

Mark A. Strong proposes the following substitute bill:

School Fees Amendments

2025 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Mark A. Strong

Senate Sponsor:

2

3 **LONG TITLE**

4 **General Description:**

5 This bill amends provisions related to school fees.

6 **Highlighted Provisions:**

7 This bill:

8 ▶ defines terms;

9 ▶ requires a local education agency (LEA) to, beginning for the 2026-2027 school year:

10 • ensure that a student has at least one option at the student's school to complete all

11 required courses and credits without paying a fee or a waiver; and

12 • clearly disclose any fee related to a course or activity in the description of the course

13 or activity in the LEA's registration materials;

14 ▶ prohibits an LEA from:

15 • charging a student a fee for certain non-fee courses; or

16 • charging a general fee or charging or increasing a fee to a student to supplement or

17 supplant a fee the LEA is prohibited from charging;

18 ▶ allows an LEA to charge a student a fee for certain expenses, under certain circumstances,

19 including for:

20 • expenses beyond the common delivery of instruction;

21 • fee courses;

22 • instructional supplies;

23 • extracurricular activities;

24 • a discretionary project; and

25 • other additional expenses;

26 ▶ repeals duplicative language regarding fees for textbooks; and

27 ▶ makes technical and conforming changes.

28 **Money Appropriated in this Bill:**

29 None

30 **Other Special Clauses:**

31 This bill provides a special effective date.

32 **Utah Code Sections Affected:**

33 AMENDS:

34 **53G-7-501**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2024, Chapters 20, 497

35 **53G-7-502**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2024, Chapter 497

36 **53G-7-505**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2019, Chapters 223, 293

37 REPEALS AND REENACTS:

38 **53G-7-503**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2024, Chapter 497

39 REPEALS:

40 **53G-7-506**, as renumbered and amended by Laws of Utah 2024, Chapter 497



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

43 Section 1. Section **53G-7-501** is amended to read:

44 **53G-7-501 . Definitions.**

45 As used in this part:

46 ~~[(1) "Co-curricular activity" means an activity, a course, or a program that:]~~

47 ~~[(a) is an extension of a curricular activity;]~~

48 ~~[(b) is included in an instructional plan and supervised or conducted by a teacher or~~
49 ~~education professional;]~~

50 ~~[(c) is conducted outside of regular school hours;]~~

51 ~~[(d) is provided, sponsored, or supported by an LEA; and]~~

52 ~~[(e) includes a required regular school day activity, course, or program.]~~

53 (1)(a) "Common education expense" means an expense an LEA incurs that is related to
54 the delivery of instruction for all courses, unrelated to a specific course, program, or
55 activity.

56 (b) "Common education expense" includes the employment of educators and staff, the
57 provision of capital facilities, and operation and maintenance costs.

58 ~~(2)(a) ["Curricular activity"] "Course" means an activity, a course, or a program that an~~
59 ~~LEA:~~

60 ~~[(a) (i) [is intended] intends to deliver instruction;~~

61 ~~[(b) (ii) [is provided, sponsored, or supported by an LEA] provides, sponsors, or~~
62 ~~supports; and~~

