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See Royce? I guess this is you and – everybody else has wireless.

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OK.

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So we're going to take this one out for audience questions?
Okay, great.

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OK.

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If I mix up the order, we're going to try and kind of keep track as we pass it back and forth. If you guys will let me know if I've messed up the order? OK.

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I'm going to start with this though.

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Changing the – Good evening. My name is Royce Van Tassell. I am the Executive Director of the Utah Association of Public Charter Schools, and we are one of the members of the Utah Education Debate Coalition. We are thrilled that all of you are here – This is what? I think our 13th of 14 debates for our State Board of Education. We will conclude tomorrow night with our last debate in District 10 which is over in Draper.

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is what? I think our 13th of 14 debates for our State Board of Education. We will conclude tomorrow night with our last debate in District 10 which is over in Draper. We are thrilled that we've had so many people come out to meet candidates, ask questions – we really are thrilled. The members of the Utah Education Debate Coalition and our guests for on stage and include KSL, The Sutherland Institute, Hinckley Institute of Politics, United Way of Salt Lake, and of course you just heard the Utah Association of Public Charter Schools. We want to especially thank Syracuse Arts Academy for hosting us here this evening. They've been very gracious in letting us use their beautiful facility.

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I know some of the candidates took a moment to tour the facility – I'm

sure we can arrange that after the debate if that's something that you would like. Let me give you a brief overview of what to expect this evening. In just a moment, we're going to have a Pledge of Allegiance that will be lead by Taylor Sacks. He is a seventh grader on the tech crew. He's set up my mic and everybody else's mic. We really appreciate his help as well as his other team members. Then, after Taylor is done leading us in the pledge, our moderator, Ethan Miller from KSL News Radio and a good friend of mine, will lead the show the rest of the evening. We have set aside rules and candidates have agreed to respond...at the candidate's discretion. Ethan will explain the specifics of that when he takes over. We are thrilled that we've had so many people come out to meet candidates, ask questions - we really are thrilled. The members of the Utah Education Debate Coalition and our guests for on stage and include KSL, The Sutherland Institute, Hinckley Institute of Politics, United Way of Salt Lake, and of course you just heard the Utah Association of Public Charter Schools. We want to especially thank Syracuse Arts Academy for hosting us here this evening. They've been very gracious in letting us use their beautiful facility. The first half hour, we will have specific questions lead by the moderator. The second half, we will take this mic that I have here out to you and take questions from you. I don't think there is anything else, that's probably it. So without further ado, Taylor, will you lead us in the Pledge?

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Please join me in the Pledge of Allegiance. I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic which it stands one nation under God indivisible with liberty and justice for all. Thank you Royce. We all set here? All right, can you all hear me OK? Thank you so much for coming today to this debate. We really appreciate it. Just to give you a little heads up, we are live streaming this debate online and we're also recording the debate and the recording and the transcripts of the debate are made

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available at KSL.com. So you can go there, you can share the audio with friends, you can go back review some of these answers, you can hear what other candidates are saying in other districts as well. So we hope that you'll find that will be a great great resource so

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even though we haven't filled this auditorium this evening, what happens tonight will go far and a lot of people will be able to see and hear these

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candidates responses and ideas and they'll be able to cast an informed vote this evening. So we really hope that you will do your part to share this debate information when it shows up online. You can watch for that on social media as well through the

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various partner organizations in this debate organization. Now as Royce mentioned, we do have a few rules. We're going to start like this.

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I have a few questions that I'm going to pose as moderator. Oh no, I'm sorry - I'm getting ahead of myself. The first thing we're going to do is each of the candidates is going to

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give an opening statement. We'll give them two minutes each for that opening statement. We did a coin toss. Dave Thomas will take the first two minutes. Jennifer Graviet, the second two minutes. And then at the end for the closing statements, we will go in that same order with Dave Thomas going first Jennifer Graviet going second so Dave will open this debate. And Jennifer will close it. In between, time will kind of pass the questions back and forth between them. With each question that I ask, the candidates will be offered one minute each in response and then we'll also give them an opportunity for a one minute rebuttal if they so choose to

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take it. After a couple of questions, we'll pass it off to you, the audience to ask some questions of your own so please be thinking of something you'd like to ask about. You're welcome to ask a question on the same topic we may have already covered, you don't have to cover new ground. Just look for the information that you really want. A couple of tips: One is if you can, write it down even if you kind of punch it into your phone ahead of time. That will help you maybe deliver it if you have the tendency to ramble. We'd like to keep everything as tight as possible, give people as much opportunity to be heard as we possibly can. Rachel is our time keeper tonight so she has a

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series of cards. She has a 30 second card, a 10 second card, and a time card. So those are for the candidates. You can watch for those as your cues once it hits time, I'm going to find say the least awkward way to interrupt you. OK. So we're going to start with Dave Thomas and two minutes for an opening statement. Thank you, Ethan. Thank you, Jennifer. I appreciate this wonderful facility, Syracuse Arts Academy.

