

R277-477 received final approval by the Utah State Board of Education on November 4, 2021. R277-477 was published in the December 1, 2021, Utah State Bulletin, subject to a 30-day comment period, with a first possible effective date of January 10, 2021.

R277. Education, Administration.

R277-477. Distributions of Funds from the Trust Distribution Account and Administration of the School LAND Trust Program.

R277-477-1. Authority and Purpose.

(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 53F-2-404(2)(d), which allows the Board to adopt rules regarding the time and manner in which a student count shall be made for allocation of funds; and

(c) 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.

(2) In accordance with Section 53D-2-202, through representation on the Land Trusts Protection and Advocacy Committee, the Board exercises trust oversight of:

(a) the Common School Trust;

(b) the School for the Deaf Trust; and

(c) the School for the Blind Trust.

(3) The Board implements the School LAND Trust program and provides oversight, support, and training for school community councils and Charter Trust Land Councils consistent with Section 53G-7-1206, Rule R277-491, and this Rule R277-477.

(4) The purpose of this rule is to:

(a) provide financial resources to a public school to implement a component of a school's Teacher and Student Success Plan [~~in order~~]to enhance and improve student academic achievement;

(b) provide a means to involve a parent of a school's student in decision-making regarding the expenditure of School LAND Trust program funds allocated to the school;

(c) provide direction in the distribution of funds from the Trust Distribution Account, as funded in Section 53F-2-404;

(d) provide for appropriate and adequate oversight of the expenditure and use of funds by an approving entity, school administration, and the Board;

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(e) provide for proper allocation of funds as stated in Section 53F-2-404, and the appropriate and timely distribution of the funds;

(f) enforce compliance with statutory and rule requirements, including the responsibility for a school community council to notify school community members regarding the use of funds; and

(g) define the roles, duties, and responsibilities of the Superintendent with regards to the School Children's Trust.

R277-477-2. Definitions.

(1) "Approving entity" means a school district board or a charter authorizer consistent with Section 53G-7-1206.

(2)(a) "Charter trust land council" means a council comprised of a two person majority of parents or grandparents of students attending the charter school, elected by parents of students attending the charter school, convened to act in lieu of the school community council for the charter school.

(b) "Charter trust land council" includes a charter school governing board if:

(i) the charter governing board meets the two-parent majority requirement; and

(ii) the charter school governing board chooses to serve as the charter trust land council.

(3) "Council" means a school community council or a charter trust land council.

(4) "Digital citizenship" means the same as that term is defined in Section 53G-7-1202.

(5) "Fall enrollment report" means the audited census of students registered in Utah public schools as reported in the audited October 1 Fall Enrollment Report of the previous year.

(6) "Funds" means School LAND Trust program funding as defined in Section 53F-2-404.

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(7) "Most critical academic need" means an academic need, consistent with the core standards in Rule R277-700, identified by a council through the annual review of schoolwide assessment data and other relevant indicators.

(8) "Parent," for a charter school, includes a grandparent of a student currently enrolled at the school.

(9)(a) "Principal" means an administrator licensed as a principal in the state and employed in that capacity at a school.

(b) "Principal" includes the director of a charter school.

(10) "Sample" means:

(a) one-third of schools within a district;

(b) at least ten schools; and

(c) all schools if there are less than ten schools in a district.

(11) "Satellite charter school" has the same meaning as that term is defined in Section R277-550-2.

(12) "School safety principles" has the same meaning as described in Section 53G-7-1202.

(13) "Student" means a child in public school grades kindergarten through 12 counted on the fall enrollment report of an LEA.

(14) "Teacher and Student Success Plan" or "TSSP" means the plan required of each school under Section 53G-7-1305.

(15) "Trust Distribution Account" means the restricted account within the Uniform School Fund created under Subsection 53F-9-201(2).

(16) "UPEFS" means the Utah Public Education Finance System.

(17) "Website" means the School LAND Trust website.

R277-477-3. Distribution of Funds - Local Board or Local Charter Board Approval of School LAND Trust Plans.

(1) A public school receiving School LAND Trust program funds shall have:

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(a) a school community council as required by Section 53G-7-1202 and Rule R277-491;

(b) a charter school trust land council as required by Section 53G-7-1205; or

(c) an approved exemption under this rule.

(2) Notwithstanding Subsection (1)(a), the USDB Advisory Council may fill the responsibilities of a school community council for USDB.

(3) A public school receiving School LAND Trust program funds shall submit a membership form consistent with the required membership in Subsection (1) that includes a principal assurance consistent with Subsection 53G-7-1206(3)(c) by October 1 annually.

