

**Jordan D. Teuscher** proposes the following substitute bill:

**High School Credit Amendments**

2025 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

**Chief Sponsor: Jordan D. Teuscher**

Senate Sponsor: Lincoln Fillmore

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**LONG TITLE**

**General Description:**

This bill addresses the use of an instructional packet to receive credit in public high schools.

**Highlighted Provisions:**

This bill:

- defines terms;
- makes a technical change;
- allows a local education agency to award a high school student credit for a course completed through the packet method if the packet meets certain requirements;
- requires the State Board of Education to review and approve packets; and
- creates a reporting requirement.

**Money Appropriated in this Bill:**

None

**Other Special Clauses:**

This bill provides a special effective date.

**Utah Code Sections Affected:**

AMENDS:

**53E-1-201**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2024, Chapters 3, 460 and 525

**53E-3-501**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2023, Chapter 527

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*Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

Section 1. Section **53E-1-201** is amended to read:

**53E-1-201 . Reports to and action required of the Education Interim Committee.**

(1) In accordance with applicable provisions and Section 68-3-14, the following recurring reports are due to the Education Interim Committee:

(a) the report described in Section 9-22-109 by the STEM Action Center Board,

- including the information described in Section 9-22-113 on the status of the computer science initiative and Section 9-22-114 on the Computing Partnerships Grants Program;
- (b) the prioritized list of data research described in Section 53B-33-302 and the report on research and activities described in Section 53B-33-304 by the Utah Data Research Center;
- (c) the report described in Section 53B-1-402 by the Utah Board of Higher Education on career and technical education issues and addressing workforce needs;
- (d) the annual report of the Utah Board of Higher Education described in Section 53B-1-402;
- (e) the reports described in Section 53B-28-401 by the Utah Board of Higher Education regarding activities related to campus safety;
- (f) the State Superintendent's Annual Report by the state board described in Section 53E-1-203;
- (g) the annual report described in Section 53E-2-202 by the state board on the strategic plan to improve student outcomes;
- (h) the report described in Section 53E-3-501 by the state board on students in an LEA who receive academic credit through the packet method;
- ~~[(h)]~~ (i) the report described in Section 53E-8-204 by the state board on the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind;
- ~~[(i)]~~ (j) the report described in Section 53E-10-703 by the Utah Leading through Effective, Actionable, and Dynamic Education director on research and other activities;
- ~~[(j)]~~ (k) the report described in Section 53F-2-522 regarding mental health screening programs;
- ~~[(k)]~~ (l) the report described in Section 53F-4-203 by the state board and the independent evaluator on an evaluation of early interactive reading software;
- ~~[(l)]~~ (m) the report described in Section 63N-20-107 by the Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity on UPSTART;
- ~~[(m)]~~ (n) the reports described in Sections 53F-5-214 and 53F-5-215 by the state board related to grants for professional learning and grants for an elementary teacher preparation assessment;
- ~~[(n)]~~ (o) upon request, the report described in Section 53F-5-219 by the state board on the Local Innovations Civics Education Pilot Program;

[~~(t)~~] (p) the report described in Section 53F-5-405 by the state board regarding an evaluation of a partnership that receives a grant to improve educational outcomes for students who are low income;

[~~(p)~~] (q) the report described in Section 53B-35-202 regarding the Higher Education and Corrections Council;

[~~(q)~~] (r) the report described in Section 53G-7-221 by the state board regarding innovation plans; and

[~~(r)~~] (s) the reports described in Section 53F-6-412 regarding the Utah Fits All Scholarship Program.

(2) In accordance with applicable provisions and Section 68-3-14, the following occasional reports are due to the Education Interim Committee:

- (a) in 2027, 2030, 2033, and 2035, the reports described in Sections 53B-1-116, 53B-1-117, and 53B-1-118;
- (b) if required, the report described in Section 53E-4-309 by the state board explaining the reasons for changing the grade level specification for the administration of specific assessments;
- (c) if required, the report described in Section 53E-5-210 by the state board of an adjustment to the minimum level that demonstrates proficiency for each statewide assessment;
- (d) the report described in Section 53E-10-702 by Utah Leading through Effective, Actionable, and Dynamic Education;
- (e) if required, the report described in Section 53F-2-513 by the state board evaluating the effects of salary bonuses on the recruitment and retention of effective teachers in high poverty schools;
- (f) upon request, a report described in Section 53G-7-222 by an LEA regarding expenditure of a percentage of state restricted funds to support an innovative education program;
- (g) the reports described in Section 53G-11-304 by the state board regarding proposed rules and results related to educator exit surveys; and
- (h) the report described in Section 26B-5-113 by the Office of Substance Use and Mental Health, the state board, and the Department of Health and Human Services regarding recommendations related to Medicaid reimbursement for school-based health services.

