

## **History of Education System**

The United States of America is celebrating Independence Day this week, so I'd like to review the historical timelines of our national's public education system. In 1647 the Massachusetts Colony approved a decree requiring every town of fifty families to have an elementary school, and towns of 100 families should have a Latin school to ensure children could read the Bible. Thomas Jefferson proposed a two track educational system relating to skilled trades and learned professions in 1779. Parcels of land were designated as townships where land grant universities were established in the Northwest Territory, which became known as the state of Ohio in 1785. In 1790 the Pennsylvania state constitution called for free public education for students who are economically disadvantaged and more affluent families were expected to pay tuition for their schooling. In 1820 the first public high school opened in Boston, which was followed by Massachusetts passing a law in 1827, which made public school open to all grades at no cost for tuition. From 1846 to 1856, 3.1 million immigrants arrived in the U.S., which promoted the need to provide a free education to all students in the country. The first compulsory education law requiring students to attend school was passed in 1851 in Massachusetts. In Utah, the first territorial superintendent of schools was appointed in 1851, which was followed by the first Free Public School Act in 1890. Districts were developed along county lines from 1867 to 1900. The Tax Revision Commission in 1929 placed an emphasis on the use of property tax to support the educational needs of the children in the state of Utah. Secondary schools in Utah continued to struggle to enroll students with only 58 percent of 16 to 17 year olds attending high school in 1910, but increased to an enrollment of 86 percent in 1940. The Utah Legislature began appropriating educational funding from the state's General Fund in 1943 that allowed for an additional \$2.6 million to go to schools, which included a percentage of the state's revenue from income tax. Utah actually does more with its tax resources to support education than many other states. Utah has the highest proportion of its population in public school (98.2 percent) than other states and leads the nation in the percent of the population over twenty-five with a high school diploma. Utah has the lowest expenditure per student in the nation but the state ranks fifth in the percentage of personal income expended for education. Utah and particularly the Kane School District is a wonderful place for students to receive a free and appropriate public education, which was the vision of many of our country's founding fathers.

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