

School Safety and Security Specialists

Onboarding

Utah State Board of Education School Safety Center



Welcome!

- Housekeeping:
 - Connect with the old Specialist in your building to discuss any “handoff” items necessary to be successful.
 - Each School Safety and Security Specialist (SSSS, Specialist) will be added to the FY26 SSSS email listserv.
 - Each Specialist will be invited to join to the FY26 Canvas course - look for an email from notifications@instructure.com.
 - Check your SPAM folder for emails from schoolsafetyprograms@schools.utah.gov.

Agenda

- Welcome Message
- The Utah School Safety Center
- Evolution of School Safety and Security Specialists
- Legislative Job Duties
- Utah School Safety Needs Assessment
- FY26 Canvas Course
- Stipend Distribution
- Future Training Dates and Training Opportunities
- School Safety Legislation to Note
- Resources



Welcome Message

“It takes a village to raise a child.”
~African Proverb

The Utah School Safety Center (1)



Ashley Pistello
School Safety Center Specialist



Levi Grisenti
School Safety & Security Specialist



Willie Chen
School Safety Data Analyst



Michelle Knight
Threat & Crisis Response
Support Specialist



Scott Eyre
OSUMH Liaison –
School Based Mental Health Specialist



Lt. Jeremy Barnes
Department of Public Safety –
School Safety Liaison



Marie Steffensen
Charter School Liaison

The Utah School Safety Center Leadership and Support



Shauntelle Cota
Director of School Safety &
Student Services



Rhett Larsen
School Safety Center
Coordinator



Melissa Muhlestein
Executive Secretary for the
School Safety Center

The Utah School Safety Center (2)



Mission

The mission of the Utah School Safety Center is to work collaboratively to provide technical assistance, training, and resources that support Local Education Agencies' commitment to ensuring school safety and improving the climate of school communities.



Vision

The vision of the Utah School Safety Center is that each student learns in a safe and healthy school environment.



The Utah School Safety Center (3)

- Spring of 2019, the Utah State Legislature passed House Bill (H.B.) 120: Student and School Safety Assessment and formed the Utah School Safety Center.
- The Utah School Safety Center is a group of professionals from USBE, Utah Department of Public Safety, Utah Office of Substance Use and Mental Health, and Utah State Charter School Board.



Evolution of School Safety and Security Specialists

- Visit to Indiana in 2021 and learned about their approach with School Safety Specialists
- **H.B. 61 (2023)** - School Safety Requirements
 - Designated a School Safety Specialist in each K-12 public school
 - Established ongoing funds (\$3,000/Specialist) for LEAs to distribute
- **H.B. 84 (2024)** - School Safety Amendments
 - Updated name to School Safety and Security Specialists
 - Updated required duties
- **H.B. 40 (2025)** - School Safety Amendments
 - Updated required duties



Legislative Required Duties (1)

School Safety and Security Specialists must:

- Participate in an annual training the State Security Chief selects with the SSC (School Safety and Security Specialists Training Program)
- Collaborate with the County Security Chief and with local law enforcement to conduct the Utah School Safety Needs Assessment and review the results to recommend and implement school safety improvements

Legislative Required Duties (2)

- Report directly to the school's Principal
- Monitor and report security risks
- Oversee school safety and security practices
- Ensure adherence to all policies, procedures, protocols, rules, and regulations (e.g.: Standard Response Protocol™)

Legislative Required Duties (3)

- Be an active member of the school's multidisciplinary team and participate in all duties including:
 - Conducting a behavioral threat assessment when deemed necessary using an evidence-based tool (Comprehensive School Threat Assessment Guidelines (CSTAG))
- Coordinate with local first responder agencies to implement and monitor safety and security drills
- Ensure school staff and students receive training on the school's current safety and security practices

Legislative Required Duties (4)

- Organize a debriefing with individuals following an event where the school's security has been significantly compromised
- Abide by all chain of command policies
- Coordinate with school safety personnel during an emergency
- Follow student privacy policies
- Remain current on:
 - CSTAG;
 - Specialist duties; and
 - The school's emergency preparedness, emergency response plans, and emergency recovery plans

Legislative Required Duties (5)

This position DOES NOT:

- Replace the role of a School Resource Officer (SRO)
- Enforce student discipline

For more information, refer to [Utah Code Section 53G-8-701.6](#).

