OUR MESSAGE, YOUR STORY
Crafting Stories to Persuade in Utah’s Tax Restructuring Effort

There is power in collectively sharing a common message. But, an important part of any successful communications effort is developing and telling individual stories to support the collective message.

OUR MESSAGE ABOUT TAX RESTRUCTURING...
BACKGROUND: While revenues for education are up (Education Fund), the state has experienced much slower growth in revenues for other services (General Fund). To address this, the 2019 Legislature created a “Tax Restructuring and Equalization Task Force” charged to study taxes and make recommendations. A primary concern is that many solutions discussed to date could impair the state’s ability to grow public education funding.

THE UEA SUPPORTS TAX POLICY SOLUTIONS THAT...

1) Grow public education investments in student success
   • Our students need secure, sustainable and growing education revenue sources.
   • We must safeguard resources available for public education as provided by the Utah constitutional guarantee directing income tax to education.

2) Provide equitable resources for ALL students to learn and thrive
   • All students, regardless of zip code, deserve learning opportunities in safe schools, classes small enough for one-on-one attention and up-to-date learning materials tools.
   • Students cannot learn when they are hungry, stressed or in pain. Families in need should be provided support services like nutrition, counseling and health care.

3) Allow the state to attract and retain qualified teachers and other school staff
   • We support teaching as a sustainable profession.
   • We must ensure that every educator has the resources, mentoring and support they need to ensure student success.
   • Resources must be provided to address stress factors driving teachers from the profession such as:
     - class sizes well beyond recommended norms for optimal student learning;
     - over-focus on standardized tests;
     - lack of classroom support (counselors, librarians, paraeducators, etc.);
     - increasing student social, emotional and behavior issues; and
     - insufficient mentoring support for educators entering the profession.
YOUR STORY ABOUT TAX RESTRUCTURING...
Now it’s your turn. Utah’s tax restructuring effort presents an opportunity for teachers to share personal, student-centered stories. You can use your story in many ways:

- A **blog post** telling how education funding impacts your students
- An **op-ed** explaining why your students need solutions that grow education funding
- A **conversation with your legislator** to gain their support for a fair tax structure
- A **social media post** sharing the un-met needs of at-risk students in your classroom
- A **town hall meeting** comment letting legislators know why their solution must include new funding to adequately and equitably support the needs of ALL students

**WORKSHEET FOR CREATING YOUR STORY:**

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<th>GET THEIR ATTENTION - an attention-grabbing introduction</th>
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