

# Minimum School Program Descriptions

## Basic School Program

### **Kindergarten:**

The Kindergarten program provides unrestricted revenues for LEAs based on the number of kindergarten students. LEAs may expend the funds as needed to support the basic education of students within their schools. Weighted Pupil Units (WPU) are determined based on an LEA's prior-year kindergarten average daily membership (ADM) plus growth, multiplied by 0.55 for half-day students, and 1.0 for full-day students (0.9 for charter schools).

### **Grades 1-12:**

The Grades 1-12 Program is the largest single program within the Minimum School Program. Funding is unrestricted in use by local governing boards and supports all educational services provided by school districts and charter schools in the first through twelfth grades. Educational services may include, but are not limited to, educator compensation, textbooks, supplies, materials, support personnel, and many other functions, people, and programs that support the basic education programs in these grades. WPU are determined based on an LEA's prior-year average daily membership (ADM) of students enrolled in the first through twelfth grades plus growth. School districts receive 1.0 WPU for one full ADM. Charter schools receive WPU as follows: 0.9 for K-6, 0.99 for grades 7 and 8, and 1.2 for grades 9-12.

### **Career and Technical Education Add-On:**

The Career and Technical Education (CTE) Add-on program provides funding to LEAs to pay for the higher costs associated with CTE courses. Add-on programs in the Minimum School Program (MSP) provide funding in addition to the regular Weighted Pupil Unit (WPU) generated by an enrolled student. Program funding only supports CTE courses approved by the State Board of Education and provided directly by an LEA or by an external provider contracted by the LEA.

### **Class Size Reduction:**

The Class Size Reduction program provides unrestricted funding to school districts and charter schools. The funding is a remnant of a class size reduction effort made in the mid-1990s. The funds were used to lower class sizes at the time. Since then, the annual appropriation is targeted to maintain this initial reduction and does not provide for additional reductions each year. Not only do the funds not provide for additional reductions each year, but the original effort has likely eroded over time due to changes in the economy, local education agency (LEA) compensation programs, and inflation.

LEAs must use 50 percent of their allocation on reducing class size in grades K-2. If the average K-2 class size for the district or charter school falls below 18, the school district or charter school "can seek State Board of Education for approval to use these funds for class size reduction in grades 3-8". Up to 20 percent of class size reduction funds may support capital facility projects that help reduce class size.

### **Foreign Exchange:**

High school foreign exchange programs allow secondary students from other countries to attend up to one academic year in Utah schools. Visiting students reside with host families and participate in school and local community activities. Visiting students must be between 15 and 18 1/2 years old at the time of enrollment or have not completed more than 11 years of primary and secondary school. Statute, 53G-6-707, encourages school districts and charter schools to enroll foreign exchange students. "Due to the benefits to all students of having the opportunity to become familiar with individuals from diverse backgrounds and cultures, school districts are encouraged to enroll foreign exchange students . . . particularly in schools with declining or stable enrollments where the incremental cost of enrolling the foreign exchange student may be minimal."

### **Necessarily Existent Small Schools:**

The Necessarily Existent Small Schools (NESS) program assists school districts in operating schools in remote areas of the state and with low student populations. Certain schools are deemed "necessarily existent" through an application process grounded in state statute and State Board of Education rules. A school that meets these provisions is necessarily existent to provide educational opportunities that can't be met but by keeping the school open. The NESS program provides additional resources to qualifying schools to allow for higher costs involved in operating the school. There are three sub-programs within the NESS appropriation, these components include: the NESS allocation formula, funding for geographically isolated schools that do not qualify for funding under the NESS allocation formula, and a minimum base funding amount for school districts that enroll fewer than 2,000 students. The Isolated Schools and Small District Funding Base amounts were included by the Legislature beginning in FY 2021.

### **Professional Staff:**

The Professional Staff Program provides funding to school districts and charter schools to support recruiting and retaining highly educated and experienced educators for instructional, administrative and other types of professional employment in public schools. The program provides additional weighted pupil units for professional staff. The additional WPU's are based on a statutory scale that weights experience (years of service) and training (degree obtained) to offset the higher cost associated with long-term educators. School districts and charter schools may use program funding in a variety of ways, which may include signing and retention bonuses.

