

## Issue Brief – U-PASS Assessment Costs

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION – OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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### **SUMMARY**

The Legislature passed the Utah Performance Assessment System for Students during the 2000 General Session. U-PASS is a comprehensive student achievement plan that requires annual testing of students and reporting of assessment data. The Legislation also required the development of a state-wide student accountability plan. Implementation of the U-PASS legislation has progressed over several years since the original legislation was passed by the Legislature.

### **OBJECTIVE**

This brief provides details of an issue raised by the State Board of Education regarding funding for several components of the U-PASS program.

### **DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS**

For the past several years, the Utah State Office of Education has been able to fund several components of the U-PASS program with surplus federal funds received for the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) program. Specifically, NCLB Title VI carry-forward funds have been used. Indicators suggest that the surplus NCLB revenue will not be available in FY 2007 to support these functions.

#### ***U-PASS Components Funded with Surplus NCLB Revenue***

The State Board of Education has identified several components of the U-PASS program that are funded entirely, or in part, by surplus NCLB revenue. The major U-PASS functions funded with surplus federal funds include: Criterion Reference Tests (CRT) for Elementary and Secondary Language Arts, some components of the Utah Basic Skills Competency

Test (UBSCT), computer services and support, and online testing.

The Board requests an ongoing Uniform School Fund appropriation of \$3,456,900 to continue the identified U-PASS components. A portion of this funding will also provide for an upgrade to the state's student data delivery system, as well as the development and administration of online tests.

*Recommendation:* The Analyst recommends that the subcommittee evaluate the specific U-PASS components that have been funded with surplus NCLB revenue and the other requests detailed above. The Analyst further recommends that the subcommittee prioritize among other items before the subcommittee, \$3.4 million in ongoing Uniform School Fund revenue to support U-PASS assessment costs.

### **LEGISLATIVE ACTION**

This section provides a guide of what actions might be taken if the Legislature wishes to adopt the recommendations presented in this brief. The Analyst recommends that the Legislature consider:

1. Prioritizing \$3,456,900 in ongoing Uniform School Fund revenue to support U-PASS functions previously funded with surplus federal revenue.