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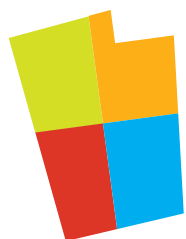
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WELCOME

Message



BY ROYCE VAN TASSELL, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



We can all breathe a sigh of relief — the Legislature’s general session is over. No more unnecessary wrangling. No more ill-considered, if well-intentioned bills. And perhaps most hopefully, less strife, more striving together.

As our legislative recap below notes, the Legislature treated public education very generously. We got a 6% increase in the WPU, a 7% increase in the LRF, and a total of \$383 million in new spending on public education. We can and should be grateful.

I know many teachers were up in arms during the session about this or that proposed bill. And the process worked. As proposals wended their way through committees and floor votes, the stupid got winnowed, like chaff from the wheat. Not everyone got what they wanted, but public education did very well.

Legislators are now working their way through various re-election processes. Some of us may feel a desire to scold legislators who voted differently than we might have. Others of us may feel even more strongly. May I suggest

that we look for constructive ways to help them understand how to improve our public education landscape. Scolding and scoffing may make us feel good, but it rarely yields the results we want.

In that vein, let me encourage all of us to reach out to the candidates for the Legislature and the State Board of Education. Each of them has taken on an enormous burden. Every one of them wants to improve Utah’s public schools. They need our help to do that. They need to understand our day-to-day challenges, what is working well, and what can be improved.

If you would like to hold a town hall, let us know. We’d love to help set that up for you. And then we can further strengthen the great relationships Utah charter schools have with our elected officials.

Finally, our annual conference is coming up. I look forward to seeing so many of you again there. Make sure you and your colleagues register. Conference is a great time to learn from each other — see you soon! 🌈



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— Dr. Joe Heywood, USOE Specialist

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— Rick Veasey, Lakeview Academy Director

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— Kara Salisbury, Wasatch Charter School Administrative Director

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2022 Board Members



Anya Yeager, Board Chair

After moving to Utah 15 years ago, Anya Yeager held an administrative position with the Utah State Office of Child Care as a Quality Improvement Consultant and, for the last decade, has served in the charter school world. During that time, her proud professional moments have included earning the title of ‘Charter School of the Year’ in 2013 and ‘Rookie of the Year’ in 2015 with George Washington Academy. Anya currently holds an executive position with Williamsburg Learning, which oversees several charter schools, including Leadership Academy of Utah. She is a strong supporter of school choice and the role that UAPCS plays in supporting all of the amazing charter school options we have here in Utah.



Stephanie Schmidt, Board Vice-Chair

Stephanie (Steph) Schmidt earned an associate’s degree at Snow College and a bachelor’s degree at Utah State University in Secondary Education (Social Studies Composite). While in college, she served on the Board of Directors for the National Student Association of Community Colleges. In this role, Steph was an advocate for higher education and lobbied for support from U.S. senators and representatives in Washington, D.C. She taught history and geography at a junior high school in Brigham City and at a treatment center called Lifeline for Teens. She worked with students struggling with difficulties, including behavioral disorders, drug involvement, and eating disorders. Education is her passion, and she believes there are few things more rewarding than empowering these amazing teens! She is busy every spring and fall working for a family business, Schmidt’s Farm & Greenhouse. Steph loves doing anything outside (hiking, biking, camping, gardening, etc.) with her husband and kids. Steph is the Executive Director at Early Light Academy. She puts her full support behind the high-quality education that students (including her children) receive at charter schools throughout the state.



Andrew Larsen, Board Treasurer

As a father of eight children, Andrew knows personally, the value of education and the lasting impact a teacher or administrator may have upon a child. He has been involved with UAPCS for over five years in support of Zions Bank’s sponsorship of the association and Charter School University training, and appreciates the training and advocacy work the association does. With an MBA in Finance and nearly 15 years of commercial banking experience, he brings a unique business and finance perspective, in addition to knowledge of charter school dynamics across multiple states. Andrews believes that continued emphasis is needed on helping to build the self-esteem of each student and preparing them with the skills required for success in a 21st-century career.