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I pride myself on being a commonsense conservative who is able to bring diverse parties together with differing ideas and come to a resolution of problems. I've done that historically on the State Board of Education. That's my record when I was a state senator. In doing

so, I'm guided by four principles: One, transparency. I believe in open government. Two, local control. I believe the State Board should establish a framework within which school districts and charters can operate and have flexibility, doing the best

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for their own students. Three, best interest should control and four, parental choice. I believe that parents are in charge of the education of their children. We should be giving them educational opportunities and a menu of options they can choose from. I'm reform-minded. That means that I believe that there are always better way to do things

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and I'm open to that and open to thinking outside the box.

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The prism by which I view things in public education over the last years that I've been on the state board and going forward is college and career readiness.

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Our kids have to be college and career ready. We live in a global marketplace. And according to George Washington – a Georgetown University study, by 2020 – in four years – 66 percent of all our jobs are going to require some kind of post-secondary education. We need to be prepared. Our kids need to be educated and we have to have an

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educated workforce

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so those jobs stay here and don't go outside. Thank you. And two minutes to Jennifer Graviett. I also want to thank everyone for being here and the moderator and this beautiful facility. I think it's safe to say that we all care about education. I really really think those of you put the time and effort to actually showing your care for public education.

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That's why we're here. I think it's safe to say that's why we're here and that's why we're running. I was thinking the other day, if you would have told me a year ago that I would be running, that I would be at a debate for the State School Board, I think I would have laughed at you. Well, I'm not laughing at you anymore, I'm laughing at myself. But when I think about why I'm doing that I saw a need and I

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decided that I needed to be part of the solution. I needed to get the voice of teachers out there because every day I'm lucky enough to go

in my classroom and to care and to teach and love other people's children, to care and teach and love Utah's children and I see right on the front lines what's happening and I see how it's affecting our students. A little bit of background for those of you who don't know me. I was raised in Weber County, have

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attended Weber County schools, have taught at Weber County schools for 21 years. This is my 22nd year. I've been the department chair for quite a few years and I do have to do

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just a little shout out to my little English department. We have four of us

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and two of them are brand new teachers – excellent brand new teachers. And we just got the

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results from the growth of our SAGE test which was a 65. And for those of you who don't know, a 40 is good.

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65 got us the best growth in our district so I'm really proud of them. As far as degrees go, I have a degree in English and psychology and a master's degree in school counseling. But when it comes down to it, what I'm here for is for the best interests of the kids and I'm running for State School board because I love my profession, I love the kids, I love my students and I love my teachers. Thank you. As we move on to the questions I just want to alert – we've got some great people that are running these microphones. Up here on the stage we're getting just a little bit of gentle feedback. I don't know if there's something that you can kind of you don't

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like that. Are you hearing any feedback in the audience? A little bit? OK. Well we'll let them work on that a little bit to see if we can get that knocked out. But first, I have a few questions and I'm going to pose it to the candidates. As we discussed just ahead of time, we'll be giving the first response back over to Dave Thomas. My first question is this: Every year, we have a lot of very talented young people that start a teaching career but many many many who leave the profession too early. What needs to be done to encourage teachers to stay

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teaching? And pardon me –

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these are one minute responses. With regard to the teacher shortage, it is an entry level teacher shortage and what we find is that our traditionally trained teachers are leaving at a percent about 40 percent attrition the first five years. ARL teachers – those are alternative routes to licensure teachers – are leaving at a smaller rate, about 25 percent per year and there is a

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number of things that we can do. One, we can remove artificial

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barriers to entry into the teaching profession. To expand the base, expand the number of teachers available. The second thing is we can do something with regard to entry level teacher salary. And those demand a specific targeted investment. Right now our teachers are earning on

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average \$35,000 a year. The national average is \$40,000. We need a specific targeted investment by the legislature to up those salaries. But that also means that it does not go for WPU increase. It's specific to those salaries. Thank you. Jennifer Gravier, same question. How would you keep teachers in the profession? Well I talk to teachers every day and yes, it would be helpful to have

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better starting salaries. Yes, it would be helpful to have better salaries for those at the end of the scale to keep them. We have a lot of teachers who are losing money at the end. But when I talk to teachers, the number one thing they say that is frustrating for them, it's a time issue. We are being asked to put more and more and more with less and less time.

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The other thing I would add is we need to professionalize this profession. We need to allow teachers, maybe we have. We take away a planning period so that a teacher can be a mentor or maybe we allow a teacher to do research. One of the things I'm involved in is the Teacher Leadership Initiative which is about growing teacher leaders inside and outside the classroom and that's what we did. Teachers are craving their voices to be heard. They want to be professionals. But really when it comes down to it, they want the time. Thank you. Dave Thomas, a one minute rebuttal to you.

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I mean I agree. Certainly what we've found is having a master teacher mentor is very important in terms of

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retention in the teaching profession and what the state board has done is we've stood up something called a teacher leader as a specific

licensure

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and we provided some specifications on what it takes to be that kind of master teacher mentor of those who are coming into the profession. And one of the things that we've inserted into that, at least right now we're strongly encouraging districts and charters that when they do this they don't have a full schedule for the teacher leader, that the teacher leader gets a bump in salary. I've told superintendents, we're asking you to do this now. If we don't see results and actually doing that, we will probably make it mandatory.

