School Board Members,

I am not only a constituent and voter, but am also a licensed middle school educator in the state of Utah. I have taught middle school science for 10 years in a rural school. I would like to encourage you to change your vote regarding art, health, and PE in middle schools.

These subjects are important for developing well-rounded students. These classes are the ONLY education many of the students ever get in these areas, especially in low income and rural areas. I have also experienced just how much these classes can contribute to core content such as using measurement, understanding biology, recording data and drawings in notebooks, and I am sure there are many more connections. I also hate to think our teens will have NO health class to understand their own bodies and NO art/band/chorus class to find talents they never knew they had.

Please think of what your own school experience would have been like if you had not been able to have these "fun" classes. Our students have enough pressure to know everything in core classes, let's not take this part of their education away. Please require schools to continue teaching the arts, health, and PE.

Thank you for your consideration.
Jessica Ivie

From: Sara Penny [mailto:sara.penny@yahoo.com]

Sent: Friday, September 22, 2017 2:37 PM

To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: Please keep arts requirement

Dear State School Board,

As a private violin teacher we encourage our students to participate in school orchestras because they learn cooperation, listening skills, and so much more. Not every family can afford private lessons so the public school music and art programs are essential to an educated populace.

Thank you for your service,
Sara Penny
Cedar City

From: Courtney Marden [mailto:elfman_danny@hotmail.com]
Sent: Friday, September 22, 2017 3:00 PM
To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: AGAINST removing the requirement for PE education, health and art classes

As a nurse and mother, I would urge the reversal of the infamous August 4th decision to remove the Middle School credit requirement for health, arts, and physical education.

These may seem optional but a well-rounded education with PE education, health and the arts have many benefits to our children including increased: social skills and interaction, mental health and healthy diet changes, graduation rates, creative thinking and problem solving, academic performance, civic engagement and service along with community cohesion, positive attitudes about school and learning, self-discipline, etc. These educational offerings have been shown to decrease student aggression and violent tendencies.

With these proven benefits, I believe it would be detrimental to our children to remove the requirement for PE education, health and art classes.

I also wanted to include a section of the Salt Lake Tribute article which shows how lifting the requirement can hurt rural schools:

"Other rural school district representatives were critical of the changes. Tintic School District Superintendent Kodey Hughes said his district is more susceptible to changes in student preference than his Wasatch Front counterparts.

If interest in band or the arts wanes among a particular cohort of children, he said, staffing pressures would require him to excuse teachers who may or may not come back when the popularity of band or choir surges.

"We can't replace them like our counterparts on the Wasatch Front," he said. Hughes said that statewide course requirements provide consistency for rural administrators to maintain their budgets and faculty rosters.

"Local control often means lack of support," he said."

<http://www.sltrib.com/news/education/2017/09/21/utah-school-board-gets-earful-after-dropping-middle-school-arts-and-health-requirements/?>

[mc_cid=f6d333a6a0&mc_eid=53358d93e0](https://www.sltrib.com)



[Utah school board gets earful
after dropping middle school
arts and health requirements](https://www.sltrib.com)

www.sltrib.com

When Melanie Provost began junior high, she was overweight and terrified of the requirement to enroll in gym class.

Let's not fix what isn't broken. The arts, health and PE education requirements are immensely helpful to our students. Please support the requirements!
Thank you!

Courtney Marden
946 Murdock Drive
American Fork, UT 84003

From: Patricia Mead [mailto:trishrmead@gmail.com]
Sent: Friday, September 22, 2017 3:01 PM
To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: Middle School credits

Dear School Board,

As a parent, retired English teacher (31 years in Granite District), and a tax paying citizen of Utah, I am strongly opposed to dropping credit requirements for arts, health, and p.e. in middle school.

Of course math, science, language and history are important and necessary, but health and especially the arts are integral to our culture. An education without culture is basic training.

Please do not deprive our children of what may be their only exposure in their formative years to the best life has to offer.

Sincerely,
Patricia Mead
Taylorsville, UT

From: Curtis Benjamin [mailto:cbenj@northernuu.com]
Sent: Friday, September 22, 2017 3:28 PM
To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: R277-700

Dear Board Members:

Thank you for the opportunity Wednesday night that you provided me and so many others to express our thoughts regarding the rule changes affecting middle schools.

With Regard to Local Control and Freedom:

We heard several who supported the changes that Board made do so framing their support within the context of local control and freedom. However, neither of those principles has been abandoned by those who opposed the new rule. Rather both values, were expressed through the social agreement citizens enjoy with their governments though decision making bodies such as yours and through the opportunity to be heard.

Furthermore, by asking you to maintain the current credits and requirements of middle school curriculum, those opposed to the new rule argued for an *opportunity* to be required that would later provide our children with greater exposure, opportunities and liberty.

Ironically, an iteration of local control where the State doesn't require certain, arbitrarily selected non-tested subjects may have the effect of an inverse mandate: Schools may interpret what the State Board has done in this rule as giving diminished priority to non-tested subjects, and so comply by not offering them; small districts and socio-economically struggling schools could feel pressure no longer provide these courses altogether as well.

With regard to eliminating the unit requirement:

We use the vernacular "seat time" as a short-hand for requiring attendance as part of being awarded credit for a course. However, that term implies that only one part of the body is involved. For me in my classroom, attendance meant discussions, projects, collaboration -- minds we could engage for mouths to express critical thinking, hearts we could heal hearing another student's poem, hands that could mold and hold what we could make together. My professional experience, guided by the state "core," informed a level of competency that extended beyond what could be tallied on a test, and could often take longer to master than even the time I was allotted during a semester or year. As you reconsider the new rule you might ask what do you want mastery to mean? How narrow, how expansive? What do you want equity and opportunity to mean?

With regard to removing the arts, health, PE and career courses requirement:

You heard a great deal regarding why that not having a basic requirement would be unwise as having the requirement secures such opportunities and safeguards for all students. A

more prudent approach would be to continue what schools and districts now do to adjust or waive when wise, but not abandon the standard altogether. Having moved my 14 year old from one district to another part of the state, I wouldn't have wanted that to mean basic requirements were lower in our new location, or that he wouldn't meet the new District's criteria for gaining credit to graduate if there were more requirements. Moreover, because the arts were prioritized in his new district—music especially at his new school--he discovered a love for marching band which made our move an experience in which he thrived.

One of the teachers with whom I work summarized the concerns expressed that evening well in her letter to you that she also shared with me:

"At a time when rates of obesity and diabetes are rising why would the main voice for public education, the state school board, consider eliminating the above mentioned subjects. Why wouldn't the state board want to promote health and wellness and the arts? I believe that public education should strive to teach to the whole student and not just the core subjects which are tested... Many students who struggle in the core required classes often find enjoyment and meaning in the non-core subjects. This meaning is what motivates some students to attend school altogether."

Please consider returning former credit structure and subject requirements.

Thank you..

Curtis Benjamin Ed.D.
Director, Northern Utah UniServ

father and patron

From: Robyn Harris [mailto:robyn.harris@jordandistrict.org]

Sent: Friday, September 22, 2017 4:08 PM

To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>

Subject:

Doing away with any of the ARTS is a sad day for all. Students develop their minds better with the arts. I am stating a quote by W. Aksin from my thesis. He stated that, "It is a privilege, a joy, a delight, and quite often a dire necessity to be able to give ideas tangible form, to create images that can liberate the imaginative life and transform thought patterns, our state of being. To be an artist is to engage in the wonderfully fulfilling, dangerous, and intensely social act of creating perceptions and propositions."

Also to quote Dewey, "..the production of a work of genuine art probably demands more intelligence than does most of the so-called thinking that goes on among those who pride themselves of being intellectuals"

Art makes students think and problem solve, which is a much needed trait, skill or whatever you want to call it.

Shame on even the idea of taking the arts out of any school curriculum!!!!

Robyn Harris

From: Marcia Harris [mailto:mhutih@gmail.com]

Sent: Friday, September 22, 2017 4:11 PM

To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: ARTS

Please, please do not remove the Arts from the school curriculum. It is vital our students have a full education and by eliminating the Arts you will leave them with less than a full education.

Thank you for your attention,

Marcia Harris

From: tami476@aol.com [mailto:tami476@aol.com]
Sent: Friday, September 22, 2017 11:09 PM
To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: DON'T CUT THE ARTS/PE

I am writing in response to the school board proposal of cutting the arts and PE/health. I wear 3 hats as I address this. I am, first and foremost, a parent of school aged children. I am also a teacher at a Jr. high. Not only am I a teacher, but I teach those with significant disabilities.

First, addressing this as a parent, I am shocked that this would even be a consideration. I feel PE is very valuable for students. Not only do they learn skills of playing a game, but they learn to play sports/games that are non-traditional (Pickle Ball, floor hockey, Wallyball, Medic Ball, bocce ball, etc). My Jr. high student comes home and tells me about the fun things he did in PE. That is valuable to me as a parent as I cannot replicate those types of activities. I also look at this as a time for my child to learn to be physically fit. I want my kid to be active. I care much more about my kid being able to walk a few miles than I do being able to conduct a science experiment or exploring current careers.

As far as health in concerned, I want my kid to have health and be able to discuss drug abuse, personal hygiene, healthy lifestyles, exercise, self image etc. The only thing that would make health better would be to teach forms of birth control, not only abstinence. I am a conservative parent who is also a realist and a person of the LDS faith. I want to arm my child with as much information as possible so that when/if the time comes that he finds himself in a situation, he would know all options available. Yes, we will teach this at home, but I feel it sends a mixed message as, "We don't believe in premarital sex, but if you're going to do it, use birth control". I would rather teach abstinence at home and have the school teach birth control.

The arts. My kid loves band. He is an awesome drum player and I don't want him to loose out on the opportunity to participate in something that he enjoys and excels at. He is not too much into drawing, but I feel it is valuable to be given the option of exploring different mediums (ceramics, photography, computer generated art). This adds to him being well rounded as well as the fact that it may spark an interest for him.

Secondly, addressing this issue as a teacher. I teach in a Title one, inner city school. For a lot of this population, PE and Art are the only classes a lot of the kids excel at. All boys love to play basketball and most of the girls like to dance. At a time when childhood obesity is at an all time high, getting the kids involved in something that they like as they are exercising is huge. I have also witnessed, through the many years of teaching, several students learn to play volleyball and soccer in PE and go on to try out for the school teams and become school players. It gives these students a purpose and a reason to keep their grades up as well as giving them a place to belong.

Lastly I am addressing the cutting of PE and the arts as a teacher of students with significant disabilities. My students have very few classes they can actually access in a meaningful way. As we move more and more towards a STEM curriculum, more and more my students are left out and their environment becomes more restrictive. It's hard for students with lower IQ's to compete in technology related classes because it is so technical and requires a lot of adapting. It becomes so overwhelming for the teachers and less meaningful for the students that they end up not enjoying the classes and choose not to go. I want my students out of my room as much as they can be. Classes all of my students usually access are Art, PE, and Music. If those are eliminated, then my students end up spending more time in my

classroom and loose out on those social opportunities.

I understand the proposal is just to eliminate the "mandatory" part, but still offer the classes. However, in a time when testing in math, LA, and science is weighted so heavily, I could see districts and schools phase out these classes and choose to put students in more 'tested" related classes such as study hall that would relate to math, LA, science, or double dosing kids in these tested areas. I believe without the classes as being mandatory, schools will restructure thier offerings to better "help" students achieve higher testing/proficiency scores so that schools rank higher when they are graded. We're so caught up in making the grade that we loose sight of the student and his/her needs and talents.

As a parent and teacher, I am begging you not to make PE, Health, and the Arts, optional classes. I want my kids and students to be well rounded, socially adjusted, individuals who can discover their likes and dislikes and talents through an educational system that works for them.

Sincerely,
Tami

From: Michelle Church [mailto:mchurch@utahdigitalservices.com]
Sent: Saturday, September 23, 2017 8:18 AM
To: Pat Holmes <pholmes@visitsaltlake.com>; Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>
Cc: Angela Brown <angela@slugmag.com>; Crystal Young-Otterstrom <cyo@brand.pink>; David Wicai <dwicai@utah.gov>; Elisabeth Nebeker <enebeker@utahfilmcenter.org>; Erica Brown <ebrown@thanksgivingpoint.org>; Erin Laney <elaney@gsutah.org>; Julie Hollist Terrill <julie@explorelogan.com>; Stephen Brown <sb@sbdance.com>
Subject: Re: Eliminating Arts, PE, etc. Middle School Requirements

Thank you for this!

Last year I had the opportunity to present cooking demonstration for 30 students at my daughters jr high for college career awareness. The feedback was staggering. One student had never had bacon before, other than the microwaveable kind (!?!) and the Latina teacher commented she had never seen/tried a cherry tomato.

Eliminating these programs is a big mistake.

On Fri, Sep 22, 2017 at 7:42 PM Pat Holmes <pholmes@visitsaltlake.com> wrote:

Utah State Board of Education...

Please see attached letter from the Utah Arts and Cultural Coalition requesting the Board reverse its August 4th decision to remove the middle school credit requirement for health, arts, physical education, college and career awareness, world languages and digital literacy.

Thank you for your time to read our letter and your consideration of our request.

Best regards,

Board of Directors
[Utah Arts and Cultural Coalition](#)



Pat Holmes | Director
Utah Arts & Cultural Coalition
175 South West Temple
Suite 30
Salt Lake City, UT 84101
Direct: 801.534.4930
pholmes@NowPlayingUtah.com

|

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Michelle Church

Director of Marketing & Events

(O): 801.257-8865 | (C): 801-755-5444

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From: Scott Sprenger [mailto:scottsprenger@weber.edu]
Sent: Saturday, September 23, 2017 9:38 AM
To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: short-sighted

Dear School Board Members,

I am writing to protest the measure to cut musical education from middle schools. I think it is very short-sighted and damaging to our youth, especially to those families without the private funding to teach their kids music or without information about staying healthy. Do you realize that PE and music are sometimes strong motivators for kids to go to school?

More importantly, can we please learn precisely how much money will be saved by this short-term measure? And how much will be lost in terms of shortchanging our youth over the long term? What the effects will be on public health? Have you really thought this through?

You can count on me to work on voting you out of office if this measure goes through.

Sincerely,
Scott

Scott Sprenger
Dean of Lindquist College of Arts & Humanities
Weber State University
3950 West Campus Drive, Dept. 1904
Ogden, UT 84408-1904
Office: [801-626-6424](tel:801-626-6424)
Website: (www.weber.edu/cah)



From: Ben Driggs [mailto:bendriggs1@gmail.com]

Sent: Saturday, September 23, 2017 10:25 AM

To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: Requesting vote against local control and for a reversal of the decision to remove the requirement for Arts, Health, and P.E. for middle school students

To whom it may concern,

As a constituent in Granite School District, I am skeptical of local control. While the thought of local control conjures an ideal of customization and flexibility, the practical reality is that without a broadly-mandated credit requirement, non-hard science disciplines (e.g., Art, Health, and P.E.) tend to get short-changed in favor of the hard sciences. True, many local decision-makers will continue to require a well-rounded curriculum, but statistically there will be some local decision-makers (and I believe the numbers will not be few) who will gradually move away from a well-rounded emphasis, which is the risk we are facing now. We have seen this trend for years, and in today's increasingly scientific and digital age, I see the bias toward favoring hard sciences accelerating further, not decelerating. When push comes to shove in a competitive world with limited budgets, I am concerned local decision-makers, even those who appreciate the value of a well-rounded education, will opt to fund the hard sciences over the non-hard sciences again and again. We cannot afford to let this happen. Of course the hard sciences are important, but we must not allow our fixation on keeping up with the world's emphasis on science allow us to jeopardize the soul and root of what makes America unique, attractive, and engaging...a place where people around the world long to visit and live.

I encourage decision-makers to take a step back and look at what happens in countries that focus on the advancement of the hard sciences at the expense of other disciplines. In particular, I want to draw a distinction between Western cultures and Eastern cultures. When we emphasize the hard sciences, are we trying to emulate first-world Asian countries who are producing narrow-focused students with frighteningly high teen suicide rates, students who are being shoved through a heartless system yielding a society that is screaming out for the emotional and creative power these students envy in the United States and other Western nations? Why is the United States the envy of the world? Why do U.S. companies continue to be innovative leaders that dominate world business, particularly relative to their Asian counterparts? With all due respect to the value of the hard sciences, it's not because we are relentlessly churning out a generation of scientists. On the contrary, we are the world leader for reasons generally **opposite** the results a hard-science-focused culture produces. The same could be said of Western Europe. Why do people flock to visit Western European countries, dwarfing the rate at which they choose to visit similar Asian countries? And why do Western European countries dominate the top spots on lists of the happiest and most satisfied nations? It's because these Western European countries value a rich life based on cultivating **all** parts of the human experience: food, arts, culture, architecture, leisure, etc. That is what we human beings want and need.

In recognition of the many and varied problems all countries and cultures encounter, I strongly believe America is a great place to live and work because we value a well-rounded life experience. **Our education system must reflect that value.** In today's ever-growing scientific world, let us not fall into the tempting trap of focusing on the need to become even *more* scientific, unwittingly embracing scientific advancement as an end unto itself rather than as a means to a happier and more fulfilling life.

Ben Driggs
[801-706-4968](tel:801-706-4968)

P.S. I have a master's degree in East Asian Diplomacy, have lived in China and Japan (and speak both languages), and recently returned from a four-week trip throughout Southeast Asia and India. The contrast between East and West is something I think about a lot. At the risk of romanticizing Western culture, which is chock full of its own problems, I nonetheless argue that most people around the world, particularly educated Asians who anxiously feel driven to excel in science in order to succeed in today's competitive world, crave the rich diversity of thought, culture, freedom, opportunity, and expression found in the West.

From: Bonnie King [mailto:BonnieVKing@comcast.net]
Sent: Saturday, September 23, 2017 11:56 AM
To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: Optional arts and pe requirement

To Whom It May Concern:

I hope you will take a few minutes to consider the following information. I am a newly retired music educator from Davis School District. In 2004 I conducted a research study into parental attitudes in choral music education in which I surveyed nearly 1,000 parents in northern Utah. (Parental Attitudes in Choral Music Education, University of Utah, 2004). The data revealed many interesting and important discoveries and correlations into parents' feelings about music education and the benefits they perceive that are received through it. These findings are applicable to the arts in general. Two important findings were:

- 1- The more education a parent had the more they recognized the benefits of choral music education.
- 2- Parents who participated in music classes in their youth valued it more and felt it important for their students to experience it.

Now, we know that our schools have many disadvantaged students. Some schools have a very high percentage of disadvantaged. These are students who mostly come from households with lower levels of parent education and skills, low income levels, high divorce rates, dysfunctional homes and family life. These are struggling families usually with one parent just trying to make ends meet. These students do not have the benefit of parents who understand the value in the arts. To many of these families, the arts are a luxury that they cannot afford and do not have time for. **Without curriculum requirements in the arts, these are the students who will most likely never experience them or receive their many benefits. And once again, we have overlooked the disadvantaged and thrown one more strike against them.**

-
Please do not leave this important decision up to individual school districts whose administrators may or may not understand the benefits of arts education.

Please do not disregard our disadvantaged students who need benefits the arts provide most.

Please consider these quotes from John Dewey and Horace Mann. And as you read them, think about today's youth and the challenges our society is faced with.

"Judged then by this triple standard, intellectually, morally, and physically, vocal music

seems to have a natural place in every system of instruction which aspires, as should every system, to develop man's whole nature...Now this defect of our present system, admirable as that that system is, is this, that it aims to develop the intellectual part of man's nature solely, when for all the true purpose of life, it is of more importance, a hundred-fold to feel rightly, than to think profoundly." John Dewey

"The social and moral influences of music far transcend, in value, all its physical and intellectual utilities. It holds a natural relationship or affinity with peace, hope, affection, generosity, charity and devotion. There is also a natural repugnance between music and fear, envy, malevolence, and misanthropy." Horace Mann

(Unfortunately, in today's world of pop culture there has been created music that very much enhances fear, envy, malevolence, and misanthropy. **ALL** students need to be exposed to, educated in and gain an appreciation of music that inspires to greater heights than what is being produced for them in today's culture.)

Thank you for your time and consideration. –Bonnie King

If you have time, you might want to read a few of the many comments I received from these surveyed parents – all comments were completely unsolicited.

Parents' Comments

Unsolicited comments from parents who were surveyed:

Choral music education is one of the BEST activities in which a student can participate! It is one of the most valuable experiences a student can have in school.

I am concerned about the way emphasis on 'core' subjects sometimes squeezes out the arts.

I believe choir is a VERY valuable class. It helps a student be more well rounded. Music can teach and touch a life in a way that nothing else can.

Music skills are lifetime used skills. It encourages cooperation and teamwork – also personal development.

All classes taught on the secondary level are vital to the learning, understanding, and development of young minds. No legislator, parent or special interest group should be allowed to veto any curriculum that inspires and enriches a child's mind, and culture.

The arts are a vital and necessary part of all students learning. To take away any portion of its areas would be a tragedy to our communities now or ever.

My daughter has benefited so much from her music experience. She is a better student because of what she has learned through the arts. Her confidence and knowledge she has gained through music will help her ore in her later years than any other class offered in the public schools.

Any study of music is, I feel, essential in a student's educational experience. Those things learned and developed in the brain are vital for other subject mastery, such as math!

My daughter plays in the band and sings in the choir. It has given her a reason for school attendance and a reprieve from an otherwise stressful and often times frustrating academic experience. I am certain that without this program you would have one less students in jr. high.

Years participating in the choir program will remain the single most significant positive influence on my student's life.

I believe the music programs need to demand more awareness from the state board of education and Utah legislature. This means more money and inclusion in the state core. It should no longer be an elective course, but one that should be taken by all. Students learn at different levels, - but music and the arts is a common ground for all.

Please, please, please don't let these programs go away. There is so much ugliness in the world music, especially in the outside world. Music taught in school will give a child a hold on beauty.

I think that in the focus to demand more core subject proficiencies, we are losing some of the opportunities needed to teach our students to be well rounded and tolerant of individual diversity. Music has the ability to lift the spirit, to motivate the soul and strengthen one's convictions in being true to one's self.



Utah Arts & Cultural Coalition
175 South West Temple, Suite 30
Salt Lake City, UT 84101
801.534.4930

September 22, 2017

Members of the Utah State Board of Education:

This letter is written on behalf of the Utah Arts and Cultural Coalition (UACC), whose mission is to increase awareness about arts and cultural opportunities in Utah by providing a comprehensive events resource...cost-free to 3,046 arts and cultural organizations. The UACC Board of Directors today (9/22/17), unanimously voted to request the Board of Education to reverse the August 4th decision to remove the middle school credit requirement for health, arts, physical education, college and career awareness, world languages and digital literacy.

In discussing this issue today, the UACC Board reviewed the many benefits that results in our children participating in the areas the Board is addressing. To name just a few:

- ❖ Performance and grades in reading, math, writing, and other subjects improve
- ❖ Positive attitudes towards school and learning increases
- ❖ Improvement in cognitive ability, motor skills, and self-discipline
- ❖ Aggression and a tendency towards violence is lessened
- ❖ Better opportunities in the workforce
- ❖ Graduation rates improve!

These benefits to children (especially at-risk children) that contribute to a well-rounded education are not just perceived, but proven by research, program evaluations and many well-respected studies, as well as through personal experiences our Board members have had with their own children. NOT providing a well-rounded education that includes health, arts, physical education, college and career awareness, world languages and digital literacy, puts our children at a decided disadvantage.

If we truly believe in raising well-adjusted children, providing the advantages to become productive adult citizens then we need...are required...to provide our children access to all educational disciplines that contribute to their success. It can be a tough, competitive world out there so to do otherwise is shirking our duty as parents and the constitutional guardians of public education for the state.

We are asking you to stay true to the three tenets of your strategic plan: **educational equity** (“...set the general statewide conditions in which each student can excel, including equity of educational and culturally responsive practices...”); **quality learning** (“...learning outcomes as a key to high student achievement with the understanding that high quality instruction is central...”); **system values** (“...set the conditions and systems for student success by working with, understanding, and listening to stakeholders...”).

Sometimes policy changes can occur that negatively affect our children’s education. The UACC Board sincerely believes this is one of those times. We respectfully request the August 4th decision regarding the removal of middle school requirements be reversed.

Best regards,

Board of Directors and Staff
Utah Arts and Cultural Coalition

From: MarLyn McKinley [mailto:marlynmckinley@gmail.com]
Sent: Saturday, September 23, 2017 12:00 PM
To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: Cutting the arts, health/PE programs

To all concerned:

I have worked for Opera by Children for upwards of 20 years. I have worked with nearly 600 school classes in the state of Utah and some in California and Idaho, which means, I have worked one on one with approximately 13,200 children.

I am an "visual art mentor" to the teachers and their students. I teach them all the process of planning and painting their scenery for their opera stories that the "students" write. I teach them art skills and techniques that tap into a different part of their brain.

Not everyone thinks and learns the same way. The programs that you are trying to cut are the very programs that are vital for some students to thrive in their future careers.

These programs through the arts and health give them confidence where they can thrive in an area that they can excel where the other areas of education are very difficult for them to grasp and be confident in.

I'm not just being dramatic, but these programs that are possibly being cut are not just fluff or a luxury.....they are very important and life changing for many of our students.

We need to offer options for learning and not scale down to the point that it shuts out avenues that can be life changing long term.

Thank you,
MarLyn McKinley
Art Supervisor
Opera by Children

From: Sydney Hansen [mailto:sydneyhansen42@gmail.com]
Sent: Saturday, September 23, 2017 4:54 PM
To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: Arts Requirement

Dear Utah School Board,

My name is Sydney Hansen. I am a graduate of Woods Cross High School, class of 2017, and the arts requirement in junior high changed my life.

Even though I came from a family of musicians, I had absolutely no intention of doing anything besides the piano lessons my mom forced me into. I wanted to be a dancer or a volleyball player, not some band geek. But when I found out that there was a music requirement, I took band anyway just to get it out of the way. I fell in love with the clarinet and kept playing all through high school. I can now say that I am a three-year UMEA All State Band member, clarinet teacher, and Clarinet Performance major at BYU as soon as I return from my LDS mission. All of this because of the music requirement in junior high.

I gained so much more from music than a future career path. As a kid, I was incredibly shy. I gained friends in band. It taught me the importance of networking and encouraged me to emerge from my shell. I am no longer terrified to talk to people I have never met. Even more importantly, music helped me through my struggle with mental illness. My junior year, I was diagnosed with anxiety and depression. Music was the one thing that motivated me to get out of bed in the morning. It gave me something to live for.

Through music, I had many incredible mentors. My junior high and high school teachers, Mr. King and Mr. Campbell, not only taught me skills that improved my musicianship, they taught me skills to improve my life. Both teachers taught me to work hard. They both pushed me to put all of my effort into everything that I do. Mr. King taught me how to get out of my shell and make friends. Mr. Campbell taught me the importance of the people in our lives and to enjoy each moment we have, because life flies by so fast. Each year in All State, I remember each of our directors imparting words of wisdom on us. Dr. David Fullmer, one of Utah's own, taught us to honor our obligations. I learned important life lessons in musical situations that I never learned in my other classes.

I strongly urge those of you who voted against the requirement to reconsider. The arts have influenced my life, and the lives of many of my peers, for the better. Many of us began our involvement in such programs because of the artistic requirement in junior

high. Changing this requirement may impact the lives of the future kids that will grow up in Utah. It will provide kids something to channel their energy into that is not negative, like self-doubt, drugs, or pornography. The arts need more support from our government, not less. Please, continue to require arts credits in junior high. You could change the life of a student, just like you did for me.

Sincerely,
Sydney Hansen

From: WENDY HART [mailto:wendyhart@alpinedistrict.org]
Sent: Saturday, September 23, 2017 7:55 PM
To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>
Cc: Board of Education <board@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: In Favor of Rule R277-700

Dear State Board Members:

Here is the text of the hearing comments made by our parents group for inclusion in your official documents.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Wendy Hart

We, parents, are in favor of the new rule R277-700, allowing local school boards greater flexibility in determining middle school course requirements. This rule shows trust in our local school boards and our parents. This rule returns local control to our boards, but most importantly, this rule does NOT remove music, art, PE, health or world languages. This rule gives power back to the local level and to the people they represent. It is scary to trust others to make decisions when we are used to having those decisions made at the state level. But fear of local control is a fear of free people making their own decisions.