(4) A charter school that elects to receive School LAND Trust funds shall:

(a) have a charter trust land council consistent with Section 53G-7-1205; and

(b) receive training about Section 53G-7-1206.

(5) A charter trust land council that is not a charter governing board shall:

(a) be subject to Section 53G-7-1203;

(b) have parent or grandparent members elected by parents of students attending the charter school; and

(c) post the following items on the school's website by October 1 annually:

(i) an invitation to parents to serve on the Charter Trust Land Council;

(ii) the dollar amount the school receives each year from the School LAND Trust program;

(iii) a copy or link to the current Teacher and Student Success Plan;

(iv) approved minutes of Charter Trust Land Council meetings for at least a year;

(v) the proposed council meeting scheduled for the school year;

(vi) ~~[a telephone number, email address, or both where each council member can be contacted directly]~~ a means to contact the members of the school's Charter Trust Land Council directly;

(vii) a link or copy of the final reports of the school for the last two years, as required by Subsection 53G-7-1206(5);

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(viii) a link or copy of the school plan for the current year.

(6) A charter school that is a small or special school may receive an exemption from the charter land trust council composition requirements contained in Section 53G-7-1205 upon application to the school's authorizer if the small or special school demonstrates and documents a good faith effort to recruit members to the charter trust land council.

(7) The principal of a charter school that elects to receive School LAND Trust funds shall submit a plan, approved by the school's governing board, to the approving entity on the School LAND Trust website:

(a) no later than April 1 for schools authorized by the State Charter School Board;

or

(b) for a newly opening charter school, no later than November 1 in the school's first year [~~in order~~]to receive funding in the year the newly opening charter school opens.

(8)(a) An approving entity:

(i) shall consider a plan annually; and

(ii) may approve or disapprove a school plan.

(b) If an approving entity does not approve a plan, the approving entity shall:

(i) provide a written explanation why the approving entity did not approve the plan;

and

(ii) request that the school revise the plan, consistent with Subsection 53G-7-1206(4)(d).

(9)(a) To receive funds, the principal of a public school shall submit a School LAND Trust plan to the approving entity annually through the School LAND Trust website using the form provided.

(b) The Board may grant an exemption to a school using the Superintendent-provided form, described in Subsection (8)(a), on a case-by-case basis.

(10) In addition to the requirements of Subsection (7), the School LAND Trust plan described in Subsections (6) and (8)(a) shall include the date the council voted to approve the plan.

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(11)(a) The principal of a school shall ensure that a council member has an opportunity to provide a signature indicating the member's involvement in implementing the current School LAND Trust plan and developing the school plan for the upcoming year.

(b) The principal shall collect a council member's signature digitally through the website.

(c) An approving entity may design the approving entity's own form to collect the information required by this Subsection (10).

(12)(a) An approving entity for a district school or a charter school authorized by an authorizer other than the State Charter School Board shall establish a timeline, including a deadline, for a school to submit a school's School LAND Trust plan.

(b) A timeline described in Subsection (10)(a) shall:

(i) require a school's School LAND Trust plan to be submitted to the approving entity with sufficient time so that the approving entity may approve the school's School LAND Trust plan no later than May 15 of each year; and

(ii) allow sufficient time for a council to reconsider and amend the council's School LAND Trust plan if the approving entity rejects the school's plan and still allow the school to meet the May 15 approving entity's approval deadline.

(c) After an approving entity has completed the approving entity's review, the approving entity shall notify the Superintendent that the review is complete.

(d) For an LEA to receive its full distribution in July, the LEA shall submit plans with all required approvals online no later than May 15.

(13)(a) Prior to approving a plan, an approving entity shall review a School LAND Trust plan under the approving entity's purview to confirm that a School LAND Trust plan contains:

(i) academic goals;

(ii) specific steps to meet the academic goals described in Subsection (11)(a)(i);

(iii) measurements to assess improvement; and

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(iv) specific expenditures focused on student academic improvement needed to implement plan goals.

(b) The approving entity shall determine whether a School LAND Trust plan is evidence based and consistent with the approving entity's pedagogy, programs, and curriculum.

(c) The president or chair of the approving entity shall provide training annually on the requirements of Section 53G-7-1206 to the members of the approving entity.

(14)(a) After receiving the notice described in Subsection (10)(c), the Superintendent shall review each School LAND Trust plan for compliance with the law governing School LAND Trust plans.

(b) The Superintendent shall report back to the approving entity concerning which School LAND Trust plans were found to be out of compliance with the law.

(c) An approving entity shall ensure that a School LAND Trust plan that is found to be out of compliance with the law by the Superintendent is amended or revised by the council to bring the school's School LAND Trust plan into compliance with the law.

