



Executive Summary

Utah Online School

Washington County School District

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Introduction

Every school has its own story to tell. The context in which teaching and learning takes place influences the processes and procedures by which the school makes decisions around curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The context also impacts the way a school stays faithful to its vision. Many factors contribute to the overall narrative such as an identification of stakeholders, a description of stakeholder engagement, the trends and issues affecting the school, and the kinds of programs and services that a school implements to support student learning.

The purpose of the Executive Summary (ES) is to provide a school with an opportunity to describe in narrative form the strengths and challenges it encounters. By doing so, the public and members of the school community will have a more complete picture of how the school perceives itself and the process of self-reflection for continuous improvement. This summary is structured for the school to reflect on how it provides teaching and learning on a day to day basis.

Description of the School

Describe the school's size, community/communities, location, and changes it has experienced in the last three years. Include demographic information about the students, staff, and community at large. What unique features and challenges are associated with the community/communities the school serves?

Utah Online School 7-12 is based in Washington County, the most southwestern county in the state of Utah. According to the United States Census Bureau, the population of the county is over 144,809. Utah Online 7-12 currently has 396 active students. There are 144 full time (in district) students, 214 part-time in-district students, and 38 part-time out of district students. Although the majority of our students are residents of Washington county, we have students from all over the state of Utah. Utah Online school is 1.5% Asian, 1.5% African American, 87% Caucasian, 6.3% Hispanic, 1.7% Native American, 1.7% Pacific Islander which compares with the Washington County demographics of .8% Asian, .8% African American, 85.4% Caucasian, 9.9% Hispanic, .9% Native American and Pacific Islander. We employ thirteen certified teachers, two school counselors, and four mentors. Our school has doubled in size in the last two years. We experience significant growth in our student population that exceeds our expectations every semester. This growth has also increased the number of staff members and teachers that we employ.

Also, when our school was first started, we did not have actual teachers who worked solely for Utah Online. Teachers at that time all worked full-time somewhere else in our district and were hired as adjunct faculty for our school. Teachers were paid per student that enrolled in their courses. While it was the reality that we did not have the student numbers to justify an actual staff, this caused several challenges for our students: being able to reach teachers and get help was difficult as they could only be reached during prep times and after 3:00 pm. Response turn around time was not ideal and it was difficult for students to feel connected. Further the curriculum provider for the school has changed for the past 3 years. This is honestly seen as a positive. The school quickly realized that the provider they were using the first year was not meeting student needs and that the content was lacking, so a change was made. And while the 2nd year's provider was better, still there was much room for improvement.

Lastly, the school has also experience administrative changes over the past 3 years. The original administrator for the school left in January 2012 which required new leadership to be hired, trained etc... Again, while this was also a change for the better it was not without the inevitable challenges that come with change.

Our students face many unique challenges. Some of our students have chosen our online environment due to health problems, behavior problems, or problems with being bullied. Other students are spending the majority of their daytime hours at college or working and have chosen to finish their high school credits online. Some only want to take a few classes and others are enrolled with the school full-time. Each student's needs vary and making sure to align decisions with what is best for all students can be challenging.

School's Purpose

Provide the school's purpose statement and ancillary content such as mission, vision, values, and/or beliefs. Describe how the school embodies its purpose through its program offerings and expectations for students.

UTAH ONLINE SCHOOL MISSION & GOALS

Utah Online School 7-12 guarantees individualized high levels of learning for all students. We accomplish this by providing:

- Access to researched-based curriculum that provides multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate comprehension
- Ensure regular contact/interaction with teachers and school staff to assist in student's academic needs
- Communicate with parents and students regarding important events in advance
- Provide Social Opportunities so students experience a well-rounded educational experience
- Use testing/data to determine student needs

Our School Motto is: CHAMPION INDIVIDUAL GROWTH

At Utah Online School, we are able to accomplish our goal of individualized high levels of learning for all students by using a curriculum that allows students to work at their own pace and according to their needs and by holding weekly live sessions that meet the specific and immediate needs of our students. As a staff, we also record our live sessions and hold additional sessions as needed. This allows us to give our students the repetition and differentiation they need as well as to challenge our students who are working ahead.

Students are expected to log in and complete work in their courses weekly and also attend the live sessions and participate. We are able to support students who are having problems logging in and other technical problems by having tech support and teachers who are able to help troubleshoot problems. Every student is also assigned a mentor that helps them with managing their course work and to support them with any other problems they have.

Notable Achievements and Areas of Improvement

Describe the school's notable achievements and areas of improvement in the last three years. Additionally, describe areas for improvement that the school is striving to achieve in the next three years.

Utah Online School has doubled in size over the last couple of years and we continue to see growth that exceeds our expectations every semester. The success rate of our students continues to increase as well. Last semester we had 80% completion.

Our school is going through growing pains. We are working hard to identify the needs of our school and differing student body and address them in an improvement plan.

Additional Information

Provide any additional information you would like to share with the public and community that were not prompted in the previous sections.

We have a sister school, Utah Online K-8, that provides online elementary education to students in the state of Utah. Many of our students "grow out" of the online elementary program and join our school for their secondary education.

Also, starting in 2014, our school will be blending with all the high schools and middle schools within our district. Students will take classes taught by our teachers at a lab located at their boundary school. Based on preliminary data, we project to add a minimum of 500 part time students the upcoming year.