Rabecca Cisneros, Board Secretary

Rabecca Cisneros is currently the Director of Operations at Itineris Early College High School. Previously she served as the Authorizing and School Support Coordinator for the Utah State Charter School Board, a school administrator, a classroom teacher, and a charter school founder. Ms. Cisneros holds an Administrative/Supervisory License, as well as a Level 2 in both Elementary and Secondary Education. She earned a Master of Education in Educational Leadership and Administration and a Master of Arts in Organizational Development.



Chris Bleak, Board Member

Chris joined RRJ Consulting after serving as Chief of Staff to the Speaker of the Utah House of Representatives for close to six years. Chris has extensive legislative and political experience at all levels of government and in organizations both large and small. Chris served as the President of the Utah Association of Public Charter Schools. In this role, Chris led the development and passage of a major piece of legislation that allows charter schools access to the State's credit enhancement, greatly reducing the cost of financing for these schools. Chris was the first Chief of Staff hired in Utah legislative history and was noted as the best mind in Utah politics in a 2009 Deseret News editorial. Prior to working for the House of Representatives, Chris was the Executive Director of the Utah Republican Party during the 2003-04 election cycle. He lobbied for the 2002 Olympic Games, Qwest Communications, and Salt Lake City. He graduated from the University of Utah in 2000 with a degree in political science. Chris is a rabid baseball fan, having visited over 32 MLB stadiums. Chris and his wife reside in Lehi, UT, with their two daughters.



Stacey Phillips, Board Member

Stacey Phillips has been active in the field of education for 20+ years. Her experience includes working in private and public education settings. Stacey graduated from Utah State University with degrees in early childhood education, elementary education, and music. She has a master's degree in Management and Leadership. Stacey has been a business owner, a curriculum director, taught in both Davis and Weber County School Districts, was the director of a Voyage Academy for seven years, and currently serves as an education specialist to over 20 charter LEAs throughout the state. Stacey has served on several state committees and was hired by the USBE to serve as a mentor for charter schools in turnaround. She has experience with charter compliance, policy, school safety, management, curriculum, grant writing, professional development, and finances. 📚

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The Science of Reading

BY D. RAY REUTZEL, PH.D. SENIOR RESEARCH FELLOW
CENTER FOR THE SCHOOL OF THE FUTURE, UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY



There are many definitions of the term *Science of Reading (SOR)*. The *International Literacy Association (ILA)* defines the *Science of Reading* as:

“a corpus of objective investigation and accumulation of reliable evidence about how humans learn to read and how reading should be taught.”

International Literacy Association, 2020

The Science of Reading (SOR) is based on **basic** empirical research studies that describe the processes that underlie how humans become proficient readers. *The Science of Reading Instruction (SORI)* is based on **applied** empirical research studies that validate the effectiveness of instructional recommendations about how to teach humans to read.

Duke and Martin (2011) distinguish between two important terms — *research-based* and *research-tested*. *Research-tested* means that “one or more research studies tested the impact of that particular practice, approach or product” (p. 17). *Research-based* means “that the particular practice, approach, or product has not been tested in a research study but has been designed to be consistent with [other related] research findings” (p. 17). In view of this distinction, a *Science of Reading Instruction* should firmly rest upon research-tested rather than research-based empirical findings. To sum up this distinction, no matter how well the corpus of basic research findings supports a *Science of Reading*, recommendations for instruction to support a *Science of Reading Instruction* must be tried out and studied in the intended context of their use and with the intended recipients of their assumed benefits.

The Report of the National Reading Panel (NICHD, 2000) and the Report of the Early Literacy Panel (NIL,

2008) provide a synthesis of strong scientific evidence for teaching a collection of reading foundation skills to young students as well as activating background knowledge and the teaching of comprehension strategies leading to proficient reading ability. Another excellent source of *Science of Reading* information is found in a recent compilation of *Science of Reading* findings entitled “How the Science of Reading Informs 21st-Century Education” in *Reading Research Quarterly* (Petscher, et al., 2020). Taken together, all of these reports describe the instructional elements included in *The Science of Reading Instruction* as shown below:

- **Oral Language Skills** — Learn to speak and comprehend aurally phrases, sentence structure, connecting terms, and discourse patterns.
- **Concepts of Print** — Learn how print works, including directionality (L>R, Top to Bottom), print not picture, punctuation, number of words and letters, and ordinal concepts such as first, last and middle.
- **Phonological Awareness** — Learn to hear, identify, and manipulate units of oral language larger than a single sound or phoneme – including onsets, rimes, syllables, and words.
- **Phonemic Awareness** — Learn to hear, identify, and manipulate individual spoken sounds (phonemes) in words and syllables.
- **Phonics** — Learn the relationships between spoken sounds (phonemes) and the letters (graphemes) that represent these spoken sounds in written language. Students develop the skills of blending sounds of letters in words to read and segment sounds in words to write or spell. Blending and segmenting sounds in words to read and write are often referred to collectively as “sounding out.”
- **Morphological Analysis** — Learn how to determine unknown word meanings by identifying meaningful word parts such as prefixes, suffixes, and other word endings, e.g., possession, plurals, and grammatical tense. Students learn how the addition of word parts to a root or base word changes meaning, e.g., read vs. reread.
- **Spelling** — Learn to use knowledge of orthographic or spelling patterns to accurately write the combination of letters to represent the sounds they hear in spoken words.
- **Fluency** — Learn to read text accurately, with appropriate speed and expression to free up attention to be used to construct meaning from text. Fluency forms a bridge from decoding to comprehension.
- **Vocabulary Development** — Acquire and use a vast knowledge of word meanings.
- **Background Knowledge** — Building and activating knowledge of the world, events, facts, experiences, and information. Building background knowledge is an essential element of evidence-based reading comprehension instruction.



Classroom teachers must know when and how to “fix-up” or eliminate reading lessons and lesson elements provided within commercially published instructional programs.



- **Comprehension Strategies** — Learn a collection of scientifically researched comprehension strategies to use to unlock the meaning of difficult, unfamiliar, or complex texts.
- **Text Discussion** — Participation in extended discussions of text with teachers and peers.
- **Writing** — Write for varied purposes and in differing genres, including writing about what is read to cement comprehension of text.

Classroom teachers must know when and how to “fix-up” or eliminate reading lessons and lesson elements provided within commercially published instructional programs. If your school or classroom is currently employing commercially published reading instruction programs, then steps should be taken to align the focus of the reading instruction in these programs with the Science of Reading Instruction (SORI) evidence-base. 🌈

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Improving Student Learning Through Data-Driven Instruction

BY ANTHONY SUDWEEKS, CO-EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND DIRECTOR OF ACADEMICS, WALLACE STEGNER ACADEMY

During my last year teaching in a large, low-income, district-run, turnaround school, I had 26 students in my sixth-grade class. Of those students, how many could read on grade level on the first day of school? Only two. What percentage of them could perform basic multiplication problems? Only 50%. In fact, a full 25% couldn't perform a subtraction problem if it required borrowing. This data affected me profoundly, and I knew something had to be done. So, I did what every good teacher would do: I Googled for answers.

It wasn't long before I stumbled on a large charter network in New Jersey that was using data to drive their instruction. As a result, despite living in some of the most impoverished neighborhoods in Newark, their students were not just performing above the state average; they were performing at a higher level than the most affluent districts in the state!

I knew my students were every bit as capable as those students, so I began writing what they called "interim assessments." The idea was that if I could write a rigorous interim assessment designed to measure how well students mastered six to eight weeks' worth of content, then those assessments would give me a road map to where our students needed to go. I pulled in the other nine sixth-grade teachers at my school, and we got to work.

These assessments immediately changed the lessons that were being taught on a daily basis. Why? Because everyone knew what the expectation was now. This is because standards tell us what to teach, but they don't define the rigor. Assessments can do that. Suddenly, we were all teaching much harder content, but that's only half of what was good about this idea.

“

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”



The second half of this plan was specific to the data. Our sixth-grade cohort sat around a large table and talked about which questions our students missed, why we thought they missed them, and (most importantly) what we were going to do about it.

That year the average math proficiency on the old state assessment (CRT) rose from 28% to 65% (my own class was 88%). Results like that don't come often. This was to be the end of the achievement gap!

