HIGH EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

WHEREAS,   More than half of all students with disabilities spend at least 80% of their school day in general education classes; there are students with disabilities in practically every classroom in Utah's public schools and the greatest in-school factor impacting student achievement is instruction quality; what happens between teachers and students in our nation's classrooms has a significant impact on student learning and achievement [1; 2; 3; 8]; and

WHEREAS,   More than 80% of students who qualify for services under IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) in Utah have disabilities classified as mild to moderate disabilities such as, speech delays, learning disabilities, dyslexia, and other impairments such as attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), sensory processing disorder or mental health conditions; students who receive Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) or have 504 plans are a widely varied group with a variety of needs; the individual strengths and weaknesses of each student should be considered when making educational decisions [1; 3; 5]; and

WHEREAS,   There is a significant and persistent gap between the achievement of students with disabilities and students without disabilities; having high expectations for all students helps develop an understanding that students with disabilities are first and foremost general education students; students with disabilities need quality general education instruction in addition to targeted interventions and accommodations for students with disabilities; access to assistive technology and accommodations significantly improves success in both special education and general education classrooms; time in general education settings often leads to fewer absences, less disruptive behavior, and better outcomes after high school; having students with disabilities in the general education setting also leads to new learning opportunities for students without disabilities [1; 2; 4; 5; 10]; and

WHEREAS, As has been shown in numerous studies, there is a crucial relationship between teacher expectations of students with disabilities and higher levels of achievement of students with disabilities, also parental expectations are essential; across all variables, parental aspirations and expectations for their children's educational academic achievement has the strongest relationship with achievement; students' mindsets also play a key role in their motivation and achievement [4; 6; 7]; and

WHEREAS, Upholding high expectations for all students and promoting cooperative relationships between students of all abilities can reduce the high incidence of stigmatization and lack of disclosure among students with disabilities due to feelings of shame or fear of being bullied; students would benefit by forming positive relationships and friendships and learning how to be more at ease with a variety of people [1; 2; 9]; now, therefore, be it

Resolved,   That Utah PTA and its constituent associations encourage all stakeholders in the educational system – teachers (both general and special education), parents, administrators, and members of the community – to have and maintain high

expectations for all students, including students with disabilities, including the students holding high expectations of themselves; and be it further

Resolved, That Utah PTA and its constituent associations collaborate with the entire school community to include children with disabilities and their families in all school activities to promote cooperative relationships between students of all abilities through experiences such as peer mentoring, collaborative problem solving, and cooperative working groups, as well as through more casual or unstructured interactions, and including having a relevant general educator present at IEP meetings; and be it further

Resolved, That Utah PTA and its constituent associations support funding for ongoing pre service training and professional development for all teachers regarding adapting instruction to meet the needs of students with disabilities in the general education classroom; accommodations that improve access to the general curriculum; and high expectations for all students with regards to both academics and behavior; and be it further

Resolved, That Utah PTA and its constituent associations support schools in implementing best practices in meeting the needs of diverse students through such practices as inclusion, Universal Design for Learning (UDL), Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), Response to Intervention (RTI), and any other similar instructional practices to support instruction from a Core content expert, and access to accommodations including assistive technology for students with disabilities, that these students be enabled to go as far as possible toward achieving their full potential and living a meaningful, fulfilling life.

(This resolution updates and replaces EDU 2017-1 to align with the National PTA Resolution passed at the National PTA Convention in 2018)

References

1. Horowitz, S. H., Rawe, J., & Whittaker, M. C. (2017). The State of Learning Disabilities: Understanding the 1 in 5. New York: National Center for Learning Disabilities. Retrieved November 07, 2017, from https://www.ncld.org/wp content/uploads/2017/03/Executive-Summary.Fin_.03142017.pdf

2. Mader, J. (2017). Is Teacher Preparation Failing Students With Disabilities? Retrieved November 08, 2017, from https://www.disabilityscoop.com/2017/03/08/is teacher-failing-disabilities/23421/

3. National Center for Education Statistics & U.S. Department of Education. (2017). Children and Youth with Disabilities. Retrieved November 08, 2017, from https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator_cgg.asp

4. Cameron, D. L., & Cook, B. G. (2013). General Education Teachers' Goals and Expectations for their Included Students with Mild and Severe Disabilities. *Education Training in Autism and Developmental Disabilities, 48*(1). Retrieved January 5, 2018, from http://daddcec.org/Portals/0/CEC/Autism_Disabilities/Research/Publications/Education_ Tr aining_Development_Disabilities/ETADD_48(1)_18-30.pdf

5. Office of Special Education Programs. (n.d.). Understanding Disabilities. Retrieved November 08, 2017, from https://ccrs.osepideasthatwork.org/teachers-social emotional-behavior/understanding-disabilities

6. Papay, C. K., PhD, & Bambara, L. M., EdD. (2013). Best Practices in Transition to Adult Life for Youth With Intellectual Disabilities. Retrieved November 08, 2017, from http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/2165143413486693

7. Dweck, C. (2017, September 01). Carol Dweck Revisits the 'Growth Mindset'. Retrieved November 08, 2017, from http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2015/09/23/carol-dweck-revisits-the-growth mindset.html

8. Dolan, E. W. (2014). Students labeled with a learning disability face lowered expectations from parents and teachers. *PsyPost*. Retrieved January 5, 2018, from http://www.psypost.org/2014/01/students-labeled-with-a-learning-disability-face lowered-expectations-from-parents-and-teachers-21918

9. Musgrove, M., & Yudin, M.K., United States Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, (n.d.). Bullying of Students with Disabilities [Letter written August 20, 2013 to Dear Colleague]. Retrieved January 5, 2018 from https://www2.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/idea/memosdcltrs/bullyingdcl 8-20-13.pdf

10. Grabiec, J. (2017, June 08). Assistive Technology Can Benefit All Students. Retrieved November 08, 2017, from https://www.edutopia.org/blog/assistive technology-can-benefit-all-students-jenny-grabiec