

Fiscal Highlights

Licensing of SAGE Test Items - Ben Leishman

In fall 2014, the Utah State Board of Education (Board) received a request to license Utah's SAGE (Student Assessment of Growth and Excellence) test items to three states, namely, Florida, Arizona, and Tennessee. The Board has since received a fourth request, from the State of Ohio, to license test items. The Board worked with the Attorney General's office to complete the license agreements.

The American Institutes of Research (AIR) is the contractor that supports Utah in developing and administering the SAGE for Utah's students. AIR also contracts with the states listed above to develop similar assessment systems and the Utah test items will be used as these states transition to their own assessment system. The agreements with AIR, Utah, and these other states assert that Utah retains ownership of all test items. AIR will provide the revenue generated from these licenses to the Utah State Office of Education (USOE) through a reduction of contract payments the State is required to pay, or by direct payment.

During the 2015 General Session, the Legislature passed the following intent language for these licensing agreements:

The Legislature intends that the State Board of Education use any nonlapsing balances generated from the licensing of Student Assessment of Growth and Excellence (SAGE) questions to other states to develop additional assessment questions and provide professional learning for Utah educators.

During the October meeting of the Executive Appropriations Committee, the Board reported that they have received approximately \$7.0 million from the licensing agreements so far. The Board has developed a professional learning program to assist certain schools in understanding and implementing information learned from the SAGE assessment. Finally, the Board has also used a portion of the funding to front the current year cost of four new employees at the USOE. These employees will include three managerial accountants and a federal grants compliance officer. USOE will request ongoing funding for these positions in the FY 2017 budget cycle.