Unfortunately for the students of this school district, the end of the achievement gap was not on the way. Several teachers were uncomfortable with sharing their class's performance with the team, and the administrators thought it was too much work to get everyone to take the tests and develop a re-teaching plan. The whole experiment was scrapped by district administrators ... so I decided to write a charter.

I found a group of like-minded educators, and we started Wallace Stegner Academy — less than a mile away from our old school. The entire premise was that we would use data to drive our instruction, and we would close the achievement gap once and for all.

Starting a charter school is no easy task, and I won't say that there weren't bumps along the road. However, we consistently double the proficiency of the schools around us. This is despite serving a population of over 70% of students who live in poverty.

Our exact system of using data has evolved and improved over the years. We no longer use interim assessments to the degree we once did. Instead, we use exit tickets. Here is how it works:

- Daily exit tickets are written for the entire year and are given to teachers on the first day of school. There are daily exit tickets for all three tested subjects (science, math, and language arts). These define the rigor and provide a road map for instruction.
- Exit tickets include rigorous test items that were used on state assessments in Texas, New York, or Massachusetts. These states release a large number of their summative assessment items each year.
- Results for every student are entered into a Google Sheet daily so that everyone on the team can see how every student and class performed on every item.
- All teachers in each grade level along with the principal, form a “data team” that meets twice per week (we have common prep times to allow for this).
- Data teams review the data, develop re-teaching plans (for whole class or small groups), and discuss the upcoming exit tickets.

We've found that this degree of data-focused attention provides a level of accountability and rigor that would otherwise be missing. Our goal is not to discuss what standards have been covered; our goal is to discuss what our students have learned. This system provides a foundation for that mindset, and (with blood, sweat, and tears) we'll close the achievement gap. 🌈



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Utah Charter Schools Conference



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JUNE 7th

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JUNE 8th

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Brooks: educator and
humorist.



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- Engaging Students in Learning
- Classroom Management
- Student Privacy Best Practices
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Wait a Minutes!

Do your minutes measure up?

Board meeting minutes matter. Minutes have specific guidelines (see Open and Public Meetings Act, Utah Code Title 52-4-203). Think of minutes like the evening news sports report of a basketball game. If the report only included the final score, you wouldn't have a complete picture of the game. The equivalent in minutes would be just a listing of the votes of any given board action. The sports report often includes video highlights of important plays during the game. In meeting minutes, this would be a synopsis of important points in the discussion. Board minutes do not need to be a transcription of everything that occurred. They should however be complete enough for someone to understand the substance of the discussion. And just as a sports report includes listing key players in the game or out with injuries, minutes reflect meeting attendees and those absent. For big sports fans who want to know every detail of the game, they can go back and watch it in full. An audio recording is required for each open meeting so that if you want to know all the details they are available to you.

To be complete, minutes taken during an open meeting:

- Include the date, time, and place of the meeting.
- Include full names of members present and absent.
- Include substance of all matters proposed, discussed, or decided.
- Include individual votes by name for each action item. (Don't just write "unanimous.")
- Include the name of members of the public attending who provide comments.
- Include any other information requested by a board member to be entered into the minutes or recording.
- Include any information (electronic or hard copy) relating to the agenda provided by an individual at the meeting to be put in the public record.

After the open meeting:

- Pending minutes must be made available to the public within 30 days of the open meeting.
- Approved minutes must be available to the public within 3 days after having been approved.
- Minutes must be posted on Public Meeting Notice



website (<https://www.utah.gov/pmn/>) with any materials distributed at the meeting and on the school's website.

- Minutes must be available at school's primary office with any materials distributed at the meeting.
- Within three business days after the meeting, post a **RECORDING** on the PMN website of the meeting, or a link to the recording.

If you have a well-crafted meeting agenda, then your minutes should be simple to complete. Minutes are a great way to get new board members up to speed on the happenings at your school. They can look at previous minutes to avoid repeating issues that have already been addressed. However, they can only see the reasoning of a decision if the minutes highlight the discussion well. It is also a good idea to make sure you document any trainings that are included as part of a board meeting.

By uploading your agenda, minutes and recordings to the PMN, you have a great board document storage plan that will endure after board member turnover. The only thing you will need to keep track of is your closed session recordings. The PMN records when documents are uploaded so state agencies can retroactively monitor if you are in compliance.

