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For Immediate Release

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### **Data Shows Improvement in Attendance, Less Absenteeism in Utah**

SALT LAKE CITY – The Utah State Board of Education (USBE) is pleased to announce that the chronic absenteeism rate across the state has decreased. Chronic absenteeism, which is defined as missing 10 percent or more school days per year, was sitting at 23.8 percent for the 2023-2024 school year. During the 2022-2023 year, both the national average and Utah rates were at 26%. While the national average held steady at 26 percent, Utah has shown improvement and is continuing to inch closer to pre-pandemic levels of attendance.

To encourage continued progress, USBE is working closely with cohorts of local education agencies that have been identified as having higher than average absenteeism levels. Staff has been assisting these schools and districts with development of teams, systems, multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) structures, and stakeholder engagement. Furthermore, USBE will be releasing an Attendance Toolkit to assist Utah schools with attendance best practices, as well as developing a Statewide Attendance campaign with multiple stakeholders.

“Addressing chronic absenteeism requires all hands on deck. A multi-faceted approach among families, districts, and the State will be the most effective way to ensure continued improvement and reduce the amount of valuable classroom time that is missed,” said State Superintendent of Public Instruction Sydnee Dickson.

Local education agencies have been on board with implementing creative strategies to foster student attendance, such as hosting educational events for parents in multiple languages, increased

real-time communication with parents through phone applications, and creating attendance teams that explore barriers to attendance. Their increased attention to this matter, along with USBE's ongoing efforts, is expected to combat absenteeism rates during the current school year.

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