Freedom brings risk. But this Board has shown a desire to return that freedom back to the parents through their local boards. It can be assumed that those in Davis or Jordan may not agree with the level of PE or arts that those in Rich or Alpine decide. The districts may disagree with what the charters have determined. Freedom brings with it great responsibility. But it also brings great potential for success, far greater than a one-size-fits-all education system. Utah Congressman Rob Bishop has said about public education, "Ever since ...the mid-sixties, ... we've been consistently fighting that battle over standardization versus freedom. Freedom should be our goal." We echo his sentiment. And we are grateful that the majority of this Board agrees that Freedom should be our goal.

As parents, we are at a disadvantage, in that, we do not have a formal group with paid employees to represent our interests. We do not have marketing groups who will send out petitions and emails to amass people to our cause. We do not have the luxury of thousands of people in our organization with contact information who can be rallied at a moment's notice to speak up about a particular rule. We are simply citizens. We are the people you were elected to represent.

While not speaking for the groups we participate in, the majority of us are members of various local school boards (Alpine, Davis, Jordan, Rich, Timpanogos Academy, Maeser Academy). We are also current and former members of PTAs, SCCs, and various parent organizations. We are accountants, teachers, programmers, designers, musicians, and social workers. But, more importantly, we are parents. And we know our individual children better than anyone.

Those of us who are local board members are excited for the trust we have been given. We love the arts! We appreciate PE! We think CTE courses, health, and languages are extremely beneficial. We thrill at the thought of education being for the benefit and improvement of each, individual child. We are not motivated to change the middle school course requirements much, if at all, from what the state has had these many years. But we support this rule change because it allows us to legally make exceptions for those students who need them.

While this may appear to be a theoretical discussion, the impact of this policy is taking place around us as we speak. Here are some examples.

Emma has severe food allergies. She was required to take a CTE class that included a foods course, putting her in medical danger. Taylor is a child in foster care who has been abused. Changing in a PE locker room causes him trauma every day. Taylor would do better in his other courses if he didn't have to go through the difficulty of changing for PE class. Brandon has ADHD. He needs to take a PE class every day to do well in his academic classes. Taking two PE classes makes it harder to have open class periods for other electives of interest, instead of just required courses. Savannah is in a community symphony program which requires her to take orchestra in school. This limits her ability to take other courses that are not required. Jordan is heavily involved in karate outside of school four days per week. He wants to take drama, band, Spanish, and choir, but he can't take all of them because he requires PE. Trina signed up for dual language immersion in first grade. All these years later, she is required to take two language courses instead of the one that was originally required when she first committed to the immersion program. Her mother is a social worker and knows the health course would just be a repeat of what Trina already understands. She'd like to take a non-required course for fun. Justin has special needs. Being required to take PE and fine arts classes like choir or band adds greater stress to his life. His success with his other courses would be improved if he didn't have to cope with the additional stress of these required courses.

While the names of these students have been changed, their situations are real. These are experiences of real students in real schools in our state. We believe the majority of students will still need and find the current middle school requirements to be a good balance for their lives. However, for those parents with students like these who need greater flexibility, we support letting local boards find ways to make exceptions.

We also support this rule change because it highlights a very important principle: Local Control. The best decisions are made at the level closest to those who are impacted. Everyone seems to advocate for local control during elections, but this is the point where local control can be supported or defeated. Do we trust our local school boards to create policies that benefit their communities? Do we trust the parents of our students to decide for each individual child what is in their best interests? Or do we want to give up that responsibility and tell these parents, that we're sorry, there's nothing we can do to help their child?

We wonder why parents aren't as involved, and this is, in part, why. Sure, they can volunteer for the Valentine's party in the classroom. But when it comes to deciding what courses their child needs and what that child should focus on, do we defer to others, far away, from that child? Do we not believe individual parents can and should have the option of working this out at the local level?

State law acknowledges this fundamental truth: parents are primarily responsible for the education of their own children. They are the experts of their children, and it is up to those of us on local school boards to represent them and to allow them the necessary flexibility in this area. While there may be ways via IEP's and 504's to individualize requirements, why can we not simply support, as local school boards, a well-rounded set of experiences? But when that doesn't apply, let us trust those parents who need exceptions for their kids to simply ask for them. Why are we so afraid to trust the people who know their children the best: the parents?

Thomas Jefferson stated in 1816: "the way to have good and safe government, is not to trust it all to one, but to divide it among the many, distributing to every one exactly the functions he is competent to." Trust us! Allow us, as local board members and parents, to make the determination for those children who will not be as successful being forced to fit into a pre-determined box. For many kids, the range of experiences we currently have will be beneficial and helpful. But for those who will experience negative consequences, we should be wanting and willing to allow that level of flexibility.

We ask for your trust. Trust that we will defend and protect the variety that currently exists: physical education, fine arts, health, world languages. Trust, also, that we will allow individual parents and guardians to make the call to aid their individual children with special needs, with specific challenges, with greater gifts in need of additional focus, with individual concerns. We either trust parents and want to empower them through their local boards or we don't. This rule change to R277-700 gives us back that trust. Let us not be afraid of freedom! Thank you for trusting us.

Wendy Hart, Parent

Paula Hill, Parent

Brian Halladay, Parent

Phillip Cardon, Parent

Rachel Thacker, Parent

Bryce Huefner, Parent

Matt Throckmorton, Parent

Liz Mumford, Parent

Julie King, Parent

Robin Allred, Parent

Alyson Williams, Parent

Darrell Robinson, Parent

Mona Andrus, Parent

Julie Tanner, Parent

From: Francis Harrold [mailto:fbharrold@gmail.com]

Sent: Sunday, September 24, 2017 11:45 AM

To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: arts, etc.

Please do NOT cut arts, health, or PE credit from the middle schools. These all benefit our children.

Sincerely,
Francis B. Harrpold
Ogden

From: Stephanie Southwick-Hickey [mailto:shickey@dsdf.org]
Sent: Monday, September 25, 2017 8:08 AM
To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: Middle Grades Arts/PE/Health/CCA requirements

Hello, my name is Stephanie Southwick-Hickey, I am a school counselor, as well as an art teacher.

I would like to take a moment to voice my opposition to the core requirement changes for the middle grades, namely the demarcation of Art, PE, Health, and CCA as electives.

Middle school is a time for self-exploration--it's a crucial developmental time period where students grow through exposure to a wide variety of topics and skills--life skills that don't necessarily include artistic fundamentals/creative problem solving or awareness of healthy habits and types of careers (although, arguably, they each serve to create a well-rounded education that paves the way for future lifelong learning habits), they expose students to different teachers, different topics, and create a climate of education after high school graduation.

As a school counselor, I can not overstate how crucial students' education is regarding how to develop healthy habits, eat well, exercise, and avoid risky behaviors and addiction. *Health class as a core requirement is a preventative measure.*

Middle grade students are developmentally going through a period of increased self-awareness (read: insecurity), and will likely take whatever classes they feel they are good at, if given the opportunity. This fear-based mindset (that most of them have, and many grow out of) stifles their growth, and fosters the belief in only to try what they are good at.

Please do not discount these crucial classes. The middle grades are a time for exploration and getting outside of one's comfort zone, being exposed to a broad range of content, teaching styles, subject matter, and developing skill sets.

Thank you for your time,

Stephanie Southwick-Hickey
School Counselor
Manila High School

160 W 200 N
P.O. Box 249
Manila, UT 84046
(435) 784-3174 ex. 220

From: Quinn Dietlein [mailto:quinnd@hct.org]

Sent: Monday, September 25, 2017 9:23 AM

To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: Thank you for your service on behalf of our children

Dear State School Board,

As co-founder/Artistic Director at Hale Centre Theatre I am writing to express my thoughts on removing the Arts from standard curriculum in Utah's Junior High Schools....

I am a former High School English, Speech and Drama Teacher. I love teaching. I love students. And especially after nearly 33 years producing live theatre, I love the arts. I have been dismayed to watch various arts disciplines held in secondary esteem to STEM projects. Humanity is simply being quietly deleted as an essential to building quality humans – quality minds. Especially in this age of social (which is oftentimes anti-social) networking, children are being bred to communicate in 'sound bites'. Face to face interaction expressing true thoughts and feelings have become frightening to an ever growing population. Interactions have become abrupt and emotionless as children learn not to look into eyes. Ever important body language has become less important and the false wall of anonymity has become an unholy 'safe place'. Humanity is failing in degrees and sometimes the only hope of reviving this lost art is in our schools.

The Arts teach that we can work solidly together to sing in harmony, to play in symphony, to tell a story. Looking at one another in the eye facilitates softer communication. Music, theatre, dance and the visual arts refine the soul so that we understand each other better. All of these beautiful disciplines cross train the brain for better learning. Language is improved. Listening is improved. Expression is improved. And, yes, STEM subjects are absorbed much more effectively. These are essential to blossoming adults. I have seen it in my teaching and hundreds of times in my theatre career.

How can we erase what thousands of years have proven ... the arts expose and refine the heart of man. A refined heart learns better, listens better and ultimately fosters better citizens of the world. I beg of you – do not remove this gift from our Utah children.

Sincerely,

Sally Dietlein
Executive Producer
Hale Centre Theatre

From: Jeff Robinson (DHMS) [mailto:jeff.robinson@washk12.org]

Sent: Monday, September 25, 2017 9:51 AM

To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: fine arts with districts

This is in regards to the latest policy that puts fine arts, vocational, health and physical education requirements under district jurisdiction.

There is a trend in our nation right now that is leading to more local control over our education system. Some may be all for this as we often think that the more localized control we have over a government entity the better that entity will be at addressing the local populous's needs. This is accurate in the fact that it might eliminate some of the needless bureaucracy in our school such as thinning out the USBE and eliminating some of the parasitic jobs that exist on the top heavy level of the Utah education infrastructure, but in the long run this policy and ultimately those that will be like it will create fundamental problems for future generations to come.

I suppose budgets will become easier to manage I since we won't have to acquire the State's permission to spend funds that we need in our own districts, and districts will now have the power to make more accurate financial decisions on their own without political hoop jumping. Finally districts will be able to free themselves from the USBE. In fact we can truly eliminate the USBE once and for all and finally simply make local decisions that will benefit our communities and only our communities.

Also parents will have more of a say in how their children get educated. We can eliminate evolution from our schools, teach children about the danger of giving into the liberal propaganda of global warming, eliminate sexual education from our curriculum, and finally we can teach the aspects of history that we want to acknowledge, and cut out anything that doesn't coincide with our own personal belief systems.

This of course is sarcasm, but I want you to realize the gravity of what you've done and that it goes beyond a simple disagreement with policy and philosophy. Before we look at the generations that will be harmed with this, you should realize that you at the State level are eliminating the very jobs that put food on your table, pays your mortgage, and gives your family security. Why you would want to give control to the individual districts in this regard is beyond me for the simple reason that it makes your job more obsolete.

Now onto how it will affect our education system as a whole. First you're going to get a mixed bag of requirements. Some districts may want more arts, others more vocational, others physical education or they may want to diminish these subjects and the requirements needed in these fields to graduate. This creates a mess for anyone who moves out of one district and into another. One school may require more credits in a certain subject than another and when the student moves there may be a burden when regarding graduation. It may happen mid-senior

year. How is a district to accommodate such a student? Do we then give the student a pass on graduation or do we keep the individual policies written for our district. This will create a generalized mess with graduation requirements throughout the state. It's already difficult for students coming from different states that have their own standards that differ from Utah's; this will make that problem unmanageable and intolerable.

And what of higher education? We need to have set credits, determined by the state, that prepare students for higher learning. To have those chosen by a district who may not be aware of what is required of these fields in college is unwise. Our students may be confused and ill-prepared for college because a district has made an uninformed decision, not because they are incompetent, but because ultimately they will not have the same information those at the state office will have.

This is a slippery slope. Will we next leave all credits and all education standards up to individual districts? What's to stop a district from deciding that they know best what to teach to their own population? Imagine a district deciding that Creationism is to be taught in lieu of Evolution. Or a factory town, mining community or farming district to decide that vocational skills are all anyone needs, let's get rid of upper level math. Let's get rid of Language arts. Or how about the opposite end of the spectrum? Schools in richer districts require much more of their students and if they can't hack it they can go to one of the poorer districts where they don't require as much.

I foresee this as being a can of worms that we may not be able to close. This is the first step into very dangerous territory.

--

Thank you,
Jeff Robinson

Please note that my email address has changed to jeff.robinson@washk12.org.

From: tim lloyd [mailto:gohndi@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, September 25, 2017 9:59 AM
To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: good points

I have two points on this topic, brain development and success in school.

Point one

I have been watching the numbers from the test scores over the last few years and I have noticed something. schools are taking away time students spend in these elective classes in different ways. By doing interventions during their time in the elective class or by changing the schedule altogether so that they have less time in the elective or affected subjects. The scores are showing improvement in students ability to answer the basic questions, but in the depth of knowledge, or really the students ability to think and apply the things they have learned the scores are going down.

These classes are focused on developing the right side of the brain, that is half of a persons brain power. By taking away these class requirements you are saying that we don't want our kids to learn how to think creatively and apply the things that they are learning. (we don't need to teach our kids to be robots, we can build those, we need our kids to be able to think about new things and apply knowledge in new ways, also lets have one of the most obese generations not have to do P.E. that makes a lot of sense. nevermind the studies that show students score go up when they are in these classes).

Point two

As a student my art classes were about the only class in school that I liked, and P.E. I do not think that I would have finished school with out them. As a teacher I have watched students in my class who have been successful and enjoyed the class start to get taken out so that they can go to intervention. I have seen their attitude change dramatically to the point where they complain about everything. Then they stop trying altogether, and then they have been getting into trouble.

Our students need these classes as much or more than any other classes in these days. It does not matter if it is for brain development or because it is something they are good at. they **need** it.

PS

I had a student who did not like my art class. this student was a great kid good at everything but struggled in art. It was obvious that he had not done much to develop the right side of his brain and he did not want to try because it was hard for him, sadly the adults in his life were all for giving up on something that was difficult. It might just be me but that is not the attitude that I want to show the next generation.

Tim Lloyd
Art Teacher
PVHS

Dear USBE members, Sydnee, Tami / LG Cox, and Greg,

We can all agree on this:

The words we say -- our "messaging" -- can make a difference.

We all know that if we say something to a child over and over again (or to a grown-up or even a nation), that child / adult / nation will sooner or later believe it...

...whether or not it is true.

So check this out:

Below are the expressions or messages of those who attended [last Wednesday's](#) hearing regarding the 7th & 8th Grade Electives issue. The words used by each side convey a powerful message. Which messages would you want *your* child to hear and believe?

"I may not 'have', but I can use my freedom to empower myself to get what I need."

"The disadvantaged, the poor won't have these opportunities unless we provide them."

"I learned how to be creative and resourceful in order to achieve what I wanted regardless of the extreme poverty of my parents."

"If we let others choose, the needs of the 'have nots' will not be met and that is not fair."

"We know what is best for our children."

"We know what is best for your children."

"We value the ability to choose and to be responsible for our choices."

"If we don't 'require' these classes, parents and students will not choose correctly."

"Children this age can and DO make good choices."

"Children this age do not have the maturity or knowledge to make good choices. We must choose for them."

"We do what is best for us when we are given a choice."

"We only do what's required." "We must require what we feel is best for all."

"Growth and happiness, self-confidence and self-reliance result even when we make a choice that is not best because we learn from having made the choice."

"We can't save ALL the children unless we require these classes."

"Let us do it because we CAN do it!"

"They can't do it. We must choose what we want for their kids."

Words can ennoble, empower, and elevate mankind.

Words can do the opposite.

There are only two plans: [Plan #1 - Freedom](#) and [Plan #2 - The Opposite](#)

These are my peanuts from the Nuttall gallery :)

"Words are seeds that do more than blow around.
They land in our hearts and not the ground.
Be careful what you plant and careful what you say.
You might have to eat what you planted one day."
-Unknown

"If we understood the power of our thoughts, we would guard them more closely.
If we understood the awesome power of our words, we would prefer silence to almost anything
negative.
In our thoughts and words, we create our own weaknesses and our own strengths.
Our limitations and joys begin in our hearts. We can always replace negative with positive."
-Betty Eadie

Thanks for all you do, and have an awesome day!
Sincerely,
Lydia Nuttall

-----Original Message-----

From: Amy Wadsworth [<mailto:Amy.Wadsworth@besd.net>]

Sent: Monday, September 25, 2017 10:40 AM

To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: R277-700 Middle Grades Arts/PE/Health/CCA Requirements

To Whom It May Concern:

I have taught Health and Physical Education for close to 20 years. Every year I have seen students that are in dire need of both Health Education and Physical Education. I have always told my students that I believe these classes are the most important classes they can take. They learn skills in both, in which, they can carry throughout their lifetime. Not only that, but these classes help students to better focus throughout the school day as they are able to get their energy out and better focus in other classes, which helps all teachers and staff as well as the students. We have an obesity epidemic in our nation in which these classes are the foundation for teaching healthier eating habits and exercise habits. In fact, other countries that have implemented more time allocated for Physical Education and recess have seen great improvement in overall student achievement.

Our students face problems that we never had to face. We need to give them a strong foundation in order to help deal with these problems. Here are just a few of the topics covered in Health classes: Hygiene, healthy nutrition habits, healthy exercise, human sexuality, drug and alcohol prevention, healthy family relationships, mental and emotional health, communicable and non-communicable diseases, safety and emergency situations, and body systems. I do not think we can afford as a school, community, state or nation to cut these classes. In Physical Education students are reaping the benefits of exercise daily. I can attest that many of my students only get this exercise during my class. These benefits can only help our students and us as well.

We are doing our students, our school, our community, our state, our nation a huge disservice cutting or hindering Health and Physical Education classes. They are necessary for overall student achievement. It is healthy for their mind, body and relationships with others. I have to admit I was dumbfounded when I heard about this change and hope that it is reversed as I believe it will be detrimental to our students.

Amy Wadsworth
Box Elder Middle School
Physical Education Teacher

Doug Allen
12028 Aiden Ridge Drive
Draper, Utah 84020

September 22, 2017

Dear Utah State School Board:

I am writing to ask that you **keep the Arts, PE and Health as required courses in Utah Middle Schools**. I have had four children attend Utah schools and I now have grand children that are attending Utah Schools. All of those classes were a **gift** to my children as they took classes where they learned curriculum that became imbedded into their lives. If they had not been required to take those courses, they would have missed out on skills that they gained and opportunities that the classes provided. Those classes, are highly important and offer long term skills and learning that will not happen unless provided at such a pivotal age in their lives.

Through the arts students learn discipline, creativity, and problem solving skills. All of my children took different music courses in middle school that started them on a music path that was much more than just music. It became a way of life and the discipline learned carried over to other subjects also.

In PE, students learn the rules of various sporting activities and develop patterns of physical activity that can continue on in life. It also offers ways to enhance instruction in other subjects and a great outlet for relieving stress. My children that are now adults still include physical activity as part of their daily routine and pursue that for their children. Through a Health class students will learn important ways to build character and take care of their bodies. It is also when puberty hits and sex education needs to be addressed and students provided with healthy ways to take care of themselves.

All of these subjects are valuable and need to be required as part of a child's education. By taking the requirement away you are saying they are not valuable and worth the time and energy involved. I can tell you, as a parent they are valuable and important, they were for my children and I know that they would be for my grand children. To make them optional sends a different message and without encouraging students to have that opportunity students will miss out on experiences that give children the chance to find a talent and develop a skill that the child did not even know that they had. I realize there is a push for on-line instruction but it should not be through these classes where face-to-face instruction needs to be a priority.

My point is, the Arts, PE and Health provide instruction and opportunity that is just as important and offer health well being for our children.

These courses should be valued and given the same weight as math, science, social studies, etc.

I cannot set by quietly by and let the elimination as a requirement undermine the serious nature of the Arts, the value of PE and the strength of Health, when all of these courses provide so much for our children. Please keep the Arts, PE and Health as required courses in the Middle School.

Sincerely,

Doug Allen

From: WENDY HART [mailto:wendyhart@alpinedistrict.org]
Sent: Saturday, September 23, 2017 7:55 PM
To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>
Cc: Board of Education <board@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: In Favor of Rule R277-700

Dear State Board Members:

Here is the text of the hearing comments made by our parents group for inclusion in your official documents.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Wendy Hart

We, parents, are in favor of the new rule R277-700, allowing local school boards greater flexibility in determining middle school course requirements. This rule shows trust in our local school boards and our parents. This rule returns local control to our boards, but most importantly, this rule does NOT remove music, art, PE, health or world languages. This rule gives power back to the local level and to the people they represent. It is scary to trust others to make decisions when we are used to having those decisions made at the state level. But fear of local control is a fear of free people making their own decisions.

Freedom brings risk. But this Board has shown a desire to return that freedom back to the parents through their local boards. It can be assumed that those in Davis or Jordan may not agree with the level of PE or arts that those in Rich or Alpine decide. The districts may disagree with what the charters have determined. Freedom brings with it great responsibility. But it also brings great potential for success, far greater than a one-size-fits-all education system. Utah Congressman Rob Bishop has said about public education, "Ever since ...the mid-sixties, ... we've been consistently fighting that battle over standardization versus freedom. Freedom should be our goal." We echo his sentiment. And we are grateful that the majority of this Board agrees that Freedom should be our goal.

As parents, we are at a disadvantage, in that, we do not have a formal group with paid employees to represent our interests. We do not have marketing groups who will send out petitions and emails to amass people to our cause. We do not have the luxury of thousands of people in our organization with contact information who can be rallied at a moment's notice to speak up about a particular rule. We are simply citizens. We are the people you were elected to represent.

While not speaking for the groups we participate in, the majority of us are members

of various local school boards (Alpine, Davis, Jordan, Rich, Timpanogos Academy, Maeser Academy). We are also current and former members of PTAs, SCCs, and various parent organizations. We are accountants, teachers, programmers, designers, musicians, and social workers. But, more importantly, we are parents. And we know our individual children better than anyone.

Those of us who are local board members are excited for the trust we have been given. We love the arts! We appreciate PE! We think CTE courses, health, and languages are extremely beneficial. We thrill at the thought of education being for the benefit and improvement of each, individual child. We are not motivated to change the middle school course requirements much, if at all, from what the state has had these many years. But we support this rule change because it allows us to legally make exceptions for those students who need them.

While this may appear to be a theoretical discussion, the impact of this policy is taking place around us as we speak. Here are some examples.

Emma has severe food allergies. She was required to take a CTE class that included a foods course, putting her in medical danger. Taylor is a child in foster care who has been abused. Changing in a PE locker room causes him trauma every day. Taylor would do better in his other courses if he didn't have to go through the difficulty of changing for PE class. Brandon has ADHD. He needs to take a PE class every day to do well in his academic classes. Taking two PE classes makes it harder to have open class periods for other electives of interest, instead of just required courses. Savannah is in a community symphony program which requires her to take orchestra in school. This limits her ability to take other courses that are not required. Jordan is heavily involved in karate outside of school four days per week. He wants to take drama, band, Spanish, and choir, but he can't take all of them because he requires PE. Trina signed up for dual language immersion in first grade. All these years later, she is required to take two language courses instead of the one that was originally required when she first committed to the immersion program. Her mother is a social worker and knows the health course would just be a repeat of what Trina already understands. She'd like to take a non-required course for fun. Justin has special needs. Being required to take PE and fine arts classes like choir or band adds greater stress to his life. His success with his other courses would be improved if he didn't have to cope with the additional stress of these required courses.

While the names of these students have been changed, their situations are real. These are experiences of real students in real schools in our state. We believe the majority of students will still need and find the current middle school requirements to be a good balance for their lives. However, for those parents with students like these who need greater flexibility, we support letting local boards find ways to make exceptions.

We also support this rule change because it highlights a very important principle: Local Control. The best decisions are made at the level closest to those who are impacted. Everyone seems to advocate for local control during elections, but this is the point where local control can be supported or defeated. Do we trust our local school boards to create policies that benefit their communities? Do we trust the parents of our students to decide for each individual child what is in their best interests? Or do we want to give up that responsibility and tell these parents, that we're sorry, there's nothing we can do to help their child?

We wonder why parents aren't as involved, and this is, in part, why. Sure, they can volunteer for the Valentine's party in the classroom. But when it comes to deciding what courses their child needs and what that child should focus on, do we defer to others, far away, from that child? Do we not believe individual parents can and should have the option of working this out at the local level?

State law acknowledges this fundamental truth: parents are primarily responsible for the education of their own children. They are the experts of their children, and it is up to those of us on local school boards to represent them and to allow them the necessary flexibility in this area. While there may be ways via IEP's and 504's to individualize requirements, why can we not simply support, as local school boards, a well-rounded set of experiences? But when that doesn't apply, let us trust those parents who need exceptions for their kids to simply ask for them. Why are we so afraid to trust the people who know their children the best: the parents?

Thomas Jefferson stated in 1816: "the way to have good and safe government, is not to trust it all to one, but to divide it among the many, distributing to every one exactly the functions he is competent to." Trust us! Allow us, as local board members and parents, to make the determination for those children who will not be as successful being forced to fit into a pre-determined box. For many kids, the range of experiences we currently have will be beneficial and helpful. But for those who will experience negative consequences, we should be wanting and willing to allow that level of flexibility.

We ask for your trust. Trust that we will defend and protect the variety that currently exists: physical education, fine arts, health, world languages. Trust, also, that we will allow individual parents and guardians to make the call to aid their individual children with special needs, with specific challenges, with greater gifts in need of additional focus, with individual concerns. We either trust parents and want to empower them through their local boards or we don't. This rule change to R277-700 gives us back that trust. Let us not be afraid of freedom! Thank you for trusting us.

Wendy Hart, Parent

Paula Hill, Parent

Brian Halladay, Parent

Phillip Cardon, Parent

Rachel Thacker, Parent

Bryce Huefner, Parent

Matt Throckmorton, Parent

Liz Mumford, Parent

Julie King, Parent

Robin Allred, Parent

Alyson Williams, Parent

Darrell Robinson, Parent

Mona Andrus, Parent

Julie Tanner, Parent

From: Brooke Horejsi [mailto:brookehorejsi@gmail.com]

Sent: Monday, September 25, 2017 11:22 AM

To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: Feedback about arts, PE, health, and career credit requirement change

I'd like to express my extreme disagreement with the elimination of credit requirements for arts, PE, health, and careers in our middle schools. My boys are both in middle school, and this change will be a great disservice to them and the generations of kids younger than them. Here are some important reasons why this change would do more damage than good:

1. Many Utah families can afford to address these curricular areas outside of school. This is less true for students at Title I Schools in our city center and even more true in rural districts where extracurricular offerings are fewer. All areas of learning should be available to all students, regardless of socioeconomic status.
2. State leaders, including Orrin Hatch, have worked toward national measures to address teen suicide. A reduction in health education across Utah school districts is out of step with what Utah voters have claimed is necessary including not only suicide prevention but also more boundary education to address sexual abuse.
3. We are a state that values choice at every turn — we want our state, school districts, and families to make their own choices. As Carol Lear suggested in the vote, we are forgetting students also need to make choices, and removing these options from core curriculum limits their ability to do so.
4. We shouldn't accept the standards in the arts have to be the bare minimum and instead could find ways to support co-curricular partners (like Central Pennsylvania Youth Ballet in PA) so students of all abilities have access to high quality courses rather than only students with high median income families who can afford certain arts programs
5. It is HIGH ACHIEVING kids in suburban and rural districts who are most likely to commit suicide. To eliminate health is to harm the very group of children proponents of these cuts are claiming to support because the cuts give kids no space for mental health support and eliminate critical reprieve from the demands of high achievement via imaginative, physical and creative outlets.

We moved here from another state and are constantly disappointed in the lack of investment this State demonstrates in public education. Please do not make the situation even worse.

