

Statewide Online Education Program Amendments

2025 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Joseph Elison

LONG TITLE**General Description:**

This bill makes changes to enhance quality, accountability, and transparency in the Statewide Online Education Program.

Highlighted Provisions:

This bill:

- ▶ authorizes the State Board of Education (state board) to conduct sample audits of online courses;
- ▶ expands performance reporting requirements for an authorized online course provider;
- ▶ requires the state board to establish a report card for an authorized online course provider;
- ▶ facilitates regular communication between an authorized online course provider and a primary LEA of enrollment;
- ▶ implements a model syllabus template for online courses;
- ▶ requires the state board to create a centralized registration system for parents and students; and
- ▶ requires more frequent progress reporting and student support from an authorized online course provider.

Money Appropriated in this Bill:

None

Other Special Clauses:

This bill provides a special effective date.

Utah Code Sections Affected:

AMENDS:

53F-4-511, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2024, Chapter 24

53F-4-512, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2024, Chapter 24

53F-4-514, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2024, Chapter 24

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

Section 1. Section **53F-4-511** is amended to read:

- 32 **53F-4-511 . Report on performance of authorized online course providers.**
- 33 (1) The state board, in collaboration with authorized online course providers and, if
34 applicable, the state board's contractor, shall develop a report on the performance of
35 authorized online course providers, which may be used to evaluate the Statewide Online
36 Education Program and assess the quality of an authorized online course provider.
- 37 (2) A report on the performance of an authorized online course provider shall include:
- 38 (a) scores aggregated by test on statewide assessments administered under Title 53E,
39 Chapter 4, Part 3, Assessments, taken by students at the end of an online course
40 offered through the Statewide Online Education Program;
- 41 (b) the percentage of the authorized online course provider's students who complete
42 online courses within the applicable time period specified in Subsection 53F-4-505
43 (4)(c);
- 44 (c) the percentage of the authorized online course provider's students who complete
45 online courses after the applicable time period specified in Subsection 53F-4-505
46 (4)(c) and before the student graduates from high school;[~~and~~]
- 47 (d) the pupil-teacher ratio for the combined online courses of the authorized online
48 course provider[~~:~~] ;
- 49 (e) student grade distributions for each course the authorized online course provider
50 offers;
- 51 (f) student completion rates for each course the authorized online course provider offers;
- 52 (g) results of student and parent satisfaction surveys;
- 53 (h) if applicable, a summary of the authorized online course provider's plan to improve
54 course quality and student outcomes; and
- 55 (i) results of any sample audits the state board has conducted related to courses the
56 authorized online course provider offers.
- 57 (3) The state board shall post a report on the performance of an authorized online course
58 provider on the Statewide Online Education Program's website described in Section
59 53F-4-512.
- 60 (4) The state board shall develop a standardized performance evaluation report card to
61 assess an authorized online course provider, which shall be published annually on the
62 Statewide Online Education Program's website described in Section 53F-4-512.
- 63 Section 2. Section **53F-4-512** is amended to read:
- 64 **53F-4-512 . Dissemination of information on the Statewide Online Education**
65 **Program.**

- 66 (1) The state board shall develop a website for the Statewide Online Education Program
67 which shall include:
- 68 (a) a description of the Statewide Online Education Program, including its purposes;
69 (b) notwithstanding Subsection (2), information on who is eligible to enroll, and how an
70 eligible student may enroll, in an online course;
71 (c) a directory of authorized online course providers;
72 (d) a link to a course catalog for each authorized online course provider;[-and]
73 (e) a report on the performance of authorized online course providers as required by
74 Section 53F-4-511[-] ; and
75 (f) a centralized registration system that:
76 (i) allows a parent or eligible student to register for online courses; and
77 (ii) automatically shares registration information with the selected authorized online
78 course provider.
- 79 (2) An authorized online course provider shall provide the following information on the
80 authorized online course provider's website:
- 81 (a) a description of the Statewide Online Education Program, including its purposes;
82 (b) information on who is eligible to enroll, and how an eligible student may enroll, in
83 an online course;
84 (c) a course catalog;
85 (d) scores aggregated by test on statewide assessments administered under Title 53E,
86 Chapter 4, Part 3, Assessments, taken by students at the end of an online course
87 offered through the Statewide Online Education Program;
88 (e) the percentage of an authorized online course provider's students who complete
89 online courses within the applicable time period specified in Subsection 53F-4-505
90 (4)(c);
91 (f) the percentage of an authorized online course provider's students who complete
92 online courses after the applicable time period specified in Subsection 53F-4-505
93 (4)(c) and before the student graduates from high school;[-and]
94 (g) the authorized online course provider's pupil-teacher ratio for the online courses
95 combined[-] ; and
96 (h) additional information described in Subsection 53F-4-511(2) not described in this
97 Subsection (2).
- 98 (3) The state board's contractor shall provide on the contractor's website information
99 regarding enrollment and participation by a private school or home school student

