

# Board Summary

October 3, 2024 Board Meeting

The Utah State Board of Education:

- Discussed and prioritized its 2025 legislative funding requests, with an increase to the weighted pupil unit (WPU) being the top priority.
- Approved the agency's carry-forward spend plans and a continuation of contingency funds.
- Evaluated the results of appropriations for several education-related programs.
- [Full agenda](#)

## Board Prioritizes Funding Requests for the 2025 Legislative Session

The Utah State Board of Education (USBE) has reviewed and approved a draft of 10 [legislative funding priorities](#) for the 2025 legislative session. Typically, USBE staff provide a list of funding recommendations to the Board based on perceived needs across Utah's public education landscape, and the Board discusses and prioritizes a number of these funding recommendations going into the legislative session. The Board's top ten funding priorities for the upcoming legislative session are:

**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 school-related work done beyond contract time.

**4. Grow Your Own Educator Pipeline.** Addresses educator shortages while leveraging local community members interested in earning their professional credentials in public education.

**5. Student Information System (SIS).** Funds used to create 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. Increasing the stipends and support is likely to lead to teacher retention and higher student academic achievement.

**7. School Safety Needs Assessment Findings.** Assists LEAs with resources to meet any 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, including creating a sustainable and equitable funding schema to expand participation and reduce barriers to expand BTS Arts into all interested schools statewide.

**9. School Lunch Based on Representative Clancy's Work.** Eliminates the reduced-price meal category meal charge for school students. 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. Reduce food insecurity, improve access to nutrition during the school day, reduce school meal debt balances, increase meal participation are expected positive outcomes.

**10. Educator Supplemental Programs.** Supports the expansion of supplemental salary programs to positions not currently in code for these programs, including occupational therapists and physical therapists.

A complete spreadsheet of the requests can be accessed [here](#).

For additional information, please contact:

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Board Approves Usage of 2024 Carry-Forward Funds and a Continuation of Contingency Funds

The Utah State Board of Education approved spending plans for unencumbered [state fiscal year 2024 carry-forward balances](#). Some of the remaining funds can be allocated as carry-forward funds to be used on detailed spend plans, such as continuing to provide services on existing contracts, allowing LEAs more time to spend their grant awards in alignment with Utah code, etc. Details about the spending plans can be found [here](#).

The Board also approved a continuation of a [contingency fund](#) of \$200,000 and a legal contingency fund of \$250,000. The Board will be using \$1,365,676.71 of state discretionary funds for:

- Providing funding to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction.
- Continuing onsite and revolving security guard services at the USBE office.
- Paying off older agency vehicle leases to realign them with the replacement cycle.
- Allocating a building operations budget for various replacements and repairs (e.g., broken security cameras, paint and patch, updated conference room furniture, etc.) for the 2025 fiscal year.
- Small district base funding for administrative costs.

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# Board Evaluates Impact of Funding on Specific Education-Related Programs

The Utah State Board of Education (USBE) made recommendations to evaluate impacts of appropriations on several [targeted education programs](#).

The Board took the [following actions](#) related to the School LAND Trust Program:

- Directed staff to consider and make recommendations to remove requirements through legislative code changes and rule changes to streamline the responsibilities of school community councils.
- Directed staff to work with the legislature to seek funding for an office specialist for the School LAND trust.

The Board voted to take the following actions related to the CTE Add-On program:

- Supporting the CTE Add-On Increase Business Case in alignment with the legislative funding request.
- Supporting additional clarifying language for [Utah Code 53F-2-311 4\(b\)](#) for growth identified in the statute to be allocated to USBE.
- Hiring of one full-time employee to administer and support this program.

The Board discussed and supported a base plus funding formula for the Beverly Taylor Sorenson Arts (BTSA) program as part of the request for funding for the BTSA program.

The Board also requested that staff take the following actions related to the Statewide Online Education Program (SOEP) for home and private school participation:

- Work with legislators to develop clarification on the relationship between the Board and the future contractor to administer this program;
- Seek a legislative change during interim on services delivered during a hybrid environment requiring physical attendance vs. the statutory intent for completely online learning experience open to all students as described in code, and/or

moving this hybrid approach out of the SOEP program to its own line item for clarity and specific guidance on the implementation and rename the private school portion and keep the home school portion with USBE; and

- Continue to work on the existing statutorily required Request For Proposal (RFP) unless or until the requirement is amended by the Legislature.

