

R277. Education, Administration.

R277-303. Educator Preparation Programs.

R277-303-1. Authority, Purpose and Oversight Category.

(1) This rule is authorized by:

(a) Utah Constitution Article X, Section 3, which vests general control and supervision over public education in the Board;

(b) Subsection 53E-3-401(4), which allows the Board to make rules to execute the Board's duties and responsibilities under the Utah Constitution and state law;

(c) Subsection 53E-6-201(3)(a), which directs the Board to establish the criteria for obtaining licenses; and

(d) Section 53E-6-302, which requires the Board to establish standards for approval of educator preparation programs.

(2) The purpose of this rule is to establish flexible criteria for demonstration of competency in educator preparation programs in Utah.

(3) This Rule R277-303 is categorized as Category 4 as described in Rule R277-111.

R277-303-2. Definitions.

(1) "Candidate" means an individual enrolled in an approved educator preparation program who is working toward completing the requirements for a Utah professional educator license.

(2) "Clinical experience" means a structured opportunity in which:

(a) a licensed educator mentors a program candidate;

(b) a school or district administrator or institution of higher education preparation program faculty member with appropriate training evaluates program candidates; and

(c) a program candidate develops and demonstrates competency in the skills and knowledge necessary to be an effective educator.

(3) "Competency" means evidence of successful application of knowledge and skills shown through demonstration in a higher education or prek-12 classroom setting.

(4) "Completer" means a candidate who has completed licensure requirements and been endorsed for licensure by an approved educator preparation program.

(5)(a) "Educator preparation program" means a comprehensive program administered by an entity that is intended to prepare individuals to meet the requirements for a Utah professional license or license area of concentration.

(b) "Educator preparation program" may include a program developed by or associated with an institution of higher education, individual LEA, a consortium of LEAs, or the Board.

(6) "Flexibility," for alternative preparation programs, means the process by which a program exercises local decision-making to design and implement focused options to meet program and applicant licensing needs, without adding additional requirements beyond those outlined in Board rule, and allowing a teacher to demonstrate competency where reasonably possible in lieu of coursework or other requirements, consistent with the purpose of Board licensing rules.

(7) "LEA" includes, for purposes of this rule, the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind.

(8) "License area" has the same meaning as set forth in Subsection R277-301-2(6).

(9) "Low rates of passage," as described in Subsection 53E-6-302(8) and this rule, means a university preparation program with less than a 75% passage rate of the science of reading preparation assessment for teaching candidates.

(10) "Mentor" means an educator with a professional license with training that may include how to advise, coach, consult, and guide the development of a new educator.

(11) "Professional license" means the educator license described in Section R277-301-5.

R277-303-3. Utah Educator Preparation Program Standards.

An approved Utah Educator Preparation Program shall meet the following standards:

(1) Program completer competency:

(a) a completer can effectively demonstrate the educator preparation competencies established in Board rule;

(b) a completer has the experience, knowledge, and skills needed to serve students with a variety of educational needs; and

(c) a completer establishes goals for their own professional growth and engages in self-assessment, goal setting, and reflection.

(2) Systems of support for candidate competency:

(a) a program provides high quality learning experiences aligned to Utah competencies and standards while offering multiple opportunities for a candidate to demonstrate that the candidate has the knowledge and skills to serve all students;

(b) a program seeks out and supports high quality clinical experiences for a candidate where the candidate has opportunities to practice and receive feedback on their knowledge and skills;

(c) a program develops and supports high quality mentors who support program candidates in demonstrating competencies in Board rule; and

(d) a program prioritizes capacity to support candidates as reflected in staffing and institutional resources.

(3) Program continuous improvement and impact:

(a) a program engages in thoughtful continuous improvement practices by reviewing program performance data and seeking opportunities for innovations and enhancement; and

(b) a program seeks partnerships with stakeholders to strengthen the Utah education system.

R277-303-4. Educator Preparation Program Review and Approval.

(1) The Superintendent shall establish uniform procedures for initial approval and review of educator preparation programs to ensure compliance with this rule.

(2) The Superintendent shall approve an educator preparation program that meets the requirements of this rule and the standards for program approval established in:

(a) Rule R277-304;

(b) Rule R277-305;

(c) Rule R277-306; and

(d) all other applicable Board rules.

