

President's Message

Change is a Good Thing

There are a couple Utah Science Teacher Association board members who have been involved with the UtSTA since its inception. It is to these few that the past five years of science education seems so incredible, or even impossible. Things have certainly changed.

It wasn't too long ago that the UtSTA Mid-Winter Conference shifted location around the state. Some years we hoped to attract 100 members to attend, knowing that really less than fifty would eventually show up. These early years stand in stark contrast to the past twelve months, which boasted the largest Mid-Winter conference attendance on record at just under 1000 attendees. This level of participation is exciting and a bit overwhelming.

Each year the UtSTA board members do their very best to reach out across the state to assemble presentations for our Mid-Winter Conference. However, with the current size of Utah, we know that we miss numerous outstanding teachers who have amazing ideas to share. The Board recognizes the need to do better in serving Utah's teachers and students, and we need your help to do so. We believe that efficiency will help us work smart, but we also need to increase representation for our teachers. It is for these reasons we are proposing the following changes to our voting members for approval.

Most of Utah's population can be found in the urban areas of the Wasatch Front. This area has grown considerably and our Region Representatives need more help to serve the teachers. Our current Region divisions place far too much burden on these Reps and the Board is proposing the creation of two new Regions. Maps showing the current scheme and the proposed boundaries shifts can be found later in the newsletter. We would hope that you would [approve this change](#) and that some of you would volunteer to become new Region Representatives for these areas. We desperately need you and your great ideas to help us move forward.

Finally, we feel we can work smarter if we utilize the existing organizational communication channels found within Utah's four Regional Service Centers. These centers seek to meet the needs of students and teachers by bringing together resources and fostering partnerships between rural districts. Superintendents of Utah's rural school districts meet together frequently at these centers to plan, share ideas, and work together towards meeting their collective needs. Oddly, the UtSTA Regions have never aligned with these highly functioning centers and we'd like to change that. Therefore, the UtSTA Board is asking for your [supporting vote](#) to realign our region boundaries to match the existing boundaries of the Regional Service Centers.

The Board feels these two changes will help us better meet the needs of our growing population, but we also need you to help in this effort. There are many ways you can

serve within the UtSTA. Each year we hold elections for a few positions on the board and we also need a [number of volunteers](#) to help us with the yearly conference. Please, if you feel you can serve with us, fill out the volunteer form using the link in this newsletter, and support us in voting for the changes in our structure. Should the changes pass, we'd also hope that a few of you outstanding teachers would run for one of the new board positions during the elections later in the year.

Thank you for your choice to be a teacher. Thank you for tackling subjects that are difficult, but oh, so, rewarding. I wish you the very best as we all head back to school. May your "preps" be productive, your Diet Coke breaks rewarding, and may the fidget spinner craze die down or at least be used to teach physics concepts.

-John Taylor