Lastly, USBE addressed the kindergarten program and requested that staff work with legislative leaders on addressing the current age requirement for students that start kindergarten in another state and move to Utah.

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## Board Updates Goal Language in Strategic Plan

The Utah State Board of Education updated the [goal language](#) for its strategic plan. The updated language articulates the Board's goal of improving educational excellence by:

1. Providing high quality licensing, educator and school leadership development to increase the presence of highly-qualified educators for every student in Utah;
2. Enhancing system effectiveness to minimize educational barriers and provide appropriate flexibility and monitoring; and
3. Maintaining robust data governance and protection to support decisions.

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## Board Makes Requests for Statutory Changes

The Utah State Board of Education has asked staff to work with legislators on potential [amendments to the Utah Code](#). The statutory change requests include:

- Amending [Section 53E-4-303](#) to increase the grade range the state-adopted standards assessment may test from eighth to tenth grade for the English, mathematics, science, and writing sections, and to amend Utah Code to remove [Section 53E-4-304](#), which introduced the Utah Aspire Plus assessments.
- Directing staff to work with the legislature to amend [53G-7-203\(6\)](#) to repeal Subsection (6)(c). The language to be repealed will remove the requirement for LEAs to create a locally-approved process to follow for a kindergarten student who is not toilet trained.

For additional information, please contact:

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## Board to Release the Technical Assistance Internal Audit

The Utah State Board of Education voted to release the [Technical Assistance Audit Report](#) and assigned the released report to a standing committee of the Board for further consideration.

For additional information, please contact:

### **Debbie Davis**

Chief Audit Executive

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## Board Approves Renewal of Four-Day School Week Waiver Request from Duchesne County

The Utah State Board of Education approved a [waiver renewal request](#) from Tabiona School in Duchesne County. This district has requested a waiver under [R277-419\(4\)](#), which states that an LEA shall provide educational services over a minimum of 180 school days each school year. The approval allows this LEA to continue to offer a four-day school week.

For additional information, please contact:

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## New Administrative Rules, Amendments, and Repeals

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

- [R277-603, Autism Awareness Restricted Account Distribution](#). This rule is being repealed due to changes to the distribution of funds for the Autism License Plate. While the funds had previously been managed through USBE, moving forward, the Utah State Tax Commission will manage the program.
- [R277-473, Utah Computer Science Grant](#). This rule is being amended to reflect the requirements for ongoing administration of the K-12 Computer Science for Utah Grant and advisory committee.
- [R277-746, Driver Education Programs for Utah Schools](#). This rule is being amended to incorporate an updated [Driver's Education Manual](#), which has been updated due to the passage of [2024 HB 250](#).
- [R277-323 \(Section 1\), Public Educator Evaluation](#). This rule is being amended to add oversight categories.
- [R277-301, Educator Licensing](#). This rule is being amended to add oversight categories for the rule, consistent with the Board's oversight framework requirements.
- [R277-462, Comprehensive School Counseling Program](#). This rule is being amended to add a data project submission deadline date of June 15, per a recommendation by Internal Audit.

## 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 [Law and Licensing, Standards and Assessment, and Finance Committees](#) met on Friday, October 4. Items approved in committee meetings will be heard by the full Board during its November meeting.

**Law and Licensing Committee** met in a hybrid format from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Highlights from the meeting included:

- Preliminary approval of [R277-316, Professional Standards and Training for Non-licensed Employees and Volunteers.](#)
- Preliminary approval of [R277-123, Process for Members of the Public to Report Violations of Statute and Board Rule.](#)

**Standards and Assessment Committee** met in a hybrid format from 9:15 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Highlights from the meeting included:

- Preliminary approval of [R277-325, Public Education Exit and Engagement Surveys.](#)
- Preliminary approval of [R277-114, Response to Compliance and Related Issues.](#)

**Finance Committee** met online from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Highlights from the meeting included:

- Preliminary approval of [R277-752, Special Education Intensive Services Fund.](#)
- Preliminary approval of [R277-801, Services for Students Who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing, Blind, Visually Impaired, and Deaf Blind.](#)