Thank you,
Brooke Horejsi

From: Jeanine Kuhn [mailto:shrink4928@hotmail.com]

Sent: Monday, September 25, 2017 11:12 AM

To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: Rule

Please consider how foolish it is to eliminate credit in middle schools for such important subjects as PE, health and the arts. Young people benefit so much from knowledge in these areas. Think of childhood obesity in our country as well as teenage suicides. This ruling needs to be changed. Thanks so much for your consideration!

Sincerely,

Jeanine Kuhn-Coker

From: D FORSTERBURKE, D FORSTER-BURKE <CBURKE_5@msn.com>

Sent: Monday, September 25, 2017 11:49:19 AM

To: Board Rule Comments

Subject: concerning the decision to alter the core curriculum for middle schools

Dear Board Members,

I am a retired nursing faculty who spent years with my nursing students assisting the school nurses of Canyons, Jordan, Granite, and Salt Lake Schools Districts. I cannot imagine the challenges to teachers to have (perhaps 10%) of their students with ADHD who have not had a chance to exercise and cannot focus on learning in the classroom. PE helps students by giving them an outlet for their activity. Additionally, students need both PE and Health to avoid obesity.

With the increase in adolescent suicides and other health concerns (pregnancy, STDs, addiction, opioid crisis), it makes no sense to eliminate health classes. And lastly art may be the single opportunity for students to be able to express themselves as individuals. There was an excellent editorial in the SL Tribune on Sunday, Aug 13 about the importance of these classes in middle school.

These classes convey important content and provide much needed experiences.

Not all students are strong in traditional academic courses and the content in health, art and PE allows students to engage and become excited about learning according to their different ways of learning.

Thank you. Diane Forster-Burke MS, RN, 8942 Wasatch Blvd. Cottonwood Heights, UT 84093, 801-699-4841
(c)

From: Parker, Diana [mailto:dparker@graniteschools.org]

Sent: Monday, September 25, 2017 12:04 PM

To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: concerning Administrative Rule R277-700 to require all middle school/junior highs to require elective credits.

Concerning Administrative Rule R277-700 to require all middle school/junior highs to require elective credits.

Please reconsider your decision to reduce or eliminate the requirements for elective credits in junior high/middle school. That is the age where students engage. And if they are engaged in electives they are more likely to engage in their core. Electives are OFTEN the very thing that keeps a student in school. To remove the requirement cannot help but backfire and cause severe damage to our school system and to our CULTURE. Electives, especially the arts, teach people how to live, not just how to pass a test or make money. Study after study has proven the value of electives and movement to the improvement of brain function and improved test scores. Please do not eliminate any of the arts or other electives.

Sincerely,

Diana Parker

From: ANGELA TANNER [mailto:angelatanner@alpinedistrict.org]
Sent: Monday, September 25, 2017 12:33 PM
To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>; Wright, Joel
<joel.wright.uted@gmail.com>
Subject: Eliminating the Arts?

I write this letter for all children. If you eliminate the Middle School requirement of Arts, CTE, PE you are not in line with the desire to foster 21st century skills and lack vision for our Utah children. Many students do not have the financial means to after school art and recreation programs that develop the creativity, collaboration, and discipline developed in these important classes. You assume children can do this at home by watching you-tube. These classes develop important skills that carry through all subjects. You are not looking at the whole child. The ability to solve problems with innovative and unique solutions is fostered through the arts. Look to states who include this in their curriculum and you will see children who have greater abilities to apply high lever thinking skills through out all of their classes. Why not have something we are passionate about at school? Why not try new things and experience things that you would not experience in the home. I hope your choice doesn't fit your limited belief in education. If we want our students to be involved in "Civics" and "Community" as this is the goal of education; WE have to insist that they receive an education that gives them all those skills necessary to participate democracy. Learning to see others and their view points is so important. When I teach US Government and Civics the most meaningful activities use some sort of art form. They may listen to a song, view a documentary, or observe a piece of art that best expresses freedom with out words. Art says what words cannot say. Why not allow our students to develop skills that do not involve just words. Looking at the purpose of a basic sketch book could easily be translated into what I want my representatives to do for me.

Just having a visual art class with a sketch book.....

Develops concentration, guides thought process, stimulates deeper thinking, generates ideas, encourages questioning and expansion, helps form opinions and develop a personal vision, analyzes how parts are put together and/or how something is made, creates focus or attention

Exercises memory, promotes reflection and self-reflection, gains insight, encourages curiosity and inquisitiveness, promotes dreaming and exploration, engages imagination

Records specific information, develops observation skills, links experience and memory (learning), aids visual learners, documents and preserves experiences, trains perceptions

Outcomes:

Gain confidence, no wrong answers, all thoughts and renderings are valid, freedom of expression, see progress, link memory and learning, develop personal style, understand art as process, allow risk taking, ENJOYMENT (EDU Fine Arts Drawing Class)

This is my lunch break and I do not have time to expand this email. This lady says what I do not have time to say, "There is a quote by Vladimir Nabokov that reads, 'There is, it would seem, in the dimensional scale of the world a kind of delicate meeting place between imagination and knowledge, a point, arrived at by diminishing large things and enlarging small ones that is intrinsically artistic.' I've kept this quotation

on my desk for days now after seeing it used as an epigram to a James Lasdun poem and I have to confess, I can't paraphrase what it means (which I would say is a sign of great art). But the sentence is beautiful and the cloud of unknowing it puts me in reminds me of why I do love art. Often with art I feel I'm talking with someone who knows something I don't, something I'd like to know. Art stretches me, challenges me, makes me think and feel. I'm a curious person and want to know. Art is the place where huge concepts like love and war are distilled for us to reckon or small things like a flower is held up to all. And akin but different to Nabokov's thought, things become right sized with great art. Money, power, status are so easily and quickly overvalued and things like relationships, beliefs, or even happiness, the stuff of art that makes life worth living is devalued in our world that is constantly pushing us apart toward isolation. Art gives us a reality check as to what's really going on and what could go on if we cooperated. As a society the place where imagination and knowledge meet is where we want to start." – Sidney Smith <https://www.arts.gov/art-works/2015/why-arts-matter>

I hope you will take the time to research the "research" behind arts in public education.

Angee Tanner

-----Original Message-----

From: only.gail@yahoo.com [<mailto:only.gail@yahoo.com>]

Sent: Monday, September 25, 2017 2:47 PM

To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: Health education should be required

Middle school is filled with misinformation obtained from peers. Health education is a critical science subject for understanding adolescent's changing bodies and for learning life-long health behavior.

Respectfully submitted,
Gail Rose, RN, BSN

From: Melanie Fillmore <melnfillmore@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, September 25, 2017 1:50:39 PM

To: Board Rule Comments

Subject: R277-700

To Whom it May Concern,

As a parent of four children in the public education system, I am strongly and deeply opposed to the approval of R277-700.

I count on the education system to provide a well-rounded education for my children. When PE, Health, and Fine Arts classes are no longer required, that objective has been lost.

It also signals a lack of respect and value for said classes. If I seek to raise happy, healthy, creative, well rounded kids, then these classes deserve equal footing with Math, English, and Science.

I KNOW YOU ARE SAYING that I as a parent or in my local school District that choice can still be made. However, that is an irresponsible argument by the Board of Education. If you say this decision will be determined by the local school districts, then why make a ruling at all? That sounds like a scapegoat for the Board to defer the responsibility of a far reaching and widely unpopular decision.

Thank you for your time in considering this email.

Sincerely,
Melanie Fillmore

From: Samantha Wise [mailto:Samantha.Wise@hci.utah.edu]
Sent: Monday, September 25, 2017 3:05 PM
To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: Education Requirements

To Whom It May Concern,

I am deeply disappointed in the school board's decision to eliminate the arts, health, and PE credit requirement for middle school students.

As a public health education specialist, scientist, and advocate, I do not condone this kind of action.

I encourage the following individuals to CHANGE their vote at the October board meeting: Janet Cannon, Brittany Cummins, Jennifer Gravier, Carol Barlow-Lear, Kathleen Riebe, and Spencer Stokes

The above individuals should be aware of how their decision negatively impacts students. **These actions HURT children who cannot speak for themselves.** They deserve a well-rounded education! Do not rob them of the opportunity to gain knowledge that will help them now as well as in the future.

And lastly, a special thanks of gratitude to the following individuals for defending public health and art education: Teryl Warner, Linda Hansen, Lisa Cummins, Laura Belnap, Joel Wright, Alisa Ellis, Scott Neilson, Mark Huntsman, Michelle Boulter

To the defenders of education- *You are greatly appreciated. Continue fighting the good fight!*
Samantha Wise

Samantha Wise, MS
Clinical Research Coordinator
801-213-6113

Huntsman Cancer Institute

Total Cancer Care
2000 Circle of Hope RM 4730
Salt Lake City, UT 84112
huntsmancancer.org/totalcancercare



From: Locke Ettinger [mailto:Locke.Ettinger@imail.org]
Sent: Monday, September 25, 2017 5:50 PM
To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: R277-700

State Board of Education.

With regards to the policy change R277-700. I am not supportive of changing the policy requirements for PE and Arts in our public schools. The research is clear both from a physical health and educational standpoint that physical activity reduces health risks for chronic disease, including obesity, diabetes, heart disease, depression, anxiety and other. Intensive physical activity has also been shown to improve end of level testing. I am happy to provide these studies, however they were shared during the open discussion last week. With the rise in chronic diseases the State Board of Education is not acting in the best interest of the health and well-being of Utah's children. It is time to act responsible and provide a well-rounded education for all children which address the whole person. Those at greatest risk will likely be hurt the worst by this policy change, including, students less inclined to be physically active and who do not participate in extracurricular sporting activities. You have heard many arguments for and against this policy change, however by representing the State of Utah education system you should follow the scientific evidence and support the health, well-being and education of our students. Furthermore, the engagement of the right brain in arts is limited in our society today, the repercussions of such are yet to be determined. Our communication is being directed to emails, text, social media etc... all of which use and engage left brain activity (fight or flight). The use of right brain communication such as face to face discussions, the Arts, individual innovation is become less common place and is processed on the right brain. This imbalance will lead to negative impact on our society.

Reconsider your change in policy in this area.

Locke Ettinger, PT, Ph.D
Director of Health Promotion
Intermountain Healthcare

From: Dave M [mailto:davemyers@alpinedistrict.org]
Sent: Monday, September 25, 2017 7:19 PM
To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: Board Hearing on Rule R277-700

Ms Austin: It seems that the State of Utah is trying to reduce the core to a small list of classes that teach the 3 R's of education. While the 3 R's are important (reading, writing and arithmetic), I wonder about the electives that are being dropped. Many students I see in CTE programs, come to school because they "fit" in with CTE and elective classes. A large percentage of students love their P.E., health, CTE, the arts and other classes that are being considered for removal. Not every student will attend college or attain a 4 year academic degree. Our MATC's are full of "career minded" students that first got an exposure to a career pathway, in a class like college and career awareness (CCA) and others being considered for removal. CCA, taught in 7th grade, is a feeder class to future CTE classes. Eliminate this required class... you will severely cut enrollment numbers to CTE classes and possibly cause teaches to loose their jobs. On the subject of Health and P.E. classes; we live in a country, I believe, is the most obese nation in the world. Eliminating these classes will promote this current trend and lead to other health concerns in student's future lives.

Sincerely,

Dave Myers -25 years teaching at Pleasant Grove Jr high

--

Jay Leno's garage "The heart is happiest when the head and the hands work together"

Dave Myers -Pleasant Grove Jr high CTE/Tech/Engineering

From: Megan Oliverson [mailto:metyolive2@gmail.com]

Sent: Monday, September 25, 2017 8:36 PM

To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: R277-700

As a mother of four children, ages 18, 15 12, and 9 I would prefer that for the middle-school ages the Fine Arts, Health & PE classes stay required. I feel like there are many benefits from this and that a high school level would be a better place for things like that to be optional. Middle School is a place for them to try new things that they're not necessarily accustomed to or wouldn't choose themselves. The benefits of these subjects have been proven over and over again as well.

Thank you.

I am also a member of the PTA and have read their position. I agree with them.

From: caralk8@gmail.com [mailto:caralk8@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, September 25, 2017 10:06 PM
To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: R277-700

Please do not take health, PE and fine arts away from the Jr High/middle school groups.

I have 8 children and one of the ways that they have stayed motivated academically is having these subjects available to them.

My oldest daughter was not adjusting well in 7th grade until she joined the band and played the flute. This experience opened up a new doors for her and music. She went on through high school trying new things and was in Accapella choir and participated in the musical plays. Her grades went up as well as her confidence.

My now 22 year old daughter was in 7th grade PE class and was introduced to a number of sports in their basic form. She then decided to join the track team. She also learned volleyball and basketball basics. By ninth grade she was winning almost every meet she competed in in high jump and her junior year placed first in the 4A state competition. She was recognized all over for her achievements in track, volleyball, and basketball, all competing for MVHS. With the potential of a scholarship, she studied and did well academically. She received a partial scholarship to 3, D1 colleges. She represented UVU.

Likewise I have 2 sons that have been following her lead. My older son placing 3rd at state in 2014 for high jump. He then followed pursuits academically and also in choir music and ballroom dance as well as the musicals. My second son was introduced to basketball in Jr High and competed on MVHS's team. He then switched to baseball where is is currently pitching as a senior, at 85-90 mph speeds. He also excels in choir music. As well as the plays where he is still remembered for his remarkable portrayal of the Genie when Lakeridge portrayed the okay Aladdin.

My 5th child was introduced to basketball and volleyball and choir in Jr High. She led Lakeridge with one of the highest rebound records for last season. She also made the High School choir this year. She and the others had not played many sports or sang in choir prior to 7th grade.

I tell you this because I have the more coming up, not yet through Jr High and I want them to have the same advantages and opportunities I did and my older children have had here in Utah. Utah is unique in that we have so many different options for our childrens learning. Many from out of state have commented to me about the blessing it is for us to have these available to us. At our house if they play sports they need to balance it with fine arts. They all do and excel in all they participates in.

Again we plead with you as a family, attending Utah middle schools, to leave these programs as required classes/credits. It is an absolute benefit for all of our children.

Thank you
Cara Kretschmer and family
Please bring puppies

From: Megan Woods [mailto:megan.woods@hotmail.com]
Sent: Monday, September 25, 2017 11:52 PM
To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: decision to eliminate arts, P.E., health requirements

To the Utah State School Board:

I am a resident of Rich County, Utah. I am alarmed by the decision to eliminate the credit requirements for arts, P.E., and health classes in Utah's middle schools. I have been trying to understand what reasoning there could be behind this decision. Other than financial, I cannot imagine any logical reason. It is widely understood from many studies that students who take music and art classes do better in their core curriculum. The value of these elective subjects is tremendous.

I understand that eliminating the requirement doesn't mean that the classes will immediately be eliminated. However, my family's experience shows that if elective subjects aren't required, school districts, especially those located in less-affluent areas, have trouble finding the money to finance them. My husband is a music teacher. He taught for eight years at a private school in Utah. After the introduction of Common Core curriculum, the school had less and less money for any extras. Over a couple of years, they eliminated athletics, art, and eventually music. My husband was laid off, which was bad for us, but worse for the students because they had no options for music education.

At that point, my husband was hired to teach in the inner-city in a different state. Before he was hired, there had not been a music program at that school. Many students in affluent areas can afford to take private lessons or join teams outside of school. But for so many others, public schools provide the only opportunity for a musical, physical, or art education. If the state does not support and require art and P.E. credits, schools in rural or inner-city areas will suffer. They will not be able to find the funds to pay for these elective classes without state help. While my husband taught in the inner-city, he had no budget, absolutely no budget, for the music program. He was lucky to find grant money and was able to build a program through donors. Many others are not so lucky. The benefits to the students of having music classes were incredible.

Now we live in Utah again, in a very rural area. Our community loves the music, theater, and athletic programs at the middle and high schools. There are significant challenges teaching in a

rural area, but all students deserve an opportunity to have a well-rounded education beyond the basic core subjects. In our rural area, there are no community sports programs or music groups that students could go to for extra-curricular education. They depend on the public schools. There is no reason to eliminate the funding, requirement, and benefits for the students.

I home school my own children. Utah has wonderful student-friendly education laws. One is that a student can attend public school part time. My middle school-aged children have been able to take music, theater, P.E. and other classes at school while continuing to learn their core subjects at home. This opportunity is a real benefit to homeschooled children in Utah. It helps us provide the balanced education our children deserve even when we can't afford many opportunities for our children.

Please reconsider this decision. It was poorly conceived. I know the current trend is to steer as many students as possible into the important STEM careers. However, public schools exist to educate human beings, not just to train workers. A full and complete education includes music, art, P.E., and health.

Thank you.

Megan Woods

From: Karen Teuscher [mailto:karen.teuscher@ccsdut.org]

Sent: Tuesday, September 26, 2017 12:02 AM

To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: Arts in middle school

I would like express my desire as a parent and teacher that arts remain a required class at the middle school level. Training in the arts is critical for every student and has long been a part of a full education, as demonstrated by the curriculum studied by great philosophers such as Aristotle and our own Thomas Jefferson. I once attended a workshop taught by a master storyteller who had dedicated her life to arts training for children. She explained that training in the arts goes beyond the initial "artistic" experience to help to train minds in the appreciation of beauty and the development of an ethical and moral center that significantly affects the development of leadership capabilities as these students age. This is so critical for every student. In addition, the development of credible arts programs at the high school level must begin at the middle school. When we become too diverse in our offerings of elective and required credits, it "waters down" many quality options. The experiences that our students have as they develop in music programs through middle school and high school develop students who appreciate beauty, create beauty, have self-discipline, the ability to analyze and make goals for improvement, learn the satisfaction of teamwork, the development of fine motor skills, and develops the ability to express feelings and emotions in an way that appropriately speak to the community and world. These skills are not optional in the development of a child. Students in middle school must begin the development of these skills in order for them to be able to achieve the greatest result further on in their careers. Please re-consider. The arts must remain a requirement in our public schools.

Sincerely,

Karen Teuscher

From: Sarah Coyne [mailto:moneycoyne@hotmail.com]

Sent: Tuesday, September 26, 2017 3:42 AM

To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: Recent ruling

Please reconsider the recent ruling on not requiring the arts in higher education. There is a terrible decision.

Sarah Coyne

From: O. Fahina [mailto:Fahina36@hotmail.com]
Sent: Tuesday, September 26, 2017 7:11 AM
To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: REVERSE AUG 4TH VOTE!!

Dear Rules Committee:

It is with great distress and anguish to hear of the school board cutting the arts, health and PE middle school credits out.

My name is Fahina Tavake-Pasi, Executive Director for National Tongan American Society (NTAS) serving Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders of Utah.

Our Native Hawaiian Pacific Islanders (NHPI) in Utah have the highest rate of obesity. We also have the highest rate of infant mortality. NTAS, with the assistance of the Utah Health Department, in 2014 implemented a survey with over 600 adults and youth which indicated that though healthy eating was a problem, an even bigger issue was physical activity. Over 70% of our NHPI population is overweight or obese and our children suffer from the "chronic disease of obesity." Obesity leads to many chronic diseases, including diabetes, of which people are now getting at a younger age.

It is hard to understand why any school board would do away with PE and health when the USA overall, is climbing in obesity rates and has the highest health cost per person in the world and least effective. I support the curriculum of PE and Health as a much needed subject! It can help to educate and help children make better choices, help them identify when the greedy and conspiring food and beverage industries are hunting them down with their well designed ads and toxic chemicals in their foods. Added 'gardening' component to PE and health are wonderful additions!!

And as for arts, many of our children are visual learners, use art as a release, especially when language is an issue.

As Utah is growing in diversity, it is important to acknowledge the fact that learning styles are diverse, that interests are diverse, that values are diverse, that various subjects are needed in order for ALL to flourish.

For better physical, emotional, and social health of Utah's growing diverse children, **PLEASE REVERSE YOUR AUGUST 4TH VOTE AND NOT CUT THE ARTS, HEALTH**

AND PE MIDDLE SCHOOL CREDITS OUT.

Thank you,
Fahina Tavake-Pasi
Executive Director
National Tongan American Society
3007 S West Temple, Unit H
Salt Lake City, UT 84115

PS:

- **THANK YOU** to Janet Cannon, Brittany Cummins, Jennifer Gravier, Carol Barlow-Lear, Kathleen Riebe, and Spencer Stokes for voting for better education!!
- I ENCOURAGE Teryl Warner, Linda Hansen, Lisa Cummins, Laura Belnap, Joel Wright, Alisa Ellis, Scott Neilson, Mark Huntsman, Michelle Boulter to **CHANGE YOUR VOTE** in this October meeting.

From: Tim Jones [mailto:Tim.Jones@besd.net]

Sent: Tuesday, September 26, 2017 7:36 AM

To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: Art Teacher in room #8

I am not surprised by this. If you project forward into the future, what do you see the education system being like in 20 years? A lot of online classes will be available and most content will be available through the internet. Public school will be Math Science Language Arts and History/Geography. Other classes will be through the private sector and the graduation requirements will still include the PE art music but through the private sector. I am saddened that we are going down this road but I will adapt. My voice has been heard but the damage will continue to be done by good people with good intentions. Good luck.

From: Janene [mailto:janenesmail@yahoo.com]

Sent: Tuesday, September 26, 2017 8:18 AM

To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: please keep the credit requirement for arts,P.E. and health (especially arts :) in Utah's middle schools!!

Please make it possible for all children to have access to a well-rounded education!! Can you imagine growing up without the arts as a part of your junior high and high school experience? Participating in the arts, especially, has been foundational and has enriched my education and I have seen it benefit my young children as well. IT SHOULD NOT END WHEN THEY TURN TWELVE. Our children need beauty, activity, well-being on many levels that arts, health and P.E. provide. Sure, some students have parents who can afford extra exposure and activities outside of the classroom, but many simply DO NOT have this option. Do you think these programs, that enrich the human experience, should only be for the people who can afford them? Our society and our children - ALL children - deserve better!

Please reconsider if you voted to remove this credit requirement. I am a voter, I AM one of your active constituents. Please represent me.

Janene Wirthlin

From: LYDIA C NUTTALL Owner [mailto:lydianuttall@centurylink.net]
Sent: Tuesday, September 26, 2017 11:26 AM
To: Board of Education <board@schools.utah.gov>; Dickson, Sydnee <Sydnee.Dickson@schools.utah.gov>; tpyfer <tpyfer@utah.gov>; Gbell <gbell@xmission.com>
Subject: "What justifies taking away choice?" Isn't this the root issue re: 7th/8th Grade Electives?

Dear All,

I received a response to my email yesterday that made me really think hard.

The point was made that because I did not include the context in which to consider each sentence (true - I didn't), the responder felt I contorted the meanings of each sentence and therefore arrived at a summary to which the responder did not agree. I thanked the responder for the feedback. It was valuable to me. It challenged my thinking, my beliefs, my observations, and my conclusion. It resulted in me having to dig really deep and analyze *why* the responder and I processed differently the same stories, comments, and points made by both sides of the 7th/8th Grade Electives issue at the hearing last Wednesday. Here's what I concluded:

"What justifies taking away choice?" is the root issue regarding 7th/8th Grade Electives.

Does fear / concern justify taking away choice? Fear of obesity increasing, no one in P.E., too many in art, no well-roundedness, not discovering that he/she actually *likes* the subject he/she thought he/she wouldn't like, a child or parent not making the "right" choice, or even losing a teacher or a student taking his/her life? Does making things fair and equal for everyone justify taking away freedom to choose?

We are divided because two ideologies exist.

One Ideology:

A belief that Freedom to Choose is good and should not be taken away unless...

- ...someone has broken the laws of the land
- ...fairness or equality need to be ensured
- ...concerns or fears need to be resolved, or
- ...someone feels that they know what is best for the individual(s)

Another Ideology:

A belief that Freedom to Choose is, well, sacred – a God-given right – and that as such, the only justification for taking away someone's freedom to choose is if...

- ...someone has broken the laws of the land

These two ideologies divide us as a people and also as a nation. It didn't used to. United, we fought a great war against the greatest power on earth (Great Britain) based on our collective belief that Freedom to Choose is a sacred, God-given right. The laws being issued from the government of England were trampling on that right because King George III and his Parliament believed *they* had the right to choose for us. We believed differently, and unanimously we declared to King George III and to the world, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men...are endowed *by their Creator* with certain unalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness."

King George II and his Parliament believed **One Ideology** and we in America believed in and defended **Another Ideology** to the extent of war. Against all odds, we won that war.

I believe in Another Ideology.

Respectfully,
Lydia Nuttall

-----Original Message-----

From: Brian Gibson [<mailto:muminkun@gmail.com>]

Sent: Tuesday, September 26, 2017 12:31 PM

To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: PE, Health, and Art

If you really feels it necessary to remove something from the school curriculums you should start with the subjects that are repeated 7 times from 6th grade to 12th. I'm talking about English, math, etc. My child who just graduated from HS took english for all those years, and it was the same class taught over and over again. She had all the skills she would ever learn in those classes by the time she was a Freshman. (And she took AP English) Most kids will never need the higher level math that we require them to take. A few will and those classes should be available to them, but why do we require it of everyone?

In all honesty I feel strongly that we require too many things of our kids as it is, but the things we keep cutting are the things that every kid should have. Not every kid is going to be an engineer, computer programer, or novelist. But everyone needs to know how to take care of their health. Everyone could use a lot more creativity in their lives. Instead of taking these away from kids, lets give them more options. If you really need to make fewer things required, how about we go back to the idea of a well rounded kid, stop trying to make them all the same and offer some diversity to their lives. Let them have more freedom to take what they want and explore what interests them?

But by all means go ahead and encourage more childhood obesity, and conformity. Heaven forbid we allow them to be healthy and creative.

This is a bad move for the state school board. Don't change these requirements, look at other requirements to change.

Thanks for your time,

Brian

T. Brian Gibson

From: Kathleen Kaufman [mailto:kathleenkaufmanuna@gmail.com]

Sent: Tuesday, September 26, 2017 12:07 PM

To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: Comment on Middle School Curriculum Changes

Utah Nurses Association Position on the Proposed Changes to Core Curriculum for Utah Middle Schools

The Utah Nurses Association is very concerned about the removal of the core requirement for each 7th and 8th grade student to take physical education, health, and art at least once during the middle school years. We are concerned that this will have potentially long term effects on the health – both physical and mental—of our pre-teen and young teenagers.

Obesity, sedentary lifestyles, and suicide are all well documented as increasing in Utah teens. If local school boards choose to eliminate the possibility of taking these classes, this will deny a certain part of the school population from key aspects in their growth and development. Local school boards could quite easily refuse to fund the staff needed to teach these suddenly” optional” subjects.

For some students, the physical activity in a PE class may be the only activity they participate in. This activity allows many students to focus better in their academic classes. Some students need to experiment with the arts before they find their niche in life. Not all students have a rich cultural home life to depend on when exploring the arts.

Most importantly in the view of the Utah Nurses Association is that eliminating required health classes in the middle school years does NOT prepare students to be “properly prepared for instruction in grades 9-12,” as required in R277-200-5 (Middle School Education Requirements). In looking at the high school requirements, the student could elect to NEVER take a health class beyond the 6th grade.

This is not preparing students for important health-related decisions they will need to make in their adulthood. We will be graduating students who have had little to no preparation to deal with health or health problems.

The Utah Nurses Association strongly opposes these changes in the Middle School Education Requirements.

Aimee McLean BSN,RN,CCHP

President

Utah Nurses Association

amclean.una@gmail.com

[801-946-2446](tel:801-946-2446)

Kathleen Kaufman MS,RN
Government Relations Committee Co-Chair
Utah Nurses Association
801-618-6558

Uintah Middle School

Rule 277-700 Amendment hearing 9/20/17

First, we would like to express our gratitude for the efforts made by this board to increase local control and allow students the flexibility to create a course schedule that reflects personal and family priorities and interests. We would also like to thank Alisa Ellis and other members of the board and department of education for their willingness to answer some of our questions and to clarify our interpretations of the memorandum sent to districts concerning the amendments to this rule.

