



March 11, 2013

Dear Utah Legislator:

On behalf of the members of the Utah Technology Council (UTC), as we did in 2011 when Senator Niederhauser first introduced the School Grading bill, we write to inform you that **UTC has taken a position of support for S.B. 271 – School Grading Amendments** (Sen. Adams, J.S.). This bill is fully supported by President Niederhauser as the original sponsor in 2011 and contains his approved approach to how school grades should be determined. President Niederhauser has worked closely with USOE over the past two years.

The reasons for our support of this bill include:

- It fairly measures student proficiency and learning gains in language arts, mathematics and science measured by statewide assessments.
- It provides additional focus and fair measurement of the school's students that are in the lowest quartile of statewide achievement tests in language arts, mathematics and science based on growth year over year.
- It adds the measurement of graduation rates and college and career readiness for high schools.
- It provides incentives to include all students in the testing process.
- It provides for better transparency to students and parents by adding a reporting requirement for the school's grade and a personal student achievement report.
- It develops an equitable, simple and transparent approach to help schools get better results for students by setting benchmarks and measuring achievement against those benchmarks.

NOTE: This bill helps support UTC's #1 most pressing issue – to ensure that Utah develops the highest **QUALITY WORKFORCE** in the nation to fuel our growth companies with the current serious talent shortage.

Since it became our top priority in 2006, UTC has been at the forefront in advancing Rigor and Relevance in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) education. We were the only organization who worked with the State School Board to increase high school requirements by one year each for math, science, and language arts with Governor Huntsman and his GOED board. We also actively participated on the USOE Math Steering Committee and encouraged the approval of 12th grade math along with other recommendations critical to **prepare our 600,000 "underserved students" for the thousands of open, high-paying jobs in our industry.**

Representing over 5,500 high-tech, clean-tech and life science companies in Utah, UTC supports legislation that creates a quality workforce for these innovative, high-growth companies. UTC feels that S.B. 271 will help to that end and respectfully asks for your support of this bill. We value your excellent public service. As always, I'd welcome hearing from you.

With much appreciation,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard R. Nelson".

Richard R. Nelson
President and CEO
Mobile: 801.718.3999

2755 East Cottonwood Parkway, Suite 500, Salt Lake City UT 84121