(3)(a) The Superintendent shall conduct an ongoing review of approved educator preparation programs and shall renew or deny approval for a program at least every seven years.

(b) The review described in Subsection (3)(a) shall include monitoring whether:

(i) an educational preparation program is in compliance with Board rules; and
(ii) an alternative preparation program has reasonable flexibility for candidates to demonstrate required competencies.

(4) The Superintendent may grant preliminary approval to a new educator preparation program within a Utah public college or university pending approval by the Utah Board of Higher Education.

(5) The Superintendent shall make a report to the Board when an educator preparation program's initial application for approval is granted or denied.

(6) The Superintendent may place an approved educator preparation program on probation for:

(a) failure to meet program requirements detailed in applicable Board rules; or
(b) failure to submit complete and accurate information in a report required under this rule.

(7) The Board may revoke the approval of a probationary program that fails to meet probationary requirements with at least one year's notice to the educator preparation program.

(8) The Superintendent may require a program or subset of programs to submit reports to inform the annual report to the Board required in Section R277-301-9.

(9) The Superintendent shall accept an approved educator preparation program's recommendations for a professional license or license area if the prospective licensee meets all other requirements of Board rule.

R277-303-5. Educator Preparation Programs.

(1) An educator preparation program that applies for approval by the Superintendent shall demonstrate how it will ensure that participants:

(a) are prepared to meet the Utah Effective Educator Standards established in Rule R277-330; and

(b) demonstrate all competencies applicable to the license area and subject area as established by the Superintendent.

(2) In addition to the requirements of Subsection (1), an educator preparation program that is not also a Utah LEA shall:

(a) have a physical location in Utah where participants attend classes; or

(b) if the program provides only online instruction:

(i) have the program's primary headquarters located in Utah; and

(ii) be licensed to do business through the Utah Department of Commerce; and

(c) establish entry requirements that are designed to ensure that only high quality individuals enter the preparation program, which include measures of:

(i) previous academic success;

(ii) disposition for employment in an educational setting; and

(iii) basic skills in reading, writing, and mathematics.

(3)(a) If the Superintendent denies an application from an educator preparation program, the proposed educator preparation program may appeal the Superintendent's decision to the Board by submitting a written appeal to the Board Secretary.

(b) The Board shall assign an appeal under Subsection (3)(a) to a standing committee to make a recommendation to the full Board for final action.

(4) An approved educator preparation program may recommend an individual that completed the program for a professional license or license area as long as all current license requirements have been met.

(5) If five years have passed since an individual completed an approved educator preparation program, the program may recommend the individual for a professional license or license area if the program:

(a) reviews the individual's program; and

(b) requires the individual to complete any additional necessary requirements to meet current programs standards before making a licensing recommendation.

R277-303-6. Superintendent Responsibilities.

(1) The Superintendent shall provide support to educator preparation programs and potential licensees to the extent that funding allows by:

(a) maintaining a website to:

(i) facilitate collaboration between educator preparation programs;

(ii) facilitate communication between potential educators and approved programs; and

(iii) provide access to up-to-date research on educator preparation and education practices;

(b) reviewing third-party preparation materials for alignment with the Utah Effective Educator Standards in Rule R277-330;

(c) working with potential licensed educators to help them become licensed educators;

(d) ensuring that alternative preparation program applicants be grandfathered from new program requirements added after an applicant's acceptance into the program; and

(e)(i) developing strategies to provide support for preparation programs with low rates of passage on the required literacy preparation assessment; and

(ii) providing increasing levels of support to a preparation program with low rates of passage on the required literacy preparation assessment for two consecutive years.

(2) The Superintendent shall design and maintain a model educator preparation program that:

(a) meets all requirements of all applicable Board rules;

(b) may be adopted by:

(i) an LEA; or

(ii) subject to Section R277-303-5:

(A) an accredited private school; or

(B) a consortium of accredited private schools; and

(c) is overseen by staff distinct from the staff responsible for ensuring educator preparation program compliance with all applicable Board rules.

KEY: educator preparation program

Date of Last Change: November 21, 2025

Notice of Continuation: June 10, 2025

Authorizing, and Implemented or Interpreted Law: Art X Sec 3; 53E-3-401(4); 53E-6-201(3)(a)