UEA Priorities for the 2022 Utah Legislative Session

Education Funding
After fulfilling statutory education funding requirements, address the following funding priorities:

- Provide at least a 5% increase on the WPU (est. $175 million), for a total WPU increase of approximately 7.5% after inflation.
- Enhance funding for students at-risk of academic failure by increasing weights on the At-Risk Student line item (est. $44.2 million).
- Expand optional full-day kindergarten, over three years (est. $20 million annually).
- Fund educator-directed flexible preparation and collaboration time for all licensed educators (est. $57.5 million).
- Enhance Special Education funding by improving the add-on WPU formula used to fund students with disabilities (est. $3 million).
- Oppose schemes that funnel funds intended for public education to personal student accounts or privately-run entities where taxpayer accountability is lost.
- Establish a tax system that will deliver sustainable and growing long-term revenue to address the chronic underfunding of public education.

Quality Instruction and Student Equity
- Ensure each classroom has an effective teacher by funding strategies to identify and address the root causes of Utah's critical educator shortage.
- Invest in programs that develop a pathway for diverse educators to the teaching profession, including in rural areas or hard-to-staff subjects and schools.
- Improve teacher retention through comprehensive educator induction and mentoring programs.
- Increase resources for student social and emotional well-being such as school psychologists, social workers and counselors.
- Invest in educator salaries to attract the best and the brightest to remain in the teaching profession.
- Reduce class sizes to allow teachers the time needed to reach and inspire individual students and meet every student's unique learning needs are met.
- Maintain high standards for teacher licensure to ensure that every student has a teacher prepared and qualified to teach on day one.

Education Policy
- Strengthen accountability standards for charter and online schools consistent with neighborhood schools, including student performance, governance, educator evaluation and financial accountability.
- Eliminate the overuse of standardized testing and the misuse of student test scores to grade schools and impose consequences on schools.
- Ease the overwhelming workload heaped on Utah teachers by reducing the number of education bills and limiting the number of mandated initiatives.
- Develop a plan for maintaining investments, programs and progress made with federal COVID funds.
- Recognize teachers as experts on public education issues and consult with them before establishing laws.
- Support the direct, non-partisan election of school board members.