(15) If an approving entity fails to comply with Subsection (12)(c), Superintendent may report the failure to the Audit Committee of the Board as described in Section R277-477-8.

R277-477-4. Appropriate Use of School LAND Trust Program Funds.

(1) Parents, teachers, and the principal, in collaboration with an approving entity, shall review school[-]wide assessment data annually and use School LAND Trust program funds in data-driven and evidence-based ways to improve educational outcomes, consistent with the academic goals of the school's teacher and student success plan framework under Section 53G-7-1304 and the priorities of the LEA governing board, including:

(a) strategies that are measurable and show academic outcomes with multi-tiered systems of support; and

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(b) counselors and educators working with students and families on academic and behavioral issues when a direct impact on academic achievement can be measured.

(2) A school's School LAND Trust program expenditures shall have a direct impact on the instruction of students in the particular school's areas of most critical academic need and consistent with the academic priorities of the LEA's governing board:

(a) to increase achievement in:

(i) English;

(ii) language arts;

(iii) mathematics; and

(iv) science; and

(b) for high schools to:

(i) increase graduation rates; and

(ii) promote college and career readiness.

(3) A school may not use School LAND Trust program funds for the following:

(a) costs related to district or school administration, including accreditation;

(b) expenses for:

(i) construction;

(ii) maintenance;

(iii) facilities;

(iv) overhead;

(v) furniture;

(vi) security; or

(vii) athletics; or

(c) expenses for non-academic in-school, co-curricular, or extracurricular activities.

(4) A school that demonstrates appropriate progress and achievement consistent with the academic priorities of the LEA governing board outlined in Subsection (2) may request local board approval of a plan to address other academic goals if the plan includes:

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(a) how the goal is in accordance with the core standards established in Rule R277-700;

(b) how the action plan for the goal is:

(i) data[-]-driven;

(ii) evidence based; and

(iii) has a direct impact on the instruction of students consistent with Subsections (1) and (2);

(c) the data driving the decision to spend School LAND Trust funds for academic needs outlined in this Subsection (4); and

(d) the anticipated data source the school will use to measure progress.

(5) A council may budget and spend no more than \$7,000 for an academic goal or component of an academic goal than incorporates any combination of the following:

(a) digital citizenship training under Subsection 53G-7-1202(3)(a)(iii); or

(b) safety principles consistent with Subsection 53G-7-1202(3)(a)(v).

(6) A school district or local school board may not require a council or school to spend the school's School LAND Trust program funds on a specific use or set of uses.

(7) Student incentives implemented as part of an academic goal in the School LAND Trust program may not exceed \$2 per student in an academic school year.

R277-477-5. Distribution of Funds - Determination of Proportionate Share.

(1) An LEA shall report the prior year expenditure of distributions for each school.

(2) The total expenditures each year described in Subsection (1) may not be greater than the total available funds for an LEA.

(3)(a) In an unanticipated circumstance, a school within an LEA may be allowed a small advance from a school's allocation for the next fiscal year when:

(i) the LEA has unspent School LAND Trust funds to cover the advance; and

(ii) the LEA governing board approves the advance.

(b) If a school receives an advance under Subsection (3)(a):

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(i) the LEA shall decrease the beginning allocation to the school for the next fiscal year in the same amount as the advance; and

(ii) restore the same advance amount to the unspent School LAND Trust funds of the LEA.

(c) A school's beginning School LAND Trust funds balance for a new school year shall be:

- (i) the school's allocation for the new school year;
- (ii) minus any advance approved under Subsection (3)(a);
- (iii) plus any carry-over from the prior year.

(4) A school district shall adjust the current year distribution of funds received from the School LAND Trust program as described in Section 53F-2-404, as necessary to maintain an equal per student distribution within a school district based on:

- (a) school openings and closings;
- (b) boundary changes; and
- (c) other enrollment changes occurring after the fall enrollment report.

(5) An LEA shall provide the current year distribution and carry-over amount from the prior school year to the principal by October 1 annually.

(6) A charter school and each of the charter school's satellite charter schools are a single LEA for purposes of public school funding.

(7)(a) For purposes of this [S]section[-(5)], "qualifying charter school" means a charter school that:

(i) would receive more funds from a per pupil distribution than the charter school receives from the base payment described in Subsection (6)(c); and

(ii) is not a newly opening charter school as described in Subsection (7).

(b) The Superintendent shall distribute the funds allocated to charter schools as described in this Subsection (6).

(c) The Superintendent shall first distribute a base payment to each charter school that is equal to the product of:

(i) an amount equal to the total funds available for all charter schools; and

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(ii) at least 0.4%.