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Thank you. And to Jennifer Graviet, a one minute response. I love that idea. I love the idea of giving teacher leaders extra time, extra pay. It's interesting because, gosh I was part of an educational excellence

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committee. We put together a document for policymakers called "Educators Taking the Lead:

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A Vision for Fostering Excellence in Teaching and Learning". We gave this to policymakers several

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years ago. It had some of those very ideas in it. I know that keeping

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good teachers in the classroom requires mentorship, team teaching. But right now, like last year for example, I saw 220 to 230 students every day. I'm an English teacher. I just would like you to take five minutes for each essay and calculate that in your head for a second. As much as I would love to mentor a new teacher, I have to take care of my own students so we need to build in time and salary to really make this profession keep good teachers. Thank you. Next question we'll go to Jennifer Graviet for an initial response.

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Hypothetical situation: The Speaker of the House or the President of the Senate sit you down personally, just the three of you, and they say, "What changes do we need to make to education funding?" And they're willing to take your best idea. What

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is it?

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Well that's a good question that would be one I would really need to

study. My expertise is in the classroom, but I am concerned that we're trying to – like, I think we need to return to one income tax which is just for K-12. You know, we've added higher education and it's not good to pit higher education with public education. But we lost a lot of money that way. I think that many people would be willing to have their taxes raised a little bit if they knew it would go into our schools because I keep thinking about this quote and I'm not going to quote it correctly, but Terry Thomas Williams says, you know, if the eyes of the future

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are looking back at us and they're begging us to pay attention to what's important and I would just say we've got to prioritize what's important and we need to be creative in finding solutions. And that's something I'd want to study. Thank you. Dave Thomas, same question: Your best idea.

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Actually, this isn't a hypothetical. I've had this discussion with the speaker and the press.

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And it does get back to the 1996 amendment that allowed a higher ed to come into the education fund. The education fund comes from income taxes that used to be 100 percent going to public ed. And the reasoning behind changing it was to allow flexibility in budget. Well today, 80 percent of higher ed is funded by the education fund.

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It has gone way beyond what it would it should have been. What I've asked the

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leadership in the House and the Senate is to return it, return to the original intent or at least make sure that the surpluses all go to public ed are not split between public ed and higher ed. And one minute response to Jennifer Graviet. I – actually I love that you've had that conversation. I think it's 100 percent on that it does need to be returned to public education. Right now when you're in the schools, you see how kids are suffering because I don't have enough money from books and things like that.

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So I think we exactly should do that.

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Thank you Dave. We'll give a one minute response to you as well.

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The follow up is the response has always been well if we do something

like that the impact to higher ed will be higher tuition. And I've said yeah, I recognize that. But Utah has one of the lowest tuitions in the United States and you can't build that lower tuition at the disadvantage of the public schools. Thank you. I have one final question that I'll pose before we go to audience questions and this question goes first response to Dave Thomas.

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Do you support a path to the teaching profession for otherwise non-teaching professionals and if you do, what should that path look like?

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We already have that path and that path is APT.

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We have had alternative routes to licensure for 15 years and it's important to recognize that the literature on this subject also says the same thing: Whether you go through alternative routes to licensure or a traditional route, the effectiveness of the teachers is about the same. What we're trying to do is

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open up the teaching profession to allow more individuals who

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are interested in teaching to come back to profession or to enter into the profession

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later in their lives. If you're in a classroom and your instructor is a CPA and he's teaching math, there's something about having that professional who is able to impart to you how you can really use that math in everyday life, how you can use that math in a profession going

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forward.

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So I don't want to preclude these alternative routes because I think they're important. Thank you. Jennifer Graviet, same question. Well, I have some pretty strong feelings about this just because I see this alternative route as maybe being more a stepping stone away from the

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profession. I think about the time and effort it takes for teachers to get into

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the teaching profession and they're already leaving at such drastic rates. What's going to happen if you just have to get a college degree

and pass a test? You get in there with 35 eighth graders and you decide you don't like it. You haven't even made the investment as much. The student teaching, the pedagogy, those kinds of things. What's going to keep you there? And I think we have to go back to the best thing a child can have in a classroom is a qualified, practiced, educated teacher. And so why take our chances on experimenting? To me, I don't think you experiment with

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with who's teaching your child. And I would ask a parent and say "Would you want your child taught by somebody who is not certified?" That would be my question. Thank you. And we have a one minute response to Dave Thomas, if you like. The attrition rate for alternative route teachers is almost half that

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of traditional and trained teachers and it's not an experiment, it's been going on

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for many many years - 15 years. There is research behind that.