Section 2. Section **53E-3-501** is amended to read:

**53E-3-501 . State board to establish miscellaneous minimum standards for public schools.**

- (1) The state board shall establish rules and minimum standards for the public schools that are consistent with this public education code, including rules and minimum standards governing the following:
- (a)(i) the qualification and certification of educators and ancillary personnel who provide direct student services;
  - (ii) required school administrative and supervisory services; and
  - (iii) the evaluation of instructional personnel;
  - (b)(i) access to programs;
  - (ii) attendance;
  - (iii) competency levels;
  - (iv) graduation requirements; and
  - (v) discipline and control;
  - (c)(i) school accreditation;
  - (ii) the academic year;
  - (iii) alternative and pilot programs;
  - (iv) curriculum and instruction requirements; and
  - (v) school libraries;
  - (d) services to:
    - (i) persons with a disability as defined by and covered under:
      - (A) the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 42 U.S.C. Sec. 12102;
      - (B) the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. Sec. 705(20)(A); and
      - (C) the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. Sec. 1401(3); and
    - (ii) other special groups;
  - (e)(i) state reimbursed bus routes;
  - (ii) bus safety and operational requirements; and
  - (iii) other transportation needs;
  - (f)(i) school productivity and cost effectiveness measures;
  - (ii) federal programs;
  - (iii) school budget formats; and
  - (iv) financial, statistical, and student accounting requirements; and
  - (g) data collection and reporting by LEAs.
- (2) Except as provided in Subsection (3), the state board shall determine if:

(a) the minimum standards have been met; and

(b) required reports are properly submitted.

(3) When the state board makes a request of an LEA under Subsection (1)(f) or (g), the state board shall include:

(a) the justification for the requested information;

(b) a statement confirming that the information is not available elsewhere;

(c) a deadline by which the LEA must provide the information in accordance with state board rule; and

(d) penalties, including withholding of funds, for non-compliance in accordance with state and federal law.

(4) The state board may apply for, receive, administer, and distribute to eligible applicants funds made available through programs of the federal government.

(5)(a) A technical college listed in Section 53B-2a-105 shall provide competency-based career and technical education courses that fulfill high school graduation requirements, as requested and authorized by the state board.

(b) A school district may grant a high school diploma to a student participating in a course described in Subsection (5)(a) that is provided by a technical college listed in Section 53B-2a-105.

(6)(a) As used in this Subsection (6), "generally accepted accounting principles" means a common framework of accounting rules and standards for financial reporting promulgated by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board.

(b) Subject to Subsections (6)(c) and (d), the state board shall ensure the rules and standards described in Subsections (1)(f) and (g) allow for an LEA to make adjustments to the LEA's general entry ledger, in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles, to accurately reflect the LEA's use of funds for allowable costs and activities:

(i) during a fiscal year; and

(ii) at the close of a fiscal year.

(c) If the state board determines under Subsection (2) that an LEA has not met the minimum standards described in Subsection (1)(f) or (g) or has not properly submitted a required report, the state board shall allow the LEA an opportunity to cure the relevant defect through an adjustment described in Subsection (6)(b).

(d) An LEA may not, in an adjustment described in Subsection[-] (6)(b), reflect the use of restricted federal or state funds for a cost or activity that is not an allowable cost or

activity for the restricted funds.

(7)(a) As used in this Subsection (7):

(i)(A) "Comparable course" means a course that fulfills the same graduation credit requirements as a course for which a student seeks to improve a grade.

(B) "Comparable course" does not include a course a student completes through the packet method.

(ii) "Grade replacement" means credit a student earns by retaking a teacher-led course for a letter grade to improve a previous grade, which:

(A) may raise the student's grade point average if the new grade is higher; and

(B) replaces the lower grade on the student's transcript.

(iii) "Original credit" means credit a student earns through the successful completion of a course for the first time.

(iv) "Packet" means a collection of instructional materials and assessments used to receive credit through the packet method.

(v) "Packet method" means an educational approach where:

(A) a high school student receives a collection of instructional materials from an institution, organization, or LEA;

(B) the high school student works through the materials independently with minimal or no direct instruction from a teacher; and

(C) assessment is primarily based on completion of assignments within the instructional materials.

(vi) "Replacement credit" means a pass-fail credit a student earns for a course the student did not pass or complete, which:

(A) does not affect the student's grade point average; and

(B) allows the student to fulfill high school graduation requirements.

(b) An LEA may award a grade for original credit or replacement credit through the packet method if the packet adheres to the standards prescribed in state board rule and:

(i) the LEA approves the packet for use as an instructional material in accordance with:

(A) Subsection 53G-4-402(27) for a district school; or

(B) Section 53G-5-404 for a charter school; or

(ii) the state board recommends the packet after going through the state instructional materials process described in Title 53E, Chapter 4, Part 4, State Instructional

199                    Materials.

200            (c) An LEA may not use the packet method, or classify a packet as original credit, to  
201                    improve a previous course grade of a high school student as described in Subsection  
202                    (7)(d).

203            (d) A high school student may improve a grade through grade replacement by:

204                    (i) repeating a course one or more times; or

205                    (ii) enrolling in and completing a comparable course that is teacher-led.

206            (e) The state board shall:

207                    (i) in accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act,  
208                    make rules or policies that:

209                    (A) establish standards for the use of the packet method to award original credit  
210                    and replacement credit;

211                    (B) include alignment with core standards the state board establishes under  
212                    Sections 53E-3-501 and 53E-4-202; and

213                    (C) maintain a comprehensive list of state board approved packets in the state  
214                    board's Recommended Instructional Materials System on the state board's  
215                    website; and

216                    (ii) report annually to the Education Interim Committee the number of students in  
217                    each LEA who receive academic credit through the packet method.

218            (f) An LEA shall:

219                    (i) assign a distinct course name and number for credit earned through the packet  
220                    method to easily identify the use of the packet method on a student transcript; and

221                    (ii) track and record the number of packets an LEA uses to award original credit or  
222                    replacement credit each school year.

223            Section 3. **Effective Date.**

224            This bill takes effect on July 1, 2025.