

Board Summary

December 4, 2025 Board Meeting

The Utah State Board of Education:

- Reviewed and discussed statutory change requests in preparation for the upcoming legislative session.
- Received a report on the results of a federal funding performance audit conducted by GPP Analytics.
- Approved a special education add-on waiver for new and expanding charter schools.

Board Approved Statutory Change Requests

The Utah State Board of Education reviewed and approved statutory change requests for the 2026 legislative session, directing staff to work with lawmakers on potential amendments to Utah Code. Statutory requests are technical policy changes the Board identifies each year to clarify outdated language, remove duplicative or ineffective requirements, reduce burdens on schools, or improve the administration of statewide programs. This year's recommendations include proposed code changes intended to streamline requirements and improve program administration. Key requests this year include repealing the Early Learning Plan and Math Plan statutes — both found to add burden without improving student outcomes — and clarifying statewide guidelines related to the use of seclusion rooms and emergency safety interventions. The Board approved an additional statutory change request during its Thursday meeting to remove an outdated reading program and amend code surrounding the first credential pathway to add clarity. [The full list of statutory requests can be found here.](#)

For additional information, please contact:

Elisse Newey

Deputy Superintendent of Policy

Phone: (801) 538-7550 | [E-mail](#)

Greg Connell

Policy Analyst

Phone: (801) 538-7957 | [E-mail](#)

Board Receives Report on Results of Federal Funding Performance Audit

The Utah State Board of Education (USBE) received a presentation from GPP Analytics on the results of a performance audit of USBE's federal funding and associated compliance costs. The audit was conducted under U.S. Government Accountability Office standards and examined federal funds received and the state-level costs required to administer and comply with federal programs across FY 2022–23, FY 2023–24, and FY 2024–25. Unlike a financial audit, this performance audit focused on the efficiency of processes, the full cost structure of federal program administration, and whether systems are functioning as intended.

The auditors reported that while USBE maintains strong internal controls, transparent practices, and administrative overhead levels that are broadly consistent with, or lower than, peer state education agencies, Utah continues to absorb an estimated \$8–\$12 million in state-funded ancillary support costs each year that are not recovered. This represents roughly 2 percent of appropriated federal sources for FY 2024–25. The analysis itemized 17 categories of state-funded compliance and administrative activities and confirmed that some costs of meeting federal requirements, such as reporting, monitoring, oversight, and cross-agency coordination, extend beyond what federal reimbursement covers. The Board received the report for review and discussion regarding next steps.

For additional information, please contact:

Scott Jones

Deputy Superintendent of Operations

Phone: (801) 538-7615 | [E-mail](#)

Deborah Jacobsen

Assistant Superintendent of Operations

Phone: (801) 538-7627 | [E-mail](#)

Board Approves Special Education Add-on Waiver for New and Expanding Charter Schools

The Utah State Board of Education approved a waiver of [R277-479-3\(1\)](#) for FY 2026 to ensure new and expanding charter schools do not receive reduced special education allocations due to implementation issues in the current rule. Past allocations have been based on statewide averages without a long-term true-up mechanism, resulting in funding misalignments over time. The waiver provides short-term stability while staff and a stakeholder working group continue developing a revised formula to address the structural issues and establish an accurate, sustainable approach going forward.

For additional information, please contact:

Sam Urie

School Finance Director

Phone: (801) 538-7545 | [E-mail](#)

Board Approves Child Sexual Abuse and Human Trafficking Instructional Materials

The Utah State Board of Education approved eight curriculum sets following its review in the Fall 2025 Recommended Instructional Materials System (RIMS) cycle. Under 53G-9-207, instructional materials for child sexual abuse and human trafficking prevention must receive Board approval before use in schools. The curriculum was evaluated by the designated review committee to ensure it met all required guidelines, and USBE prevention staff recommended it to the Board for approval.

For additional information, please contact:

Tanya Albornoz

Student Support Services Prevention Coordinator

Phone: (801) 538-7412 | [E-mail](#)

Mindy Elliott

Student Support Services Prevention Specialist

Phone: (801) 538-7913 | [E-mail](#)

Board Approves American Leadership Academy Waiver Request Renewal

The Utah State Board of Education approved American Leadership Academy's request to renew its minimum school days waiver, allowing the school to continue operating on a four-day school week.