(d) After the Superintendent distributes the amount described in Subsection (6)(c), the Superintendent shall distribute the remaining funds to qualifying charter schools on a per pupil basis.

(8)(a) The Superintendent shall distribute an amount of funds to a newly opening charter school that is equal to the greater of:

(i) the base payment described in Subsection (6)(c); or

(ii) a per pupil amount based on the newly opened charter school's projected October 1 enrollment count.

(b) The Superintendent shall increase or decrease a newly opening charter school's first year distribution of funds in the school's second year to reflect the newly opening charter school's actual first year October 1 enrollment.

(9) If a school chooses not to apply for funds or does not meet the requirements for receiving funds, the Superintendent shall deposit the unused balance in the Trust Distribution Account.

R277-477-6. School LAND Trust Program - Implementation of Plans and Required Reporting.

(1) A school shall implement a plan as approved.

(2)(a) The principal shall submit a plan amendment authorized by Subsection 53G-7-1206(4)(d)(iii) through the School LAND Trust website for approval, including the date the council approved the amendment and the number of votes for, against, and absent.

(b) The approving entity shall:

(i) consider the amendment for approval;

(ii) approve an amendment before the school uses funds according to the amendment; and

(iii) notify the Superintendent an amendment is ready for review.

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(c) The Superintendent shall review an amendment for compliance with statute and rule before the school uses funds according to the amendment.

(3)(a) A school shall provide an explanation for any carry-over that exceeds one-tenth of the school's allocation in a given year in the School LAND Trust Plan or final report.

(b) The Superintendent shall recommend a district or school with a consistently large carry-over balance over multiple years for corrective action for not making adequate and appropriate progress on an approved plan.

(c) The Superintendent may take corrective action to remedy excessive carry-over balances consistent with Rule R277-114.

(4) By approving a plan on the School LAND Trust website, the approving entity affirms that:

(a) the entity has reviewed the plan; and

(b) the plan meets the requirements of statute and rule.

(5)(a) A district or charter school business official shall enter prior year audited expenditures of School LAND Trust funds through UPEFS consistent with UPEFS requirements and timelines.

(b) The expenditure data shall appear in the final report submitted online by a principal, as required by Subsection 53G-7-1206(5)(b).

(6) A principal shall submit a final report on the School LAND Trust website annually before a School LAND Trust plan for the coming school year is submitted.

(7) An approving entity shall ensure that a final report includes clear explanations of plan implementation and expenditures and meets the confidentiality requirements of Rule R277-487 prior to March 1 to allow the review required by Section R277-477-7.

(8) An LEA shall provide an annual report to its governing board on the implementation of each school's prior year School LAND Trust plans by March 1 annually.

R277-477-7. Compliance Review.

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(1)(a) The Superintendent shall review a sample of school final reports for consistency with the approved school plan.

(b) The Superintendent shall create a list of all schools in the sample whose final reports indicate that funds from the School LAND Trust program were expended inconsistent with the statute, rule, or the school's approved plan.

(c) The Superintendent shall annually report a school described in Subsection (1)(b) to the school district contact person, district superintendent, and president of the local board of education or charter board and charter approving entity, as applicable.

(2) The Superintendent may visit a school receiving funds from the School LAND Trust program to discuss the program, receive information and suggestions, provide training, and answer questions.

(3)(a) The Superintendent shall supervise annual compliance reviews to review expenditure of funds consistent with the approved plan, allowable expenses, and the law.

(b) The Superintendent shall report annually to the Board Audit Committee on compliance review findings and other compliance issues.

R277-477-8. Superintendent Responsibilities.

The Superintendent shall:

(1) represent the Board on the Land Trusts Protection and Advocacy Committee in accordance with Section 53D-2-202;

(2) review and approve a charter school plan on behalf of the State Charter School Board;

(3) provide notice as necessary to the State Charter School Board of changes required of charter schools for compliance with statute and rule;

(4) review and approve a plan submitted by the USDB Advisory Council as necessary;

(5) prepare the annual distribution of funds to implement the School LAND Trust program pursuant to Section 53F-2-404;

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(6) provide training to entities involved with the School LAND Trust program consistent with Subsection 53G-7-1206(8); and

(7) implement corrective action, if appropriate, consistent with Rule R277-114 if an LEA or its council fails to comply with ~~[the provisions of]~~this rule.

KEY: schools, trust lands funds, school community councils

Date of Last Change: 2022~~[July 20, 2021]~~

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Authorizing, and Implemented or Interpreted Law: Art X Sec 3; ~~[53A-1-401]~~53E-3-401; 53F-2-404