Utah’s Economically Disadvantaged Students

A review of the data and the role of education
Key Points

1. Education creates greater economic opportunity.
2. 1 in 3 Utah students experience economic hardship.
3. Economically disadvantaged students face worse educational results.
4. Targeted funding for economically disadvantaged students makes a difference.
5. Utah’s long-term future improves for everyone.
Education creates greater economic opportunity.
Utah Poverty Rate, 2019

- Less than high school diploma: 0%
- High school diploma or equivalent: 3%
- Some college or associate degree: 6%
- Bachelor's degree or higher: 9%

Note: Data are for individuals age 25 and over
Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey
Utah Unemployment Rate, 2019

- Less than high school diploma: 3.0%
- High school diploma or equivalent: 2.0%
- Some college or associate degree: 1.0%
- Bachelor's degree or higher: 0.0%

Note: Data are for individuals age 25-64
Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey
Utah Median Annual Earnings, 2019

- Less than high school diploma
- High school diploma or equivalent
- Some college or associate degree
- Bachelor's degree
- Graduate or professional degree

Note: Data are for individuals age 25 and over
Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey
U.S. Economic Mobility, 2011

Probability of a child moving to a higher income quintile than their parents

Without a college degree

With a college degree

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60%

Note: Data are for individuals age 25 and over
1 in 3 Utah students experience economic hardship.

- Statewide
- Lifetime Hardship
- Compounded by demographics

453,167
Not Economically Disadvantaged

214,236
Economically Disadvantaged

Source: Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute 2021 Economic Report to the Governor
Economically disadvantaged students face worse educational results.
Utah Student Achievement by Economic Status, 2019–2020

- High School Graduation: Economically Disadvantaged 78.4%, Not Economically Disadvantaged 91.9%
- Scoring ≥ 18 on the ACT: Economically Disadvantaged 42.8%, Not Economically Disadvantaged 69.4%
- Mathematics Proficiency: Economically Disadvantaged 31.8%, Not Economically Disadvantaged 56.0%
- ELA Proficiency: Economically Disadvantaged 31.8%, Not Economically Disadvantaged 55.8%
- 3rd Grade Literacy: Economically Disadvantaged 32.6%, Not Economically Disadvantaged 56.3%

Source: Utah State Board of Education
Targeted funding for economically disadvantaged students makes a difference.

For low-income children, a **10% increase** in per pupil spending for all 12 years of public school is associated with:

- **6.1%** Poverty Incidence
- **9.6%** Earnings
- **.46** Years Education

Source: The Quarterly Journal of Economics
Utah’s long-term future improves for everyone.

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<tr>
<th>Individual Benefits</th>
<th>Societal Benefits</th>
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<td>Increased earnings</td>
<td>Stronger community</td>
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<td>Increased economic mobility</td>
<td>Increased GDP</td>
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<td>Better health outcomes</td>
<td>Decreased crime</td>
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<td>More likely to receive employer-provided health insurance</td>
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<td>More likely to do educational activities with their children</td>
<td>Increased voter participation</td>
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<td>Increased tax contributions</td>
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<td>Lower unemployment rate</td>
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<td>Reduced reliance on public assistance</td>
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<td>Reduced healthcare costs</td>
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<td>Decreased poverty rate</td>
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Source: Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute based on literature review