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What's important, though, is that APT changes the gatekeeper. Whereas before the gatekeeper was the University Dean, now it's changed for more local control. The ones who control those licenses are going to be the local superintendent, the principal who is the instructional leader of that school. They're going to be the ones making the decision in terms of pedagogy and those kinds of things for the APT teacher. Plus, you've also got a mandatory three year period to have a master teacher mentor with that APT teacher. So

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I think those are important. And that allows us to move forward and it's not really experimentation. And one minute to Jennifer Graviett. Well I think ARL is a whole different thing than APT, and maybe that's not experimentation, but they actually have pedagogy classes, they're in the classroom working with a teacher similar to student

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teaching. With APT, they don't have to step foot in a classroom before they

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come to teach. To me that's experimentation. And as far as the mentorship, I think it would be great to have the mentorship but again, who's going to be in charge of making sure that district says, you mentor this person and I'm going to give you the time to do it, because without the time, it's not going to work to be able to

mentor somebody coming in. It's even, and I have to say this, even with some of our alternative route licensure teachers, the burden is heavier. We have to help them. They don't know how to set up this or that or even construct a lesson – lesson plans. Some of them just haven't had that experience. And so the burden falls on other teachers in the school building. And really, we should be focusing on students and teachers should come in ready to

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teach from day one. Thank you. We're going to now turn the microphone over to you. Royce has a walking mic back there and he'll bring it around if you'll just raise your hand or stand then he'll be able to bring you the microphone. Just a couple of tips and request: I mentioned before the value of jotting down your question ahead of time. Maybe you

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grabbed one of the notebooks from this back table or typed it in your phone. That's extremely helpful. We

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do ask that you please not make a statement but really ask a question and that you ask a question that – you ask the same question to both candidates. So are you asking the same question. And I think that'll be – that'll work really well. We're going to go with the same format for right now, which is one minute responses and one minute rebuttals. And so our first response will go to Jennifer Graviett. Thank you. Oh, and we also ask that you state your name and where you live. So I guess I should rephrase this question, because I'm not sure who ..

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Jennifer, you have this first response. It's pretty specific. Do you want to go ahead with it?

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I can answer what I know. I think –did you say that junior high standards for science? Okay, that again is something I would have to look at. I know the junior high standards. I'm an English teacher but I would have to look more in depth, I would have to study that because I neither voted for or against it. So that's something I would have to study and look into. Dave Thomas. I did vote on them and when they first came to the board, they parroted the next generation science standards which had a lot of political commentary and not science. And I was one of

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the ones who sent it back to the drawing board to come back not with the next generation science standards, not with a political bias, but instead having a focus on the scientific method. And I think what we've got to in the end was something that was pretty close to

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that without having political commentary as part of science class. Thank you. Since that question was so specific, If you're both ok with it I'm going to allow Jennifer to answer first on this next general question. OK. Who is - who would like the next question? Just raise your hand, stand up....(Indecipherable question asked). Thank

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Just raise your hand, stand up....(Indecipherable question asked).

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you. So you're talking about a study an international study comparing American students to other countries? OK, and so you're asking for - OK.

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Thank OK. Well let's give - let's give her a chance to respond. Thank you so much for your question. I will go one minute to Jennifer Graviet. So I haven't read the specific document you're talking about but I have read quite a few things comparing, you know, American scores to international scores. And it's interesting because I attended a conference in Washington D.C. It was a teaching and learning conference and Pasi Sahlberg was there from Finland and he talked about an interesting phenomenon where when Finland was trying to prove their scores and their educational

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system, he said, we looked at the research that the United States had done. We looked at multiple intelligences, we looked at play in the classroom, we looked at creativity, and we stole those ideas and we incorporated them. And he said, meanwhile America has kind of gone the other direction.

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And he said - he just said, it's interesting that they're moving away from things that would

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make them better. Side note quick, I was in China. I was sent there to study the schools

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and one of the teachers said to me you know why is America trying to be more like us? We want to be more

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like America in terms of innovation, productivity, etc because America's educating all students and we're educating a few.

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Thank you. Dave Thomas, one minute to you. I was at the conference and I certainly read the study. One of the findings of this study is that summative assessment is

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not the way to go. And unfortunately we're kind of locked in because of what

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was No Child Left Behind is now the Every Student Succeeds Act. I've never thought that summative testing, having the autopsy at the end, was very informative to teaching. And what I

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took from the report are two things: One, it's important to have standard-based

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learning, data-set standards that are high quality and rigorous and two, a method of assessing that

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that's formative in nature which means as you learn the concepts, the teacher has the flexibility to assess that

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and then to change the way they're teaching in order to make sure that subject matter is covered. So those are the things I really took from that study. Thank you. And Jennifer Graviett, if you wish, one minute response. Yeah, I just want to echo the whole idea of summative assessment as a teacher. You know I remember when we first started doing the SAGE test, it was kind of frustrating because we didn't get the results until after the students had moved on which felt kind of like, what was the point?