We offer our hopes, concerns and questions with the expectation that they will provide insight into the needs of rural districts and LEAs, and to direct the efforts of the board as they seek to provide effective support and guidance.

In this spirit, we will present our concerns organically as they originated when reading this memo and follow with our interpretation and possible strategies we might pursue. These concerns are not based on the amended rule that was to be posted on the Office of Administrative Rules, so comments are limited to the memorandum.

We hope that this rule offers flexibility in regard to teacher certification and course offerings when providing meaningful educational opportunities to students.

The memorandum states, after the third paragraph on the first page, that LEAs are legally obligated to offer the courses listed thereafter--increasing the requirement of course offerings with the addition of Digital Literacy and World Language (which we interpret as a course of foreign language studies).

The memorandum then states, in the second paragraph on the second page, that an LEA may integrate the standards of one of the listed courses (using Digital Literacy as an example) into other courses, provided that the standards of each course are met.

Our concern was that the addition of course standards would increase certification requirements for teachers struggling to manage such a hybrid (we received clarification on this matter, but we will continue to put our concerns down for the sake of being on record). Teachers assure me (often in a panic) that there is not enough "fluff" in their standards to add another course into what they already offer, so it seems the promise of integration is unlikely even if certifications are not an obstacle.

For courses that cannot be integrated, it is understood that a certified teacher be on staff to provide instruction in that area regardless of student interest (again, this is an initial assumption that has since been corrected).

For example, if Health is an elective instead of a requirement, and there is little interest when registering for courses, it seems we would have to pay a Health teacher to serve a small number of students--overwhelming other teachers to stay within our allotted FTEs. Likely, we would just choose to keep the subject required, thereby defeating the intent behind amending this rule.

Unless small districts (or schools that have difficulty filling positions) receive additional support to offer elective opportunities independent of whether they can fill a teacher's schedule with 28-32 students each period, schools are back to forcing students into classes based on what they were able to offer.

Let us use a real-world scenario from our school: Our hard-working Art teacher informed us one year that she was taking a term or two off to have her baby. Unfortunately, no certified Art teacher had contacted our district for the position. In the meantime, we had hired (through APT, because of difficulty attracting applicants) a former oil-field environmental consultant to fill a Science position.

Our student population required 1.5 Science teachers for that grade, but without someone willing to work part-time, and certification issues between elementary and secondary classes, we had to hire two complete human beings. We had hoped we could use the surplus in Science to offer a couple sections of electives to compensate for being down an Art teacher.

The plan was to create a science exploration elective that the oil-field consultant and our counselor could use to show students how science is used in our community. The course would (as an added bonus) be used to create interest in the Oil Field Technology pathway our District has implemented that guides students through high school and into a stackable tech certification. The idea seemed like a perfect fit that complimented the intent of state “1,2, 4 or More” initiatives.

Unfortunately, we were told that our electives are limited by course codes at the state level, by certifications that influence funding, and by the requirements to offer Art (and other non-core classes) to certain grades. As a result of these restrictions, we over-loaded a full-time substitute in Art with kids that had little to no interest; and possibly more troubling, we threw away an opportunity to place vocationally focused students in much more personally valuable elective options.

True, removing Art as a requirement could lead to having it dropped all together; however, easing requirements could also mean alleviating over-loaded Art classes. Schools may have the student population to warrant fractional core-content teachers; but, unless one of those teachers is certified in an area that can be used for other core classes or elective options, those positions are rounded up to the nearest whole FTE. This is how we over-load the few elective options available (like Art). Large districts may be able to move teachers around to compensate, but small districts often end up with wasted course sections and a sparse selection of over-loaded elective classes.

So how does the amended rule change things for a small district? Well, it does and it doesn't. With the new rule (and our new understanding of certification requirements) we could (in theory) get creative and add another section of science as an elective option. The class would be taught by a science teacher, but the section would focus on the standards of a class like Art—albeit through a science lens (like a scientific illustration class). Such a class could be very valuable and allow some flexibility for us, but it implies a certain level of *custom course creation* that I think could just be acknowledged overtly by allowing schools to maximize local strengths in offering non-core subject electives.

It seems with more flexibility we can make teaching more rewarding in rural districts and Title 1 schools; we can make classes more applicable to real-world topics and state career initiatives; and, we can also allow small LEAs to shine as they advertise their strengths...instead of being forced to be cheap knock-offs of schools on the Wasatch front (who may have less trouble filling positions).

Thank you again for your efforts.

Uintah Middle School
Uintah School District

From: Emily Holt (SRIS) [mailto:emily.holt28@washk12.org]

Sent: Tuesday, September 26, 2017 11:36 AM

To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: Arts and PE Changes Throughout Utah

I, Emily Holt, an educator in Washington County, vote to not change the requirements regarding art and PE in the state of Utah. It would be detrimental to student creativity and innovation, as well as be harmful to the general learning environment.

Emily Holt

From: Linda Hanks [mailto:lwhanks@gmail.com]

Sent: Tuesday, September 26, 2017 8:25 AM

To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: Rule 277-700

State School Board Members:

Thank you for your recent vote on rule changes to 277-700. I currently serve on our local board and I appreciate the desire to allow for more local control. You have still provided guidelines and within those guidelines, we can best meet student needs while still providing a balanced education to our students. I attended many of the standard and assessment committee meetings in which this rule was discussed. These were great discussions with a desire to allow flexibility to LEAs. This was not done recklessly. I appreciate that Chair Belnap sought out public input and that the committee worked hard on this rule before it was brought with a recommendation to the full board.

Thank You,

Linda Hanks
Juab School Board Member

From: Sterling Keyes [mailto:skeyes@alpinedistrict.org]

Sent: Tuesday, September 26, 2017 8:24 AM

To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: Public Comment on R277-700-5: Middle School Education Requirements

ATTN: State Board of Education:

I know that there has been much recent comment on the new rule for Middle School Education Requirements and I am grateful that the State Board of Education has left the issue open for public comment and inquiry.

I was able to physically review the policy only yesterday, and as a Secondary School Music teacher, and as the District Performing Arts Director in the largest district in the state, I feel compelled to share some of my thoughts as the impacts of this policy may have long term consequences for the quality and availability of arts programs throughout the State.

I know that Choice in Education is an important parental right which carries with it significant political pressures, and I appreciate that the Board of Education is trying to acknowledge and respect those rights. I believe this policy, however, will serve the needs of a very small segment of the State population while marginalizing a large portion of the population whose parents may not have the time resources to be as fully invested in their child's education.

I'll try to make reduce my comments to three points:

1. 7th and 8th Grade is an age of exploration and discovery, however it is not an age of wisdom or maturity - in consequence of this many students who simply do not think that they like the arts, PE, or health will choose not to take these courses. For some it will be too uncomfortable for them to do something outside of their comfort zone, for others it will be because they do not see such classes as "cool" or "popular". While there is a segment of the population whose parents will be guiding these choices, for a large segment the choice will be left up to a 12 or 13 year old to decide what classes are best to take. Requiring that the student choose Art, Health, and PE essentially opens a door which many students given an alternative will never open.
2. This age is a unique time for students to start development in the Arts and Physical Education which will shape lifestyle choices for the rest of their lives. It is very, very difficult for a student to develop competence on an instrument, for example, before graduation, if they do not start in 7th grade. I know you heard the testimony of the Superintendent of Tintic School District last week. I know you heard his story. His is the story which we have witnessed dozens of times in our classrooms. Frequently the most poignant stories are those of students who, perhaps even reluctantly, signed up for an Arts class to complete a requirement and discovered for themselves an outlet of joy, self-worth, and accomplishment.
3. For Performing Arts education especially, long term involvement is key to establishing

high quality top tier Performing Arts Educational Ensembles in the High Schools. There is a filtering process that happens as Middle School children experiment, develop, and determine whether to pursue or explore new options. Those that continue can contribute to the high level of performance which has become a proud tradition in the State of Utah. Speaking as a High School Teacher, I know that almost all in my top level performance ensembles began to develop their love of Music in the 7th Grade or before. I see this change in the Middle School requirements as a direct threat to the quality of our top performing arts classes. If lack of incoming experience means a need to dedicate resources to teaching skills and ability that are best cultivated in the Middle Schools it will only serve to discourage students and teachers alike. Such changes threaten our culture and tradition as a State with strong Music and Arts programs.

I appreciate that you have taken time and resources to submit yourselves to public comment on this. I'm certain you have heard many fine arguments on every side of the issue. My final plea is that the State Board of Education make policy which benefits the most students in the state and not just a segment of education elitists who use their wealth and their political clout to push through an agenda which may benefit their own child, but which marginalizes hundreds of thousands of students in our state. It is the duty of the State Board to make difficult decisions that are the best for all, even when those choices may not be politically popular.

I trust that there are intelligent, courageous, and fair minded members of State Board of Education who will wisely consider the ramifications of every policy they enact. The problem with mistakes in your arena is that the consequences typically don't show themselves immediately. In some cases it may take 12 years for an entire generation of public school children to move through the system before we see the full impact that the choices of today will make.

Please, please consider carefully the opinions and arguments of teachers, educators, and those whose lives are changed with the policies you adopt. Parents are important and need to be heard, but they should not be the only voices of reason when weighing heavy considerations.

Thank you for your time. I hope my comments can be read, understood, and properly considered.

--

Sterling Keyes

Performing Arts Coordinator
Alpine School District

Choral Music Director
Orem High School
175 S. 400 E.
Orem, UT 84097
(801) 610-8165 ext. 106

-----Original Message-----

From: Mona Andrus [<mailto:mandrus@dsdmail.net>]

Sent: Tuesday, September 26, 2017 1:41 PM

To: Board of Education <board@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: Comment on R277-700

State School Board Members,

I am writing to thank you for your recent vote on R277-700. As a district school board member, I strongly support your decision and am grateful for the trust and confidence you have placed in us.

I attended the public hearing and wanted to share one observation with you. Most of the comments asking you to reverse your decision were based on fear. Fear that students would not take the opportunity to participate in the "elective" classes. Fear that classes may not be filled and the impact that change would have on teachers. Fear that an inferior education would be offered, etc.

There is a great saying, "A life lived in fear is a life half lived!" Please don't make a decision based on fears. I ask you to uphold your decision and give the local districts this opportunity to shine. I am confident that we all, in our own unique ways, will surpass your expectations.

Sincerely,

Mona Andrus
DSD School Board Member

From: Kaitlyn Ipson (WCHS) [mailto:kaitlyn.ipsen@washk12.org]
Sent: Tuesday, September 26, 2017 1:55 PM
To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: In regards to changes of r277-700

I am a music teacher currently teaching in the Washington county school district. Before coming to Washington county I was teaching music in Carbon County school district. I can see the reasoning behind the changes and the benefits it may have for the smaller school districts especially, but I am afraid of the consequences it will have for the students.

I am aware that the administration will have their own say for their school district. This means that for those smaller school districts with less students it may make sense to lose some of those classes as the ruling suggests. However, as soon as those classes are gone, the students will be lost as well. I don't see this as a problem in Washington county school district. They have already stated that nothing will change. In Carbon County school district, however, I can see them very easily taking P.E. courses, or arts courses away because they can't find the teachers, or they may find that it is not important for those students to experience those classes at that grade level.

My experience has been that the most influence those subjects can have is in those grade levels of 6-9. Those students need a reason to come to school- and that is for P.E. or FACS or Music or Art. It is such a critical age to not be able to express themselves artistically or find they have talent sewing, or get rid of some MUCH needed wiggles in P.E.

When given the decision, there will be many school districts that opt out of these programs. It will be a huge disservice to the education of our state if we allow this. I urge you to please reconsider the ruling and show the state the importance of all of these subjects as core classes.

Thank you,
Kaitlyn Ipson
Water Canyon High School (7-12)
Washington County School District

--

Kaitlyn Ipson
Music Director
Water Canyon High School

From: Kathleen Kaufman [mailto:kathleenkaufman2008@gmail.com]
Sent: Tuesday, September 26, 2017 1:58 PM
To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: Public Comment on Proposed Middle School Curriculum Changes

As a mother and grandmother whose children and grandchildren go to or have gone to school in the Granite School District, I am very concerned about the removal of the core requirement for each 7th and 8th grade student to take physical education, health, and art at least once during the middle school years. I believe this will have potentially long term effects on the health – both physical and mental—of our pre-teen and young teen agers.

Obesity, sedentary lifestyles, and suicide are all well documented as increasing in Utah teens. If local school boards choose to eliminate the possibility of taking these classes, this will deny a certain part of the school population from key aspects in their growth and development. Local school boards could quite easily refuse to fund the staff needed to teach these suddenly” optional” subjects as was done when my children were in school with shop teachers.

I can easily see that the physical activity in a PE class may be the only activity that some students actually do. Retired teacher friends tell me that many students need this activity to help burn off their excess energy from sitting all day. I agree, they need to have required PE.

If a complaint is that there is discrimination or bullying occurring in locker rooms, then the PE teachers should be charged to not let this happen. If a student cannot undress in a locker room due to serious past trauma, that information should be part of their IEP and they should be able to not take PE. Surely this is a minority of students.

Some students need to experiment with the arts before they find their niche in life. Not all students have a rich cultural home life to depend on when exploring the arts. My son was a mediocre student until he was able to take a shop class in 7th grade. Once he was involved in that class, he suddenly got interested in all his other classes. I regret that shop is rarely taught now, if at all. That was his portal into education. He graduated from college and now works in a library in Omaha.

As a retired nurse I am extremely concerned that eliminating required health classes in the middle school years does NOT prepare students to be “properly prepared for instruction in grades 9-12,” as required in R277-200-5 (Middle School Education Requirements). In looking at the high school requirements, the student could elect to NEVER take a health class beyond the 6th grade. This is not preparing students for important health-related decisions they will need to make in their adulthood. We will be graduating students who have had little to no preparation to deal with health or health problems.

I am vehemently opposed to making these classes no longer part of the core curriculum required by the state school board. I did attend the hearing last week and I sensed that most people who care, want to preserve these courses as requirements. If they are not required, they will be the "low-hanging fruit" that gets cut out of local school district budgets to the long term detriment of their children and their communities.

I hope you make the right decision, I will be watching as will many others to see how this turns out.

Respectfully,

Kathleen Kaufman
4211 South Shanna St.
Salt Lake City, UT 84124

From: Sarah Hodson [mailto:sarah@gethealthyutah.org]
Sent: Tuesday, September 26, 2017 2:10 PM
To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: R277-700

I am writing to express concern over the Utah School Board of Education decision to eliminate the requirement for health, PE, and art in 7th and 8th grades. The research is clear. Health, physical education, and physical activity benefit students. In fact, research has shown positive relationships between physical activity and academic achievement, test scores, attention, concentration, on-task behavior, lifetime healthy habits, reduced behavioral problems, and reduced high-risk behaviors.

As the rates of obesity and diabetes continue to rise, it is short-sided to reduce access to physical activity for children in Utah. Children need 60 minutes of physical activity each day. PE in school helps students reach this goal. Health and PE in school can support the work that parents do at home by teaching and reinforcing healthy behaviors.

Research shows that health education most benefits students before the onset of risky behaviors. This makes 7th and 8th grades an ideal time for Utah children to participate in health classes whose curriculum is designed to address risk-reducing behaviors, developing positive relationships with others, and understanding the mental, emotional, social, and physical changes that occur throughout the lifecycle. As we continue to grapple with the high rate of youth suicide in Utah, we should not remove the classes that are most suited to address this issue. With this requirement change, students now only have one semester to learn this vital information.

According to your own website, *“Health education, integral to the success of students in Utah’s educational setting, provides opportunities for students to acquire knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for life-long, health-enhancing behaviors. Schools can better achieve their basic educational mission if students are healthy and fit physically, mentally, socially, and emotionally.”*

The recent requirement change sends the message that health, PE, and arts education are not important for middle schoolers. We hope that you will reconsider your decision and place a priority on the health and well-being of Utah children.

Sincerely,
Sarah Hodson
Executive Director, Get Healthy Utah

Sarah Hodson, MS

Executive Director
Get Healthy Utah
sarah@gethealthyutah.org
(c) 801-369-8089
www.gethealthyutah.org



From: Thom Priest <tpriest@weber.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, September 26, 2017 2:35:37 PM
To: Board Rule Comments
Subject: Informed Choice

Hello:

The problem with not requiring arts education is that students will often times not have enough experiences to know whether or not to choose an arts education.

If you've never experienced something before, you cannot make an informed choice.

--

Thomas Priest, Ed.D.

Chair of the Department of Performing Arts

Professor of Music

Weber State University

3950 West Campus Dr., Dept 1905

Ogden, UT 84408

Office: 801-626-7181

"If I were not a physicist,

I would probably be a musician.

I often think in music.

I live my daydreams in music.

I see my life in terms of music.”

— Albert Einstein

www.weber.edu/performingarts

The Department of Performing Arts provides world-class instruction with opportunities for students to personally excel in live theater, music and dance productions.



From: Elizabeth Sampson <elizsampson@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, September 26, 2017 2:34:04 PM

To: Board Rule Comments

Subject: R277-700

Dear USBE,

I am writing this letter to encourage you to reinstate basic requirements for our middle school students!

At this tender middle school age, I think that every child should have opportunities and education in ALL aspects of education but perhaps most importantly Health, PE, Art and Music. Children going into puberty need the basics of a health class so they can understand their body and what their needs are. The music and art classes expose students to their humanity and give them an artistic level of self expression. PE? Why would you cut the requirement for PE? Everyone needs PE. As a book worm, I don't like to exercise but I know I NEED to exercise. There are some children who may not make wise choices.

It is so important to give students OPPORTUNITIES in many different subject areas so that they can be exposed to subjects that might interest them and they can find out what they really want to do.

I feel it is up to the school board to be a wise steward to help ALL the students in the state be exposed and have the opportunity to take classes that will help them be healthy and have exposure to the arts.

One option for students who have the economic blessing of outside education is that a parent can show proof of music classes or dance classes that may be substituted for a regular class. This option was available in New York where I grew up. It allowed children with more opportunities to take different music or art classes but it did not take opportunity away from the children whose families could not afford outside instruction. If a child played on a community sports team, that was also a way they could earn PE credit. I think that health instruction is important for all students and there is really no outside substitute for it.

I am afraid if you take away these classes for struggling students because of increased remediation they will find no joy or reason in attending school. I hope you will reinstate the requirements for a well rounded education for our middle school children and consider other ways to give students more time to take optional classes.

Thank you for your attention and thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Sampson

elizsampson@gmail.com

Youth Art Month Chairperson for Utah

Teacher, Mother and Grandmother

PO Box 9, Neola, Utah 84053

From: Don A. Abernathy <mtnhorn1@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, September 26, 2017 2:36:17 PM

To: Board Rule Comments

Subject: rule R277-700

To whom it may concern,

I am dismayed that there is even a discussion of passing this rule (#rule R277-700), relegating the requirement of arts credit at the state level for grades 7 and 8 to only the district level. By doing so, I foresee arts diminishing, perhaps even disappearing altogether, in many districts.

Yes, I understand that Utah is *lower* than most states in their education achievements. I also see that the United States of America does not even rank in the top ten countries for educational prowess. But upon closer inspection, what I do discover is that among those top ten countries in the world, ***all have a dedicated arts program!***

I forward my opinion as 1) a musician and active performer, 2) a music teacher, 3) a concerned parent/grandparent/great-grandparent, and 4) a state and national citizen (read: taxpayer and voter). I greatly oppose passage of this rule.

Thank you for taking the time to read my response.

Cordially,

--

Don A. Abernathy
Music Educator & Horn Performer
Salt Lake Symphony

From: Reid Anderson <Reid.Anderson@slcschools.org>

Sent: Tuesday, September 26, 2017 2:37:19 PM

To: Board Rule Comments

Subject: Keep Physical education, Health, and the Arts requirements

To whom it may concern: My name is Reid Anderson and I am a Physical Education teacher at Clayton Middle School in Salt Lake City Utah. I have been an educator for the past 14 years and in 2012 I was a finalist for the Salt Lake City School District Teacher of the Year, and in 2012 I was the Utah Middle School Physical Education Teacher of the Year. In 2013 I was one of 6 finalists for the National Middle School Physical Education Teacher of the Year and was honored at the NASPE National Convention in Charolette, North Carolina. The Physical Education program at Clayton is nationally recognized, our dance classes are packed full and our school play gets a write up every year in the Salt Lake City Newspapers. I have a lot of comments and questions of the board on their decision to no make Physical education, Health, Dance, music and the arts no longer required in middle school.

There is a direct correlation, backed by multiple scientific studies, that link academic aptitude with physical activity. Please look up the book Spark the Revolutionary New Science of Exercise and the Brain. Along with the book The Culprit and the Cure.

What I want to talk about is the age and maturation levels of middle school students. Middle school is not a mini high school! I like to call middle school "The Age of Discovery". Middle school is a time where students get opportunities to experience and learn new things. It is the time to explore and the time where parents start to give their child some freedoms in order to pursue their own interests. 11, 12, 13, and 14 years of age is not the time to choose a career path. Ask any middle school athlete what they want to be when they grow up and most say "I'm going to be a professional _____player! Not a computer programmer nor an accountant. Middle school students live their lives watching cartoons one minute and then thinking about boys/girls the next. They might seem goofy with braces and acne and awkward, but they have real life issues and need to know how to have the tools in which to deal with them. Consider one possible example: A 7th grade girl take computer programming and her parents keep making her take computer programming, even though she does not like it. She doesn't take Physical education or Health and because she spends so much time in front of a computer screen, she doesn't get the necessary exercise she needs and eats junk food so she becoming unhealthy leaning towards obese. She doesn't participate in games and sports with her friends

and soon her friends no longer include her. She spends so much time in front of the computer that she has now made an "online friend" They agree to meet at the mall, and this "friend" turns out to be an adult. She falls in love with him because he gives her a tablet. She gets pregnant, an STD and is so depressed that she is contemplating suicide. Could happen just like getting a job at a computer camp.

Middle School kids need to have basic information so that they can live a healthy, active lifestyle in order to become productive members of society. Not every student has parental involvement in their education they are children and really don't know what they need in order to have the basic tools of an education to help them become successful.

What deems one curriculum as more important than another? How often does the average adult use geometry? or chemistry? But pretty much everyday people listen to music, are physically active, and need the basic knowledge in order to stay Healthy.

Reid Anderson
Physical Education Clayton Middle School
801-808-5221
reid.anderson@slcschools.org

Scanned By Microsoft EOP

From: Nancy Head <nancy.head@washk12.org>

Sent: Tuesday, September 26, 2017 2:42:53 PM

To: Board Rule Comments

Subject: Loosing Art, PE and Health requirements.

I guess my concern is that while I understand the focus is on the K-12 technology program I worry that the skills necessary to appreciate good things and to be healthy while we live our lives will be lost. Our children spend enough time on their phones and the social media places of their lives and are not developing skills of higher thinking and expression that Art at least can bring to their lives. I watch zombies walk down the halls with a device glued to their hands and they never look up to see the people around them. I work with students who can't tell you why they like a movie only that it was good. What was good about it I say and their response is it was funny or it was action packed. The ability to think outside of the simple answers is lost and it will only be further lost if they are not taught in an art class how to look beyond what is right in front of them. A PE class teaches far more than a skill, it teaches students how to work together and solve problems using physical energy as well as mental processes. PLEASE RECONSIDER THIS DECISION. I fear for the future of the rest of the Fine Arts if we continue down this path. Thanks for the opportunity to share. Nancy Head a professional educator for 35 years in the public schools of Utah

From: Nathan Wright <nawright@dsdmail.net>

Sent: Tuesday, September 26, 2017 2:51:52 PM

To: Board Rule Comments

Subject: Arts requirements

To whom it may concern – because I am concerned:

The recent decision by the Utah State Board of Education is a great disappointment to me as a secondary education professional in the arts. Over my 25+ years of teaching, I have watched the lives of countless young people change for the good year after year after year. I see young lives headed in so many directions (many negative directions) become focused and turn to positive outcomes. I wish I had in writing all of the comments from parents sitting across from me in parent teacher conferences expressing their deep gratitude for the changes they have seen in their child's life as a result of arts participation. These comments range anywhere from improved grades to improved confidence/self-esteem to new friends who influence their student(s) in positive, uplifting ways.

I'm sure you have received an inordinate number of emails from concerned parents and educators on this issue. I hope you will reconsider this decision which, I believe, will eventually result in a disappointing outcome. Please reinstate the 7-8 grade arts, language, health, PE, etc requirements.

Most sincerely,

Nathan Wright
Director of Choirs
Viewmont High School
120 W 1000 N
Bountiful UT 84010
801-402-4369

From: Melissa Horan <mhoran@providencehall.com>

Sent: Tuesday, September 26, 2017 2:58:42 PM

To: Board Rule Comments

Subject: Rule on Art Requirement

To Whom it May Concern at the Utah State Board of Education,

Hello, I teach at a Charter School in the Jordan District. I teach band, and percussion at both the Junior High and High School level, and a Diploma Program Music Course for High School Juniors and Seniors. I would like to comment about this new rule about districts not requiring arts credits for 7th and 8th grade. This last summer I spent much of my time reading up about music around the world and through history in preparation for my students to test (in the IB program) about music involving multiple music cultures. Music has always been a part of culture, whether on stage, for festivals, for work or relaxation. Music has been responsive to actions of government, and society. Perhaps you would say music can still be part of a culture without it being in the school programs. Yet, I would argue, that our society is becoming much more individualized, and the potential of leaving out these culturally valuable electives is only supporting the separation of people, who find that youtube is the only place to have talent, that video games are the only medium of artistic expression of the future, and nothing but mathematical and scientific intellect is appreciated.

Performing and visual arts preserve culture and history and give context to life in a way that nothing else can. They teach emotional and social response to the world around us, which is something needed especially by Junior High students who are finding their place in the world. The opportunity for them to gain new skills and talents at a younger age is priceless.

We live in a world obsessed with money. A district that is tight on money will use this opportunity to rid of these programs that change students lives, and not just their grades. A child's future is more than just core class intellect. When we say we want to help every student in education, and then drop programs that support individual interests, we are being hypocritical. We will create better families and happier people by continuing to involve these programs, rather than allowing them to drift away. Perfectionism with one area of focus on an educational level is destructive to the culture. I hope we leave room open to reconsider this action.

Thank you.

From: Emmalee Price <price.emmalee@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, September 26, 2017 3:01:00 PM

To: Board Rule Comments

Subject: Comment about R277-700

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to you today as a long-time Salt Lake County Constituent, who is very concerned about the passing of the new R277-700 bill. As I am sure you have received much research behind the health and academic benefits to PE and Health Class, I am writing to you instead from a personal perspective, hoping to relay to you how important PE and health were to me when I went through middle school.

I played soccer and ran track and field throughout high school, and I would have never considered trying out for either of those teams had it not been for my PE classes in 7th and 8th grade. Participating in those after school programs not only provided me with life-long friends, but also set me up for an overall active lifestyle into adulthood. I still continue to run with my husband and dog, and also play soccer three times a week with new and old friends. I learned the importance of perseverance and practice, on and off the field and track. Without PE setting me up with those skills to have confidence going into those try outs, I would not be as healthy as I am today.

I also remember my health class being incredibly informative and interesting in 7th and 8th grades. This is a time when kids are just learning about themselves, who they are, and who they may want to be in the future. This is a time when peer pressure and peer influence have a lot of power behind them, and could be for the good or bad, especially within the health topics. If students aren't getting the health education at home or at school, where are they going to get it from? The internet or their friends, which neither of those may be very accurate. Health within the first couple years of middle school is crucial, and can forever change a 7th and/or 8th grade student's life.

I hope you will consider my opinion, and those shared at the Public Hearing on September

20th, 2017, and reverse your decision to pass R277-700.

Sincerely,

Emmalee Boyland

From: RachelMarie Kimball <rachelmarie.kimball@nebo.edu>

Sent: Tuesday, September 26, 2017 3:03:17 PM

To: Board Rule Comments

Subject: KEEP Arts/Health/PE/CCA/Language REQUIREMENTS!

