

**RESOLUTION PROMOTING MODERATELY
SIZED SCHOOLS**

2005 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: David N. Cox

Senate Sponsor: Dan R. Eastman

LONG TITLE

General Description:

This concurrent resolution of the Legislature and the Governor encourages more moderately sized, simple, community-based neighborhood schools.

Highlighted Provisions:

This resolution:

- ▶ encourages local school boards, to the extent feasible, to build more moderately sized, simple, community-based neighborhood schools; and
- ▶ urges the State Office of Education to foster research on innovative ways to create smaller schools.

Special Clauses:

None

Be it resolved by the Legislature of the state of Utah, the Governor concurring therein:

WHEREAS, research indicates that smaller school size is the second most important factor in creating positive educational outcomes, after socioeconomic status;

WHEREAS, large schools are expensive to individuals, their communities, and the nation because there are many hidden transportation and security costs;

WHEREAS, there are also higher costs per graduate, as well as societal costs for increased crime rates;

WHEREAS, smaller school size promotes learning and improves grades and test scores of students, especially minorities and low-income students;

WHEREAS, research shows that school dropout rates decrease in smaller schools;

WHEREAS, student behavioral problems, including truancy, classroom disruption, vandalism, aggression, theft, alcohol and substance abuse, and gang participation, occur more often in larger schools;

WHEREAS, creating smaller schools and smaller learning communities within larger schools promotes school safety;

WHEREAS, smaller schools, including schools with wider grade configurations, reduce the feeling of isolation, allow students to form closer relationships with teachers, and create a sense of student loyalty to and pride in the school;

WHEREAS, researchers have concluded that the first step in ending secondary school violence is to break through the impersonal atmosphere of large secondary schools by creating smaller learning communities within large schools;

WHEREAS, research demonstrates that students who attend smaller schools are more likely to participate in extracurricular activities and to participate in a greater variety of extracurricular activities;

WHEREAS, large schools contribute to negative teacher attitudes and low staff morale; and

WHEREAS, smaller schools can be established in a cost-effective manner, as the sheer size of larger schools requires more administrative support:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah, the Governor concurring therein, encourage local school boards, to the extent feasible, to build more moderately sized, simple, community-based neighborhood schools.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature and the Governor urge the State Office of Education to foster the spread of research for furthering innovative ways of creating smaller schools.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to each school board in the state of Utah, the Utah State Board of Education, and the Utah State Office of Education.