Utah School Safety Needs Assessment

[Utah Code Section 53G-8-701.5](#) requires:

- The Specialist of each school to conduct The Utah School Safety Needs Assessment (SSSNA) **once every three years**, in collaboration with the County Security Chief and local law enforcement agency with relevant jurisdiction over the school.
- Report the results of the Utah SSNA for each school to the State Security Chief and the Utah SSC.
- The results will be used to award a grant to an LEA in accordance with 53F-5-220.
- The Utah SSNA will be due by **October 15** of each applicable year.
- Application for Alternatives at both the LEA and school level are available.



FY26 Canvas Course (1)

- Specialists will receive a course invitation via email from Instructure Canvas to join our course. (email from notifications@instructure.com)
- Modules
 - **FY26 Recordings** (always available)
 - **Resources** (always available)
 - **Onboarding** (always available)
 - Viewing Confirmation Quiz
 - Exit Ticket
 - Q&A (participation optional)
 - **Training #1** (available after 3:30p on October 29)
 - **Training #2** (locked until previous Module is complete)
 - **Training #3** (locked until previous Module is complete)



FY26 Canvas Course (2)



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▼ Onboarding Training (Required for new Specialists) Complete All Items

	Onboarding Training: Viewing Confirmation Oct 29 1 pts Score at least 1.0	☐
	Exit Ticket: Onboarding Oct 29 5 pts Score at least 4.0	☐
	Onboarding Training: Q&A View	☐

▼ Training #1: Organizing an After Action Debrief Complete All Items 

Stipend Distribution

- Each LEA will receive annual funding to provide one \$3,000 stipend per Specialist per school.
- The stipend and duties of a Specialist **cannot** be split amongst multiple individuals.
- Final salary amounts **may vary** based on benefit deductions and should be confirmed with the LEA's Business Administrator.
- For questions, reach out to your LEA School Safety and Security Director.



Training Program

Onboarding Training will be recorded and sent to all Specialists via email. Viewing is required for all **new** Specialists.

1. **Training #1:** Organizing an After Action Debrief
 - a. Wednesday, October 29, 2025 | 2:30 - 3:30 p.m.
2. **Training #2:** Emergency Recovery Plans
 - a. Wednesday, January 21, 2025 | 2:30 - 3:30 p.m.
3. **Training #3:** Updates from the 2026 Legislative Session
 - a. Wednesday, April 8, 2025 | 2:30 - 3:30 p.m.

Zoom links will be sent by the SSC via email prior to the training date.

Professional Learning Opportunities (1)

Standard Response Protocol™ (SRP) - The “I Love U Guys” Foundation:

- October 27, 2025: ½ Day SRP/Standard Reunification Method (SRM) Workshop (virtual)
- November 20-21, 2025: SRM Reunification Exercise (in-person; Canyons School District)
- January 28, 2026: SRP Train the Trainer (in-person; Alpine Learning Center)

Comprehensive School Threat Assessment Guidelines (CSTAG):

- December 9, 2025: 1-Day Workshop (in-person; Nebo School District)
- December 10-11, 2025: Train the Coach (in-person; Nebo School District)
- February 24 -25, 2026: 1-Day Workshop (in-person; USBE)
- February 26, 2026: Train the Coach (in-person; USBE)

Professional Learning Opportunities (2)

4th Annual Utah School Safety Center Conference

- Wednesday - Thursday, June 10-11, 2026
- Location is TBD - Let us know if you would like to host!

Training Request and Technical Assistance Requests:

- Use our [Training Request Portal](#)!
- Trainings offered by SSC
 - CSTAG
 - PREPaRE Workshop 1, Crisis Prevention Through Recovery
 - Youth Mental Health First Aid (YMHFA)
 - Question. Persuade. Refer. (QPR)



School Safety Legislation to Note

- H.B. 120 (2019) - Student and School Safety Assessment
- H.B. 61 (2023) - School Safety Requirements
- H.B. 140 (2023) - Standard Response Protocol to Active Threats in Schools
- H.B. 84 (2024) - School Safety Amendments
- H.B. 40 (2025) - School Safety Amendments
- H.B. 104 (2025) - Firearm Safety in Schools Amendments

Call to Action

By October 29, 2025, School Safety and Security Specialists will:

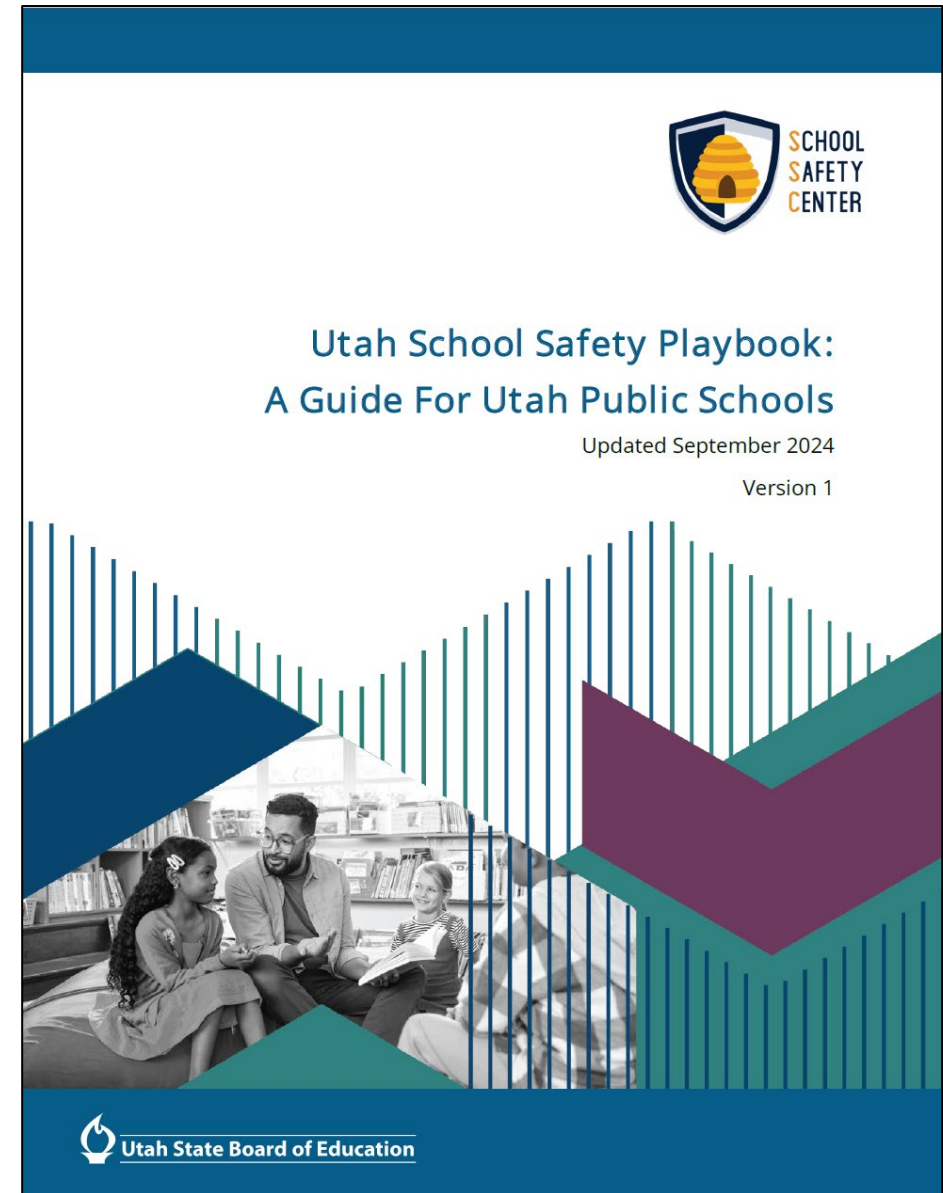
1. Check in with previous or other School Safety and Security Specialists in your LEA to review current school safety initiatives; and
2. Identify and establish a relationship with other LEA School Safety and Security personnel (e.g.: School Safety and Security Director, SRO).

Exit Ticket - Onboarding

1. Complete the Viewing Confirmation quiz in Canvas to unlock Exit Ticket - Onboarding.
2. Take Exit Ticket - Onboarding with at least a score of 4/5 to pass.
 - a. Specialists interested in earning relicensure hours will need to score 5/5.
 - i. All hours will be entered into MIDAS at the **end** of the Canvas course in spring 2026.

Resources

- [Utah School Safety Playbook: A Guide for Utah Public Schools](#)
- [Emergency Preparedness Planning Guide for Utah Public Schools](#)
- [Utah School Safety Center webpage](#)
- [Student Services Training Request Portal \(TRP\)](#)
- [The “I Love U Guys” Foundation](#)
- [SafeUT](#)



Contact

Reach the Utah School Safety Center at
schoolsafetyprograms@schools.utah.gov.