



October 17, 2024

For Immediate Release

Contact: Kelsey James, board communications coordinator
801-538-7616 · kelsey.james@schools.utah.gov

Board of Education Names Weighted Pupil Unit Funding Increase as Top Legislative Priority

SALT LAKE CITY – The Utah State Board of Education has reviewed needs and requests for resources to support Utah’s K-12 public school system, and selected an increase to the Weighted Pupil Unit (WPU) as its top priority ahead of Utah’s 2025 legislative session.

The Board would like to see an increase to the WPU of 3 percent above the inflationary factor, which would amount to a total increase of approximately 6.8 percent in an ongoing funding request, which would be estimated to be approximately \$303 million in total. The WPU is the amount of money per student that a school receives in Utah. The state uses WPUs to determine how much funding each school should receive based on the needs of its students and other factors.

“As we approach the upcoming legislative session, it is vital that we advocate for an increase to the WPU, as it directly impacts our ability to provide a quality education for Utah students and provides flexibility to local education leaders,” said Chair Jim Moss. “Many of our legislative priorities are interconnected and essential to fostering an environment where teachers are supported and every student can be successful. We appreciate the Legislature’s ongoing commitment to these efforts; investing in these priorities is not just an investment in our schools; it’s an investment in our future.”

The Board's top ten funding requests for the upcoming legislative session, in order of priority, are as follows:

1. **WPU.** An increase to the weighted pupil unit (WPU) of 3 percent above the inflationary factor, amounting to a total increase of approximately 6.8 percent. The WPU is a standard measure used to allocate state funds to schools, with each WPU representing the cost of educating one student.
2. **Critical USBE FTE Needs.** Allows USBE to address FTEs for critical capacity needs related to roles, responsibilities, requirements, and improving service to the field in response to audit findings and program expectations.
3. **Paid Professional Hours.** Allows educators to be paid for some school-related work done beyond contract time including costs associated with conferences, and other activities to meet the needs of students. This request is for funding to continue an existing program.
4. **Grow Your Own Educator Pipeline.** Addresses educator shortages while supporting local community members interested in earning their professional credentials in public education.
5. **Student Information System (SIS).** To fund a uniform reporting system, resources for LEAs without a sustainable SIS system, and potential FTE for statewide SIS data and reporting behaviors.
6. **Educator Incentives: National Board Certified Teachers.** A salary supplement that acknowledges and rewards educators who have achieved national board certification. The incentive also assists educators with the fees associated with completing this certification.

7. **School Safety Needs Assessment Findings.** Assists LEAs with safety resources to meet needs identified by the School Safety Needs Assessment.
8. **Beverley Taylor Sorenson Arts and Pops.** Increases Utah's reach to a broader range of schools statewide to provide an engaged arts-rich integrated educational experience to children in grades K-6.
9. **School Lunch Resources Based on Representative Clancy's Work.** Increases the number of public K-12 students that are enrolled in participating schools that can qualify for free breakfast and/or lunch. . The funding request applies to K-12 students determined to be eligible for reduced-price meals who are enrolled in public schools participating in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program, and is informed by Representative Tyler Clancy's legislation from the 2024 General Session.
10. **Educator Supplemental Programs.** Supports the expansion of supplemental salary programs to school positions not currently in code for these programs, including occupational therapists and physical therapists.

Other legislative funding requests supported by the Board include Career & Technical Education program funding, registered apprenticeship programs for teachers, and statewide attendance support.

Representatives from the Board will present these priorities to the Governor's Office and the Utah Legislature prior to the 2025 General Session.

A complete list of the requests can be accessed by visiting the [USBE website](#).

www.schools.utah.gov