

# Board Summary

March 6, 2025 Board Meeting

The Utah State Board of Education:

- Confirmed Dr. Leah Voorhies as the new Deputy Superintendent of Student Achievement.
- Recognized Utah's Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST) recipients.
- Requested that Governor Cox consider vetoing [S.B. 37 Minimum Basic Tax Rate Amendments](#) and [S.B. 268 Rules Review and General Oversight Committee Amendments](#), 2nd Substitute, if necessary.
- Directed USBE staff to use \$150,000 in discretionary funds to perform an audit of federal funds.
- [Full agenda](#).

## Board Confirms Dr. Leah Voorhies as Deputy Superintendent of Student Achievement

The Utah State Board of Education (USBE) confirmed Dr. Leah Voorhies as the new Deputy Superintendent of Student Achievement. Deputy Voorhies has served as the Interim Deputy Superintendent of Student Achievement since Deputy Patty Norman's retirement in early January.

Deputy Voorhies has held administrative roles at USBE for over 15 years. Before stepping into her interim role, she served as the Assistant Superintendent of Student Support, where her responsibilities included serving as the State Director of Special Education.

For additional information, please contact:

**Kelsey James**

Board Communications Coordinator

Phone: (801) 538-7516 | [E-mail](#)

## Board Requests that Governor Spencer Cox Veto Two Bills that Have Implications for Public Education

The Utah State Board of Education reviewed legislation and discussed [veto consideration](#) for two bills. The Board requested that Governor Cox veto [S.B. 37 Minimum Basic Tax Rate Amendments](#) and [S.B. 268 Rules Review and General Oversight Committee Amendments](#), if necessary.

S.B. 37 proposes changes to the funding mechanism for Utah's public schools by altering the flow of property tax revenue. S.B. 268 proposes to enhance the Rules Review and General Oversight Committee's authority to examine and oversee agency rules, policies, and procedures, including those related to education, ensuring they align with legislative intent and statutory authorization.

For additional information, please contact:

**Elisse Newey**

Deputy Superintendent of Policy

Phone: (801) 538-7764 | [E-mail](#)

## Board Requests Audit of Federal Funds

The Utah State Board of Education (USBE) requested an [audit of federal funds](#). USBE directed staff to use \$150,000 in discretionary funds to issue an RFP that would retain auditors to determine:

- How much federal funding has been received by USBE for the past 3 years;
- The costs associated with administering those funds and the costs associated with complying with all federal contracts, directives, rules, and laws associated with those federal funds.

The audit shall separate the costs of COVID-19 relief funds from ongoing monies.

For additional information, please contact:

**Kelsey James**

Board Communications Coordinator

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## Board Recommends Items for Interagency Research Agenda for Utah Data Research Center (UDRC)

The Utah State Board of Education (USBE) approved research questions as USBE research priorities for the Utah Data Research Center (UDRC) research agenda.

Previously, USBE directed staff to provide additional information to the Board on the technical aspects of the [data exchange](#) between UDRC and the agencies. A [full list of the questions](#) can be found online.

For additional information, please contact:

**Aaron Brough**

Director of Data and Statistics

Phone: (801) 538-7922 | [E-mail](#)

# Data Governance Plan Approved for the Utah Schools for the Deaf and Blind

The Utah State Board of Education approved a [Data Governance Plan](#) for the Utah Schools for the Deaf and Blind (USDB). The purpose of the plan is to establish clear policies and procedures for managing and protecting student and educator data at the Utah Schools for the Deaf and Blind. The plan ensures that USDB meets all the legal requirements for protecting privacy and minimizing data handling risks. Additionally, the plan defines responsibilities and security measures for data security, and how data can be shared or deleted. It also requires yearly training and established reporting practices for accountability and transparency.

For additional information, please contact:

**Joel Coleman**

Superintendent at Utah Schools for the Deaf and Blind

Phone: (801) 629-4700 | [E-mail](#)

## New Administrative Rules, Amendments, and Repeals

The Utah State Board of Education approved, amended, or repealed the following administrative rules:

- [R277-417, Prohibiting LEAs and Third Party Providers From Offering Incentives or Disbursement for Enrollment or Participation](#). This rule is being continued upon its five-year review, with the addition of an oversight category.
- [R277-714, Unsafe School Choice Option](#). This rule is being continued upon its five-year review, with the addition of an oversight category.
- [R277-304, Teacher Preparation Programs](#) (incorporated by reference document).

- [R277-304, Teacher Preparation Programs](#). This rule is being amended to incorporate by reference updated special education competencies and update other program requirements throughout.
- [R277-113, LEA Fiscal and Auditing Policies](#). This rule is being updated to remove unnecessary language, yet preserve key reporting components with local flexibility. The rule was approved with direction to staff to bring back Section 8 to be discussed further during the May board meeting.
- [R277-407-6, LEA Requirements to Establish a Fee Schedule -- Maximum Fee Amounts --Notice to Parents](#). This rule is being amended due to ongoing discussion in the legislature making local board approval of fees before July 1 impractical.

## Board Approves Consent Calendar

The Utah State Board of Education approved its consent calendar.

## Highlights of Friday's Committee Meetings

The Utah State Board of Education [Finance, Law and Licensing, and Standards and Assessments Committees](#) met on Friday, March 7. Items approved in committee meetings will be heard by the full Board during its April meeting.

**Finance Committee** met in a hybrid format from 9:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. Highlights from the meeting included:

- Preliminary approval of [R277-632, At-Risk Add-On Funding Report](#).
- Preliminary approval of [R277-317: Incentive for National Board Certification](#).

**Law and Licensing Committee** met in a hybrid format from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Highlights from the meeting included:

- Preliminary approval of [R277-121, Board Waiver of Administrative Rules](#).

- Discussion on [Board Policy 2005: Complaints Against Individual Board Members](#).

**Standards and Assessment Committee** met in a hybrid format from 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Highlights from the meeting included:

- Review of [National Assessment of Educational Progress \(NAEP\) 2024 Results](#).