

## Superintendent's Corner "Morgan School District by the numbers"

Each year the State Superintendent's office publishes an annual report that summarizes much of the statistical data related to public education in the State of Utah. This report reviews information from the prior school year, and thus the numbers reflected below are the product of the 2006-2007 school year.

I believe we can learn a great deal by looking at statistical information. Many times, the condition of a district is simply evaluated by student progress based on a couple of state or national tests. There is much more to a district than a couple of test scores. I would like to share with you some of the information provided in this year's annual report.

### **Demographics**

Student enrollment on October 1, 2006 was 2,183 students. Out of the forty school districts in Utah, we ranked 28<sup>th</sup> in size. From October 1, 2005 to October 1, 2006, we were the second fastest growing school district when measured by percentage of growth. Our 4.8% growth was only surpassed by Duchesne County.

We had the lowest percentage of students enrolled in special education (6.89%) while the percentage of students who were classified as being part of a racial/ethnic minority ranked second lowest in the state (2.8%). The only district with a lower percentage of racial/ethnic minorities was Rich with 2.3%.

As reported frequently in the past, our student population is drawn from a relatively high socioeconomic level. Morgan usually has the lowest percentage of students on free lunches in the state and the second lowest count when combining the percentage of students on free or reduced lunches. The average income per family is usually second to Park City.

### **Student to Teacher Ratio**

The charts indicating student to teacher ratios provides what appears to be some interesting conflicts. When one hears testimony in the legislature, there are frequent examples of huge class sizes at many different levels in several districts. One walks away from the hearings feeling quite good about our ratios. When the charts in the annual report are studied, they reveal a different picture that makes me much less satisfied with what we are doing in Morgan. There needs to be some clarification of the discrepancies.

Our average teacher to student ratio in grades K-6 is 24.78 students to one teacher. That is slightly below the state average of 26.01 and ranks 24<sup>th</sup> in the state. Our average teacher to student ratio in grades 7-12 is 21.05 students per teacher. This ratio is again below the state average (24.09) and ranks 21<sup>st</sup> in the state. When you put the two together, our average is 22.87 students per teacher. We rank 20<sup>th</sup> in the state. The state average is 25.13 students per teacher.

Another series of charts indicates that when looking at individual grade levels as well as secondary language arts, math, and science, the only area in which we are below the state average is in our kindergarten classrooms.

Our ratio of secondary students to counselors is one of the highest in the state (ranked 38<sup>th</sup>) as is our ratio of administrators per student (ranked 35<sup>th</sup>).

## **Salaries/Benefits**

We are below the state averages in all areas of salaries and benefits for our certificated staff, as found in the report. Those areas include building administrators, beginning teachers, average teachers, benefits, and total compensation.

By ranking, we are farthest from the norm in our average salary. Although nothing to be discounted, that is the most volatile figure because it is dependent upon the experience and level of education of our staff. As veteran teachers retire and are replaced by those with less experience, our average salary will continue to decline.

Our salaries were greatly enhanced during the 2007 legislative session. This is a strong indication that this will happen again in 2008. Although that doesn't help in our comparison with other Utah districts, it certainly helps when being compared with other states in this region.

## **Financial**

During the 2006-2007 school year, our general fund revenues per student was \$5,622.85 which ranked 38<sup>th</sup> in the state. Our general fund expenditures per student was \$5,514.77 which ranked 37<sup>th</sup> in the state. The general fund covers our basic daily operating expenditures and is one of the most important numbers we deal with.

We received 4.4% of our funds from the federal government, which is quite low in comparison to the vast majority of districts in the state. We do exceed the state averages with regards to the percentage of our funds that come from the state (54.5% to 54.0%) as well as those funds that come from our local taxpayers (41.2% to 37.2%).

Our assessed value per student ranks 23<sup>rd</sup> and is slightly less than the average in the state, while our local property tax for public education ranked 34<sup>th</sup> and was well below the state average.

## **Student Performance**

The annual report only dealt with the ITBS scores. The ITBS is a national test given in grades 3, 5, 8, and 11 within the State of Utah. When comparing the average composite scores to other districts in the state, our students ranked as follows:

Third Grade – Ranked 11<sup>th</sup>  
Fifth Grade – Ranked 6<sup>th</sup>  
Eighth Grade – Ranked 4<sup>th</sup>  
Eleventh Grade – Ranked 3<sup>rd</sup>

For those who would like to review the data in the 2007 annual report, please feel free to visit the district office and we will provide copies of the portions of the report that you desire. Reports are also available through the Utah State Office of Education located in Salt Lake City.