

Working with Utah's Rural School Districts to Expand and Enhance UPSTART

Validation Grant

AP: **Serving Rural Communities *and* Effective Use of Technology**

CPP(s): **Improving Cost-Effectiveness and Productivity; Enabling Broad Adoption of Effective Practices; and Supporting Novice i3 Applicants.**

IP: **Supporting High-Quality Early Learning**

Waterford with UT rural school districts (Beaver, Daggett, Duchesne, Emery, Garfield, Grand, Kane, Millard, N. Sanpete, N. Summit, Piute, Rich, San Juan, Sevier, S. Sanpete, S. Summit, Tintic, Wayne), will improve school readiness preparation and reading development using UPSTART, a home-based, technology-delivered pre-K program. Use of the curriculum will resume in summers after kindergarten and 1st and 2nd grades to forestall learning decay. UPSTART's curriculum is comprised of three software programs, and, together they provide a strong, individualized academic program when the usage requirement of 15 minutes a day, five days a week, is met. For academic supervision, UPSTART draws on the home's resources—available time and the presence of a concerned parent or caregiver. UPSTART has been piloted throughout Utah and meets i3 evidence standards. Over five years, the project will: serve 1,760 children in rural districts that have both fewer program offerings and more lower SES children than their urban and suburban counterparts; work with district liaisons to transition children into kindergarten; work with districts to use UPSTART in three summers to prevent learning decay; and provide an evaluation of the program. Expected results are: gains similar to those from the statewide UPSTART program; a blueprint of ways to work with districts to improve outcomes for children as they enter kindergarten; a diminishment of summer learning loss; and information for decision makers across the country looking to implement cost-effective pre-K programs, particularly in traditionally difficult-to-serve rural areas.