To All Whom It Concerns:

We need to be concerned about educating the WHOLE child, which includes their ability to create and to be in touch with their WHOLE being! Eliminating the requirement for students to engage in health, arts, physical education, college and career awareness, world languages, and digital literacy is a disservice to those in the rising generation (as well as those to come!) Our nation craves understanding, innovative citizens who care about their own well-being as well as the well-being of others. The courses previously mentioned are designed to create such individuals as they help address areas of the child that would go untouched and unnourished in their other various courses.

I urge you to KEEP Arts/Health/PE/CCA/Language REQUIREMENTS!

Rachel Marie Kimball

BTSALP Dance Specialist

Nebo School District

385-207-9828



From: Randall Beach <rbeach63@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 26, 2017 3:12:50 PM
To: Board Rule Comments
Subject: Music requirements for grades 7 - 8

Although I believe parents should have the greatest control possible in choosing and directing their child's education, the reality is our education system is driven in large part by "required" courses. The arts, music, etc. are very valuable and most parents want these opportunities for their middle school and junior high children. Removing these requirements will most likely create an unfavorable situation for the sustaining of these types of courses in our curriculum.

These types of courses already operate at a sever disadvantage and removing all requirements at the state level will only worsen this situation.

Please carefully consider the impact your decisions will have on the health and support of these elements of our curriculum!

Thank you,

Randall Beach
Director of Bands
Green Canyon High School
North Logan, UT
Cache County School District

From: BriAnn Christensen <briann@heavyd.net>

Sent: Tuesday, September 26, 2017 3:25:59 PM

To: Board Rule Comments

Subject: Opposed to rule R277-700

I am opposed to the rule allowing school districts to implement any requirements for arts, language, health, PE, CTE and computer studies. I feel music classes, especially, are essential for every student and this rule allows for inequality in access to music across the state. There are many benefits of music as a component to a whole and complete education of an individual. Please don't implement this rule in Utah!

Thanks for your consideration

BriAnn Christensen
Suzuki Association of Utah
UMEA

From: JOHN RYSZKA <JOHN.RYSZKA@wasatch.edu>

Sent: Tuesday, September 26, 2017 3:27:00 PM

To: Board Rule Comments

Subject:

Taking Music from required credits as part of a well rounded education shows how we devalue the arts. There are many studies that show improvement for test scores and students ability to problem solve being directly related to their involvement in music programs. The truth is that the arts should be able to stand on their own merit. The arts should be important because they are the arts. Why does that have to be proven? The action of our state board of education demonstrates their commitment to standardized testing and federal government aid, not students, not the arts, or a well rounded education.

John G. Ryszka

Wasatch Bands

435-654-0604 ex. 3767

"To make a mistake is insignificant. To play without passion is inexcusable." Ludwig Van Beethoven

From: Abegg, Paul <Abegg@dixie.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, September 26, 2017 3:32:51 PM
To: Board Rule Comments
Subject: rule R277-700.

This would be a big mistake to remove the requirement for study of the arts. There are so many documented scientific studies showing the positive effects of the study of the arts on academics.
Please reconsider.

Dr. Paul Abegg
Director, String Studies, Orchestras
Dixie State University
225 S. University Ave.
Saint George, UT 84770
435.652.7904



From: Marc Watterson <marc.watterson@heart.org>

Sent: Tuesday, September 26, 2017 3:35:32 PM

To: Board Rule Comments

Subject: Public Comment regarding Proposed Rule R277-700: The Elementary and Secondary School General Core

As an organization, the American Heart Association|American Stroke Association thanks the Board for the opportunity to comment on this proposed rule.

Physical education, commonly referred to as PE, has been taught in American schools for more than a century—educating students on what it means to live a healthy lifestyle. And for good reason. Regular physical activity is associated with a healthier, longer life and with a lower risk of heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, obesity, mental health problems, and even some cancers. But, it doesn't stop there. These benefits extend into the classroom, too. Studies have shown that active children perform better in school, behave better in the classroom, and have a greater ability to focus. Because physical activity improves academic performance, it can also become an important strategy to address health disparities, like childhood obesity, and the achievement gap.

Girls and boys from all racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic groups, through all grades, and in urban and rural settings benefit from physical education. Physical education offers all of our kids the best chance for physical activity in their school day and teaches them the skills needed to sustain an active and healthy lifestyle.

National surveys have shown that 95% of parents with children under 18 think PE should be part of the daily school curriculum for all students, grades k-12. Rather than allowing for more flexibility for parents and students, the Board's action to remove Physical Education and Health from required core standards seems to fly in the face of what parents really want for their children.

As an organization, we worry about the Board's efforts to deemphasize physical education and health. Obesity rates are on the rise and affect nearly a third of children in America. As a society, we agree that we want all children to get more exercise, but it's not that easy. At many of our schools, a priority is placed on standardized test scores above everything else, including physical health and education. Yet, studies show that a student's academic performance and cognitive ability improves

with increased time spent in physical activity.

We are concerned about children across our entire state, especially those in low-income communities, where kids are even less physically active due to a lack of resources, space, and funding for PE in schools. When considering the impact that this proposed rule would have on these low-income communities, these rules seem to contradict the recently submitted State ESSA plan which put an emphasis on building equity for all children throughout our school systems.

We also have concerns of what this could lead to in the future. Studies have shown that racial inequities and socio-economic challenges leave many schools without the resources for PE. While the current rule states that PE shall be a course offered for all 7th and 8th grade students, it is one step closer to moving this as an optional offering where schools will simply drop the courses altogether. Rural areas of the state and those schools with limited local resources will simply find this as one less class that they have to offer, leaving students who already have an increased chance of developing cardiovascular disease even more at risk.

Some comments already made to the Board have erroneously cited the difficulty of offering PE to kids with impaired faculties as a reason for making this an optional course. Physical Education offers these children many of the same benefits as their peers. Free resources are available to help children of all ages and abilities. The following link is a toolkit for Adaptive Physical Education that parents and teachers can use to ensure these students have a meaningful experience with PE as well: <https://physicaleducation.voicesforhealthykids.org/resources/281/>

We encourage the Board to delay implementation to these rules, reassess where the priorities for our children's education should lie, and take adequate steps to ensure that our children are best positioned to succeed now, and later on in life. By so doing, we hope that the Board will see the wisdom in keeping PE and Health a priority throughout our children's formative years spent in 7th and 8th grades, and K-12 as a whole. The benefits of Physical Education ring clear as a school bell. With PE, we can keep kids' hearts healthy and their minds in gear to do their best at school. The simple fact is, active kids learn better.

If we truly want to set our kids up for a healthy future, PE programs should not be viewed as optional, but necessary.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments to the proposed rules change.

Marc Watterson

Director

Government Relations, Utah

465 South 400 East, Suite 110 | Salt Lake City, UT 84111

marc.watterson@heart.org | www.heart.org

P 801-702-4427 | F 801-532-2101

saving lives is why



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From: Murdock, Demya <murdockd@ogdensd.org>

Sent: Tuesday, September 26, 2017 3:41:58 PM

To: Board Rule Comments

Subject: Regarding rule R277-700

To whom it may concern,

I am writing as a concerned music teacher and as a concerned parent. I understand that the state board is interested in making school as equitable and fair to all students as possible. I also understand many of the reasons that this bill was passed. However, I must point out to you how unfair this bill will make the Utah Education System. Many of the school districts will maintain their commitment to the arts as they always have, however, many of the school districts will choose to drop arts. Thinking about who will keep the arts and who will not. I can promise that districts that have students in higher economic classes will never get rid of their arts. These families and students can afford to supplement the district with private classes. I can also promise that districts that are title one will cut their arts budgets and maybe their arts all together. Many thought that would not happen in elementary school, but bit by bit the music, arts, and drama courses were cut from elementary education. Now the arts programs in the elementary school hangs on the generosity of a few grants and donors who make these programs possible. Do we really want our secondary arts programs to suffer such fates? Studies have shown that the arts increase graduation rates, increase student GPA's, and give students the 21st century skills that many employers are looking for. Please repeal this bill. I believe it will a catastrophic mistake to allow districts to choose to keep the arts. Students, communities, and Utah need these courses. They are what makes us human and helps us discover who we are.

--

Demya Murdock

District Elementary Music Specialist K-4

801-833-7873



From: Jeff and Pam Budge <JPBUDGE@msn.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 26, 2017 3:47:49 PM
To: Board Rule Comments
Cc: Board of Education
Subject: SUPPORT for R277-700 Public Comment

State School Board Members,

I am submitting public comment in support of R277-700 from group members in "Families for Locally Directed Education" and related groups. Here is a link to our letter (also copied below): https://docs.google.com/document/d/1unwcmGTxl3_nfVDWlaMkFCfufYhDwprL2BzbCmsqrYI/edit#

Thank you for your consideration.

Members of the State School Board,

As members of the group, Families for Locally Directed Education and related groups (as noted above), we support the changes to R277-700-5 Middle School Education Requirements.

The focus of our group(s) is to bring decisions back to the local level where parents can have the most influence and where decisions are made closest to the student by people who know them best. We work in our individual school districts to establish educational goals and standards determined by parents and educators at the most basic level, our school boards.

Therefore, we applaud the State School Board for bringing decision making authority to the local level. We appreciate the flexibility this will give schools, parents, and students.

We recognize that these courses will still be offered as electives (R277-700-5 [Subsection 9](#)); or, they may continue to be required courses, depending on the decision of local board members (R277-700-5 [Subsection 11](#)).

These courses are required all throughout Elementary, as we see in R277-700-4, which

allows students to get a good foundation that they can build upon in middle school as they choose which courses most fit their needs and their education goals.

Those who would like these courses to remain required in their school may petition their local board; likewise, those who would like these courses to be electives may do the same. **Every parent and educator will have an equal opportunity to make their case to their local boards where the unique needs of students in each school can best be addressed.**

We fully support R277-700 as it is currently written and urge the State Board to keep the rule as is. Thank you for the opportunity to provide public comment on this very important decision.

From: SLS <beethovenbeck@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 26, 2017 3:49:28 PM
To: Board Rule Comments
Subject: We support Arts, Health and PE

Dear School Board Members,

As constituents and voters, my family and I, all 19 of us, are 100% AGAINST eliminating arts, health, and PE middle school credits.

Do you school board members sit much of every single day at your jobs and at home? As you likely know, sitting is the new smoking, and you may need PE. Certainly our kids need PE for optimal physical, mental, social and emotional health. With their sitting in classes each day, plus additional sitting time at computers and other electronics at home, they need PE. Not to mention in PE, kids learn different sports, learn how to play together, refine gross motor skills and coordination, show good sportsmanship, make friends, etc.

A personal example of the benefits of the arts program:

I am a product of the arts program, having begun violin in the school orchestra class in sixth grade. My childhood, non-white family would be categorized as "disadvantaged" or "under-served" today, so had it not been for this orchestral arts class, I would likely have missed out on a wonderful, meaningful orchestra experience throughout junior high, high school and college. I would likely not have had my sons learn violin. As a result of that, their children are in the orchestra program--and we have a burgeoning mini orchestra in our family, which is both joyous and rewarding.

As educators yourselves, I do not need to elaborate the benefits of playing a string instrument--learning to read music, daily practicing, learning perseverance and concentration skills, playing together in a group,

using memory and other parts of the brain, refining small motor skills, coordinating both hands in different movements, and so on.

I won't bore you by going on and on about the benefits of other arts programs, health classes, and PE. Please retain the arts, health and PE credits in the middle schools.

Thank you,
Sarah Smith
Salt Lake City UT
Darrell Smith and family
Sandy UT
Danny Smith and family
Woods Cross UT
David Smith and family
Spanish Fork UT

#1: The email to send comments about the school board cutting the arts, health, and PE middle school credits is: *against*. Deadline is still 5pm Tuesday.

#2: I also had a mistake in the votes:

* School board members who voted no on the rule change to eliminate credit requirements for arts, health and PE (*THANK* these people): Janet Cannon, Brittany Cummins, Jennifer Gravier, Carol Barlow-Lear, Kathleen Riebe, and Spencer Stokes

* Here are the school board members who voted yes (encourage them to *change* their vote at the October board meeting): Teryl Warner, Linda Hansen, Lisa Cummins, Laura Belnap, Joel Wright, Alisa Ellis, Scott Neilson, Mark Huntsman, Michelle Boulter

I've received a few emails from people asking for help in figuring out who their representative is. It's easy to look up, go to vote.utah.gov <<http://utahculturalalliance.us5.list-manage.com/track/click?u=29e1c34933008e492a1d140d2&id=3c4896db6c&e=737c1bd0c4>> and input your address. It will tell you ALL of your elected representatives! Screenshot the list. Feel free to contact school board reps for districts in which you live, your organization resides, or in which you have programming. Identify yourself as a constituent and voter.

From: Hill, Julie J <jjhill@graniteschools.org>
Sent: Tuesday, September 26, 2017 4:03:15 PM
To: Board Rule Comments
Subject: R677-700

To Whom It May Concern:

I am a teacher at Kearns Sr. High School in Granite School District. My students and I are very concerned about the decision to remove the requirement for the arts and music, specifically. The following letters are from some of the members of the Advanced Women's Choir at Kearns High School.

Julie Jensen Hill
Choral Director
Kearns High School

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Charity. I am a freshman at Kearns High School. Please repeal your decision to remove requirements for music such as choir, band, orchestra, etc, because music is a fun opportunity to develop you talents and learn new things. When singing, sometimes it will be in a different language that you learn and understand. Singing can reduce stress and can help you feel happy. With music comes history behind it that can affect us. When you learn these skills you can also use it in real life to bond with other people. I believe that music is truly helpful in people's lives. Music has truly blessed me in my life and has let me make new friends. Music is also a beautiful way to express your thoughts and feelings. Music can help you through very difficult times, and it has definitely helped me. Letting out your feelings in a non-violent way is super important and can be very beneficial to you. Music can bond so many people together. Thank you for considering my request and taking your time to read this.

Sincerely,
Charity

To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Siumoana. I am a junior at Kearns High School. Please repeal your decision to

remove requirements for the arts. I'm a member of the Kearns High Advanced Women's Choir as well as a former orchestra member. The arts have made such an impact on my life. Having the ability to express yourself through motion and music really helped me escape from the noise of school and personal drama. Though the other core classes have such a high importance, fine arts classes can help people find their passion. I come from a family that stresses the importance of music. I know that if our parents hadn't put us in orchestra in junior high, my siblings and I wouldn't have found an outlet of expression. Sometimes, it take a little force to find out what makes you really happy. Without the requirements for fine arts classes, they may not find it. Being in dance, band, orchestra, or choir helps students learn about other cultures through the songs and routines they learn. It helps kids make friends and helps bond people. Please don't take these opportunities away from these kids.

Thank you,
Siumoana

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Kamryn. I am a senior at Kearns High School. Please repeal your decision to remove requirements for the arts. It is important for kids to take an art class (Choir, theater, dance, etc) because if it isn't a requirement, then kids WON'T take an arts class. This means that Fine Arts programs will die out. It should be a requirement for students to take a fine arts class during school, because it encourages them to audition for groups or musicals when they go to high school. The fine arts program is what helps kids decide what they want to do when they graduate. Getting involved in the fine arts is such an amazing experience that needs to be passed to other generations. We already struggle with not very many taking fine arts classes in high school and if it stops being required hardly anyone is going to take them. This will cause complete termination for the arts programs.

The arts are a fun way to express yourself without using words. Being involved in the arts, you create many friendships that turn into your families away from your literal family. If you don't decide to repeal it, then please find a way to encourage kids to take fine arts classes. It breaks my heart that this is even being considered. It really should stay a requirement, because if it's not, then the arts themselves will cease to exist. Please reconsider this decision. Music can bring everyone together so we all appreciate different cultures. Kids who get bullied can turn to the comfort of their choir members or theater family.

I went through a hard time my junior year and if it wasn't for the arts program, I would still be down about what I went through. I have made many friends/relationships because of having the requirement of taking a fine art class. I encourage you to reconsider your decision on this because the arts are there to help us build relationships and they are there as a MAJOR support if you're dealing with a really hard time; the arts will help you get through it. Many individuals confide in the arts to actually find a place where they belong. Please repeal R277-700.

Thank you for your consideration,

Kamryn

To whom it may concern,

My name is Shannon and I am a freshman at Kearns High School in the Granite School District. Your decision to change required classes for 7th and 8th grade worries me. Please understand that music can help teenagers with things that friends and counselors can't. Without music classes required, lower income schools will drop it all together, leaving students without even the option. With the teenage suicide rate in Utah being so high already, I don't think that the decision that was made was a wise one. I ask you to please reconsider. Thank you for your consideration.

- Shannon

To whom this may concern,

My name is Shayla. I am a sophomore at Kearns High School. Please repeal your decision to remove requirements for the arts. Why? For most choir or any other art class is an outlet. In these classes you get taught social skills and patience. Personally, in my class we have built a family and I would hate for younger kids not to get the chance to build a family and/or friends. Thank you for your consideration.

- Shayla

To whom it may concern,

My name is Sarah. I am a freshman at Kearns High School in Granite School District. Please repeal your decision to remove requirements for the arts because it has proven that creating music helps you with the other subjects in school. If we take this away, we may see differences in test scores and grades. Also, it helps you to be able to make friends and create a bond with the teacher and the people that you create music with. Thank you for your consideration.

- Sarah

My name is Bella. I am a freshman at Kearns High School in Granite School District. Please repeal your decision to remove requirements for the Arts, PE, Health, Foreign Language, Career/College Readiness, Tech, etc. because there is more to life and school than just core. In these classes you find yourself and bond with the others around you. If anything you need to add classes with things we all use everyday, like music. Thank you for your consideration.

-Bella

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Brandi. I am a sophomore at Kearns High School. Please repeal your decision to

remove requirements for the arts. Art is an important piece in everyone's lives. What is life without Art? If we aren't required to take an art related class, our world can turn black and white. Kids and children who never knew about their hidden admiration for art will never shine through. Why? Because it will not be required to take an art class. Art has a huge impact on people's lives, so please don't take that away. Once again, I please ask of you to repeal your decision to remove arts requirements.

Thank you so very much for your consideration,
Brandi

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Elizabeth and I am a sophomore at Kearns Sr. High School. I have recently heard of the news that you have decided to pass a law that it will not be required to take a class in the arts. If this passes, people will stop taking those classes. The arts are more than just a class a kid can opt into. They are more than simply a way to fill class schedules. Studies have been performed time and time again. It has been revealed by these studies that when a student participates in a music class or an artistry class, their grades rise. The arts act as a refuge from homework that students receive in other classes. Lives can be balanced by being involved in these classes, but if people are not exposed to them at a young age, the arts will cease to exist. What we have will only be in our memories. The arts help students perform better in their schooling and in their every day lives.

Thank you for your time,
Elizabeth

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Aileenne. I am a Freshman at Kearns High School. Please repeal R277-700. The arts and other classes like foreign languages and health, can give us an advantage in life, careers and college. Please consider this.

Thank you,
Aileenne

To whom it may concern,

My name is Kloie Romero, I am a sophomore at Kearns High School in Granite School District. Please repeal your decision to remove requirements for the Arts because I think everyone needs to learn the arts whether or not it's choir or dance or even drawing. Everybody needs to learn it at some point in my mind. Thank you for your consideration.

- Kloie Romero

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Natalee. I am a sophomore at Kearns High School. Please repeal your decision to remove requirements for the arts (R277-700). Arts can teach younger children language, history, science. While these things that the arts can TEACH are required, the arts themselves

are NOT required? It does not make sense to not require something that has the ability to teach all of them at once. Further more, the arts can be an outlet for many people, young or old. Arts are the only classes that hold the ability to allow those who cannot express themselves with words or directly to another. The arts have the ability to build relationships, make people feel happy, safe, and welcome. By not requiring the arts in schools, you are saying that you believe that students should not have an outlet to rely on to be there when they need it.

Thank you for your consideration,
Natalee

From: Hill, Julie J <jjhill@graniteschools.org>
Sent: Tuesday, September 26, 2017 4:04:15 PM
To: Board Rule Comments
Subject: R277-700

To Whom It May Concern:

I am a teacher at Kearns Sr. High School in Granite School District. My students and I are very concerned about the decision to remove the requirement for the arts and music, specifically. The following letters are from some of the members of the Advanced Women's Choir at Kearns High School.

Julie Jensen Hill
Choral Director
Kearns High School

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Charity. I am a freshman at Kearns High School. Please repeal your decision to remove requirements for music such as choir, band, orchestra, etc, because music is a fun opportunity to develop you talents and learn new things. When singing, sometimes it will be in a different language that you learn and understand. Singing can reduce stress and can help you feel happy. With music comes history behind it that can affect us. When you learn these skills you can also use it in real life to bond with other people. I believe that music is truly helpful in people's lives. Music has truly blessed me in my life and has let me make new friends. Music is also a beautiful way to express your thoughts and feelings. Music can help you through very difficult times, and it has definitely helped me. Letting out your feelings in a non-violent way is super important and can be very beneficial to you. Music can bond so many people together. Thank you for considering my request and taking your time to read this.

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Thank you,
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I went through a hard time my junior year and if it wasn't for the arts program, I would still be down about what I went through. I have made many friends/relationships because of having the requirement of taking a fine art class. I encourage you to reconsider your decision on this because the arts are there to help us build relationships and they are there as a MAJOR support if you're dealing with a really hard time; the arts will help you get through it. Many individuals confide in the arts to actually find a place where they belong. Please repeal R277-700.

Thank you for your consideration,
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Thank you,
Aileenne

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My name is Natalee. I am a sophomore at Kearns High School. Please repeal your decision to remove requirements for the arts (R277-700). Arts can teach younger children language,

history, science. While these things that the arts can TEACH are required, the arts themselves are NOT required? It does not make sense to not require something that has the ability to teach all of them at once. Further more, the arts can be an outlet for many people, young or old. Arts are the only classes that hold the ability to allow those who cannot express themselves with words or directly to another. The arts have the ability to build relationships, make people feel happy, safe, and welcome. By not requiring the arts in schools, you are saying that you believe that students should not have an outlet to rely on to be there when they need it.

Thank you for your consideration,
Natalee

From: Gregory Wheeler <gregj.wheeler@usu.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, September 26, 2017 4:11:28 PM
To: Board Rule Comments
Subject: R277-700 Middle Grades Arts/PE/Health/CCA Requirements -

Dear Utah State Board of Education,

I write this letter with insight having taught Jr. High School for 30 years, having been President of Utah Music Educators Association, now as full time faculty in music education at Utah State University, and probably most important as a parent. I am very disappointed with the decisions made concerning the backward approach to the importance of the music and the arts in the lives of our children. Utah is unique in the wealth of resources we have attained to this point in educating our students. This has happened with the unrelenting assistance of dedicated administrators, teachers, and the work of those who we trust in the State Office of Education who are the authorities in their area – why they are there? As I have served in the UMEA Executive Board it has been a pleasure to assist and move forward with all the music activities in our state as we worked directly with the Utah High School Activity Association. Their endless care to our school programs and acknowledgement to the importance the high school activities makes Utah unique amongst most of the other states.

Our high school programs are strong and we keep building to assist our students in a positive manner as they mature and leave our schools. At some point, we need to sit back and examine what makes this all work. It is obviously it is the team effort of the high school and middle school educators working with a combined philosophy of how important it is to provide a solid background in music and the arts as the student progresses through their middle school experiences and take their place in the upper level programs in our public schools.

Please consider and never take lightly the importance of our students receiving the fundamentals of what builds our school music programs, especially the high schools. As of this last year, our national legislature recognized the importance of the arts in the well-rounded education of the student. National legislation of the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA) reinforced and recognized the importance of the arts, that the success of the STEM does not happen without the application of music and the arts. It is all about STEAM – including the arts in the academic influence of our students is reinforced over and over in the literature which also includes this national legislation. So, the question arises, in the structure of our State Office of Education, why is it that we are ignoring all the work, educational progress, advice from those in the know, all which that has gone on for the previous many years? If student growth is examined, it is discovered that consistency in education is crucial for our young students. In the arts, the exploratory experiences mostly happen in the

elementary settings. This is the one area which the current state edict severely disrupts the educational process for our 7th and 8th grade programs. Focused requirements for the youth in arts gives them direction providing the back bone of the structure of all the music programs in our state.

In the last two years, music educators and school district administrators in the rural areas have been very involved in wanting programs state wide to be equitable such that students in the rural areas have the same opportunities as those on the Wasatch front area. The UMEA organization has been addressing this issue with All Area Ensembles for Jr. High and High School levels. We are into our pilot year of this in the Richfield area trying to be fair in setting up these programs and festivals. This will make things quite difficult when the local school does not require their students to participate and that is all a part of these activities. School districts will be requiring different elements in the arts where counselors and administrators will have the power to encourage or discourage. At this age level the classes must be offered year-round allowing the students the opportunity of consistent growth. I have been in and know of many programs where the local school counselor was advising students – not having any priorities towards the arts. This was an incredible discouragement and downfall of the program and school. This decision empowers the local educational leaders with a free pass having no checks or balances. There are already enough issues taking students out of proven programs. This simply adds negative probability to the success of the music programs in our state. I am also hearing of and can't blame school districts for boycotting this issue in their school districts because they realize what this will do to the already successful programs. I once had an extremely fine principle known throughout this state who said, "as goes the fine arts, so goes the school." It is difficult if not impossible to find an extremely successful middle school program (student success: reading levels, math and science scores, etc.) that doesn't identify with a very high level fine arts program, especially music. I have spent my whole life working with students and parents in 7th and 8th level schools as well as dedicated my life's study to this cause. This shocks me to think any such thing could occur as to take schools into such a backward direction. My hope is that you take this very seriously and that there is still time to resolve this problem.

Sincerely,

Gregory J. Wheeler

Gregory J. Wheeler Ph. D.
Music Education, Jazz,
Bands, Woodwinds
Utah State University
Immediate Past President – Utah Music Educators Association
gregj.wheeler@usu.edu
435-512-5799



UTAH MUSIC
EDUCATORS
ASSOCIATION

From: Brian Petersen <brian.petersen207@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, September 26, 2017 4:19:36 PM

To: Board Rule Comments

Subject: The arts curriculum

Dear USBE,

As a 35-year veteran choral and vocal music teacher in Utah and Idaho, I must state my opinions about the pending ruling regarding the students in grades 7-8 possibly not being required to enroll in arts or music courses, among others.

Because of this new rule, I envision the stark possibility of some short-sighted school districts in our state perhaps eliminating arts programs because of the disparate emphasis on the "core subjects" in the course choices for students. ***You will recall that the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION for MUSIC EDUCATION recently received federal recognition of music as a CORE SUBJECT!*** Apparently, this has been ignored by the Utah Legislature and certain members of the Utah State Board of Education.

Anyone who has seen the movie, "Mr. Holland's Opus" may recall the fictitious, but strangely truthful story of a school deciding to eliminate its music program due to budget difficulties. You will recall that one of the students who had been in Mr. Holland's music program went on to become the governor of the state - largely because she was able to gain some self-confidence through being involved in music.

This can become our worst nightmare as music educators. I can't imagine eliminating the range of choices for students at this critical time in their education! We as a state ought to be ashamed of ourselves if this ruling stands! Ask our Governor, the Honorable Gary Herbert, if his children were blessed by being involved in music in their youth. Several of his children were among my best music students at Mountain View High School back in the early 1990's.

Thanks for your consideration. I guess this may force my early retirement - especially if the rules ripple into the personnel decisions at our district level.

Brian D. Petersen, member, State Choral Committee, Utah Music Educators Association
choral director, Bear River High School and Bear River Middle School
brian.petersen@besd.net

From: Alisa Ellis 12 <alisa.ellis12@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 26, 2017 4:42:37 PM
To: Board Rule Comments
Subject: Fwd: Equity Statement and USBE Hearing Comment

Superintendent Northcott asked that I forward his written comment.