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Well now that we've been doing it for several years, you know, we can pass that data in our department. And actually it's starting to be a benefit. I can look at it broken down, I can see how they do in informative writing, I can see how they read non-fiction versus how they read the literature and it's starting to be used in a summative way. That's becoming helpful. Before, you do a standardized test and never see the score and it will just move on. That was frustrating. Felt like a waste of

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time, but I really do appreciate being able to use things that now I can

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see how kids are growing and they like to see how they're growing like we let them say, look how much you've

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progressed from seventh to ninth grade. Let's look at your informational text writing. So I find summative evaluations very, well – formative assessments very helpful. Thank you. And one minute to Dave Thomas for response. One of the things we are doing in terms of a summative assessment is that I passed the motion on the state board to end SAGE in high school. Instead, go to the ACT and ACT Aspire which better prepares students to be college and career ready. And that would

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take the place of SAGE for 9th, 10th, and 11th grade. So that's one thing that we're doing to try to make it more meaningful. Certainly we're going through a process right now of rebidding the

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RFP on our assessment system. And one of the things, quite frankly, we're

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looking at is can we scale down the summative assessment and

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beef up a formative assessment benchmark test that would be off the

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shelf that teachers could use whether they – and they can they can decide. That's not mandated by the state. So that's one of the things that we're looking at. Thank you. Next question. [Indecipherable question] Thank you so much. First response goes to Dave Thomas. One minute. Obviously the core of that are the scientific or science standards. State board set standards in 12 different areas and science is one of those. We're always looking for upgrading the standards, making them better,

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making them more useful. For science, focusing on the scientific method, providing that literacy. We generally go through standard setting on any subject every three to five years. Standards are not static. So that's one thing we can do. With regard to the curriculum,

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I take the position that that's really a local issue.

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We can set standards and we try to set high rigorous standards, but then we allow our districts and our school teachers to decide how they're going to teach that standard and I'm comfortable allowing them to do that. And certainly if we need additional professional education, we can talk about doing that as well. Thank you. And one minute to Jennifer Graviett. As an English teacher, I've seen a lot of the key goes back to literacy because when we're doing things in my English classes, when we're falling the standards, we are creating students who how to

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think critically, who know how to weigh both sides of the arguments, who know how to provide evidence. This makes them better scientific thinkers as well. And I've seen - we do a

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lot of cross-curricular things. I've seen the science teachers talk to me about my standards and vice versa. And when it comes down to it, we don't want kids to believe anything we say unless they can think critically through it and they can figure out how the

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evidence matches and things like that. So I also,

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I think Dave Thomas is - brings up a good point where the standards aren't static. I mean

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for example, you know when Common Core came out and they said no cursive, well that was revised in Utah and they

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incorporated cursive - like, things can be adjusted. And so we listened to our science teachers and we listened to parents and we listened to students.

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Pardon me. Give me one second.

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I just had a minor coughing fit right there. I'm glad I made it through your response though. You could have - I kept it together. Pardon me one second. We would have used the scientific method to figure it out. You would have understood pretty quickly I think. OK. Thank you so much. So we'll do a one

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minute reply from Dave Thomas. One of the things that we've been trying to

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do with our standards as we upgrade standards across the board is try to make them inner-related to one another. As Jennifer's talked about, making sure that there is a cross-walk between what you learn in English, what you learn in science, what you learn in social studies, trying - and science as well, especially with mathematics as well, especially with science and trying to make it so it fits together in a logical sequence. And so that's part of continual standard setting - trying to make them better. Thank you. And one minute response from Jennifer Graviet.

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do with our standards as we upgrade standards across the board is noticed about our standards. The standards before didn't quite have that cross-walk. Now they do. We're trying to promote the same thing which is thinking, thinking, thinking. And it's sometimes frustrating for our students because they want to be told the answers but it's making them better learners. It's making them better thinkers. And so I really like

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the idea of standards having this cross-walk from one to the next because then it fits in all of their

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classes and it makes sense, so. Thank you. Next question. [Indecipherable question] Oh, I get a one minute response once again! I love the idea because that's one of the things I've noticed about our standards. The standards before didn't quite have that cross-walk. Now they do. We're trying to promote the same thing which is thinking, thinking, thinking. And it's sometimes frustrating for our students because they want to be told the answers but it's making them better learners. It's making them better thinkers. And so I really like Thank you so much. One minute to Jennifer Graviet.

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Well one of the things, it's kind of nice that we have the school board elections differently this year because look at all the interest. I mean, maybe we don't see it in the crowd here, but I think we have a lot more interest because people feel like they have a voice. As far as partisan school board elections go, I am not in favor of that because I think as a school board member or anybody connected to a

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school, you really can't be beholden to an ideology or a party. You're

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beholden to what's best for the children of our state. And I mean, just look at the national politics right now. Look at the divisiveness. Look at the polarity.

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That's not good for kids. That's not good for coming to a compromise. That's not going to coming to solutions. So I think there are some things, like judges just for example. There's an impartiality

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you need. I think you leave school board elections nonpartisan because that's what's in the best interest of everybody.