### **Special Education Add-On:**

The Special Education Add-On Program is the largest of five programs serving special education students. The Add-On program serves students that range in age from 5 through 21 (the maximum age that students may remain in the public education system). Special education students must receive a free, appropriate education consistent with state and federal mandates. As the name suggests, Add-on WPU's are applied in addition to a "primary count" WPU generated when a student enrolls in the public school system. The primary count WPU generated for special education students is counted in either the Grades 1-12 program or the Special Education - Self-Contained program (for students that require more than 180 minutes of special education services each day). An Individual Education Plan (IEP) governs the educational services provided to each special education student. An IEP committee comprised of parents, teachers, support personnel and administrators determines the educational needs of each student and the required services to meet identified needs. These services can range from a 15-minute per-week session to one-on-one instruction for six hours each day. A student's IEP may require other related services, such as physical therapy, occupational therapy, or nursing services in order for the student to benefit from special education services. Cost estimates indicate that it is more expensive to educate a special education student (depending on severity of need) than it is to educate a traditional student. Special services such as prescriptive speech therapy, physical therapy, occupational therapy, psychological and behavioral management, and adaptive physical education may significantly increase the costs associated with providing educational services.

### **Special Education Extended School Year:**

The Special Education - Extended School Year Program supports students with severe learning disabilities, who, because of the severity of their disability will not maintain skills gained in the regular school year over the summer break or other long school breaks. The program provides additional educational time to qualifying students to avoid having to recoup learning gains.

### **Special Education Extended Year for Special Educators:**

The Extended Year for Special Educators program provides funding for additional contract days for special education teachers. These teachers have added duties and responsibilities associated with complying with state and federal special education regulations that warrant additional time to complete. Program participation is voluntary for educators. Educators can use additional workdays to perform duties associated with the student IEP (individualized education program) process, administering student assessments, conferring with parents, maintaining records and preparing reports.

Teachers may receive up to a \$200 stipend per additional day of work (up to a statutory maximum of 10 days). The number of additional days available is limited based on the amount of funding appropriated by the Legislature. Current funding provides approximately 5 additional contract days.

### **Special Education Impact Aid:**

The Impact Aid program provides funding to school districts and charter schools for three purposes: to pay for higher administrative costs associated with providing special education services to students; to pay special education costs for students in state custody (prisons, detention facilities, and the state hospital); and to provide additional funding for students with low-incidence disabilities.

### **Special Education Preschool:**

The Special Education - Preschool Program provides educational services to children with disabilities who are three to five years of age. After age 5, students transition to kindergarten programs in the school districts and charter schools. Since 1992, Federal law (Public Law 99-457) requires that children with disabilities ages three to five years receive an appropriate free public education.

### **Special Education Self-Contained:**

The Special Education Self-Contained Program represents the "primary" weighted pupil unit for certain special education students. A self-contained means a student that is enrolled in a special education class for 180 minutes or more each school day. Unlike resource students (less than 180 minutes), a student in a self-contained setting does not generate a regular WPU in the Grades 1-12 program. Students also receive a "secondary (or add-on) count" through the Special Education Add-on program. Funding is distributed to local education agencies (LEAs) to help fund the additional costs associated with providing more extensive educational services to students who are in a self-contained setting as opposed to primarily general education setting (resource student). LEAs must spend self-contained funds on their special education program.

### **Students At-Risk Add-On:**

The Students At-Risk - WPU Add-on program provides additional weighted pupil units (and associated funding) for students experiencing economic disadvantage or who are English language learners. The program was created during the 2021 General Session to provide additional weighted pupil units for certain students "at-risk" of academic failure. While WPUs are generated based on the enrollment count of economic disadvantage and English language learners, school districts and charter schools determine how to use the funding to meet all students at risk of academic failure as determined by the local board.