Alisa

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Bruce Northcott** <BNorthcott@dsdf.org>
Date: Wed, Sep 20, 2017 at 3:41 PM
Subject: Equity Statement and USBE Hearing Comment
To: "Alisa Ellis 12 (alisa.ellis12@gmail.com)" <alisa.ellis12@gmail.com>

Bruce Northcott

Superintendent

Daggett School District

196 West 200 North

Manila, Utah 84046

[435-784-3174](tel:435-784-3174)(Office)

[435-784-3920](tel:435-784-3920) (Fax)

[801-597-2325](tel:801-597-2325) (Mobile)

bnorthcott@dsdf.org

From: Hill, Julie J <jjhill@graniteschools.org>
Sent: Tuesday, September 26, 2017 4:52:22 PM
To: Board Rule Comments
Subject: R277-700

To Whom It May Concern:

I am a teacher at Kearns Sr. High School in Granite School District. My students and I are very concerned about the decision to remove the requirement for the arts and music, specifically. The following letters are from some of the members of the Concert Choir at Kearns High School.

Julie Jensen Hill
Choral Director
Kearns High School

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Matthew. I am a Junior at Kearns High School. I would like to request that R277-700 be repealed and/or modified. While I agree that students should not be made to take credits they don't want, I view this more as a potential step to removing funding from Fine Arts classes. That would be a deadly mistake as it would remove a passion from life that is found nowhere else. It focuses our culture on STEM, flattening the depth and color of it out of existence. Fine Arts classes are often what gets me through a day.

Thank you,
Matthew

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Lily. I am a Junior at Kearns High School. I am writing to you to ask if you would please repeal R277-700. I believe these classes are very important in the development of teens in junior high and high school. If these aren't required anymore, I fear that kids won't see the importance of them. Numbers for those classes will drop, and good teachers teaching important subjects could lose their jobs.

Thank you,
Lily

To Whom it May Concern:

My name is Ashton and I am a senior at Kearns High School. I feel the decision to remove requirements for the arts should be repealed due to its lazy nature. Arts should be required for credits in all schools. Arts expands the view of students minds, allowing them to find a passion and a group to be involved in. Classes like PE, Choir, and Cooking have provided me an escape/break from more stressful classes. Students who take art classes have the opportunity to make a bond with other students who share the same passion.

Thank you,
Ashton

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Camila. I am a sophomore at Kearns High School in the Granite School District. Please repeal your decision to remove requirements for the Arts, Music, PE/Health, Foreign Languages, etc. I may not enjoy the requirements for taking a tech class but I do enjoy PE, Arts, Music, and Health. If you remove the requirements for these classes, students will become less educated about things they will actually use in their lives such as health. College enrollment numbers will drop and students will become less interested in school. Teachers won't have as many students and they could lose their jobs. Please consider my suggestions and repeal your decision. Thank you for listening.

Sincerely,
Camila (who wants younger students to have fun classes, too!)

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Anna. I am a senior at Kearns High School. Please repeal R277-700. Throughout my high school experience, the classes in your legislation have helped me look forward to coming to school each day, have a break from more rigorous core classes, make new friends, and learn skills that can be used in a future career. The skills learned in these classes translate beyond the end of year tests and even graduation. I believe that these classes are extremely important for students and will help ensure their success in the real world.

Thank you for your consideration,
Anna

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Samuel. I am a junior at Kearns High School. Please repeal your decision to remove requirements for music. Music, more specifically, choir is one of my favorite classes. I would have never taken it if there wasn't any requirement.

Thanks,
Sam

To Whom It May Concern,

I implore you to repeal R277-700. Fine arts classes are very socially and culturally important. Not only this, but many of them teach valuable skills that can be utilized in the future, possibly even as a career. Furthermore, if students aren't required to take arts, they may never find motivation to discover their passion, if they haven't found it yet. These classes, as I said, are more important than most may realize, and should be required as such.

Thank you for your consideration,
Bryon

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Diana. I am a senior at Kearns High School. Please repeal R277-700. I think this decision presents many dangers.

First, I would like you to consider what is remembered in history. What things are kept throughout the ages? Although breakthroughs in science, English, and math are recorded and due fame given, they are not seen in places such as the Louvre. It is the fine arts, such as music and art that are preserved and cherished. It is music and fine arts that make the biggest impact. Art from the earliest stages of life are kept and talked about in art classes. If the requirement for art is taken away, it is very possible that art classes will be lost. With this loss of art, there will be less and less that are inspired to draw and pursue the preservation of timeless creations. The names of Monet, Picasso, and Matisse will become like dusty books never opened and never discovered.

This would also happen with the removal of the requirement to take a music class. Music is one of the most beneficial factors for students. Music creates new pathways and connections. It engages the brain in ways no other activity can. Classical music is already becoming antiquated--a thing of the past. This could happen to pop music and contemporary music as well. By cultivating a school system where music is less important, less people and students will want to make music that is beautiful. The love of music is something that must be cultivated at a young age if it is to survive.

Although the concern to increase academic improvement is commendable, the fine arts and PE provide good outlets and breaks from academic strain. Without classes to provide a balance that is necessary in all aspects. Lest you think sole focus on academics is beneficial, consider the high suicidal rates of Japan. Although their academic achievement is quite high, it

comes with a cost. It is possible that this could occur if these outlets are take. Please repeal your decision. It could have more negative consequences than beneficial in the long run.

Thank you for your consideration,

Diana

My name is Sarah. I am a junior at Kearns High School. Please repeal your decision to remove requirements for the arts, music, health, and foreign language. These help us learn and grow as people. So many students only go to school for these programs. Kids get scholarships to colleges for these programs. What will happen to all of those kids what rely on the scholarships? Music, art, sports, they change people, make them better, and they learn valuable skills for life. Why would you vote them out? Haven't you ever had a class that you look forward to? The one fun class? Music and art are my favorite classes.

Thank you,

Sarah

To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Jorden. I am a junior at Kearns High School. Please repeal your decision to remove requirements for the arts, music, PE, Health, etc. We need these classes. A lot of people go to school for these classes. It will just mess up the system. I understand that these classes are not required for educational purposes, but these classes are important for mental and future purposes. Students need things like art and PE to get in touch with their creative side. Health is especially important. We are teenagers who need to know about how the human body works. Most of these classes will help our future life.

Thank you for your consideration,

Jorden

To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Isabel. I am a junior at Kearns High. The Arts, PE, Health, etc. make people want to come to school. If it is not required, kids might not want to take some classes, they wouldn't expand their ideas, and find other things they like. Please repeal your decision.

Thank you,

Isabel

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Bela. I am a senior at Kearns High School. I have enjoyed taking all these classes

and although I might not enjoy PE or Health as much as I enjoy choir and drawing, I still learned valuable life lessons in them that I wouldn't have learned in math or science. I believe that by making these classes not required then kids will choose not to take these classes, therefore missing out on these valuable life lessons that will actually be used in life after graduation. I honestly won't use $fx=(3x^3 + 7n)/(3h)^2$ in my every day life.

Drawing, choir, and foods, are all classes that I really enjoy and give me a break from my more stressful and rigorous classes like calculus, AP Lit & Language, etc.

I feel that if the requirements are removed, children won't feel that they need to take these classes so then numbers will drop, then the classes will need to be removed because there is no longer demand or funding for them. Please repeal your decision. Keep the future bright! How boring would the world be without animators, clothing designers, singers, etc.?

Thank you!

Bela (a senior who wants her little brother and sister to have the same fun classes and experiences she had)

From: Kellie Mortensen <kmortensen@sjsd.org>

Sent: Tuesday, September 26, 2017 4:54:47 PM

To: Board Rule Comments

Subject: Regarding R277-700

Hello,

I strongly feel that cutting the arts, or any subject, from middle school or junior high will ultimately hinder the progression and learning of students in Utah. Taking those subjects out of their education at such a formative age will set our students back. How can we expect them to become decent citizens in our community if they aren't influenced by the arts, technology, or even their own health?

As a music educator I realize I'm not just teaching a student how to play an instrument or sing properly, but I am also teaching them skills to become better people. We work on things together in small groups, larger groups, and individually. They learn how to work with others to benefit the whole. They see (or rather hear) what happens when we strengthen our weakest teammate. They learn dedication—how to stick to something, improve a skill, and keep trying even after they fail. They learn how to be self-less and help each other grow, which in turn helps them flourish too.

I think to the future and the repercussions our wonderful state of Utah will face if we cut these programs from our schools. Will we see future adults who don't know or value the importance of taking care of their bodies? Will we see generations of students who are illiterate at using technology (because we aren't all born with computer skills)? Will we see communities that find no value in the beauty of art or music, vehicles that help us express our human experiences?

I feel that if we don't have a state requirement that not only will our junior and middle schools suffer, but the high schools will too. Not having a standard/requirement that is met all across the board will lead to deficiencies in some areas, and will be a great disservice to our students, communities, workforce, and state as a whole.

Reflecting on my personal experiences in junior high I learned a great deal about being human in the very subjects that districts will have the option to cut based on this rule. I look back at an awkward junior high kid who was trying to figure out how to be an adult and see that my music class helped me develop confidence. P.E. taught me the importance of taking care of my body, even though it was changing, and how to do it. I reflect on the CTE classes and see all the skills I learned to function in society.

Teaching high school, junior high, and elementary students I have seen and experienced first-hand how these classes impact their lives for the better. How these classes help the students develop, and discover how to think, who they are, what they can do, or what they can do to do it better. How these classes can help a kid with no confidence, feel like they can do something right. How they can be a part of something greater and bigger than just themselves.

Where will our students be in 10 years from this new rule? Will we have taught them better? Will they be ready to live in the adult world? Or because we were too concerned about test scores, will they not know how to function in society?

Is that not our purpose as educators? To teach students how to think. How to grow. How to *try*. How to be human.

Kellie Worwood, Master of Music in Music Technology
Monticello High School Music Director
Region 19 Music Chair

From: Ann Penman-Morgan <ann.penman@umfa.utah.edu>

Sent: Tuesday, September 26, 2017 5:09:53 PM

To: Board Rule Comments

Subject: ask you to reverse your August 4th decision to remove the Middle School credit requirement for health, arts, physical education, college and career awareness, world languages, and digital literacy.

A well-rounded education is vital to the future of our children.

As a citizen of this great state of Utah, I ask you to reverse your August 4th decision to remove the Middle School credit requirement for health, arts, physical education, college and career awareness, world languages, and digital literacy.

The benefits to children of a well-rounded education that includes arts, health, and PE education are many:

1. Better academic results, better workforce opportunities, and more civic engagement, especially for at-risk children.
2. Improved performance and grades in reading, math, writing, and other subjects.
3. Increased creative thinking and problem solving.
4. Increased positive attitudes towards school and learning.
5. Less aggression and violent tendencies.
6. Improved cognitive ability.
7. Improved community cohesion.
8. Improved graduation rates.
9. Improved motor skills and self-discipline.
10. Improved social interaction.
11. Improved mental health and dietary choices.

Eliminating the credit requirement for arts, health, physical education, college and career awareness, world languages, and digital literacy suggests that state standards and oversight for these vital programs could disappear. These are subject areas that are proven to close the school achievement gap. Lack of standards and oversight prevents fair and equitable services statewide, and puts at risk our State's commitment to ensure that a healthy and productive generation is ready to lead our future.

Thanks for helping to keep our lives enriched by the arts, and to keep us physically fit.

Ann K. Penman
623 Harrison Ave.
SLC, UT 84105

From: Hill, Julie J <jjhill@graniteschools.org>
Sent: Tuesday, September 26, 2017 5:18:07 PM
To: Board Rule Comments
Subject: R277-700 Part 3

To Whom It May Concern:

I am a teacher at Kearns Sr. High School in Granite School District. My students and I are very concerned about the decision to remove the requirement for the arts and music, specifically. The following letters are from some of the members of Men's Choir and Beginning Women's Choir at Kearns High School.

Julie Jensen Hill
Choral Director
Kearns High School

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing in reply to the school board's recent decision to no longer require the arts or physical education in the junior high curriculum. My concerns are mainly focused on the robbing of the vital artistic education. I fell in love with the arts a young age thanks to the requirement from you. Kids need to be able to express themselves through positive pathway. Music, art, and language have a connection and a window into our innermost emotions. Through the arts, we are able to live, laugh, and love or wander, mourn, and cry. It dates back to our deepest ancestral roots. These were and are vital forms of communication. By not reversing your decision, you are stripping away diversity and the ability to become one, break down boundaries, and most importantly, self-discovery.

Thank you for your consideration,
Jose

Dear Board of Education,

I recently heard that you were planning on removing the requirement to have art and PE classes in junior high. Although I can understand this decision, I do not believe that this is the best course of action. For many of this generation, when not required to do something, they simply ignore and refuse to do it. This shouldn't be the case. Although they are still required for high school, junior high is a crucial time in their lives and needs to be utilized. Children

need to discover what they love at this age so they can still pursue it in high school and college. All this is doing is starting them late on skills and talents that could decide their future. Some will choose the arts, but most will not. They need that push to pursue what they want.

Thank you,

Jeffrey

To Whom It May Concern,

I feel as though your decision to remove art and physical education from the list of requirements can have both positive and negative impacts. Math, science, and English are important subjects, but art is what builds creativity. Kids who think creatively have the ability to think innovatively, and that's the type of people the world needs today.

Thanks for your consideration,

Josh

To Whom it May Concern:

My name is Emily and I am a freshman at Kearns High School. Please repeal your decision to remove requirements for Arts, PE, Health, etc. In my 7th grade year, I hated school and didn't want to go. My classes on A days were the only reason I wanted to go. I had dance, PE, choir, then Health. I loved every class and was very glad that I was required to take them. Now in high school, I am a part of the drill team, advanced women's choir, and a cross country runner. All the classes we were required to do really help you. The classes tell you what you do and don't want to do in life.

Thank you,

Emily

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Ella. I am a freshman at Kearns High School. I would like you to please repeal your decision to remove requirements for the arts, PE, and Health because in junior high, you are exploring new things and finding your talents. You are trying to figure out who you are. If I wasn't require to take those classes, I wouldn't have taken a class that I loved and decided to keep doing it in high school.

Thank you for your consideration,

Ella

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Gabriella, I am a freshman at Kearns High School. I think it would be a good idea to repeal your decision to remove requirements for the arts, PE, health, college prep, and

technology. I feel like 7th and 8th graders need to take classes like this. If you take these classes in middle school it will encourage you to maybe take them again in high school. Those classes create interest. Middle school is a really great time to find something you are passionate about. When I was in middle school, I took choir and theater. I found out that I wasn't really a fan of theater, but I really loved choir, so I took it the next year. This year, I took it again. If teens don't take these classes in middle school, they might lose interest and probably won't get these valuable experiences.

Gabriella

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Jasmin. I am a sophomore at Kearns High School. Please repeal your decision to remove the art, health, and PE requirements for the following reasons. Art has helped me discover my own individuality and has helped me realize what I would like to do for a career. Health has taught me how my body works and what I need to do to stay healthy. PE has given me confidence and helped me stay healthy and in shape. I believe all of these subjects are important in the lives of everyone, especially middle schoolers. They're still figuring out who they are and what they want in life. They need to understand their bodies. They especially need confidence to get through anything life throws their way.

Thank you for your time,

Jasmin

To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Mina, I am a sophomore at Kearns High School. Please repeal your decision. I think health and PE can benefit you by letting you know more about your health and let you lead a healthy life. Foreign languages and tech classes can help you get to a good, stable job in the future. The arts can be beneficial because they help you gain friends and you can have fun.

Thank you,

Mina

From: Shea Bradshaw <sheabradshaw@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, September 26, 2017 7:08:09 PM

To: Board Rule Comments

Subject: Music in Middle School

Utah Board of Education,

I am a 20th year educator. All that I have become as an adult began in a 6th grade music class. **I implore each board member to vote no on the rule change to eliminate credit requirements for the arts in Utah middle schools.** For other reasons I also feel that health and P.E. are important.

I am sure you will receive myriad epistles, so I will forego a lengthy plea, but I plead nonetheless.

I will share that I was a misguided young soul. The only constancy in my young life was music (school band and choir). That path kept me out of major trouble, led me to university (4 of them), and landed me to where I am today: a useful member of my community, a father and husband and a high school assistant principal.

I appreciate your service on the School Board - thank you.

With respect,

Shea Bradshaw
Salem, UT

From: Bryce Huefner <behuefner@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, September 26, 2017 7:57:08 PM

To: Board Rule Comments

Subject: Public Hearing on Proposed Rule R277-700 The Elementary and Secondary School General Core

Dear Friends,

In consideration of fundamental freedoms in our nation we should value individual choice above safety through government programs including education. As written in Utah State law "Parents and guardians have the primary responsibility for the education of their children" (Utah Code 53a-1-101) and I believe this leads the way for public education to respect the desire of parents for their children. Fewer one size fits all mandates required from schools, districts, state or federal entities is a positive step in education.

Some children and even parents may not choose wisely but if the ability to choose poorly is taken away then we're not a free society and will in time loose all freedom for the sake of choosing wisely.

Please allow parents and students to choose the classes they desire and not mandate what society deems is important in the prevailing winds of the time.

Thank you,
Bryce Huefner
Rich County School Board Member, Precinct 4
Garden City

--

Bryce Huefner
Your Cabin Keeper Security Services &
Bear Lake Landscape, Inc & Garden Center
P.O. Box 244
60 South 300 West
Garden City, Utah 84028
1-435-946-8244 Office
1-435-757-0967 Cell

From: Heather Francis <hgemperline@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 26, 2017 9:43:39 PM
To: Board Rule Comments
Subject: Keep the arts, PE, Health and CCA as electives in Middle School

Greetings,

I served as a dance and math educator at Granite Park Jr. High School from 2013-2017. In my time there I saw students develop physically, emotionally and socially, as well as cognitively in dance classes.

Dance is essential for middle school. I taught a social dance class and this is the most developmentally appropriate class for young adolescents. They learned soft skills essential for the blossoming of strong 21st century skills. Not only is a healthy lifestyle promoted but they learn communication, collaboration and creative problem solving skills. Additionally, I NEVER sent a student to the office in dance class. Students were engaged, they were happy, they were participating in whole body learning and students were returning time and time again to continue to participate in my curriculum.

I began to integrate dance into my 8th grade math classes and again, same thing, students were happier, more engaged, more collaborative, more creative and more communicative because the art form gave them a different platform for engagement and renewed motivation.

If the arts are made elective in middle schools I am afraid that more programs will be cut out from school budgets entirely and then soon these options will not be available to students at all! EVER!

My students would not have dance experiences or any other art experiences if it wasn't offered in the public school. I have story after story of students who are on track to be the first generation of their family to graduate from high school who would attribute their involvement in the arts to their academic and social success in school.

In my opinion it is absolutely ridiculous to get rid of these programs as electives in school! I believe they should be CORE programs because of how beneficial they are for all students.

I understand that there are scheduling and registration issues with dual immersion schools, why can't we add in an exception for these schools that are offering great elective opportunities for our students rather than taking away the only elective offerings for students in other schools without these type of elective immersion programs.

Respectfully

Heather Francis

--

Heather Gemperline Francis

Utah Dance Education Organization

Publicity and Marketing Director

dance and the Child international

daCi Utah Board Member

Cell: 801-628-5418

hgemperline@gmail.com

From: Natalie Clyde <natalieclyde@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 27, 2017 3:18:26 AM
To: Board Rule Comments
Subject:

Dear Friends,

In consideration of fundamental freedoms in our nation we should value individual choice above safety through government programs including education. As written in Utah State law "Parents and guardians have the primary responsibility for the education of their children" (Utah Code 53a-1-101) and I believe this leads the way for public education to respect the desire of parents for their children. Fewer one size fits all mandates required from schools, districts, state or federal entities is a positive step in education.

Some children and even parents may not choose wisely but if the ability to choose poorly is taken away then we're not a free society and will in time lose all freedom for the sake of choosing wisely.

Please allow parents and students to choose the classes they desire and not mandate what society deems is important in the prevailing winds of the time.

Thank you,
Natalie Clyde

Sent from my iPhone

From: Crystal Young-Otterstrom <cyo@utculture.org>

Sent: Tuesday, September 26, 2017 10:06:02 PM

To: Board Rule Comments

Subject: Petition [See Attachment](#)

Dear members of the School Board:

Attached is our letter and a petition signed by over 4,500 Utahns asking that you reverse your August 5th decision and bring back the Middle School credit requirements for arts, health, and PE. Inclosed in our materials are letters from several of Utah's cultural institutions requesting the same: that you bring back the Middle School credit requirements for health, arts, and PE.

Below are the remarks that we made at the September 20th hearing. We are available to answer any questions. Please let me know if you would like addresses of the signees. I can pull that I think.

Utah Cultural Alliance is the advocacy voice for Utah's arts, humanities, and cultural businesses. We come today to speak on behalf of our sector and on behalf of our state's children.

Today, we bring you over 3,500 signatures of Utahns who raise their voices with ours. Inclosed with our petition signatures are letters from CEOs, Executive Directors, Board Chairs, Music Directors, and Artistic Directors of many of our fine cultural institutions around this state including Utah Symphony | Utah Opera, Utah Museum of Fine Arts, NOVA Chamber Music Series, Utah Festival Opera & Musical Theatre, Utah Film Center, Ririe-Woodbury Dance Company, and even the Idaho State University School of Arts.

We are parents, voters, and Utahns who care about the success of our state's children. We know that a well-rounded education is vital to their future.

As your constituents, we ask you to reverse your August 4th decision to remove the Middle School credit requirement for health, arts, and physical education.

The benefits to children of a well-rounded education that includes arts, health, and PE education are many and contribute to the board's imperative to provide quality learning to Utah's students. These benefits are:

1. **Better academic results, better workforce opportunities, and more civic**

- engagement, especially for at-risk children.**
- 2. Improved performance and grades in reading, math, writing, and other subjects.**
 - 3. Increased creative thinking and problem solving.**
 - 4. Increased positive attitudes towards school and learning.**
 - 5. Less aggression and violent tendencies.**
 - 6. Improved cognitive ability.**
 - 7. Improved community cohesion.**
 - 8. Improved graduation rates.**
 - 9. Improved motor skills and self-discipline.**
 - 10. Improved social interaction.**
 - 11. Improved mental health and dietary choices.**

Eliminating the credit requirement for arts, health, and physical education suggests that state standards and oversight for these vital programs could disappear. And yet, these are subject areas that are proven to close the school achievement gap. Lack of standards and oversight prevents fair and equitable services statewide, and puts at risk our State's commitment to ensure that a healthy and productive generation is ready to lead our future.

Many supporters of this rule speak about local control. While this sounds attractive, the reality is messy. Yes, a district could possibly offer more arts classes. We in the humanities and arts are students of history and history of the last two decades teaches us that when requirements are taken away in the interest of "flexibility," schools tend to cut the optional in favor of the required because our public schools are underfunded. We think most Utahns would agree that a well-rounded education benefits all children for the reasons I've listed above. It is the duty of the school board to ensure that students receive that well-rounded education which credit requirements in the arts provide. Additionally, if some middle schools cut arts classes entirely or some choose to offer more as a result of this rule change, our state becomes faced with inequitable educational opportunities around the state where students in one district may receive a well-rounded education but students in another, do not receive such an education. This rule change is contrary to the board's imperative to ensure educational equity to all of Utah's students. Utah is a wonderful place to engage in the arts and humanities, especially with our state's significant investment in thousands of arts learning specialists through our Beverly Taylor Sorenson Arts Learning Program. We feel that cutting the middle school arts credit is an abandonment of this investment.

We thank the six board members who voted against this change: Janet Cannon, Brittney Cummins, Jennifer Gravier, Carol Barlow-Lear, Kathleen Riebe, and Spencer Stokes. We encourage the remaining nine of you to reverse your vote.

Utah is a wonderful place to live, work, and raise families. We believe that our state public education system should be a light to the rest of America and the world. When policy changes occur that negatively affect children's education -- such as this credit change -- our state educational system suffers, and our children suffer. We ask you to reverse your August 4th decision. It is a board imperative to listen to stakeholders. We ask you to listen to we who are here today and reverse your decision. But don't just take it from my organization, our hundreds of member organizations, and the 3,500 of Utahns who have signed our petition. This credit change affects our students first and foremost and I would like you to hear directly from them. We have invited three student groups from around the state to give short 1 minute performances as well as to speak about the impact of this rule change. In order they are:

Amelia Binnix and Nathan Belnap, drama students from Shadow Valley Elementary in Ogden El Sistema @ Salty Cricket Composers Collective based in SLC with students from WVC, Murray, Taylorsville, and SLC and Valley Dance Ensemble from Logan, Utah.

Thanks!
Crystal

—

Crystal Young-Otterstrom
Executive Director // Utah Cultural Alliance

801.652.0737 // cyo@utculture.org
1356 S. 1000 E. // SLC, UT 84105

send newsletter submissions to: news@utculture.org





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Tuesday, September 26, 2017

TO: MEMBERS OF THE UTAH STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

FROM: UTAH CULTURAL ALLIANCE, UTAH EDUCATION ASSOCIATION, UTAH MUSIC TEACHERS ASSOCIATION, AND THE FOLLOWING SIGNERS

(Inclosed with this petition are letters from CEOs and Executive Directors of a number of cultural institutions from around the state)

We are parents, voters, and Utahns who care about the success of our state's children. We know that a well-rounded education is vital to their future. So much so, that over 4,500 Utahns have signed our enclosed petition (names attached to this email).

As your constituents, we ask you to reverse your August 4th decision to remove the Middle School credit requirement for health, arts, and physical education.

The benefits to children of a well-rounded education that includes arts, health, and PE education are many:

1. **Better academic results, better workforce opportunities, and more civic engagement, especially for at-risk children.¹**
2. **Improved performance and grades in reading, math, writing, and other subjects.²**
3. **Increased creative thinking and problem solving.³**
4. **Increased positive attitudes towards school and learning.⁴**
5. **Less aggression and violent tendencies.⁵**
6. **Improved cognitive ability.⁶**
7. **Improved community cohesion.⁷**
8. **Improved graduation rates.⁸**
9. **Improved motor skills and self-discipline.⁹**
10. **Improved social interaction.¹⁰**
11. **Improved mental health and dietary choices.¹¹**

Eliminating the credit requirement for arts, health, and physical education suggests that state standards and oversight for these vital programs could disappear. These are subject areas that are proven to close the school



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Pioneer Theatre Company (SLC)

Joshua Stavros
Utah Shakespeare Festival (Cedar City)

achievement gap. Lack of standards and oversight prevents fair and equitable services statewide, and puts at risk our State's commitment to ensure that a healthy and productive generation is ready to lead our future.

We thank the six board members who voted against this change: Janet Cannon, Brittney Cummins, Jennifer Gravier, Carol Barlow-Lear, Kathleen Riebe, and Spencer Stokes.

Utah is a wonderful place to live, work, and raise families. We believe that our state public education system should be a light to the rest of America and the world. When policy changes occur that negatively affect children's education -- such as this credit change -- our state educational system suffers, and our children suffer. We ask you to reverse your August 4th decision.

Sincerely,

The board and staff of the Utah Cultural Alliance, the undersigned, and these organizations: Utah Education Association, Utah Music Teachers Association, Utah Federation of Music Clubs, and Morgan County Daughters of Utah Pioneers.

Crystal Young-Otterstrom
Executive Director // Utah Cultural Alliance

(petition signers are at the end of this document after organizational letters)

¹ Sources note, some of the articles below are links. All links can be found at: http://www.utahculturalalliance.org/school_board_petition

<https://www.arts.gov/file/2684>



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² A 2002 report by the Arts Education Partnership revealed that schoolchildren exposed to drama, music and dance are often more proficient at reading, writing, and math. & The 2006 Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum study on art education showed a link between arts education and improved literacy skills. & A 2011 study called "Reinvesting in Arts Education" found that integrating arts with other subjects can help raise achievement levels. & Active Education: Physical Education, Physical Activity and Academic Performance. & An Evaluation of the Relationship between Academic Performance and Physical Fitness Measures in California Schools

³ A study (<http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/champions/pdfs/Learning.pdf>) of more than 2,000 middle-school students by researchers at Columbia University found that students who had participated in at least three years of in-school arts instruction scored significantly higher on an instrument measuring creative thinking and that these students self-reported much higher rates of positive attitudes towards school and learning than did their peers who had experienced less arts education.