- 63 ~~[(e)]~~ (iii) ~~[is conducted only]~~ conducts primarily during school hours.
- 64 **(b)** "Course" includes a course in which a student is required to enroll as a condition of
65 participation in a separate extracurricular activity.
- 66 **(3)** "Discretionary project" means a project that a student completes in lieu of or in addition
67 to a required classroom project in accordance with Section 53G-7-503.
- 68 ~~[(3)]~~ (4) "Elementary school" means a school that provides instruction to students in grades
69 kindergarten, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, or 6.
- 70 ~~[(4)]~~ (5)(a) "Elementary school student" means a student enrolled in an elementary
71 school.
- 72 **(b)** "Elementary school student" does not include a secondary school student.
- 73 ~~[(5)]~~ (6)(a) "Extracurricular activity" means an activity~~[, a course,]~~ or a program that~~[is]:~~
74 ~~[(i) not directly related to delivering required instruction;]~~
75 ~~[(ii) (i) is not a [urricular activity or co-curricular activity] course; and~~
76 (ii) an LEA provides, sponsors, or supports.
77 ~~[(iii) provided, sponsored, or supported by an LEA.]~~
- 78 **(b)** "Extracurricular activity" does not include a noncurricular club as defined in Section
79 53G-7-701.
- 80 ~~[(6)]~~ (7)(a) "Fee" means a charge, expense, deposit, rental, or payment:
81 (i) regardless of how an LEA terms, describes, requests, or requires the charge,
82 expense, deposit, rental, or payment~~[is termed, described, requested, or required]~~ ,
83 directly or indirectly;
84 (ii) in the form of money, goods, or services; and
85 (iii) that is a condition to a student's full participation in or admission to an activity,
86 course, or program that~~[is provided, sponsored, or supported by]~~ an LEA
87 provides, sponsors, or supports.
- 88 **(b)** "Fee" includes:
89 ~~[(i) charges or expenditures for a school field trip or activity trip, including related~~
90 transportation, food, lodging, and admission charges;]
91 ~~[(ii) (i) payments [made-]to a third party that provides a part of a school activity,~~
92 class, or program; and
93 ~~[(iii) charges or expenditures for classroom instructional equipment or supplies;]~~
94 ~~[(iv) charges or expenditures for school activity clothing; and]~~
95 ~~[(v)]~~ (ii) a fine other than a fine described in Subsection ~~[(6)(e)(i)]~~ (7)(c)(i).
- 96 **(c)** "Fee" does not include:

- 97 (i) a student fine [~~specifically approved by an LEA~~] that an LEA approves for:
 98 (A) failing to return school property;
 99 (B) losing, wasting, or damaging private or school property through intentional,
 100 careless, or irresponsible behavior, [~~or~~] including defacing or damaging school
 101 property as described in Section 53G-8-212; or
 102 (C) improper use of school property, including a parking violation;
- 103 (ii) a payment for school breakfast or lunch;
 104 (iii) a deposit that~~is~~:
 105 (A) is a pledge securing the return of school property; and
 106 (B) [~~refunded~~] the LEA or school refunds upon the return of the school property;
- 107 (iv) a charge for insurance, unless the insurance is required for a student to participate
 108 in an activity, course, or program; or
 109 (v) money or another item of monetary value [~~raised by~~] that a student or the student's
 110 family raises through fundraising.
- 111 (8) "Fee course" means a course that is not a non-fee course.
- 112 [~~(7)~~] (9)(a) "Fundraising" means an activity or event [~~provided, sponsored, or supported~~
 113 ~~by an LEA that~~] that:
 114 (i) an LEA provides, sponsors, or supports; and
 115 (ii) uses students to generate funds or raise money to:
 116 [(i)] (A) provide financial support to a school or a school's class, group, team, or
 117 program; or
 118 [(ii)] (B) benefit a particular charity or for other charitable purposes.
- 119 (b) "Fundraising" does not include an alternative method of raising revenue without
 120 students.
- 121 [~~(8)~~] (10)(a) "Instructional equipment~~[- or supplies]~~" means an activity-, course-, or
 122 program-related [~~supply or~~]tool that:
 123 (i) a student is required to use as part of an activity, course, or program in a
 124 secondary school; and
 125 (ii) becomes the property of the student upon exiting the activity, course, or program[;
 126 and] .
 127 [(iii) ~~is subject to a fee waiver.~~]
- 128 (b) "Instructional equipment~~[- or supplies]~~" does not include:
 129 (i) school equipment~~[-]~~ ;
 130 (ii) an instructional supply; or