## **Related to Basic**

**Adult Education:**

The Adult Education programs assist adults to "become self sufficient, with skills necessary for future employment and personal success." Programs offered locally through Utah school districts support adults that do not have a secondary school diploma, the General Educational Development Test (GED) or its recognized equivalent. The program appropriation also includes funding for the State Board of Education to contract with local school districts to provide educational services to individuals in state prisons and certain county jails. The State Board is responsible for providing educational services to inmates that do not have a high school diploma or GED.

**At Risk Students – Gang Prevention and Intervention:**

At-Risk Students - Gang Prevention was created out of the conversion of the Enhancement for At-Risk Students (EARS) program into a WPU Add-on program in the Basic School Program. The Gang Prevention program provides grants to local education agencies to support gang prevention activities in public schools. During the 2021 Genral Session, the Legislature opted to keep the funding as an independent grant program beginning in FY 2022 instead of collapsing the funding into the new WPU Add-on program.

**Beverley Taylor Sorenson Elementary Arts Learning Program:**

The Beverley Taylor Sorenson (BTS) Elementary Arts Learning Program began as a four-year pilot program in 2008. The program has grown since the original 50 school pilot to include approximately 400 elementary schools across the state. The program provides grants to school districts and charter schools to hire highly qualified, full-time arts specialists based at the elementary schools. The Legislature created the program to enhance the social, emotional, academic, and arts learning of students in kindergarten through grade 6 by integrating arts teaching and learning into core subject areas.

**Charter School Base Funding Program:**

Prior to FY 2021, charter schools received \$100 per enrolled student to support administrative costs. The administrative cost program was eliminated during the 2020 5th Special Session and replaced with the Small Charter School Base Funding program beginning in FY 2021. The program provides an amount of funding based on school size for all charter schools enrolling fewer than 2,000 students. One-time funds have also been provided for schools above 2,000.

**Charter School Local Replacement:**

The Legislature established the Charter School Local Replacement Funding program to provide revenue to charter schools to assist in operating and capital facility needs. Unlike school districts, charter schools do not have bonding authority or the ability to tax their patrons to cover facility costs.

The Legislature created a statutory formula that provides an equalized per-pupil state appropriation to each charter school to replace some of the locally generated property tax revenue charter schools cannot access. School districts use local property tax revenue to support both operations and capital needs. The core of the current formula dates to legislation passed during the 2008 General Session; the Legislature amended the formula during the 2016 General Session.

### **Concurrent Enrollment:**

The Concurrent Enrollment program was established to enable high school students to complete high school graduation requirements and earn college credit at the same time. Most often, students participate in the program during their junior or senior year of high school. As college-level courses, concurrent classes provide students the ability to do advanced work during high school. The opportunity to take college courses while in high school allows students to get a head start on their college education, save money, and challenge themselves academically.

Statute requires courses to be taught by college or university faculty or an eligible instructor within the public education system. A public education instructor must be licensed by the State Board of Education, supervised by an institution of higher education, and meet policies adopted by the State Board of Regents.

### **Digital Teaching and Learning Program:**

The Digital Teaching and Learning Program provides grants to local education agencies to "improve student outcomes through the use of digital teaching and learning technology and provide high-quality professional learning for educators to improve student outcomes through the use of digital teaching and learning technology" (53F-2-510). Program funding is used to implement LEA plans submitted and approved by the State Board of Education.

Components of a digital teaching and learning program may include: student and teacher devices, Wi-Fi and wireless compatible technology, curriculum software, assessment solutions, technical support, change management of LEAs, high-quality professional learning, internet delivery and capacity, and security and privacy of users.

### **Dual Immersion:**

The Legislature established the Dual Immersion program as a pilot program in FY 2008. A dual immersion program provides students with an instructional model that uses 50 percent of instruction in English and the other 50 percent in the target language (Chinese, French, German, Portuguese or Spanish). The program begins for each school in kindergarten or first grade. Additional grades are added each year as students progress through the school.