⁴ Same study as 1.

⁵ Evaluation of a six-month program that involved youth in drama reported that these participants demonstrated less aggressive and violent tendencies, while also exhibiting more pro-social behaviors like cooperation and self control compared to before participating. http://www.traumacenter.org/products/pdf_files/jsv5_2_2006.pdf & A study of Missouri public schools in 2010 found that greater arts education led to fewer disciplinary infractions and higher attendance, graduation rates and test scores.

⁶ A study by research kinesiologists found that students showed improved cognitive ability after participating in moderate exercise. <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0306452209001171> & A meta-analysis that took into account 44 studies that had sought to identify correlations & between physical activity among children and their cognitive performance concluded that there is a significant relationship. & The Association Between School-Based Physical Activity, Including Physical Education, and Academic Performance

⁷ A 2005 report by the Rand Corporation called "A Portrait of the Visual Arts" argues that art education does more than just give students a creative outlet. It can actually help connect them to the larger world, ultimately improving community cohesion.

⁸ The Center for Arts Education published a report in 2009 that suggests arts education may improve graduation rates.

⁹ <http://www.phitamerica.org/Page1139.aspx> & Physical Education in Kindergarten Promotes Fundamental Motor Skill Development

¹⁰ <http://www.livestrong.com/article/529108-what-are-the-benefits-of-physical-education-in-school/>

¹¹ Do the Duration and Frequency of Physical Education Predict Academic Achievement, Self-concept, Social skills, Food consumption, and Body Mass Index?

Paul Meecham
President & CEO

September 18, 2017

Thierry Fischer
Symphony Music Director

Utah State Board of Education
250 East 500 South
Salt Lake City, UT 84111

Christopher McBeth
Opera Artistic Director

Dear Members of the Board,

Board of Trustees

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Mark Davidson
Lissa Stolz
Utah Symphony Musicians

Margaret Sargent
Utah Symphony Guild

Dr. Robert Fudge
Ogden Symphony
Ballet Association

On behalf of the Musicians, Staff and Trustees of Utah Symphony | Utah Opera, we urge you to reverse the Board's August 4th decision to remove the Middle School credit requirement for health, arts, physical education, college and career awareness, world languages, and digital literacy.

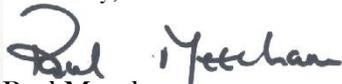
Eliminating the credit requirement for these areas suggests that state standards and oversight for these vital programs could disappear. These are subject areas that are proven to close the school achievement gap and encourage student attendance.

As the largest arts organization in Utah, and one that focuses on music, we will speak to these points. Through music, children develop observation, concentration, creative thinking and communication skills that translate into a lifetime of productive endeavors in all professional and avocational pursuits. The achievements of instrumental and vocal performers demonstrate for children the rewards of long-term dedication to a personal and professional goal. Even if they do not choose to play an instrument or learn singing techniques, early exposure to music cultivates the appreciative audiences of the future. Through these personal benefits to each child, music education enhances the overall quality of life in Utah, and its desirability as a place to live and visit.

With the current very strong focus on competency in core subjects such as language arts, math, and science, resources for arts instruction vary greatly from school to school. However, studies have shown that experiences in the arts strengthen children's academic motivation, self-confidence, and cooperation. The arts invite new ways of understanding and problem-solving, allowing the freedom to explore and experiment in an arena in which there are not necessarily right and wrong answers. By maintaining arts as a requirement, you ensure access to, and awareness of, these invaluable life skills for every child.

Utah is a wonderful place to live, work, and raise families. We believe that our state public education system should be a light to the rest of the United States of America and the world. When policy changes occur that negatively affect children's education -- such as this credit change -- our state educational system suffers, and our children suffer. We ask you respectfully to reverse your August 4th decision.

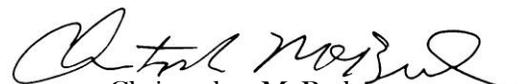
Sincerely,



Paul Meecham
President & CEO
Utah Symphony | Utah Opera



Thierry Fischer
Music Director
Utah Symphony



Christopher McBeth
Artistic Director
Utah Opera

Ticket Office
801.533.6683
Fax 801.869.9048
usuo.org

Abravanel Hall
123 West South Temple
Salt Lake City, Utah 84101
801.533.5626
Fax 801.869.9026

Production Studios
336 North 400 West
Salt Lake City, Utah 84103
801.736.4605
Fax 801.869.9051



AT THE
UNIVERSITY
OF UTAH

September 18, 2017

The Utah State Board of Education
250 East 500 South
Salt Lake City, UT 84111

Dear Utah State Board Members:

As an arts leader in the State of Utah and an arts professional with thirty years' experience in art museums and museum education, I write today to urge you to reverse your August 4 decision to eliminate the middle school credit requirement for health, arts, physical education, college and career awareness, world languages, and digital literacy.

Quality arts education is vital to ensuring our children's success by improving critical thinking and problem solving, self-discipline and social interaction, and classroom performance across all subjects. Access to good arts programming—as well as information about the importance of physical education, good health, and college/career awareness—provides kids with a world of possibility, opening their minds and hearts to all that they might pursue in life. These subjects must remain as part of the required curriculum to assure that every student, regardless of economic status or background, has access to a well-rounded education, especially at such a crucial time in their development.

At the Utah Museum of Fine Arts, a central part of our mission is to inspire creativity, curiosity, and critical thinking in our growing and diverse community. We engage visitors in dynamic programs, exhibitions, and experiences and encourage active participation in conversations that celebrate multiple perspectives and voices. We believe that all people learn together by asking questions, experimenting, and collaborating through open exchange of voices and ideas.

We raise our voice with those of arts professionals and educators around the state—including the Utah Cultural Alliance, Utah Education Association, and the Utah Music Teachers Association—in asking that you accept the substantial evidenced-based research that proves the value and importance of this kind of learning and teaching. Arts, health, and PE support and improve academic results and success in math, reading, and writing and help students develop a heightened sense of empathy and compassion for other people.

As the mother of middle-school age children, as a dedicated and experienced arts professional, and as a citizen who values arts, health, and creativity in all areas of life, I'm alarmed by the vote to eliminate the middle school credit requirement for these essential areas of study. Please reconsider this potentially disastrous decision and ensure that all of Utah's students have access to great arts and health programming.

Sincerely,

Gretchen Dietrich
Executive Director



September 18, 2017

NOVA Chamber
Music Series
PO Box 520962
SLC, UT 84152

info@novaslc.org
novaslc.org

Jason Hardink
Artistic Director

Kristin Rector
Executive Director

Board of Directors:

Frank Hanson, Pres.
Hillary Hahn
Craig Miller
Glenn Prestwich
Richard Sheinberg
Kathryn Waddell
Janell Weinstock

Dear Members of the Utah State Board of Education,

On behalf of the NOVA Chamber Music Series' music education initiative, *The NOVA Music Project* We are writing to you to reverse your August 4, 2017 decision to eliminate the credit requirements for arts, health, physical education, college and career awareness, world languages, and digital literacy.

There are many benefits to students with well-rounded education experiences such as; improved performance and grades in reading, math, and writing, more civic engagement, less aggression and violence tendencies, and increased attitudes towards education.

The NOVA Music Project has been delivered to thousands of students in our community. Here is some recent feedback we received from our program.

"I want to send you my deeply felt thanks for the opportunity to have Aspen Winds visit our classroom. It's a fantastically multi-dimensional experience to have live performers playing music close up. Our students can see, hear, and emotionally open up to it in ways far beyond a recording. We are grateful for your work, for your dedication to education, and for taking the time to visit us. I don't believe the students will forget this experience."

Kimberly Marsden – International School of Utah

"Thank you for your visit! The musicians were wonderful and they captured my students' attention and sparked their curiosity. Thank you for engaging with them and allowing them to ask questions. I'm still smiling about how you answered the 'If you could create your own instrument what would it look and sound like?' question. So wonderful!"

David Asman – Rose Park Elementary

Thank you for considering this information in the reversal of your decision of August 4, 2017.

Sincerely,

Kristin Rector
Executive Director

Jason Hardink
Artistic Director



September 18, 2017

Dear State School Board of Education,

In light of recent decisions to minimize the required credits for arts, health and PE in middle school, I would like to share an impassioned plea for reversal. The arts have absolute benefit for all of us, but most especially in each student's well-rounded education. The students' in middle school and jr. high are at their most vulnerable point and are in particular need of quality arts instruction to navigate this world. Each adolescent is searching for what they have to offer and bring to the world. Without being able to work through their personal identity in safe and productive ways, such as discovering their place within the world through quality arts (and humanities) in education, it is a very disadvantaged journey.

We at Utah Festival Opera & Musical Theatre have been working for the last 20 years with Opera by Children and other arts education programs providing in-school and after-school arts experiences. We see evidence every single day that arts in education works. Teachers too, see the difference the arts make, "This isn't just learning, teaching or guiding. It is really something every student should experience! Students in my class were more willing to try new things and take learning risks in their personal life. Some tried out for student council the following year, some tried for 7th grade officers, a few joined choir, and others took art classes. Students were able to put themselves out there and succeed and were more likely to keep trying and 'revise' their previous effort. As a class this solidified friendships, made new friendships, and as a whole class there were less behavior problems, because of this bonding experience they all shared."

The arts and humanities are part of a well-rounded education, and cannot be separated from life and the need for creativity. Our humanity shows in self-discovery and in outward communication of ideas when any art medium is used to comprehend boundless topics like war, love, spirituality, philosophy or civic duty. Without a safe way to seek for understanding of self and others, there are fewer tools to encourage compassion, compromise, or tolerance.

The arts are the most inclusive way of ensuring an education is meeting the needs of the individual. Without clear state leadership in the area of providing equitable access to arts education for each student regardless of socioeconomic status, school districts may not regard the arts as necessary, or schools may completely end the opportunity for arts learning. The risk is for students to drop out of school and not progress toward high school graduation or studies in vocational school or college. Statistics show middle school is where they are lost.

Please endorse legislation and create policies that increase these opportunities and provide revenue for school districts and utilize funding, such as Title I, in order to champion the arts strategies that provide the opportunities our students need to flourish. Support and inspire educators to teach innovatively. This is what will support our students and carry them into a future with endless opportunities in a world we have not yet lived in as it has yet to be imagined.

Sincerely,

Pamela L. Gee
Opera by Children Director
Utah Festival Opera & Musical Theatr

Elisabeth Nebeker

Utah Film Center letter

To: Crystal Young-Otterstrom

Inbox - CYO @ UCA 12:40 PM



Updated contact info found in this email: Elisabeth Nebeker enebeker@utahfilmcenter.org

[update...](#)

Dear School Board -

On behalf of the Utah Film Center we ask that you reverse your August 4th decision to remove the Middle School credit requirement for health, arts, physical education, college and career awareness, world languages and digital literacy.

We work with students and educators to use digital media arts and film in the classroom to think critically, develop storytelling skills, and create an engaging learning environment.

A well rounded education should be a priority for our State that values the importance of the arts for a lifetime. We need to commit to the benefits that have been documented by numerous studies.

As a mother of high schoolers I know the importance of giving our children opportunities to explore, build confidence and empathy through arts, health, PE, language especially in the middle school years when the challenges they are facing personally and socially can be difficult. Please vote to reverse this decision.

Kindly,
Elisabeth Nebeker
Executive Director

--

Elisabeth Nebeker
Executive Director

Utah Film Center
50 West Broadway, Suite 1125 | Salt Lake City, UT 84101
utahfilmcenter.org
enebeker@utahfilmcenter.org

o: (801) 746-7000

c: (801) 694-9110

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Culture in Motion.



September 18, 2017

Utah State Board of Education

Dear Member of the Utah State Board of Education:

We, at the Ririe-Woodbury Dance Company, believe that the arts are a vital part of K-12 education. Arts as an elective rather than a mandatory requirement of middle school students will undermined the very heart of developing well-rounded individuals.

The arts can be an equal playing ground for many students. They bring students together to not only develop creative thinking, team building, social skills, cognitive ability, but of course physical ability. Our education programs include bilingual and anti-bullying performance demonstrations as well as celebrating the similarities and the differences that each child brings to the community. We have found the arts and specifically dance, has been able to engage many students that no other STEM subject has been able to achieve.

All students should have access to the arts and the arts should be required at all grade levels.

Thank you for your consideration.

Jena C. Woodbury
Executive Director
jena@ririewoodbury.com

Ai Fujii Nelson
Education Director
education@ririewoodbury.com



Utah Arts & Cultural Coalition
175 South West Temple, Suite 30
Salt Lake City, UT 84101
801.534.4930

September 22, 2017

Members of the Utah State Board of Education:

This letter is written on behalf of the Utah Arts and Cultural Coalition (UACC), whose mission is to increase awareness about arts and cultural opportunities in Utah by providing a comprehensive events resource...cost-free to 3,046 arts and cultural organizations. The UACC Board of Directors today (9/22/17), unanimously voted to request the Board of Education to reverse the August 4th decision to remove the middle school credit requirement for health, arts, physical education, college and career awareness, world languages and digital literacy.

In discussing this issue today, the UACC Board reviewed the many benefits that results in our children participating in the areas the Board is addressing. To name just a few:

- ❖ Performance and grades in reading, math, writing, and other subjects improve
- ❖ Positive attitudes towards school and learning increases
- ❖ Improvement in cognitive ability, motor skills, and self-discipline
- ❖ Aggression and a tendency towards violence is lessened
- ❖ Better opportunities in the workforce
- ❖ Graduation rates improve!

These benefits to children (especially at-risk children) that contribute to a well-rounded education are not just perceived, but proven by research, program evaluations and many well-respected studies, as well as through personal experiences our Board members have had with their own children. NOT providing a well-rounded education that includes health, arts, physical education, college and career awareness, world languages and digital literacy, puts our children at a decided disadvantage.

If we truly believe in raising well-adjusted children, providing the advantages to become productive adult citizens then we need...are required...to provide our children access to all educational disciplines that contribute to their success. It can be a tough, competitive world out there so to do otherwise is shirking our duty as parents and the constitutional guardians of public education for the state.

We are asking you to stay true to the three tenets of your strategic plan: **educational equity** (“...set the general statewide conditions in which each student can excel, including equity of educational and culturally responsive practices...”); **quality learning** (“...learning outcomes as a key to high student achievement with the understanding that high quality instruction is central...”); **system values** (“...set the conditions and systems for student success by working with, understanding, and listening to stakeholders...”).

Sometimes policy changes can occur that negatively affect our children’s education. The UACC Board sincerely believes this is one of those times. We respectfully request the August 4th decision regarding the removal of middle school requirements be reversed.

Best regards,

Board of Directors and Staff
Utah Arts and Cultural Coalition

From: Todd Pennington [mailto:todd_pennington@byu.edu]
Sent: Tuesday, September 26, 2017 12:43 PM
To: Austin, Lorraine <lorraine.austin@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: Comment on Public Hearing for Middle School Requirements

Hi Lorraine-

I tried to email my comments concerning the public hearing held last Wednesday September 20, 2017. The email address I was given to comment was: rule.comments@schools.utah.edu

The comments I sent to the above email bounced back to me and did not go through. I have put my comments in the message below. If I need to send them to a different address could you please help me get them to the right email address? Thank you!

The State of Utah School Board Members-

First, I want to express my appreciation for holding a public hearing last week in which I had the opportunity to attend. I did not speak however because I am not allowed to speak on behalf of my employer in the context of the public hearing but want to express my thoughts and feelings as an individual.

As an associate professor in physical education teacher education I have had the privilege of preparing future PE teachers for the past 20 years. One of the courses I have taught is that of preparing future PE teachers for the middle/junior high school level. Along with preparing future PE teachers my scholarship has involved reading, conducting, and being involved in research that has examined quality physical education and its role in adolescent's physical activity and health.

One of the principles that I stress in my middle school PE methods course is the importance of student choice. I am grateful that the state of Utah School Board is a proponent of student choice. However, student choice needs to be designed so that it is developmentally appropriate for the age of the students. I have found that designing a middle school curriculum that meets national and state standards and provides students within PE a framework that allows them to choose from a wide variety of physical activities beyond traditional team sports leads them to finding a form of physical activity that they can enjoy and participate in both in and outside of school. The obesity research is clear that we see the largest decline in physical activity in our nation's youth from ages 12-18 years old (CDC, 2010). Physical activity patterns established, or the lack thereof, are critical at this age and the trend is not heading in the right direction. The data for students in the state of Utah in this age group find 16.9 % are either clinically overweight or obese leading to the next age group which is adults 18 years and older which finds 79.4% of Utah adults clinically overweight or obese (CDC, 2010).

Allowing students to choose in middle school not to participate in PE and Health at the very age they begin to develop patterns of physical activity and health for life is a very short sighted decision, especially given the research related to this issue. The estimated cost of adult obesity in the United States was 147 billion dollars in 2009 (Finkelstein, 2009).

The immediate benefits of PE and physical activity at this age are also clear. The following comes from research by John J. Ratey MD from Harvard Medical School in his book "Spark" (2008) and the development of the brain and its relationship to physical activity along with data from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) in 2010. I have listed just a few of the significant findings of research related to PE and physical activity in an effort to keep this concise:

- It can improve concentration, memory, and classroom behavior
- It can improve social interaction and builds confidence
- It significantly alleviates symptoms of any anxiety disorder
- It is recommended as a first-line treatment for depression
- It is recommended as one of the best treatments combined with others for those with ADHD
- It can improve self-control and is recommended when treating addictive behaviors

This is just a snapshot of what is being studied and learned about the impact of physical activity and its relationship to a student's overall educational experience and its benefits. I would strongly encourage you to re-consider the decision to make PE and Health an elective course in Utah middle schools and junior highs!

Sincerely,

Dr. Pennington

Todd Pennington, PhD
Dept. of Teacher Education
Brigham Young University
249 E SFH
Provo, UT 84602

801-422-2335 (Office)

(www.pecentral.org) "Guiding youngsters in the process of becoming healthy and physically active for a lifetime"

From: Jeff and Pam Budge [mailto:JPBUDGE@msn.com]
Sent: Tuesday, September 26, 2017 3:48 PM
To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>
Cc: Board of Education <board@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: SUPPORT for R277-700 Public Comment

State School Board Members,

I am submitting public comment in support of R277-700 from group members in "Families for Locally Directed Education" and related groups. Here is a link to our letter (also copied below): https://docs.google.com/document/d/1unwcMGTxI3_nfVDWlaMkFCfufYhDwprL2BzbCmsqrYI/edit#

Thank you for your consideration.

Members of the State School Board,

As members of the group, Families for Locally Directed Education and related groups (as noted above), we support the changes to R277-700-5 Middle School Education Requirements.

The focus of our group(s) is to bring decisions back to the local level where parents can have the most influence and where decisions are made closest to the student by people who know them best. We work in our individual school districts to establish educational goals and standards determined by parents and educators at the most basic level, our school boards.

Therefore, we applaud the State School Board for bringing decision making authority to the local level. We appreciate the flexibility this will give schools, parents, and students.

We recognize that these courses will still be offered as electives (R277-700-5 [Subsection 9](#)); or, they may continue to be required courses, depending on the decision of local board members (R277-700-5 [Subsection 11](#)).

These courses are required all throughout Elementary, as we see in R277-700-4, which allows students to get a good foundation that they can build upon in middle school as they choose which courses most fit their needs and their education goals.

Those who would like these courses to remain required in their school may petition their local board; likewise, those who would like these courses to be electives may do the same. **Every parent and educator will have an equal opportunity to make their case to their local boards where the unique needs of students in each school can best be addressed.**

We fully support R277-700 as it is currently written and urge the State Board to keep the rule as is. Thank you for the opportunity to provide public comment on this very important decision.

From: Carol Wilkinson [mailto:carol_wilkinson@byu.edu]
Sent: Tuesday, September 26, 2017 2:09 PM
To: Austin, Lorraine <lorraine.austin@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: Middle School Physical Education Requirement

Lorraine:

I have tried to send this to the rule.comments@schools.utah.edu address but it is coming back as undeliverable. I am sending my comments to you before the 5pm deadline today with the hope that you can deliver the comments to the school board by the deadline.

I have been teaching in physical education for 30 years. For the past 22 years, I have been a professor in physical education teacher education and I am writing to express my deep concern about the policy change to potentially allow middle school students to make the decision as to whether they take physical education or not. Student choice is a great concept, but in this situation student maturity may have a physically damaging effect on the students who make the decision not to participate in physical education. The obesity research shows that one in five school-aged children (ages 6-19) has obesity.¹ Physical activity patterns are generally established in youth. Allowing middle school students to choose not to participate in PE at the very age they begin to develop patterns of physical activity for life is a very short sighted decision, especially given the research related to this issue. The positive impact that good physical education programs that introduce students to lifetime activities will be lacking in many students' lives.

The immediate benefits of PE and physical activity at this age are also clear. The following comes from research by John J. Ratey MD from Harvard Medical School² and the development of the brain and its relationship to physical activity along with data from the Centers for Disease Control. I have listed just a few of the significant findings of research related to PE and physical activity to try and keep this concise:

- It can improve concentration, memory, and classroom behavior
- It can improve social interaction and builds confidence
- It significantly alleviates symptoms of any anxiety disorder
- It is recommended as a first-line treatment for depression
- It is recommended as one of the best treatments combined with others for those with ADHD
- It can improve self-control and is recommended when treating addictive behaviors

This is a brief summary about the impact of physical activity and its relationship to a student's overall educational experience and its benefits. I would strongly encourage you to re-consider the decision to make PE an elective course in Utah middle schools.

1. Ogden C. L., Carroll M. D., Lawman H. G., Fryar C. D., Kruszon-Moran D., Kit B. K, Flegal K. M. (2016). Trends in Obesity Prevalence Among Children and Adolescents in the United States, 1988-1994 Through 2013-2014. *JAMA*, 315(21), 2292-2299.
2. Ratey, J. & Hagerman, E. (2008). *Spark: The revolutionary new science of exercise and the brain*. New York: Little, Brown, and Company.

Sincerely,

Dr. Carol Wilkinson
PETE Program Coordinator
249D SFH
Brigham Young University,
Provo, UT 84602

801-422-8779

-----Original Message-----

From: Mona Andrus [<mailto:mandrus@dsdmail.net>]

Sent: Tuesday, September 26, 2017 1:41 PM

To: Board of Education <board@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: Comment on R277-700

State School Board Members,

I am writing to thank you for your recent vote on R277-700. As a district school board member, I strongly support your decision and am grateful for the trust and confidence you have placed in us.

I attended the public hearing and wanted to share one observation with you. Most of the comments asking you to reverse your decision were based on fear. Fear that students would not take the opportunity to participate in the "elective" classes. Fear that classes may not be filled and the impact that change would have on teachers. Fear that an inferior education would be offered, etc.

There is a great saying, "A life lived in fear is a life half lived!" Please don't make a decision based on fears. I ask you to uphold your decision and give the local districts this opportunity to shine. I am confident that we all, in our own unique ways, will surpass your expectations.

Sincerely,

Mona Andrus
DSD School Board Member

From: Ember Fife <emberfife@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 27, 2017 6:46:03 AM
To: Board Rule Comments
Subject: New policy

Hello!

I would like to offer my opinion that the new policy should be maintained and tried out so parents and students can take classes they feel is best for them in their situations!

Thank you!

Ember Fife

From: LYDIA C NUTTALL Owner <lydianuttall@centurylink.net>

Sent: Wednesday, September 27, 2017 7:03:09 AM

To: Board Rule Comments

Subject: New policy change re: 7th/8th Grade Electives

Re: New policy change re: 7th / 8th Grade Electives

Dear USBE,

Please leave the new policy change in place for a few years. Two reasons:

- Measure the outcome.
- Allow LEAs and families to make the decisions on the electives that best suit their children.

Sincerely,
Lydia Nuttall
Morgan County

From: Rachel C Zumaya <chickenrace@gmail.com>

Sent: Wednesday, September 27, 2017 7:42:14 AM

To: Board Rule Comments

Subject: Cutting arts, PE, etc.

It has been a long tradition in education to solely worry about the main three subjects: Reading, Writing, and Arithmetic. And while these subjects carry utmost importance in a child's well-rounded education, they by themselves do not prepare a child for the rigors of life, nor do they help students understand their unique contributions they can make to society. By not requiring 7th and 8th grade students to have elective requirements of CTE, Music, Physical Education, and so forth, it limits their scope of abilities for future jobs, minimalizes opportunities to discover their ability to DO, and it creates a lack of understanding of various disciplines in a generation of students.

One thing that has made America great over the past few centuries is when art and science have combined together to create new innovations. An example is the film industry. We had technicians working together with artists to create machines to help tell stories through motion pictures. Film would not become what it is today without BOTH artists and technicians. People cannot just learn the arts or technical trades from books, and the learning of these trades must start in the early learning years. They are a language of their own that must be developed while the children still have a "moldable" brain.

In educational philosophy, we have learned that what a child knows is not nearly important as what they can do. So therefore by limiting opportunities IN PUBLIC SCHOOL for students to learn these things, we are limiting the future. To keep things fair so that all students may receive a proper education we cannot cut these important technical and artistic programs from schools. What are students to understand in their reading without meaningful experiences with both performing and technical arts? What can our future doctors and scientists truly understand of the muscles human body that they have never had a chance to work out or exercise? How will they teach their patients to be healthy and change bad health choices in diet if they themselves know nothing of physical education?

The truth of the matter is that all students must be nurtured in their unique gifts and abilities. Not all parents have the time or money to put toward music lessons for their students, even if they wanted to. So by cutting them for students it puts our lower socio-economic status students at a disadvantage from their rich peers whose parents can and do afford those things.

Education is not best done in a one-size-fits-all manner. It must contain the various parts to make the whole perfect. A better solution would be to require reading, writing, and arithmetic across these disciplines. Rather than thinking of them as separate, think of them as an important part of the "doing". Make the CTE, Arts, PE, and other classes like these

REQUIRED and then have those subjects implement the core disciplines. There is where you will find power in the students to truly become who they were designed from birth to be. That is how we continue to solve the struggles in society together. Let's not limit our students opportunities to do and become, but rather nurture them by making these subjects required again.

--

--Rachel Cox Zumaya

From: Steven Hendricks <shendricks@dsdmail.net>

Sent: Wednesday, September 27, 2017 8:01:15 AM

To: Board Rule Comments

Subject: Final Thoughts

Good Morning,

First of all, thank you for opening a dialogue concerning your decision to change the requirements for 7th and 8th grade students in our state. It demonstrates your willingness to listen to those who elected you, and I appreciate that. I spoke at the meeting last Wednesday, but I have just a couple of final thoughts beyond what I said at that time.

1. Please don't devalue the work of teachers in arts, health, and P.E. I heard, over and over again, from supporters of the rule change "I love the arts." I never heard one person say "I love Utah History" or "I love Mathematics." Perhaps that wasn't said because those courses continue to have the same requirements. The people saying "I love the Arts" while supporting this rule change are devaluing them by making them an elective course. If you really want to give parents and students more choice in 7th and 8th grade, why not make EVERY class an elective and make EVERY teacher go out and recruit so they have enough kids to fill their classes and keep their job? That would be parity!

2. Please don't listen to the vocal minority. I don't know for certain, but I'm guessing that this rule change was driven by more affluent people who have a different agenda for their children. As you consider this rule, keep in mind the multitude of kids in our state who don't have access to private music, dance, or acting lessons. Keep in mind the children who go home from school to junk food and video games because both of their parents are at work.

Thanks Again!

Steven Hendricks
Director, Davis High Band
UMEA Vice President-Band
Cell 801-721-1659

From: Brett Taylor <bretttaylor@alpinedistrict.org>

Sent: Wednesday, September 27, 2017 8:02:39 AM

To: Board Rule Comments

Subject: Credit requirement change

To whom it may concern,

I would kindly request that the notion to remove a fine art credit requirement be abandoned. I am the product of such a requirement, and my life has been enriched because of it. I grew up in New England, where there was a thriving music program in the state and district (like ours here in Utah). I was required to be in a general music class in elementary school where I learned the recorder and ukulele. I can still remember (and play!) the end-of-the-year song we learned and performed on recorder. In middle school, everyone was required to take either band or orchestra. I chose clarinet and joined the orchestra (which was a full symphony, not just strings). In high school, I continued playing clarinet, but also began playing the drums in my school's jazz band. My sophomore year of high school, I got recruited to be in the choir and the rest is history. Now I teach and direct 6 choirs, perform regularly with professional choirs in the area, and have two degrees in music education (BA and MA from BYU). All because I didn't know what I wanted when I was 8 and I was guided to great things through wise adults.