For additional information, please contact:

Ashley Biehl

Assistant Attorney General

Phone: (801) 538-7685 | [E-mail](#)

Board Approves CTE Course Standards

The Utah State Board of Education approved an update to the Career and Technical Education (CTE) course standards. These standards are part of the Board's regular multi-year CTE course revision cycle, through which roughly one-fourth of CTE courses are reviewed and updated each year. The revisions were developed with input from subject-matter experts and business and industry partners and reflect the Board-approved process for updating non-core elective courses.

For additional information, please contact:

Thalea Longhurst

Director of Career and Technical Education

Phone: (801) 538-7889 | [E-mail](#)

Jonathan Frey

Career and Technical Education Coordinator

Phone: (801) 538-7852 | [E-mail](#)

New Administrative Rules, Amendments, and Repeals

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

- [R277-484, Data Standards](#). This rule is being amended to clarify when LEAs and schools need to alert USBE of significant changes to data reporting, such as

shifting a charter campus under a different authorizer, extending a campus to include new grade levels, or splitting a campus.

- [R277-477, Distributions of Funds from the Trust Distribution Account and Administration of the School LAND Trust Program](#). This rule is being amended to update terminology and school plan requirements.
- [R277-491, School Community Councils](#). This rule is being amended to update requirements for local governing boards to grant exemptions to school community council requirements consistent with the code.
- [R277-212, UPPAC Hearing Procedures and Reports](#). This rule is approaching its five-year review in February. The rule is being amended to incorporate technical edits and then continued.
- [R277-213, Request for Licensure Reinstatement and Reinstatement Procedures](#). This rule is approaching its five-year review in March. The rule is being amended to incorporate technical edits and then continued.
- [R277-214, Criminal Background Review](#). This rule is approaching its five-year review in March. The rule is being amended to incorporate technical edits and then continued.
- [R277-216, Surrender of License with UPPAC Investigation Pending](#). This rule is approaching its five-year review in February. The rule is being amended to incorporate technical edits and then continued.
- [R277-600, Student Transportation Standards and Procedures](#). This rule is being amended to clarify definitions and to provide a requirement for LEAs to put a notice on their website regarding child access routing plans.
- [R277-114, Response to Compliance and Related Issues](#). This rule is being repealed and reenacted in accordance with draft 5, prepared by the Board's Law and Licensing Committee.
- [R277-111, Board Oversight Framework](#). This rule is being repealed.
- [R277-716, Alternative Language Services for Utah Students](#). This rule is approaching its five-year review in February. The rule is being amended to incorporate technical edits and then continued.

- [R277-700, The Elementary and Secondary School General Core](#). This rule is being amended to update the requirements and timeline for the new civics course as required by H.B. 381, Civics Education Amendments. The changes will allow LEAs to begin offering the new course starting in 2027-2028. The rule will be sent to the Standards and Assessment Committee in their January 2026 meeting for review of course and credit requirements.
- [R277-705, Secondary School Completion and Diplomas](#). This rule is being amended to update the definition of Student with a Significant Cognitive Disability (SWSCD) to bring Utah into compliance with assessment requirements for students with disabilities based on a federal requirement in the Every Student Succeeds Act.

Board Approves Consent Calendar

The Utah State Board of Education approved its consent calendar.

Meeting Highlights for Friday's Committee Meetings

The Utah State Board of Education [Law and Licensing, Finance, and Standards and Assessment Committees](#) met on Friday, December 5. Any items that were approved in committee meetings will be heard by the full Board during its January meeting.

Law and Licensing Committee met in a hybrid format from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Meeting highlights include:

- Preliminary approval of amendments to [R277-304, Teacher Preparation Programs](#).

Finance Committee met in a hybrid format from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Meeting highlights include:

- Preliminary approval of [Small School District Capital Projects for FY26](#).

- Preliminary approval of amendments to [R277-726, Statewide Online Education Program](#).

Standards and Assessment Committee met in a hybrid format from 9:15 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Meeting highlights include:

- Preliminary approval of [R277-609, Standards for LEA Discipline Policy](#).
- Preliminary approval of [R277-709, Education Programs Serving Youth in Care](#).