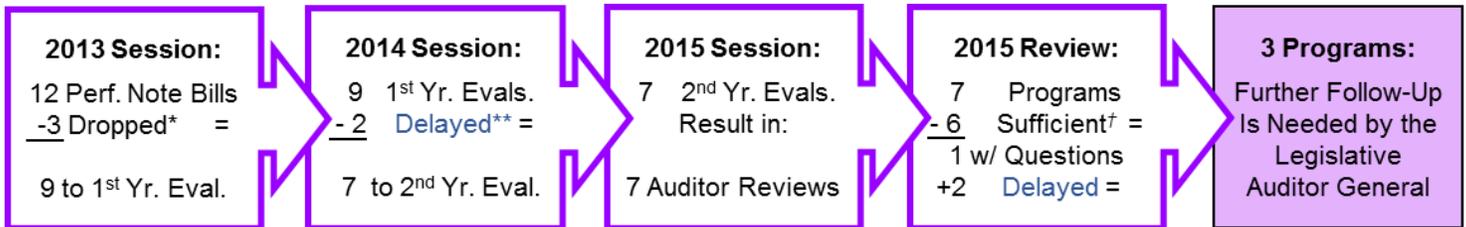


The Auditor General has statutory responsibility to review all new government programs (programs that have received a performance note required by legislative rule) and provide the new program (or agency) with information on management best practices. Since 2000, the Auditor General has published *Best Practices for Good Management* (found at [www.le.utah.gov/audit/BP\\_2009.pdf](http://www.le.utah.gov/audit/BP_2009.pdf)) as a guide for new programs.

In 2011, the Legislature implemented a legislative rule requiring some bills to include performance notes that identify program goals, objectives, outcomes, and performance measures. The Auditor General is charged with reviewing such programs according to program self-evaluations and the performance note contents. The best practices and performance note processes mesh well and are pursued in tandem.

### ■ New Programs with Performance Notes Enter Two-Year Review Process

This is the second report on our review of programs that completed the two-year self-evaluation and performance note follow-up process. Last year's progress report indicated that we were following 12 new 2013 programs. The flowchart below summarizes the work conducted for the 2013 new programs, ending with three programs needing additional follow-up, as will be discussed in the two sections following the chart



\* *Dropped: Not a program or insufficient risk level to merit further work*

\*\* *Delayed: One program's self-evaluations are delayed a year because legislation provided for a one-year pilot program; One program's final review by OLAG delayed by a change in USOE's student assessment system*

† *Sufficient: Auditor opinion is there was sufficient program documentation/progress under Best Practices & Performance Note parameters*

### ■ One 2013 Program with Questions Is Recommended for Limited Scope Audit

After reviewing the evaluations submitted by program directors, OLAG will recommend that one program be referred to the Legislative Audit Subcommittee to consider for limited scope audit work.

- *House Bill 139: Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math Action Center* has been funded with \$30 million in state funds over two years, plus an estimated \$1.5 to \$2.6 million in private cash and in-kind contributions. In addition to the two self-evaluation surveys, we reviewed financial information and an external evaluator's reports as well as presentations to legislative committees. Of considerable import is the STEM Action Center's inability to provide meaningful outcome or effectiveness data for its various projects. The external evaluator's effectiveness analyses were inconclusive, citing late implementations, insufficient student assessment data (SAGE), and low usage or participation among obstacles to the analyses of all reviewed projects. In addition, incomplete data on FINET reports make it difficult to compare budgeted amounts with actual expenditures. A further concern is the lack of accountability for private donations, which are held by a private foundation. We believe a more detailed review can provide better information on STEM operations and output, increase overall accountability, and identify the program's level of effectiveness at this point in its operations.

### ■ Two 2013 Programs with Delays Need Further Follow-Up

OLAG believes two programs should be monitored for another year before reporting whether limited scope audits should be considered.

- **House Bill 276: Newborn Screening for Critical Congenital Heart Defects** is a program providing for screening newborns for critical heart defects using pulse oximetry; the bill provided for a one-year pilot to develop appropriate oxygen saturation levels that would indicate a need for further follow-up and to determine the best methods for implementing the screening in hospitals. With the one-year pilot program, full operations began in October 2014 as directed in the bill. The first-year evaluation has been submitted; the second-year evaluation will be conducted in June 2016. At this time, we have not identified any concerns.
- **Senate Bill 284: Educational Technology Amendments** amended 2012's Senate Bill 248, Smart School Technology, that initiated a pilot project for one-to-one whole school technology to assess whether technology-assisted instruction increases student achievement. Both first- and second-year evaluations have been completed. However, because of a change from USOE's previous student assessment system to the SAGE system, pre- and post-implementation student assessment data from SAGE will not be available until late fall 2015. We have requested that USOE staff provide the data as soon as it is compiled. We will make an assessment of the program created in 2012 and expanded in 2013 when data becomes available and the external evaluator completes a report.

### ■ 2014 and 2015 New Programs Now in the Follow-Up and Review Process

In 2014, 11 bills requiring performance notes passed. Of those, one bill did not appear to create a new program and was dropped from tracking. We sent out ten first-year evaluations and received eight completed evaluations. We are following up with the two program administrators who did not return the first-year survey. In addition, we will follow up with the two programs from the 2013 session (discussed above) that were delayed in the review process.

The 2015 Legislature passed 17 bills with performance notes. Of these, ten bills did not create new programs. In June 2015, we sent the seven new programs' administrators information about the best practices and performance note review processes. First-year self-evaluation surveys will be sent out in June 2016.

Going forward, we will continue to report on new programs' progress and any programs about which we have concerns.