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Thank you. Dave Thomas, one minute to you. I was one who was in favor of nonpartisan elections until this election cycle because we have partisan elections in this nonpartisan. When the national politics right now. Look at the divisiveness. Look at the polarity. That's not good for kids. That's not good for coming to a compromise. That's not going to coming to solutions. So I think there are some things, like judges just for example. There's an impartiality

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you need. I think you leave school board elections nonpartisan because that's

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what's in the best interest of everybody. Thank you. Dave Thomas, one minute to you. I was one who was in favor of nonpartisan elections until this election cycle because we have partisan elections in this nonpartisan. When you have the teachers union who treats this as a partisan election and acts the same way a political party would act with a slate of candidates, large money donations, and using

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the apparatus of that organization's PAC just like the

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Democrats or the Republicans would use. That we had not seen in state elections before until now. That changed my mind. If in fact we're going to have that kind of partisanship in these nonpartisan races, then they might as well just be partisan. And one minute response to Jennifer Graviet.

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Well first of all, I'd respond that the teachers association is made up

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of both Republicans and Democrats and Independents and so there is not one party it's beholden to. It's beholden to education. And the other thing, like I've been very interested in this idea that I'm getting all of this money. If you go on and you can, you can look at my financial disclosure. You're going to see a long long list and it's going to include \$5, \$10, \$8, \$20, few hundred dollars, five hundred dollars. Many of my contributions are from neighborhood people, from teachers, from parents of students I've taught, like I am not made of big money and

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I am running this campaign on a small fund and just getting endorsements I need. But it's not - It's not about partisan, it's about the kids.

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Thank you. And one minute to Dave Thomas.

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The problem is that the money that UEA is using comes from the National Education Association, which is aligned with the Democratic Party. And as a result of this, they put in \$300,000 in order to influence races here in the state of Utah and specifically state school board races. That's not local control. That's an outside entity trying to influence our local elections and our elections for state school board. So I think that's fine if that's the way things are going. But if that's the way it is, then they should just be partisan.

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Otherwise, you know, you certainly may have a lot of donors for \$5 or \$10, but the primary source is the UEA, the

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UEA PAC, and the other education associations. So like

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I said, if if that's the way the game's going to be played, then let's just be upfront and say it's partisan. Thank you. Will the two of you submit to one more minute, one more round of one minute

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responses on this subject? That's fine. Well then we'll go one minute to you, Jennifer. I just want to say it's interesting to me that you mentioned, you know, the money from the National Education Association. I received in-kind donations from the Utah Education Association. And when you're referring to the National Education Association as aligned with the Democratic Party, I just have to say - so this summer I was at a representative assembly for to represent my local association and it was for the National Education Association.

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I sat next to my friend who is a Republican who was there. I sat next to my other friend who was

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a Republican. I sat next to another friend who was a Republican, and another who was a Democrat.

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All political parties are involved. School boards should not be partisan. The National Education Association, the Utah Education Association, my Weber Education Association – our goal is excellence in teaching. That's what we're beholden to: excellence in teaching and for students, it is not beholden to a party. Thank you. Dave Thomas, one minute to you. The NEA spoke at the Democratic National Convention. They didn't speak at the Republican National Convention. The UEA

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received all that money from the NEA. So they're filtering it through to candidates. You know I – it's interesting because the UEA is a union. The union is about the teachers and I appreciate that. But I don't think at times the UEA's positions are necessarily aligned with what's in the best interests of kids. They're a union, they're about

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teachers. I'm not obviously being endorsed by the union. I'm all about the students because that's really what public

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education is about. But if we have this partisanship that comes in through the

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teachers union, I think it just has to be opened up so it's fair. Thank you. Did you want to another response? If that's okay. Let's do – let's do 30 second response is that OK? Yeah. I just want to say that interest in regards to the NEA speaking at the Democratic convention. Let me tell you just briefly why. They sent a survey on education issues out to every candidate, out to every presidential candidate. Not a single

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Republican responded. Not a single Republican responded to the questions of education. They begged them. They added a special message for them to respond, Please please respond

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so we can know what to do. Nobody responded. If nobody responds, that tells us that they are not interested. Thank you. Dave Thomas, 30

seconds to you.

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Here's a good reason why Republicans didn't respond. Because they knew

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that the National Education Association is so aligned with the Democratic Party that it was like a survey from the Democratic Party. That's why you didn't have Republicans respond. And like I said, I mean if we're going to open this up, we might as well open it all the way up and that way there is fairness on all sides. We're going to take another question. If you have a question, you want clarification on this specific topic they've been discussing. You're welcome to ask about it so you don't have to cover new ground. You can recycle topics, it is no problem as long as you get your questions answered. So,

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I've got another question here. Thank you. [Indecipherable question] y

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Thank you. And the first minute response goes to Dave Thomas. Generally what we do with the legislatures – the first thing we ask for is funding for

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growth. The second thing we look for is a WPU increase. That's a line to how much it's going to cost for increases in insurance, increases in retirement, things such as that. Then we look at an additional WPU

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increase for potentially teacher salaries.