### **Educator Professional Time:**

The Educator Professional Time program was created by House Bill 396, "Paid Professional Hours for Educators" during the 2022 General Session. The program provides one-time funding from the Uniform School Fund Restricted - Public Education Economic Stabilization Restricted Account to provide additional contract time to certain educators, namely, general and special education teachers, counselors, school level administration, and other student support educators outlined in statute. Statute directs LEAs to use funding to provide paid professional hours for educators to increase subject-area knowledge, plan daily lessons, understanding how students learn, analyze student work and achievement, advance effective and evidence-based instructional strategies, etc. Educators can also use their hours for professional development costs as approved by their LEA. LEAs are required by USBE board rule to have a policy on how the hours will be administered at each LEA.

### **Educator Salary Adjustment:**

The Legislature created the Educator Salary Adjustments program during the 2007 General Session. The Legislature provided an ongoing salary adjustment to qualifying educators of \$2,500 in FY 2008. The amount was increased by an additional \$1,700 in FY 2009, for a total increase of \$4,200 over the two-year period.

The program was created in recognition of the need to attract and retain qualified and dedicated teachers in the public education system. Educators qualifying for the ongoing salary adjustment include: classroom teachers, speech pathologists, librarians or media specialists, preschool teachers, school administrators, mentor teachers, teacher specialists or teacher leaders, guidance counselors, audiologists, psychologists, or social workers. The program envisioned that each qualifying educator would receive the same increase in ongoing salary adjustment. Through this process, the Legislature provided a greater percent increase to beginning school teachers, in an effort to bring up the average beginning teacher salary in the state.

During the 2023 General Session, the Legislature passed H.B. 215, "Funding for Teachers Salaries and Optional Education Opportunities," and in doing so doubled the Educator Salary Adjustment from the \$4,200 per educator set in 2009 to \$8,400, plus employer-paid benefits. SB183 from 2024 provided that the Educator Salary Adjustment would increase by the prior year's WPU percentage increase. For FY25, the Educator Salary Adjustment was \$8,904.

### **Effective Teachers in High Poverty Schools Incentive Program:**

The Effective Teachers in High Poverty Schools Incentive Program was created during the 2017 General Session. The program provides a \$5,000 salary bonus to certain teachers. Teachers must meet two criteria to be considered for a bonus:

1. Employed as a teacher in a high poverty school.
2. Achieve a median growth percentile of 70 or higher. Statute 53F-2-513 defines a high poverty school and the median growth percentile.

A school district or charter school applies to the State Board of Education on behalf of the teacher. The Board determines if the teacher is eligible based on statutory requirements.

### **Enhancement for Accelerated Students:**

The Enhancement for Accelerated Students program was created by the Legislature in the 2011 General Session, with FY 2012 as the first year of program funding. The state funding is used to "enhance the academic growth of students whose academic achievement is accelerated." (House Bill 2, 2011 General Session) Program funding supports several educational programs in the public schools, namely, gifted and talented, Advanced Placement (AP), and the International Baccalaureate (IB) programs.

### **Flexible Allocation:**

The Flexible Allocation program provides a pool of unrestricted funding allocated to LEAs. The program originated as a way to deliver budget reductions during the economic downturn in 2010. Since this time, the program has allocated a flexible source of funding for school districts and charter schools to use in their budgets. The Legislature briefly eliminated funding for the program beginning in FY 2021 but restored funding beginning in FY 2024 to provide for one-time funding to 4th-6th class county schools and the Matching Fund for School Nurses and School Library Books and Electronic Resources programs which were eliminated.

### **Grants for Professional Learning:**

The Grants for Professional Learning program was created during the 2020 General Session through the passage of [House Bill 114, "Early Learning Training and Assessment Amendments"](#). The State Board of Education awards grants to local education agencies (LEAs) to provide job-embedded coaching and support for elementary school educators, funds a benchmark mathematics assessment, and for LEAs to hire implementation support coaches. Participating LEAs must establish an early learning plan that includes early literacy and early mathematics components.

