

1 **CONCURRENT RESOLUTION CELEBRATING THE**
2 **CONTRIBUTIONS OF MULTILINGUAL AND**
3 **MULTICULTURAL FAMILIES TO UTAH SCHOOLS**

4 2021 GENERAL SESSION

5 STATE OF UTAH

6 **Chief Sponsor: Dan N. Johnson**

7 Senate Sponsor: _____

9 **LONG TITLE**

10 **General Description:**

11 This concurrent resolution of the Legislature and the Governor recognizes the
12 contributions of multilingual and multicultural families to Utah's schools and
13 recognizes the state's previous support for Utah's multilingual and multicultural
14 families.

15 **Highlighted Provisions:**

16 This resolution:

- 17 ▶ celebrates the contributions of multilingual and multicultural families to Utah's
- 18 schools, recognizes the state's previous support for Utah's multilingual and
- 19 multicultural families;
- 20 ▶ encourages schools to utilize the "Parent and Family Engagement" self-reported
- 21 indicators in the statewide school accountability system to highlight efforts to
- 22 engage multilingual and multicultural families in conjunction with the federal Title I
- 23 Compliance Cycle;
- 24 ▶ encourages the State Board of Education to expand the "Parent and Family
- 25 Engagement" sample indicators to include metrics specific to multilingual and
- 26 newcomer family engagement; and
- 27 ▶ encourages the Education Interim Committee to review the information made



28 available through the Statewide School Accountability System regarding multilingual and
29 newcomer family engagement and district's family engagement policies in 2022.

30 **Special Clauses:**

31 None



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

34 WHEREAS, in 2018 HR 3, the Legislature has previously recognized the value and
35 importance of international and linguistic education for:

36 1. Utah’s “increased global awareness,” including an “appreciation for differences
37 among cultures and a deeper understanding of the values and perspectives of other people”;

38 2. Utah’s ability to contribute to a “foreign trade market that international businesses
39 seek out because of the state’s workforce”;

40 3. Utah’s ability to contribute to “international collaboration that is required to
41 important breakthroughs in research and technology”; and

42 4. Utah’s students' ability to successfully “seek careers in a global marketplace and
43 enhance understanding of other nations’ cultures, values, and beliefs”;

44 WHEREAS, in 2008 SB 41, the Legislature has previously recognized the value of
45 international and linguistic education for Utah's students' overall "academic, societal, and
46 economic development";

47 WHEREAS, the Legislature has formerly invested in programming to celebrate and
48 expand multilingualism across the state, including through the creation of dual immersion
49 programs, the adoption of a biliteracy seal program, Adult Education English Language
50 Acquisition resources, and software for English Learners;

51 WHEREAS, native Utahns similarly demonstrate support for multilingualism across
52 the state, through their volunteer work to welcome refugees and newcomers, their acquisition
53 of additional languages through volunteer religious service, and their work as translators and
54 interpreters for both religious and secular organizations;

55 WHEREAS, as recognized in 2018 HR 3, newcomers and families learning English,
56 similarly to international students, "contribute diversity to local communities, promote
57 understanding of different cultures, and create important worldwide relationships";

58 WHEREAS, the language proficiency of English learners and newcomer families is

59 invaluable to our military, churches, and businesses, enabling them to communicate with the
60 world, and extends to over 80 languages, including, Arabic, Amharic, Burmese, Chinese, Farsi,
61 French, Hakha Chin, Karen, Kinyarwanda, Korean, Navajo, Nepali, Oromo, Pashto,
62 Portuguese, Russian, Somali, Spanish, Swahili, Tigrinya, Ukrainian, and Vietnamese;

63 WHEREAS, 52,788 English Learner students were enrolled in Utah schools in 2021,
64 which is approximately 8% of the total student population;

65 WHEREAS, newcomers and English Learners continually demonstrate a desire and
66 ability to obtain English proficiency through participation in English as a Second Language
67 classes and programs;

