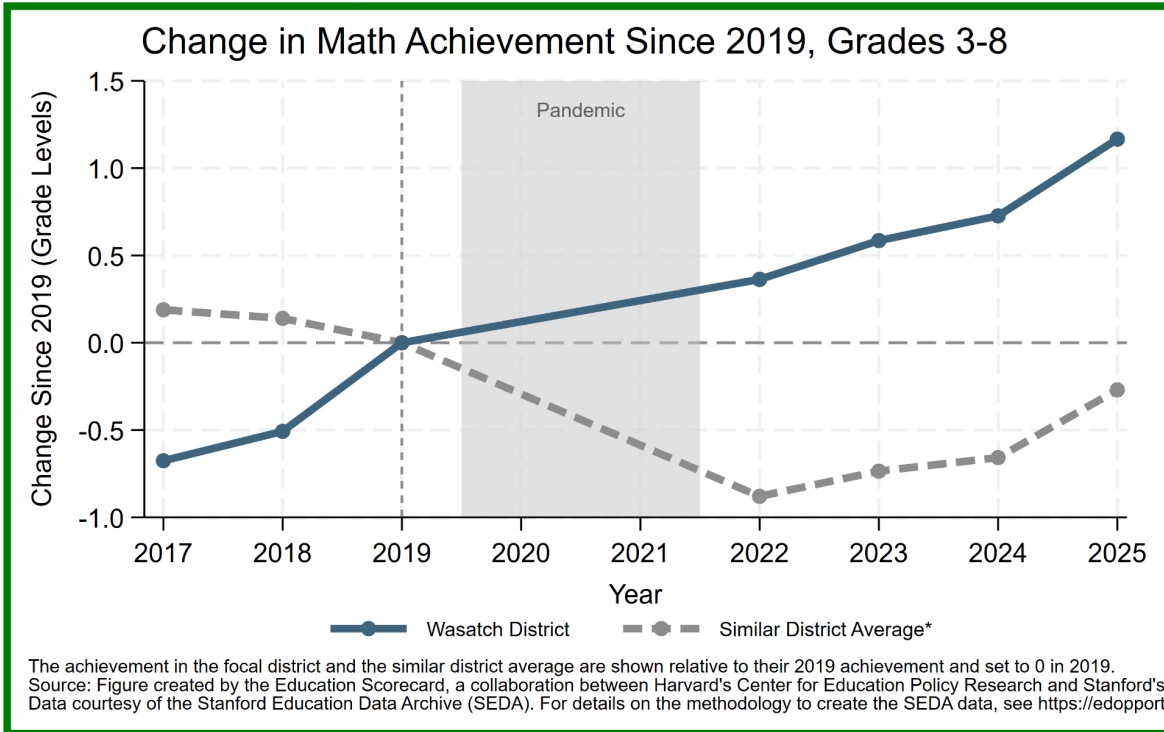


**Wasatch County School District**  
Heber City, Utah

**Wasatch District, UT**  
Rising Faster than Similar Districts in Math



\*Similar Districts: Park City District, Juab District, South Summit District, Box Elder District, Tooele District

**Student Demographics:**

Total student population: 8,471  
Economically Disadvantaged: 26%

Three largest racial demographics:

White 75%  
Hispanic/Latino 21%  
Two or more races 2%

## **Dr. Garrick Peterson, Superintendent**

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- “The belief that our district has in our teachers, the belief that our faculty has in each other, and the belief that our teachers have that all students can learn at high levels drive the culture and work of our district. The belief we have in each other drives us to find our next little change. The many little changes that teachers have made over time have led to big changes in adult capacity and student achievement.”

### **Background**

Wasatch County School District’s improvement story is rooted in a district vision that treats adult learning as the engine of student learning. District leaders describe their core belief this way: the best way to increase student achievement is through increased capacity in adults, and the district has organized itself as a high-functioning professional learning community to make that vision real.

That commitment has translated into a long-term investment in professional learning communities rather than a search for one-time fixes. In interviews about the district’s math gains, leaders pointed not to a new curriculum or a single signature program, but to a disciplined approach that strengthens teacher practice, keeps teams focused on clear goals, and responds quickly when students fall behind.

### **Strategies for Success**

#### **Becoming a High-Functioning PLC District**

WCSD operates as a high-functioning professional learning community district, grounded in the [Solution Tree](#) framework and informed by texts such as [Cultures Built to Last](#) and [Learning by Doing](#).

- Collaborative culture: Monday afternoons are reserved for collaboration with same-subject or same-grade peers, and every nine weeks schools learn from other schools. The district also looks statewide for teachers and schools that are making rapid gains and sends teams to learn from them, reflecting the belief that small improvements in practice can produce large gains over time.
- Results orientation: Setting clear goals and making the little changes to achieve those goals drives the work of teacher teams. The other teams organize to help teacher teams achieve their goals. Common formative assessments are used to reflect and make adjustments in practice as they strive to achieve their goals.
- Focus on learning: The district worked to define grade-level learning more clearly by aligning instruction and assessment to grade-level expectations and building regular checks for understanding throughout the year so schools could respond quickly when students struggled.

#### **Timely Intervention**

- Every school has a Tier 2 intervention block during the school day for students who do not pass a formative assessment, allowing teachers to bring students back within a few days for targeted support on specific skills.

- Multilingual learners, students with disabilities, and students reading well below grade level receive longer-running interventions built directly into their day, layered alongside the daily Tier 2 block rather than replacing it.
- Targeted summer school driven by formative-assessment data brings students back to the classroom to learn the specific content they missed during the year.

#### Investing in Leadership Capacity Throughout the System

- The district maintains four teams that make the system work: a district team that develops principals and central office leaders, school-level leadership teams or guiding coalitions that build teacher leadership, teacher teams that carry out the core PLC work, and intervention teams that support students who are well below grade level.
- This leadership structure is designed to build capacity throughout the district. Principals develop teacher leaders, teacher leaders lead learning in their schools, and intervention teams help ensure that the district's focus on grade-level learning reaches students who need the most support.
- WCSD used one-time federal dollars to send educators to conferences, deepen understanding of the district's PLC philosophy, and pay teachers for summer collaboration days focused on grade-level assessments and other critical work. Because those investments increased educator knowledge rather than funding new programs or recurring positions, the district has faced no major disruption as ESSER expired.