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CONGRATULATIONS TO UTAH, 2021 RECIPIENT OF THE FRANK NEWMAN AWARD FOR STATE INNOVATION!

Education Commission of the States is pleased to honor Utah with the 2021 Frank Newman Award for State Innovation, in recognition of its commitment to expanding digital learning across the state.

In the last five years, Utah has invested more than \$50 million in its Digital Teaching and Learning Initiative, which has trained thousands of teachers across the state to effectively use the internet and online tools to enhance students' learning experience. The initiative, well underway when the COVID-19 pandemic forced schools to close in 2020, allowed schools across the state to transition to online instruction within two days.



The initiative has also bred collaborative relationships among the governor's office, state policymakers and other education leaders to establish broadband and education broadcast networks that support K-12 schools, technical colleges, universities and public libraries. One district, Murray School District in a small suburb of Salt Lake County, has earned national acclaim for

delivering high-speed internet to all 6,000-plus students by installing 44 towers on 12 school buildings. It has become a model for other districts in the state and across the country.

Education Commission of the States celebrates the leadership, collaboration and tenacity evident in Utah's digital learning efforts, and is pleased to honor state leaders with this award. Utah's acceptance remarks will be available at the [2021 Virtual Forum on Education Policy](#), taking place Oct. 20-21. Registration for this event opens in September.

The Frank Newman Award for State Innovation is one of [three awards](#) that Education Commission of the States gives each year to celebrate outstanding commitment to public education. The others are the James Bryant Conant Award, which recognizes individual achievement, and the Education Commission of the States Corporate Award, which recognizes a for-profit corporation, nonprofit organization or foundation.

For more information about Utah or its digital learning efforts, contact Patty Norman, deputy superintendent of student achievement, at patty.norman@schools.utah.gov.

For more information about Education Commission of the States or its awards, contact Mandy Zatynski, director of communications, at mzatynski@ecs.org.