- 131 (iii) a personal student supply for a secondary student.
- 132 (11)(a) "Instructional supply" means a non-reusable or a consumable material or supply
 133 that is necessary to use, expend, or deplete as a component or element of an activity,
 134 course, or program in a secondary school.
- 135 (b) "Instructional supply" does not include a personal student supply for a secondary
 136 student.
- 137 (12) "Non-fee course" means a course that results in course credit or a course grade within
 138 the core standards the state board establishes under Section 53E-4-202 and other
 139 statutory requirements for:
- 140 (a) English language arts;
 141 (b) health education;
 142 (c) mathematics;
 143 (d) science; and
 144 (e) social studies.
- 145 (13)(a) "Personal student supply" means, for a secondary student, an object, tool,
 146 material, or supply that:
- 147 (i) is the personal property of the student;
 148 (ii) regardless of the use of the supply in the instructional process, individuals not
 149 enrolled in the course or activity also commonly purchase and use; and
 150 (iii) has a high probability of regular use in activities other than school-sponsored
 151 activities.
- 152 (b) "Personal student supply" includes pencils, papers, notebooks, crayons, scissors, and
 153 basic clothing.
- 154 [(9)] (14)(a) "School activity clothing" means special shoes or items of clothing that:
 155 (i) [(A)] that meet specific requirements, including requesting a specific brand,
 156 fabric, or imprint;
- 157 [(B)] (ii) [that] a school requires a student to provide and to wear for an activity-,
 158 course-, or program-related activity; and
- 159 [(C)] (iii)(A) [that] the student rents while participating in the activity; or
 160 (B) become the property of the student upon exiting the activity, course, or
 161 program[; and] .
- 162 [(ii)] that are required to be worn by a student for an activity-, course-, or a
 163 program-related activity-]
- 164 (b) "School activity clothing" does not include:

- 165 (i) a school uniform; or
- 166 (ii) clothing that is commonly found in students' homes.
- 167 ~~[(10)]~~ (15) "School equipment" means a machine, equipment, facility, or tool that:
- 168 (a) is durable;
- 169 (b) is reusable;
- 170 ~~[(e) is consumable;]~~
- 171 ~~[(d)]~~ (c) ~~[is owned by a secondary school]~~ a secondary school owns; and
- 172 ~~[(e)]~~ (d) a student uses as part of an activity, course, or program in a secondary school.
- 173 ~~[(11)]~~ (16)(a) "School uniform" means special shoes or an item of clothing that:
- 174 (i)(A) ~~[that]~~ meet specific requirements, including a requested specific color,
- 175 style, fabric, or imprint; and
- 176 (B) ~~[that]~~ a school requires a student to provide and wear during school attendance;
- 177 and
- 178 (ii) ~~[that is worn by a student for a curricular activity]~~ are the property of the student.
- 179 (b) "School uniform" does not include school activity clothing.
- 180 ~~[(12)]~~ (17) "Secondary school" means a school that provides instruction to students in
- 181 grades 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, or 12.
- 182 ~~[(13)]~~ (18) "Secondary school student":
- 183 (a) means a student enrolled in a secondary school; and
- 184 (b) includes a student in grade 6 if the student attends a secondary school.
- 185 ~~[(14)]~~ (19)(a) "Textbook" means instructional material necessary for participation in an
- 186 activity, course, or program, regardless of the format of the material.
- 187 (b) "Textbook" includes:
- 188 (i) a hardcopy book or printed pages of instructional material, including a
- 189 consumable workbook; or
- 190 (ii) computer hardware, software, or digital content.
- 191 (c) "Textbook" does not include school equipment, instructional equipment, or
- 192 instructional supplies.
- 193 ~~[(15)]~~ (20) "Waiver" means a full release from:
- 194 (a) a requirement to pay a fee; and ~~[from]~~
- 195 (b) any provision in lieu of fee payment.
- 196 Section 2. Section **53G-7-502** is amended to read:
- 197 **53G-7-502 . Schools to be free.**
- 198 (1) Except as otherwise provided in this public education code, and in accordance with

199 Utah Constitution, Article X, Section 2, the public education system shall be free to an
 200 individual:

201 ~~[(1)]~~ (a) between five and 18 years old who is a resident; and

202 ~~[(2)]~~ (b) over 18 years old who is domiciled in the state of Utah and has not completed
 203 requirements for a high school diploma.

