

Article from **Policy Perspectives**

([http://www.imakenews.com/cppa/e\\_article000392218.cfm?x=b6Gdd3k,b30DNQvw,w](http://www.imakenews.com/cppa/e_article000392218.cfm?x=b6Gdd3k,b30DNQvw,w))

April 27, 2005

## Students in Title 1 Schools

*The links within this article lead to files that are in Adobe Acrobat PDF format. If you don't have Acrobat Reader installed, then pick up a free reader by clicking:*



Policymakers often talk about Title 1 students or programs without much thought to the question of "who are the Title 1 students in our area?" This short paper will detail the demographic profiles of Utah's Title 1 students within each school district.

Title 1 schools are determined by the concentration of students within the school that are eligible for free or reduced price school lunches. Families with income levels at or near the poverty level qualify to participate in the program. At the beginning of each school year, parents complete a short form that requests household income data and family size. From that data, school officials are able to determine whether or not a child qualifies for the program. [Figure 1](#) details the percentage of students in each Utah school district eligible for the free and reduced price lunch program. The percentages range from 10.4% in the Park City School District to 73.8% in the San Juan School District. The designation of "Title 1 School" is given to those schools within a district that have the highest concentration of free and reduced price lunch students. According to the US Department of Education, Title 1 School designation within a state or district should focus on those schools that have at least 40% of their students enrolled in the free and reduced price lunch program.

For Utah school districts, one of the concerns regarding the economic situation of students is the rapidity with which the free and reduced priced lunch population is growing. [Figure 2](#) highlights two sets of growth rates for Utah's school districts. The bars on the graph are the growth in the number of students that are participating in the lunch program between the 2002-03 and 2003-04 school years. The green line is overall enrollment growth during the same time period. For the most part, participation in the school lunch program grew more rapidly than did overall enrollment. Additionally, those districts that saw the greatest enrollment growth also saw the greatest growth in the lunch program. Alpine School District saw a 4.0% increase in enrollment during the time period but growth in the percent of students that qualify for free or reduced price lunch grew at a rate three times enrollment, or 12.4%. Wasatch School District is an even starker example; enrollments grew by 2.7% while lunch participation grew by 14.1%. For these districts, the growth disparity may be because both Alpine and Wasatch School Districts serve urban-fringe areas; residents of Alpine School District may be employed in either the Salt Lake City or Provo areas and live in communities that are reasonably close for commuting purposes but have a lower cost of living and especially a lower cost of housing than the main urban areas. Parents that reside within the boundaries of Wasatch School District are most likely those that work in Park City but cannot afford to live there.

Demographically, Utah is growing more diverse and nowhere is this borne out than in the composition of Utah's school age population. Utah's Hispanic population is younger than the state's white LDS population. Additionally, both groups tend to have large families. Coupled with this propensity to large families is the timing of baby booms in the state. The time period between 2001 and 2014 will see an "echo boom" of children as the grandchildren of the original baby boom generation begin to start their own families. None of these statements should come as any surprise to policymakers and others that have listened to media reports and other discussions on these topics. However, because the Hispanic population is growing so rapidly, there may be a tendency to dismiss the growth in the Title 1 student population as an issue due solely to that ethnic group. However, as [Figure 3](#) shows, in most school districts, that is not

the case. With the exception of Granite, Ogden, Salt Lake and San Juan School Districts, the largest percentage of students in Title 1 schools are still Caucasian. While the concentration of Caucasian students in Title 1 school is less, for the most part, than the percentage of Caucasian students in a school district overall, Title 1 monies are still going to serve these students as well as their ethnic minority counterparts.

Published by [Center for Public Policy & Administration](#)

Copyright © 2007 The University of Utah. All rights reserved.

The Center for Public Policy & Administration offers research, education and services to public and nonprofit organizations that will strengthen administration, leadership and public policy making.

Powered by [IMN](#)