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We also look at line items and we look at line items because the legislature likes to fund through line items. The governor tried to put everything in the WPU the last legislative session and he didn't get even half of what he was asking for. That's because the legislature likes programs that then they can't have them evaluated and see if they work. So we work within that framework and

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try to put programs that can be tested and that hopefully then we'll get continual funding for. Thank you. And one minute to Jennifer Graviet. I really appreciated the governor trying to put that money into the WPU because as a teacher

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I see every district has different needs. One example – some of you may have heard about prosperity 2020 and the focus on the Roy Cone.

I'm part of that Roy Cone and we had some flexibility on a local level what we're going to do with that funding that involved bringing in a literacy specialist literacy specialist in secondary schools.

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We were able to fund a literacy specialist who is still working with teachers. That's something specific to our Roy Cone. We brought up graduation rates from I think, Roy High from 70 percent clear up to the 90s. This is local control. Every

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district has different needs whether it's technological, needs whether it's a reading specialist's needs, whether it's a

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behavioral specialist's needs. And I just think if we're going to do level control, let's trust our superintendents. Let's trust them to - let's trust their school board to do what is best for the District. Thank you. One minute response to Dave Thomas. One of the reasons why the legislature does what they do is because of historical practice where

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they provided money for the WPU for certain programs and then the programs didn't get funded. The money went somewhere else. And as a result of that we've had to rebuild a trust relationship with the legislature which I think we're successfully doing over time, where the legislature is giving us more and more ability

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to be flexible. But there are a lot of things that are the below-the-line items that are important that a teacher can rely upon, for example, teacher's supplies. That's a separate line item. The K-3 reading program - that's a separate line item. I talked earlier

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about targeted investment at entry level teacher salaries. That would be a line

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item. It couldn't be done through the WPU. So there are purposes of having those kind of line items. Thank you. And a one minute response to Jennifer Graviat. I agree that there are certain things that have to be below the line that are certain line items, but when you're seeing 100 plus bills come out of

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the legislative session of line item after line item, when some of those needs - some districts don't need some of the technology, some of the this - I think we need to minimize that so that really we can

get the districts the power to do what they do and if they're not following through that needs to be some parameters. There are guidelines and you know, you have to trust if we're going to really trust who's educating who's in charge of children. Can we have another round? Sure, sure let's go. Do you want 30 seconds?

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Do you want 30 seconds? We'll 30 seconds here then back to Jennifer.

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One of the things that we did with legislative leadership is we sat down and we told them we can't have 60, 70 bills every year. And what we told them is we have a strategic plan and we'd like sifting being done in the legislative rules committee where if some bill is inconsistent with the strategic plan, it not be allowed out of rules. We're continuing to try to have those discussions with legislative leadership to try to get a handle on having not so much legislation. Thank you.

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And 30 seconds to Jennifer Graviet. Yeah, and I would just say that's one of the things that are driving teachers out of the profession is all of the legislating of education. It's too much and we need to minimize those things, so I appreciate that. Thank you. We have time for one more question before the closing statements.

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Go ahead.

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[Indecipherable question] Our first response goes to Jennifer Graviet. Oh okay. Well I didn't get a chance to vote for it because, obviously. But when you look at Every Student Succeeds Act versus No Child Left Behind, it's much better. I mean the mandates - I mean

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in my opinion, and of course I would have to research it even more. But it allows

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more local control, it allows you to use a dashboard of evaluation instead of just

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testing that goes to the federal government. It allows you to look at things like, how are kids succeeding in the arts programs? It allows you to not just use a test score to determine success. It just allows more local input. So that's why I prefer it over Nickleby. [Audience comment] I don't know that that's what it says. I can't verify that.

Do you want to respond to that idea?

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No I'll go with. OK. So one minute to Dave Thomas.

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Every Student Succeeds Act was federal legislation so the state board didn't vote on it. And to the extent that Utah accepts money from the federal government, the state

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board becomes bound by it and has to go through a process to put together an accountability plan. So as I always say to

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my fellow former legislator friends, when I was in the legislature

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I actually tried to get us out of No Child Left Behind because I saw this coming -

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that in the future we'd keep on taking more more money and be locked in Unfortunately now it's a half a billion dollars a year as long as the Utah legislature accepts the money. The state board is bound to have to follow the law.

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What we've tried to do is do the minimum amount and that's what we've set forth in our strategic plan tis we're going to try to do the minimum. We're going to try to do what we think is

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in the best interest of Utah, not what Washington D.C. may think. Thank you. And, I'd like to do 30 second rebuttals here. Here's a 30 second rebuttal to you. The other thing I would worry about is as much as people don't like the federal government involved, I think we have to remember that some of the money is really useful in terms of Title 1 schools, in terms of things like Title 9, in terms of things like kids with special needs, funding for lunches. I think we'd have to be really careful to turn down money that helps our kids.

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Thank you. 30 seconds to Dave Thomas.

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Education is the province of the state, not the federal government. It's not in the federal Constitution.