My hope is not that all will become professional artists as I have become, but that they will become dedicated amateurs (the word meaning 'one who loves'), gleaning all of the emotional, communal, and developmental satisfaction that arts interaction has to offer. With all this talk of 21st Century Education (the 6 Cs and all), why is it that we abandon those subjects that have the most to offer: creativity, critical thinking, problem solving, collaboration, community.

I would urge you and any such people in power to abandon the notion of removing a fine art credit from schools. To maintain it would be to perpetuate the abolishment of human culture and whole-hearted living.

--

Brett Taylor
MVHS Choirs
Orem, UT

mvhschoir.org

Instagram: mrtaylormusic

From: KeriLyn Barr <noworrieskl@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 27, 2017 8:08:37 AM
To: Board Rule Comments
Subject: Electives

To whom it may concern,

I'm writing this letter concerning elective classes for students at the middle school level. I would ask the state to leave the new policy change in place for a few years to measure the outcome and to allow LEAs and families to make the decisions on the electives that best suit their children.

Thank you,

Kerilyn

-----Original Message-----

From: Carolina Allen [<mailto:carolinasallen@gmail.com>]

Sent: Wednesday, September 27, 2017 8:29 AM

To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: Please leave new policy in place!

Dear friends,

As a parent of six young children, 2 of which are in middle school, I am writing to ask that the state leave the new policy change in place for a few years. It's imperative so that we have enough time to properly measure the outcomes and to allow LEAs and families to make the decisions on the electives that best suit their children.

I am asking that we keep this policy in place as it directly helps parents and families make the necessary decisions for each individual child.

Many thanks,
Carolina Allen

Sent from my iPhone

From: mrsorganicoils [mailto:mrsorganicoils@gmail.com]

Sent: Wednesday, September 27, 2017 8:35 AM

To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: Middle School Electives

I am requesting that you please leave the current middle school policy in place for electives. It would be much appreciated.

Thank you,
Jill Hudson
Syracuse, Utah

Sent via the Samsung Galaxy S® 6, an AT&T 4G LTE smartphone

-----Original Message-----

From: Laureen Simper [<mailto:cleversheep56@yahoo.com>]

Sent: Wednesday, September 27, 2017 8:45 AM

To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: Support of new policy

Dear state board members,

Thank you for your recent policy change to have local boards and districts make the decisions for their electives requirements at the middle school level. Any policy change shifting that stewardship to the local districts - where it belongs - is healthy, needed, and long overdue!

I particularly would like to see decisions about health courses made at the local level. As I have followed the decision to review health standards, I have been concerned that so much of the proposed new material has come from morally questionable sources, namely, SEICUS and IPP. Their material has no place in Utah schools. Decisions about what is taught in health courses are much better made closest to home.

Sincerely,
Laureen Simper

Sent from my iPad

From: Jenny BAKER [mailto:sevenvoices@live.com]

Sent: Wednesday, September 27, 2017 10:10 AM

To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: Proposed Rule R277-700 The Elementary and Secondary School General Core

To the Utah State Board of Education,

I am writing this email to ask that the state leave the proposed Amended Rule R277-700 in place. Middle school is an exciting time for parents as they watch their youth seek out and develop talents and abilities that they will use as adults. Thank you for providing LEAs and families the freedom to make the decisions on the electives that best suit their children.

Sincerely,

Jenny Baker

St. George, Utah

435-229-9720

From: amoul1116@aol.com [mailto:amoul1116@aol.com]

Sent: Wednesday, September 27, 2017 10:16 AM

To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: R277-700

To Whom It May Concern,

Please rescind your ruling on R277-700. Being in a musical group gives real life experience working within a group to reach a common goal. Learning to play an instrument teaches self discipline, physical dexterity and improves concentration. Learning to love the arts is a privilege that few in this world really achieve. Please don't take that opportunity away from Utah kids.

You realize that many districts will take the cheap way out and eliminate these courses from their curriculum if they are not required. Please don't give them that option.

Ann Moulton
Ogden, Utah
801-731-4854

From: LYDIA C NUTTALL Owner [mailto:lydianuttall@centurylink.net]
Sent: Wednesday, September 27, 2017 6:26 AM
To: Board of Education <board@schools.utah.gov>; Dickson, Sydnee <Sydnee.Dickson@schools.utah.gov>; tpyfer <tpyfer@utah.gov>; Gbell <gbell@xmission.com>
Subject: P.S. - I awoke at 5:00am remembering that I failed to mention this important element:

Good morning, All -- Here is the final, critical element:

Democracy + Representation / Representatives = a Republic
"We the People..." + "...elect someone to represent us in local, state, and national government..." = a Republic

James Madison:

"A Republic...a Government in which the scheme of representation takes place...the delegation of the Government,...to a small number of citizens elected by the rest."
(The Federalist Papers, The Federalist #10)

What this means to me:

Regardless of what I know and how I feel about Freedom to Choose in our country, if the majority of the people in my district want something else, it is the duty and responsibility of my USBE representative to vote for something else.

A point to consider:

There are at least 2 petitions that have been circulating of which I am aware -- one for and one against the 7th / 8th Grade Electives change. I am hoping that these petitions have included each signer's area of residence or district so that each of you as USBE members knows which signers on each petition are in your district that you should represent. Eg: Many signers could be in someone else's district and therefore their voice *should be represented by that district's representative only.*

That's it!

Happy Wednesday!

Now go forth and conquer your day :)

--Lydia Nuttall

From: kristine wagner [mailto:kristinewagner28@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, September 27, 2017 10:53 AM
To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: Required classes for middle schools

To Whom it May Concern:

I commend the Utah State School Board for changing the required classes for middle schools. I am glad that these classes are still offered, but now parents can choose which classes are more beneficial for their individual children. If a child takes hours of private music lessons, he probably doesn't need to be in beginning music at the middle school. His time is better spent elsewhere. Likewise, if a student is involved in after school sports, they might choose not to take PE. Health should also be a class that parents can determine whether they want their children enrolled in. Education should not be cookie cutter process and parents still know what is best for their children.

Thank you for all that you do.

Kristine Wagner

From: Marvin Crowther [mailto:mcrowth84@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, September 27, 2017 10:43 AM
To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: Electives

Hi,

I find it is always better when parents and students make informed choices on classes rather than letting administration make the choices.

As a parent I don't think state employees have the time or insight to know the needs of every student. Where parents should know the needs of their children.

Marvin Crowther

To All Utah State School Board Members:

Thank you for reading my comment in its entirety. Although I have been involved in local, state, and national leadership and am presently Vice President of UEA-Retired (1800+) members who would attest to the veracity of my comments, I am writing this as an individual.

My primary focused question in decision making, as a parent and teacher, has always been and a child's continues to be "How will this benefit the kid(s)?" As a parent of five or teacher of thousands, one never knows what may spark a child's interest...germinate a seed of inquiry.

We set standards; hopefully, high standards to help our children succeed...our society to progress and our culture thrive. As a state and nation we should be striving for a higher standard rather than diluting what we already have; allowing less than the minimum

America's Public Education system is one of the cornerstones of our democratic republic. The hallmark of our Public Education system is that from our holistic well-rounded system, creative, imaginative, inventive, thoughtful, hard-working individuals emerged and worked together to advance our culture-our civil society.

Our gold standard system was founded and built on master educators recognizing how children learn and providing diverse enriching educational opportunities to every child in our nation's public schools. Regardless of where they live, our neighborhood public schools allowed students to build a firm educational foundation, to discover their interests, their strengths, and their passions from which to branch, grow, bloom...thrive.

My father had a devastating surgery when I was in 7th grade.

We lost our family home and because my parents valued our education,

six of us moved into two rooms of my Grandmother's

unfinished basement...

it was a very difficult time.

However,

At the Moab Music Festival some years back, I was working with our stage crew students as the orchestra played selections from George Gershwin's "Porgy and Bess". I could hum every note, sing every word, identify and name every instrument because Julianna Hayes had taught us...and it was exciting, edgy stuff... "Bess, you is my woman now..." "the stories you're liable- to read in the Bible- well, they ain't necessarily so"...and we were hooked and from there we were inspired by Aaron Copeland's "Appalachian Spring"...soul satisfying music that resonates still in my heart-strings.

In David Chaplin's art class I was exposed (among other things) to Gaudi's "La Sagrada Familia" or Church of the Sacred Family Cathedral in Barcelona yet to be completed in 2026 after 144 years of work. My artist friend Cal Johnson has his 8th grade art test on his studio wall still almost 50 years after getting 100% on Mr. Chaplin's challenging, teacher created test.

President Kennedy's National Fitness Program gave us all challenges to work through, fitness levels to achieve and an inspirational "Record Board" of push-ups and sit-ups and chin-ups and records still stand.

Little did I know at the time that all of these experiences at Hillside Junior High School would lead me years later, to excel as a master professional Language Arts, Track & Cross-Country Coach and Art educator for nearly four decades at both large urban (Hillcrest) and small rural (Grand County) high schools. It makes me wonder when Tami Pyfer was first entranced by choir that led her to performing with Mormon Tabernacle Choir.

I am not aware of the genesis of this Board Rule 277-700 to allow "local control" limiting elective course offerings at the middle grade levels, but if I had to wager a guess it would be: A) Someone thought that there would be economic or financial benefit; or B) That we ought to require only courses which could demonstrate measureable "mastery" by some yet to be determined standardized metric...in which case refer back to "A"...follow the money. By eliminating essential enhanced learning electives during these difficult early adolescent years based on a false premise promise of "local control" is not child centered.

It is this Board's responsibility and our students' best interest to ensure that each and every child, regardless of zip code, have equitable access to life-enriching course offerings...both academic and elective as an educational foundation from which to stem.

I ask that you take time to review the preponderance of factual evidence supporting a "Whole Child" approach to public education preK-12 and reconsider to rescind your decision on R277-700.

Thank You,

Ryan Anderson

HC64 Box2311

Castle Valley, Utah

(435)259-5263

kumquatry@hotmail.com

From: Liz Mumford [mailto:emumford@dmail.net]
Sent: Wednesday, September 27, 2017 12:17 PM
To: Board of Education <board@schools.utah.gov>
Cc: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>; Belnap, Laura <lbelnap@utahonline.org>
Subject: Support JH core rule change

Dear state board members,

I am writing to express my appreciation and personal support for the rule change that allows more local control and flexibility in junior high core requirements. I serve as an elected member on the Davis County School Board and I'm not speaking on behalf of Davis District administration or the Board of Education. There are obviously other rules and policy implications that need to be considered before the district or full board could voice unanimous support but I feel that this is an initial step in the right direction towards local control. I appreciate the trust it places on local boards to maintain quality programs and meet specific needs in their communities. It is a critical step in allowing us the flexibility to implement competency-based education and support personalize learning in our schools. It also values parental input and supports the professionalism of our school counselors to make important decisions with students for their future. Licensing and continuity with the high school standards are issues that will require further study by the state board but I believe this rule change is a positive policy move that will benefit students. Our board has conducted some initial discussion around the rule change and there was a consensus that we strongly value the arts, CTE, health and PE, and world languages. It is likely that our board would adopt a template similar to the pre-existing core with some discussion around the best ways to implement a waiver or flexibility into the local policy. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions about my position on the rule and I appreciate the service that you dedicate toward improving education in our state.

Liz Mumford
Davis School District
Board of Education Member
801-635-5123

From: Melanie Sorensen [mailto:melanieosorensen@gmail.com]

Sent: Wednesday, September 27, 2017 1:46 PM

To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: Electives

Hello,

I would like to write in support of the new policy which removes some elective requirements and gives students and parents greater flexibility to choose courses most important to us.

Thank you for all you do,
Melanie Sorensen

From: singyourwayhome@comcast.net [mailto:singyourwayhome@comcast.net]
Sent: Wednesday, September 27, 2017 3:15 PM
To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: Rule 277-700

To whom it may concern,

Actually, it better concerns all of us 'little people', and that a good thing. I'm grateful for this rule change. I know there's a lot of fear that it will be the end of arts and PE, but that will really be up to the parents-- what classes will they value? A little more than thirty years ago, we had NO state requirements, and not only were the arts thriving, but obesity was down, and PE involvement was still high.

As I mentioned at the public hearing last week, all parents are "parents of means"; the private sector is and always has been a more efficient provider of just about everything. I grew up well under the poverty line, and still managed to have ten years of piano lessons, plus voice lessons along the way, thanks to trading or bartering. A friend of mine lives in a neighborhood where there was little money for extras, so the parents created them, pulling on their own talents-- art lessons, dance lessons, karate, piano lessons, and more. Let parents choose what is most valuable at the public schools, then give them space to create, to band together to help and to teach each other's children. The more parents get involved, the better the education is. And the more incentive the schools give parents to back off, the worse the education is.

Please keep R277-700.

Thank you,

Rhonda Hair

From: Kathy's Letters [mailto:kathysletters@hotmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, September 27, 2017 3:11 PM
To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: Keep new elective policy for a few years

Please let the new policy for school electives stay for a few years. Let the local districts and families make the decisions on electives that best suit their children. Thank You so much!

Kathlyn Astle
6134 West Canyon Drive
Mountain Green, UT 84050
801 876-3225

From: Jenny Brown [mailto:jenbrown1776@yahoo.com]

Sent: Wednesday, September 27, 2017 3:29 PM

To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: Thank you for the flexibility!

Dear State School Board,

I have four children in the district. Thank you for allowing more flexibility for schools. This enables them to make decisions based on their direct circumstances. Great job!

Dr. Jennifer Brown

Bountiful

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

From: Christine Cooke [mailto:Christine@sifreedom.org]
Sent: Wednesday, September 27, 2017 6:16 PM
To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: Public Comment on R277-700: Sutherland Institute

Sutherland Institute supports R277-700, Elementary and Secondary Core, because it appropriately balances local control with the need for elective course access.

Education is about the learning and potential of the individual person. All individuals are different. This reality requires that we give local leaders and parents the choices, flexibility, and local control necessary to meet the needs of a diverse body of individual students.

Meaningful education will include access to a holistic set of educational choices including courses on health, languages, music and art. Under R277-700, LEAs are obligated by the state to offer at least two art courses, plus physical education, health, college and career readiness, and – starting with the 2018-19 school year – digital literacy and at least one world language. The state has an interest in requiring that such choices be available to students.

At the same time, the new rule allows LEAs greater flexibility in determining which of these courses will be required. This is an important step toward local control – letting those closest to an issue address it because they have the best information and incentive to do so. The majority of Utahns agree with the principle of local control philosophically, but its application, meaning and limits can look different to reasonable people. Sutherland Institute believes that giving LEAs the power to make decisions regarding elective requirements is an appropriate application of this principle.

We encourage board members to maintain their support of R277-700.

Christine Cooke | Director | Center for Educational Progress
801-355-1272 (o) | 480-415-6411 (c)
sutherlandinstitute.org



From: Jennie Earl [mailto:jinnamon@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, September 27, 2017 3:51 PM
To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: Middle School Requirements

Utah State Board of Education:

I am grateful for the healthy dialogue centered around the removal of required electives. It is good for varied ideas and thoughts to be discussed.

I am asking you to leave the amendment as is and to allow two years to take place in order to gather accurate information about the outcomes.

I have listened to both sides of the argument. It seems pretty evenly divided: one, saying I benefited because of the requirement and another saying it was not beneficial and maybe even a waste of time or a hoop to jump through. Both are right!

Try choice for a period of time and allow families and districts to take the lead.

John Milton said it this way in *Areopagitica* when he disputed the licensing of books, "God uses not to captivate under a perpetual childhood of prescription, but trusts him with the gift of reason to be his own chooser; there were but little work left for preaching, if law and compulsion should grow so fast upon those things which heretofore were governed only by exhortation."

I feel strongly that the youth today are competent and capable with the help of parents and school personnel to make these decisions.

Jennie Earl
Morgan, Utah

From: Delitra Talbot [mailto:johntalbot@q.com]
Sent: Thursday, September 28, 2017 12:39 PM
To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: choose local control. Please keep R277-700.

To whom it may concern,

Please choose local control in the schools. Trust the people to choose good.

Actually, it better concerns all of us 'little people', and that is a good thing. I'm grateful for this rule change. I know there's a lot of fear that it will be the end of arts and PE, but that will really be up to the parents-- what classes will they value? A little more than thirty years ago, we had NO state requirements, and not only were the arts thriving, but obesity was down, and PE involvement was still high. Most people actually want their children to be well-rounded, and that is more possible with these classes. In fact, they make it more possible for kids to do well. The people will choose them.

All parents are "parents of means"; the private sector is and always has been a more efficient provider of just about everything. I grew up well under the poverty line, and still managed to have piano lessons, art lessons, etc., thanks to trading or bartering. We have done the same thing for our children, including piano lessons, clarinet lessons, organ lessons, art lessons, etc. I am also trying to include more of these skills in our local elementary, by volunteering what musical skills I have for musical instruction and exploration. Let parents choose what is most valuable at the public schools, then give them space to create, to band together to help and to teach each other's children. The more parents get involved, the better the education is. And the more incentive the schools give parents to back off, the worse the education is.

Please keep R277-700.

Thank you,
Delitra Talbot

From: Steve Rich [mailto:richs6939@msn.com]

Sent: Thursday, September 28, 2017 9:36 AM

To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: elective credits at middle school level

To whom it may concern,

Please leave in place the new policy that would allow parents and LEAs make the decisions for what electives would be best for the middle school students.

Thank You

Steve Rich
Morgan Utah

From: Tina Cannon [mailto:tcannon@digis.net]
Sent: Thursday, September 28, 2017 11:09 AM
To: Board Rule Comments <rule.comments@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: New policy change re: 7th / 8th Grade Electives

Dear USBE,

Please leave the new policy change in place for a few years. Two reasons:

- *Measure the outcome.*
- *Allow LEAs and families to make the decisions on the electives that best suit their children.*

Sincerely,

Tina Cannon
Morgan County

Sent from my iPhone

Tina Cannon, EA
Allred & Cannon
801 876 3522

From: Christel S [mailto:212christel@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, September 28, 2017 2:43 PM
To: Board of Education <board@schools.utah.gov>
Subject: Health and Political Values

Dear Board,

I am concerned about the move toward making "health" a very politically charged, compulsory class for Utah students.

As national organizations like Planned Parenthood and the national CSE sexuality standards groups push for their narrow definitions of values to become widely adopted, know that this is not what the majority of people in Utah want taught to children or teens.

Let localities decide if they want to push that or any other political / health agenda on children under the banner of education.

Don't mandate it for everyone.

Thank you for your consideration.

Christel Swasey
Teacher and mother
Pleasant Grove

Utah State Board of Education Members and State Superintendent:

Thank you for providing time for public comment on Administrative Rule R277-700: The Elementary and Secondary School General Core.

After hearing and reading the public comments, I have one serious question which I would like considered and addressed please:

In your deliberation and discussions as a Board regarding this Rule, will you be attributing equal or differential weight to the comments provided by individuals in contrast to representatives of and in most cases, professional groups?

I raise this question because, although Royce Van Tassell, executive director of the Utah Association of Public Charter Schools, said he believes people on both sides of the issue made compelling arguments, the preponderance of professional experience based evidence is clearly more “compelling”.

After considering the attached simplified “T” chart, and respecting the professionals’ authority in educational experience that is incumbent on you as a State Board to discuss and address the aforementioned question.

Thank you for your service, time, and consideration.

Sincerely,

Ryan Anderson

Active Retired Teacher

On one hand you have:

- A “Millennial” Mother of two pre-teens who believes 7th& 8th grade students are astute enough to self-determine their Middle School course choices.
- A former Board member and computer software salesman who believes in “Freedom of Choice-Freedom of action” “Agency” education based in choice in the hands of parents and children not compulsion...”sovereignty”...
- A young “beginning my 3rd year” local school board member who had a very successful committee meeting therefore supporting local control and family choice.
- A young Mother raised in Antimony (pop.122) who suggested that others could do what her family had done to learn music and trade muffins for lessons or find a Mormon Tabernacle Choir member in the Ward to provide singing lessons.
- A paid lobbyist and Executive Director representing Utah Charter Schools members who would find financial benefit in not having to provide required elective offerings at the middle school level and having local control of their resources.

Contrasted with:

- Two rural Superintendents suggesting that research based decision making is what matters in making better choices.
- U.ofU. Dept. of Health Representative who presented 5 reasons important for Health Education and posited that with individual choice you don’t know what you’re missing.
- Utah Nurses Association Representative stated concerns about basic humanity no longer being important for youth.
- A 40 year Licensed Professional Educator with experience and committee meetings ranging from teaching, to business administration, to superintendent...now local school board member clearly suggesting Board reconsideration of R277-700.
- Representatives from the Utah Cultural Alliance, through both powerful student performance and 3,500 signatures along with the Utah Music Teachers Association shared their mutual concerns about potential unintended consequences of this Board Rule for the life-transitioning Middle grades.
- Both elected Presidents of Utah’s two Professional Education Associations representing the majority of licensed professional educators in Utah and speaking not only from their own years of experience, but also the vast historical experience of professional educators, suggested reconsideration after further research-based information

-----Original Message-----

From: Kaye Volk [<mailto:kwvolk@digis.net>]

Sent: Wednesday, October 4, 2017 3:16 PM

To: Board of Education <board@schools.utah.gov>

Subject: R277-700

To Members of the Utah State Board of Education, I am a grandmother here in Davis County. I was raised in Davis County and raised six children in this school district and am watching as several of my twenty-two grandchildren are being educated in Davis County Schools.

I have been keenly aware of some of the changes that have come to our schools in the ensuing years. Most positive, some concerning. I have recently become aware of a serious breach, in my opinion, in the trust we have placed on our educators and those who make the decisions within our state and counties.

This came as a granddaughter, now a Senior at Clearfield High School, told me that during a discussion regarding American History, that the teacher she had during her Junior year, informed them that the Founders, such as George Washington and Alexander Hamilton (by name) and others, were "evil" men, due to one issue only and of course that was the fact that they were slave owners.

I was shocked, as was she, as the teacher basically apologized for having to teach such a thing, but it was in the text book and his hands were tied.

In discussion with Mona Andrus, I learned that there is hope in R277-700 and that is hopefully, the future will allow us a greater say in what our children are being taught and that there will be an increasing ability for more local control.

I also realize that you, as a Board, are now considering stepping back from that ruling.

I also understand that this ruling does not specify American History studies, but with this first step in the right direction, the chance may present itself for more local control in this area of our children's education.

I have faith that each of you would have been shocked if a child or grandchild had told you that the Founder's were evil men and thus, diminishing everything they accomplished to one simple, regrettable fact that was far more the reality in 1776 than anyone is comfortable with in 2017. Still, the harm that this "history through a straw" is counterintuitive in teaching children that we are never the less a nation of incredible hope and promise for the millions that have come here and the countless that would be here tomorrow, if they could.

I know this is long and may not be as eloquent as I would have hoped it might be, but I plead with you to let R277-700 stand. I am a firm believer that WE AS THE PEOPLE can and will do a terrific job in educating our children, with open and honest dialogue, if given the opportunity.

Thank you for your service and the hours you spend in this important position that you each hold.

Sincerely,

Kaye Jacobs Volk
2783 South 1000 West
Syracuse, Utah
84075

From: Willow Jeppson <willowjeppson@comcast.net>

Sent: Monday, October 9, 2017 12:32:14 PM

To: Board Rule Comments

Subject: Public comment re: Rule R277-700

Dear Members of the Utah State Board of Education,

I missed the meeting regarding Rule R277-700, but I hope to add my input regarding your recent decision to change the middle school requirements, no longer requiring fine arts, health or PE. Will you please record my comments for consideration?

I have four children in the public school system, all of whom are heavily involved in the arts, and I am very concerned about this decision -- not just for my children, but also for the countless other children whose lives it may negatively impact in the future.

I have read the arguments, and I feel that this decision, while intended to give more local control, will be detrimental to our children's education -- **especially** for less affluent children, including those whose parents are not native English speakers. We welcome many refugees and immigrants into our communities, and it's important to provide as good an education for them as for our native-born children. The fine arts and good health shouldn't only be for more affluent families, but if these classes aren't required, fewer kids will take them, fewer classes will be filled, and these VALUABLE classes may very well be dropped!

Children in families with more available free time and expendable income are MUCH more likely to become exposed to fine arts and sports participation as extracurricular activities than children from less affluent families. This decision may well limit our school children's chances at having a more well-rounded, enriched, fulfilling life involving **active participation** in music, dance, theater, and sports. Many children may miss the opportunity to discover the richness in active participation in the arts. Minorities are already underrepresented in fine arts participation in our country, and this decision could definitely help to further that discrepancy!

Many students have become musicians, artists, and actors simply because they were required to take a fine arts credit in middle school. They may never have had the interest, nor discovered and developed their own talent, had they not had exposure **in middle school** because of a fine arts requirement.

Middle school is such a crucial time in a child's life; it helps shape what that child will do with his life in high school and beyond. If children do not get an exposure to the fine arts at an early age, they will be even less likely to start as a beginner in high school, especially since many other children who do arts in high school have had lessons or other forms of participation for years. **They might never discover that they have a talent for and love of singing, painting, drawing, sculpting or acting!** That would be a tragedy: for any child to miss out on these life enriching experiences because they never had the chance to try. If it's not a requirement, chances are good that middle school kids won't opt to try the arts, thinking that it applies to others but not themselves. My four children have, for the most part, loved their art, music, choir and orchestra and PE classes. If they don't love it, they don't have to pursue it further -- but at least they had the option! And in families who aren't as affluent, the fine arts are often seen as the domain of the privileged -- inapplicable to their lives, and inaccessible.

It is surprising, even shocking, that you would consider eliminating the requirement for health and PE classes. While many parents may discuss and model healthy habits and healthy lifestyle for their children, many do not. It's crucial that our children learn about how to create a healthy diet to help avoid obesity, diabetes and other diseases, and to learn about alcohol and tobacco use, drug use, and mental health/stress management. Students can sometimes even use the health teacher as a counselor, talking to him/her about depression, drug use and other things that they face. We have to face the hard fact: many students DO NOT get this information at home from their parents. Even children whose families do value and model good health choices may have a hard time finding time and opportunity for their children to exercise sufficiently during the week. This provides needed **exercise, which is good for the brain and for learning**, besides for the body.

Middle school is a key time in a child's life, and our goal should be not just to give them a good "book education" but also to educate the child holistically. As they try their hand at the arts, and learn information and develop habits that will allow them to maintain good physical and emotional health, they will take that whole-education with them into high school, and beyond. Middle school definitely helps shape what kind of adults they will become!

Please do not allow schools to eliminate these requirements. If it's easier for schools to eliminate these programs, it's likely that many will do so, for scheduling or staffing reasons. Especially as fewer kids opt to take them, because it's not a requirement, classes will be closed and valuable educational options lost. Please consider what is best for children -- especially those children whose parents may not have the time, inclination, knowledge, or skills to advocate for them! Children can become more than they even know they have potential for -- but they will never know that, if they don't have the chance to try! Requiring these courses will put a greater number of children on the path of a well-rounded education and a fuller, richer life.

Thank you for your consideration,

Sincerely,

Willow Jeppson

Salt Lake City School District parent

From: Diana Alm <dianaalm08@gmail.com>

Sent: Wednesday, October 11, 2017 9:32:03 AM

To: Board Rule Comments

Subject: I support middle school requirements rule change

Hello,

This is Diana Alm. My husband, Austin is a teacher and taught in Alpine for almost 10 years. We both support the middle school requirements rule change. Parents and students have the right and responsibility to make their OWN choices without the state dictating to them what and to do regarding electives. It provides our students the needed autonomy they deserve.

Thank you,

Diana and Austin Alm