### **Pupil Transportation To and From School:**

The To and From School - Pupil Transportation program provides revenue to assist the State's school districts in transporting students to and from school each day. Pupil transportation is a state-supported program, only students that meet state program guidelines receive funding. To receive funding, students must meet distance-based requirements outlined in statute ([53F-2-403](#)). Funding is distributed based on bus routes



approved by the State Board of Education. Charter schools are not eligible to receive state to and from transportation funding.

### **School LAND Trust Program:**

The Legislature established the School LAND (Learning And Nurturing Development) Trust Program, often referred to as School Trust Lands, in the 1999 General Legislative Session. The program provides financial resources to public schools to enhance or improve student academic achievement, implement a school's improvement plan, and involve parents in the decision making regarding the expenditure of trust funds allocated to a school.

In exchange for not taxing federal land, the U.S. Congress "gave lands to Utah schools at statehood. The lands are held in a legal trust for our schools. Schools own 3.3 million acres. The lands are managed by the School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration and must, by law, be used to generate money for our schools. The money is put in a permanent savings account, which is never spent, but invested" (USBE School LAND Trust Program, Website, December 2006) by the State Treasurer.

Statute requires each school to form a School Community Council to prepare the school improvement plan. Plans identify the academic needs of a school and provide a solution to these needs by using the annual School LAND Trust allocation to the school. Local school boards approve each of the school-generated academic improvement plans.

### **Student Health and Counseling Support Program:**

The Legislature created the Student Health and Counseling Support Program through the passage of H.B. 373, Student Support Amendments (2019 General Session). The program provides funding to school districts and charter schools to support "targeted school-based mental health support, including clinical services and trauma-informed care." Schools may provide the services by employing or contracting with qualified personnel.

Statute directs the State Board of Education to develop a formula to distribute appropriated funds to local school districts and charter schools. To participate in the program, school districts and charter schools must submit plans to the State Board of Education that include "measurable goals approved by the governing board on improving student safety, student engagement, school culture, or academic achievement." In addition, local plans should outline how the local board will use funds to meet the established goals, meet requirements on parent education, and collaborate with local mental health authorities.

Local boards are required to match the state allocation using local or unrestricted state money.

### **Teacher and Student Success Program:**

The program provides funding to schools to improve school performance and student academic achievement.

To receive an allocation from the program, local education agency governing boards must adopt a student success framework to provide guidelines and processes for LEA schools to follow in developing a teacher and student success plan. School principals develop the plan to include school-specific goals within the framework. School principals must seek input from multiple groups outlined in statute (i.e. community council, educators, parents, students, and community stakeholders).

The State Board of Education is tasked with distributing program funding. Accountability for the program is administered at the LEA level.

### **Teacher Salary Supplement Program:**

The program provides qualifying math, science, and special education teachers with a \$4,100 salary supplement each year they apply for and qualify for funding. Teachers receive the full supplement amount if they are assigned full-time to teach one or more of the qualifying courses listed in statute and also have a qualifying degree and endorsement also listed in statute. Teachers that have a part-time assignment to teach in one of these courses may receive a partial salary adjustment based on the number of hours worked in the course.

In addition to the \$4,100 salary adjustment, the Legislature appropriated funding to cover the employer-paid benefit costs associated with retirement, worker's compensation, Social Security, and Medicare.

### **Teacher Supplies and Materials**

Program funding is used to reimburse classroom teachers for out-of-pocket expenditures on classroom supplies and materials used for educational purposes. The Legislature first provided one-time funding to reimburse teachers in 1996, and from 1996 to 2018, the Legislature annually provided one-time funding for the supplies and materials reimbursements. Beginning in FY 2018, the Legislature appropriated the funding ongoing. For FY2025, the Legislature appropriated an additional \$8.4 million one-time to increase the amounts

The Superintendent shall distribute funds to Local Education Agencies (LEA's) based on data submitted to the CACTUS database. LEA's shall ensure that each returning classroom teacher receives the teacher's proportionate share of the appropriation. If a teacher has not spent or committed to spend their individual allocation by April 1, the school or LEA may make excess funds available to other teachers or reserve the money for use by eligible teachers the following year.

## Voted and Board Local Levy Programs