68 WHEREAS, the state demonstrates a commitment to prioritizing and accurately
69 measuring English Learner progress in the Statewide School Accountability System, weighting
70 English Learner progress as 9% of an elementary school's or middle school's overall score or
71 6% of a high school's overall score if a school has ten or more English Learners who took the
72 WIDA ACCESS assessment in the current and prior year;

73 WHEREAS, the Legislature formerly codified the recognition, in Section [53E-2-301](#),
74 that "parents are a child's first teachers and are responsible for the education of their children,"
75 and encourages "family engagement and adequate preparation so that students enter the public
76 education system ready to learn";

77 WHEREAS, Section [53E-2-201](#) similarly describes the responsibility of the
78 Legislature, the State Board of Education, local school boards, and charter school governing
79 boards as respecting, protecting, and furthering "the interests of parents in their children's
80 public education" and promoting and encouraging "full and active participation and
81 involvement of parents at all public schools";

82 WHEREAS, the Utah Parent-Teacher's Association's resolution entitled, "Family
83 Engagement in Education," affirms that "research has shown that the most significant predictor
84 of a student's academic success is parental engagement in the student's education, regardless of
85 socioeconomic status, ethnic/racial background, or parents' educational level";

86 WHEREAS, multilingual and newcomer families are also their children's first teachers,
87 responsible for the education of their children, and have significant and unique contributions to
88 make to Utah's public school system;

89 WHEREAS, the Legislature, the State Board of Education, local school boards, and

90 charter school governing boards are obligated to respect, protect, and further the interests of
91 multilingual and newcomer parents in their children's public education, and promote and
92 encourage their full and active participation and involvement in all public schools;

93 WHEREAS, the Utah public school system has successfully invested in supporting
94 newcomer and multilingual families through the Tumaini Welcome and Transition Center,
95 family engagement centers, family-to-family mentorship programs, school community
96 councils, paraeducators, home visits, and academic parent-teacher teams;

97 WHEREAS, multilingual and newcomer families contribute rigorously to their
98 children's education and their schools, often overcoming significant barriers to engagement,
99 including:

- 100 1. language barriers;
- 101 2. lack of familiarity with the United States school systems;
- 102 3. lack of formal education;
- 103 4. lack of access to digital devices, Internet service, digital literacy, or tech support;
- 104 5. varying cultural expectations;
- 105 6. limited transportation options;
- 106 7. childcare responsibilities; and
- 107 8. irregular or extended work hours;

108 WHEREAS, the federal Title I compliance monitoring cycle will measure family
109 engagement in December of 2022; and

110 WHEREAS, the state of Utah would benefit from a state-wide examination of
111 newcomer and multilingual family engagement practices, particularly if this examination places
112 no additional burden on teachers and administrators due to federal requirements, to identify
113 existing best practices, to identify areas of improvement, and to ensure these families are
114 supported in their efforts to contribute to the public school system:

115 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah, the
116 Governor concurring therein, hereby celebrates and values the existing contributions of
117 multilingual and newcomer families to Utah's public education system, despite the barriers they
118 face in doing so.

119 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature and the Governor recognize the
120 critical importance of multilingual and newcomer family engagement to improving the

121 academic outcomes of multilingual and newcomer students and their ability to contribute to
122 Utah's economy, Utah's society, and follow their own dreams and aspirations.

123 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature and the Governor commit to
124 supporting the contributions of multilingual and newcomer families, with similar vigor as the
125 State commits to other multilingual programming and family engagement efforts.

126 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature and the Governor encourage all
127 schools to utilize the "Parent and Family Engagement" self-reported indicators of the Statewide
128 School Accountability System during the 2022 cycle, highlighting their efforts to support
129 multilingual and newcomer families.

130 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature and the Governor encourage the
131 State Board of Education to expand the "Parent and Family Engagement" sample indicators to
132 include metrics specific to multilingual and newcomer family engagement.

133 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature and the Governor encourage the
134 Education Interim Committee to review the information made available through the Statewide
135 School Accountability System regarding multilingual and newcomer family engagement and
136 district's family engagement policies in 2022.