Minutes matter, dare we say more than a sporting event? When your minutes are complete, compliant, and available, you'll feel like a champion! 🏆



Fundraising

BY AMY BAKER, DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR,
SPECTRUM ACADEMY

Charter School programs often require more financial support than what is provided by state and federal funds, so how do you close that gap? Development and fundraising can be daunting tasks, but both are vital to any organization's overall success and bottom line. Cultivating community relationships, engaging students and parents in the cause, and generating donations in a fun and meaningful way will give your Development Plan a good foundation. Spectrum Academy, a charter school for students with high-functioning autism, uses a variety of methods to bridge the financial gap and provide the unique educational programs and tools necessary to fulfill its mission.

Cultivating community relationships will benefit your school financially and as a whole. To begin, make a list of your school's current supporters; who is already in your corner? Ask your board of directors, admin, and staff, to share connections they have that may be interested in supporting your school. Continue to expand your network by listing businesses and organizations that are in close proximity to your school. Invite parents to reach out to their contacts; if they are interested in supporting the school in some way, have them share their contact information with you. Then, start to develop relationships with these contacts; invite them to tour the school or be part of a school event, give them opportunities to volunteer, and make donations throughout the year. Building a network of supporters is a team effort that takes time but is the cornerstone of a good development and fundraising plan.

Students and parents play a big role in the success of the school's development and fundraising plan. They share the school's vision and are passionate about the mission. They are motivated to help the school succeed however they can. Engaged parents will advocate, advertise and ask.

Give them opportunities to serve and support in a variety of ways, online and in-person. Offering Parent Education Nights is a great way to guide them in supporting their students' education and bring parents together and give them another support system.

Invite students and parents to be part of the school's development and fundraising plan and give them specific ways they can help. Spreading awareness of the school's mission is a great way students and parents can help and doesn't take a lot of time or money. Ask them to give a review of the school, and with their permission, share their reviews on your website and social media; these statements will have a great impact on current and future supporters.

When needs arise, reach out to parents and invite them to ask their contacts for support. Provide them with the tools they need to represent the school well; donation request letters, event flyers, sponsorship benefit packages, etc. If your school requests parent volunteer hours, give them one more way to fulfill these hours by offering the value of any monetary or in-kind donations they bring into the school to count as volunteer hours: ex. \$10 = one hour. Students and parents are the driving force behind school development and fundraising.

Now that you've got your network of supporters and team of engaged parents, it's time to get to work and generate donations. There are many ways to fundraise and create unique and sustainable opportunities. Here are a few ideas to get you started:

- Make sure you have a "donation" button on your website.

“

Spreading awareness of the schools' mission is a great way students and parents can help and doesn't take a lot of time or money.

”

- Include a page of classroom wishes on your website. Utilize donorschoose.org. It is an incredible resource that will bring funding to your school by way of pre-purchased equipment, supplies, and materials directly to your classrooms, with little management on your end.
- Host an auction, online or in-person, that includes donated product or gift certificates from local businesses, parents, and student-made items. RallyUp.com is an excellent online auction site to use.
- Sell tickets to your school's exhibitions and performances.
- Sell donated concession items at your exhibitions and performances.
- Ask a local restaurant to donate a portion of sales to your school on a specific day, then advertise it to your entire school, staff, and community.
- Apply for grants. Have projects and programs in mind that need to be funded, then search for grants that are applicable.
- Use the idea of students gathering pledges to reinforce what they are learning and raise funds for the school. Family and friends are more likely to pledge their support when they see the students will learn something from it. Examples: basketball free throws, running, reading, spelling, acts of kindness, etc.
- Organize larger events such as a Fun Run, 5K, Golf Tournament, or Movie Night to get the whole community involved. Cover the cost of producing these events by soliciting sponsorships. Offer sponsor benefits that give sponsors opportunities to advertise their brand during the event. Use your school building to host events when you can to save money and bring the community into your school so your mission can inspire them.