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To the extent that the federal government going to become a part of that, they should basically block grant money at stake and allow us to be

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the incubators of innovation that states are. Federal intrusion is a problem. And we've seen it in many different aspects. Just look at the recent transgender bathroom policy of the Obama administration. We need to try to pull back the federal government as much as we can. Thank you. Royce, do you still have that microphone? I just – if you'll indulge me for a moment. Ahead of the debate I specifically spoke with this gentleman. He told me he had a question. I want to make sure that we that we not miss it. So we also don't want to go over time.

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Would you accept a one minute response each to this question?

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Well it is your turn to respond, Dave, so we'll do one minute response here. Dave Thomas. I'm a county attorney. I don't represent any charter school. That's

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not part of my practice.

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Consequently, I voted on all the charter schools that have come before the state board

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as well as their funding and try to make charter school just as accountable as traditional public schools.

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OK. Jennifer Graviett, would you like to take a second here? I guess the only thing I would say is just looking around this school as I was able to take a tour, like any good school that is good for kids is good, right? Like I think we all agree with that. But when we talk about accountability I'm thinking about just many of the things that charter schools don't have. Even something as simple as the Educator Evaluation Law. Charter school teachers aren't bound

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by that as neighborhood public schools are and I ask myself why because if the intent of evaluation is to give feedback and to make us better teachers don't want that for all of our teachers who are teaching our students? So, I guess that kind of concerns me and I would hope

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that you would have the same rules apply to both charters and neighborhood public schools. Why don't we do 30 second response here and here as well to make sure that we

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get everything said? Dave Thomas, 30 seconds to you. I don't represent any charters association. The Utah State Charter School Board is a statutory

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entity that is like a - ELA - is like a school district for purposes of oversight by the

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State Board of Education. But we don't appoint any members to it. The governor appoints the

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members to the state's Charter School Board and the State Charter School Board is an authorizing entity of charter schools as are

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districts, as are institutions of higher education. I would like to say in terms of teacher evaluation, that's a legislative issue. It's not an issue for the state board. Those

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provisions are in statutes. There's not a lot we can do about it.

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Thank you Jennifer Graviet, would you like a response? I think I am okay. We're going to move on to our closing statements and just before we do that, I want to thank you all for coming here tonight, for being here to meet these candidates and hear what they have to say. We'd like to thank our online audience for tuning in as well and remind you that all of this in audio and printed form will be available at KSL.com as they have been made available for past debates as well. I'd also like to thank those organizations that have brought these debates

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to life which include the Utah Association of Public

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Charter Schools. Royce and Kate really have been spearheading, keeping everyone on the ship and making sure that these are great and fair resource to the community. We'd also like to thank the Hinckley Institute of Politics for their

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valuable support and insight into this process. I can tell you that each of these partners didn't just help publicize it, but they actually really weighed in in meaningful ways as to how these will be structured and handled. We'd also like to thank the Sutherland Institute and United Way. And of course, my own KSL for that same expertise that they have brought to what I believe is a landmark series of debates which have come at just the right time as we start to change the process of how we select the school board. So we hope that you find these valuable and I hope that you share our appreciation of these sponsoring organizations. To

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close, according to the coin flip we're going to give one minute to Dave Thomas and then one minute to Jennifer Graviet. Thank you. Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this debate. as I said at the

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beginning, I

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view things through the prism of college and career readiness and college and

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career readiness is based in three parts. The first is having rigorous academic standards. Second, high quality instruction and third, reasonable computer adaptive formative

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assessment. That's what I've tried to structure when I make decisions on the state board around those kinds of things that move the ball forward. And I think we've done a lot over the years I've been on the board. We were 29th and eighth grade reading eight years ago. Today we're ninth and the same can be said on mathematics and reading for fourth and eighth graders. We've moved the ball and we're continuing to move the ball. And that's the direction I continue to be headed in.

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Thank you. Jennifer Graviet - one minute to close. I think I want to remind you that I'm a teacher. I'm a teacher first and foremost. I have never been involved in politics. But every day I go out of my classroom and I look into the eyes of my students and I listen to the

students who don't have a father because he's in jail or I listen to the student whose mother hurts her when she gets home or I see the kids who stayed up all night hungry. And so when it comes down to it, that's when I'm thinking about when I'm running for the school board. I'm thinking about the needs of our children.

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Recently I was reading a book and it said, you know, it's simple. You ask yourself if the policy or reform you plan to initiate is

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good for children. If you hesitate, if you hesitate for just a minute, then don't do it. When it

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comes down to it, we need to keep in mind all these things - these important policies and this data. But sometimes you can't quantify anything and we have to realize that we're dealing with souls and not dollars. Thank you. Ladies and gentlemen, a round of applause for your school board candidates. Great job. Thanks. Thank you so much.

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I was supposed to be. I really that everything was great because it could be OK. You collect all

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those cool to see the.

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Kids.

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I don't even. Know. About. This. Right. comes down to it we need to keep in mind all these things these important policies and this data. But sometimes you can't quantify anything. And we have to realize that we're dealing with souls and not dollars. Thank you. Ladies and gentlemen a round of applause for your school board candidates.

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Great job. Thanks. Thank you so much it's a pleasure. Thank you

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