100 through the contractor.

101 Section 3. Section **53F-4-514** is amended to read:

102 **53F-4-514 . State board -- Rulemaking -- Fees.**

103 (1) Notwithstanding Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act, the state
104 board shall provide a delayed effective date that is after the school year has ended for a
105 change to an administrative rule related to the Statewide Online Education Program if
106 the change would require an authorized online course provider to make program changes
107 during the school year.

108 (2) The state board shall make rules in accordance with this part and Title 63G, Chapter 3,
109 Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act, that establish:

110 (a) a course credit acknowledgement form and procedures for completing and
111 submitting to the state board or, in relation to a student who attends a private school
112 or home school, the state board's contractor, a course credit acknowledgement;

113 (b) procedures for the administration of a statewide assessment to a student enrolled in
114 an online course; and

115 (c) protocols for an online course provider to obtain approval to become a certified
116 online course provider, including:

117 (i) the application procedure for an online course provider to obtain approval to
118 become a certified online course provider; and

119 (ii) the standards that a certified online course provider and any online course the
120 certified online course provider offers shall meet;

121 (d) in accordance with Title 53E, Chapter 4, Academic Standards, Assessments, and
122 Materials, criteria for an authorized online course provider to submit for approval an
123 online course that does not have an existing state board course code;

124 (e) [~~no later than July 1, 2024,~~] a process within existing systems at the state board or, in
125 relation to a student who attends a private school or home school, the state board's
126 contractor, to allow a certified online course provider access to an educator's
127 licensing, endorsement, certification, and assignment information if the educator is
128 teaching an online course for the certified online course provider;

129 (f) in consultation with the authorized online course providers, the parameters for
130 conducting a site visit including:

131 (i) a definition for the term site visit;

132 (ii) the minimum amount of time required for:

133 (A) notice to an authorized online course provider of a site visit; and

- 134 (B) an authorized online course provider to prepare for a site visit;
- 135 (iii) the documents, data, and artifacts subject to inspection during a site visit; and
- 136 (iv) a process to ensure a site visit allows for observation of instruction without
- 137 interfering with the instruction;
- 138 (g) annual mandatory training for relevant staff at a primary LEA that includes:
- 139 (i) program requirements for a primary LEA including reporting requirements and
- 140 methods;
- 141 (ii) uses of resources and tools to ensure adequate monitoring of an eligible student's
- 142 progress;
- 143 (iii) federal and state requirements for accommodating enrollments that involve
- 144 special education;
- 145 (iv) appropriate circumstances and methodologies for reducing an eligible student's
- 146 schedule; and
- 147 (v) other components the state board determines are necessary; and
- 148 (3)(a) When establishing the standards described in Subsection (2)(c)(ii) the state board
- 149 shall:
- 150 (i) establish rules and minimum standards regarding accreditation;
- 151 (ii) require an online course to be aligned with the core standards described in
- 152 Section 53E-4-202;
- 153 (iii) require proof that a national organization responsible for college athletics
- 154 endorses:
- 155 (A) the certified online course provider; or
- 156 (B) the online course that a certified online course provider offers;
- 157 (iv) permit an open-entry, open-exit method of instructional delivery that allows a
- 158 student the flexibility to:
- 159 (A) schedule in response to individual needs or requirements;
- 160 (B) demonstrate competency when the student has mastered knowledge and skills;
- 161 (C) begin or end study at any time; and
- 162 (D) progress through course material at the student's own pace; and
- 163 (v) except as provided in Subsection (5), require an individual who teaches a course
- 164 for a certified online course provider to hold a teaching license issued by the state
- 165 board.
- 166 (b) When establishing the standards described in Subsection (2)(c)(ii), the state board
- 167 may not:

- 168 (i) specify a minimum duration for an online course;
- 169 (ii) specify a minimum amount of time that a student must spend in an online course;
- 170 or
- 171 (iii) limit the class size of an online course.
- 172 (4) No later than January 31, 2026, the state board shall create a communication dashboard
- 173 for the program and only related to eligible students enrolled in a public school that may
- 174 include:
- 175 (a) a counselor contact list for an eligible student that is accessible to an authorized
- 176 online course provider; and
- 177 (b) progress monitoring fields that are accessible to the primary LEA, the eligible
- 178 student's counselor, and the eligible student's parent containing:
- 179 (i) grade progress reporting of an eligible student by an authorized online course
- 180 provider;
- 181 (ii) an ability to flag a student that is at-risk of failing an online course; and
- 182 (iii) other relevant capabilities the state board determines to be necessary in
- 183 consultation with LEA users of the dashboard.
- 184 (5) If an individual possesses a provider-specific license described in Section 53E-6-201,
- 185 the state board may not prohibit the individual from teaching an online course for an
- 186 authorized online course provider while the individual is in the process of obtaining an
- 187 endorsement or additional license issued by the state board.
- 188 (6) The state board may establish a fee, in accordance with Section 63J-1-504, in an amount
- 189 to pay the costs to the state board of the application approval process and the monitoring
- 190 of a certified online course provider's compliance with the standards described in
- 191 Subsection (2)(c)(ii).
- 192 (7)(a) Fee revenue collected in accordance with Subsection (6) shall be:
- 193 (i) deposited into the Uniform School Fund as a dedicated credit; and
- 194 (ii) used to pay the costs to the state board of reviewing certified online course
- 195 providers' applications and compliance with the standards described in Subsection
- 196 (2)(c)(ii).
- 197 (8) The state board shall ensure a course that an authorized online course provider offers
- 198 contains course rigor by:
- 199 (a) conducting periodic sample audits of courses offered by an authorized online course
- 200 provider to evaluate course rigor and quality;
- 201 (b) establishing criteria for evaluating course rigor and quality to be used during a

- 202 sample audit;
- 203 (c) providing feedback to an authorized online course provider based on audit results;
- 204 and
- 205 (d) establishing consequences for an authorized online course provider whose courses
- 206 consistently fail to meet rigorous standards, which may include probation or
- 207 revocation of authorized online course provider approval.
- 208 (9) The state board shall foster programmatic collaboration with stakeholders by:
- 209 (a) facilitating regular meetings between authorized online course providers and LEA
- 210 administrators to improve communication and address concerns;
- 211 (b) requiring an authorized online course provider to present annually to the state board
- 212 on the authorized online course provider's programs and student outcomes;
- 213 (c) developing a model syllabus template that an authorized online course provider may
- 214 use for online courses that includes:
- 215 (i) clear learning objectives;
- 216 (ii) assessment methods; and
- 217 (iii) expectations for student engagement; and
- 218 (d) establishing a process for an LEA to provide feedback regarding online courses and
- 219 an authorized online course provider.
- 220 (10) The state board shall require an authorized online course provider to:
- 221 (a) provide bi-weekly progress reports for all enrolled students to the student's primary
- 222 LEA of enrollment;
- 223 (b) implement a tiered system of student support based on academic performance,
- 224 including a schedule of synchronous progress meetings with a student and the
- 225 student's parent; and
- 226 (c) document all student support efforts and share this information with the eligible
- 227 student's primary LEA of enrollment.

228 **Section 4. Effective Date.**

229 This bill takes effect on July 1, 2025.