Start creating your development and fundraising plan today. Assign team members to spearhead the process — rally a team of parents and community members to support your plan. Continue to share your mission on every platform available. Begin fundraising with a few events and make them bigger and better each year. Doing these things will help bridge the financial gap that is a challenge to many charter schools. 🌈



UAPCS Legislative Summary

Public Education Funding Does Well

- **\$383 Million Increase**—Education spending **increased 9%** overall
- **WPU 6% increase**
- **LRF 7% increase**
- **\$64M** for Teacher Professional Development Days (see HB 394)
- **\$91M** for capital and technology (see HB 475)

HB 265 Charter School Agreements and Renewals (Snow)

Would have required all charter schools to have a 5 year renewal period.

HB 396 Paid Professional Hours for Educators (Moss)

Provides \$64 million one-time funds from the Public Education Economic Stabilization Restricted Account to give teachers 4 days paid professional development.

SB 191 Regulatory Sandbox in Education (Fillmore)

Permits an LEA to adopt research-based innovations for up to 3 years, even if they require waivers from board rule. Innovations may permit the LEA to expend up to 35% of state-restricted funds in other ways, as long as the LEA continues to meet its MOE requirements. Outlines necessities in applying, demonstrating interest, etc.

HB 475 Use of Public Education Stabilization Account One-time Funding (Last)

Provides \$91 million for LEAs to spend on capital and technology from the Public Education Economic Stabilization Restricted Account. This will be distributed on a base plus per student formula.

HB 481 Education Reporting Amendments (Pulsipher)

Eliminates two legislatively required reports. It eliminates certain provisions of the literacy proficiency plan and eliminates an assessment and reporting requirement for LEAs participating in the Digital Teaching and Learning Grant Program.

HB 294 Charter School Admissions Amendments (Pulsipher)

This bill extends the COVID-19 emergency admissions preference another year. It also permits charter schools to exceed their cap to admit a foster child, if the family has a sibling at the school. It also allows enrollment preference given to a an individual whose sibling is currently enrolled in a charter school with an approved articulation agreement with the charter school in which the individual is seeking enrollment.

HB 193 Full-Day Kindergarten (Waldrip)

Increases the Optional Extended-day Kindergarten (OEK) program by \$12.2 million. It does not require LEAs to offer full-day kindergarten.

HB 113 Students with Disabilities Funding Revisions (Judkins)

Amends the formula related to add-on WPU for students with disabilities. It increases the prevalence rate to 14% in counties of the 1st, 2nd or 3rd class, and 20% in counties of the 4th, 5th or 6th class.

HB 211 School Fees Amendments (Robertson)

Would have prohibited an LEA from charging curricular and co-curricular fees. The statewide cost to LEAs is estimated at \$55 million.

HB 374 Sensitive Materials in Schools (Ivory)

Prohibits pornographic materials in schools. It requires LEAs to include a representative parent in its curriculum selection committee.

SB 127 Early Literacy Outcomes Improvement (Millner)

Sets a statewide goal of 70% of students reading on grade level by 3rd grade. Provides resources to schools to meet that goal. Funds LTRS training for all elementary school teachers and counselors and provides teaching coaches to schools in the bottom quartile.

SB 134 Special Education Amendments (Bramble)

Establishes the federal limits on the least restrictive environment (LRE) as the state limits.

 Passed in the Legislature

UAPCS Support

 Failed in the Legislature

UAPCS Did Not Support

UAPCS Neutral

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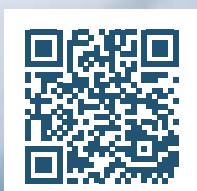
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Did You Know?

Utah is home to the longest skidmark of all time.

Bonneville Salt Flats

The Bonneville Salt Flats comprises 30,000 acres of desolate, densely packed salt pan. The spot's incredibly flat and smooth terrain makes it a popular destination for speed-seeking land racers since 1914. Racing takes place at part of the Bonneville Salt Flats known as the Bonneville Speedway. There are five major land speed events that take place at the Bonneville Salt Flats. Bonneville "Speed Week" takes place mid-August followed by "World of Speed" in September and the "World Finals" take place early October.



In 1964, a man named Norman Craig Breedlove broke the record for longest continuous tire skid when he lost control of his jet-powered Spirit of America on the flats. The resulting skid marks stretched six miles long.

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