204 (2)(a) Beginning for the 2026-2027 school year, each LEA that awards credit toward
 205 graduation shall ensure that a student has at the student's school, at least one option
 206 for each graduation requirement that:

207 (i) fulfills the graduation requirement; and

208 (ii) does not require the payment or waiver of any fee.

209 (b) Nothing in this Subsection (2) requires an LEA or a school to provide, without a fee
 210 or fee waiver:

211 (i) a specific activity, course, or program; or

212 (ii) the student's preferred activity, course, or program.

213 Section 3. Section **53G-7-503** is repealed and reenacted to read:

214 **53G-7-503 . Fees -- Prohibitions -- Voluntary supplies -- Enforcement -- Penalties.**

215 (1) An LEA may only charge a fee that:

216 (a) this part authorizes;

217 (b) the LEA governing board notices and authorizes in accordance with Section
 218 53G-7-505;

219 (c) is for a service or good that has a direct benefit to the student paying the fee so as to
 220 not be general in nature;

221 (d) is directly related to the expense the LEA incurs for providing a student the relevant
 222 activity, course, or program rather than being general in nature;

223 (e) is equal to or less than the expense described in Subsection (1)(d); and

224 (f) does not supplant or subsidize a fee the LEA is prohibited from charging, including
 225 the normal expense of delivering instruction in a course.

226 (2) Beginning with the 2025-2026 school year, an LEA:

227 (a) except as provided in Subsection (2)(b), may not charge a secondary student a fee for:

228 (i) an expense related to a non-fee course;

229 (ii) a textbook;

230 (iii) school equipment; or

231 (iv) a common education expense;

232 (b) subject to Subsections (1) and (2)(a), may charge a secondary student a fee for:

- 233 (i) relating to a non-fee course or a fee course, for:
- 234 (A) instructional equipment;
- 235 (B) a school field trip or activity trip or performance, including related
- 236 transportation, food, lodging, and admission charges or participation fees;
- 237 (C) school activity clothing;
- 238 (D) a discretionary project as described in Subsection (3); or
- 239 (E) a competency remediation program in accordance with Section 53G-9-803;
- 240 (ii) an expense related to a course, activity, or program that is a fee course, including:
- 241 (A) instructional supplies;
- 242 (B) the life-cycle replacement costs for school equipment directly related to the
- 243 fee course;
- 244 (C) a musical instrument rental;
- 245 (D) licensing fees for fine arts intellectual property; or
- 246 (E) participating in a driver education course described in Section 53G-10-503;
- 247 (iii) an expense related to the following post-secondary-related courses, including
- 248 tuition, college credit, an exam, or a textbook, as described in Section 53G-7-506:
- 249 (A) an Advanced Placement course;
- 250 (B) an International Baccalaureate course; or
- 251 (C) a concurrent enrollment course, as described in Section 53E-10-302;
- 252 (iv) an extracurricular activity, including the life-cycle replacement costs for school
- 253 equipment directly related to the extracurricular activity;
- 254 (v) open enrollment application processing in accordance with Section 53G-6-402;
- 255 (vi) charter school application processing in accordance with Section 53G-6-503; and
- 256 (c) may charge a secondary student or an individual a fee for an adult education course
- 257 in accordance with Section 53E-10-202.
- 258 (3) For a course requiring the completion of a project for a grade or credit:
- 259 (a) a secondary student may request to complete a discretionary project in lieu of a
- 260 required course activity or project if the discretionary project demonstrates the
- 261 intended core competencies of the required course activity or project;
- 262 (b) nothing prohibits a student from completing a discretionary project in addition to a
- 263 required classroom project;
- 264 (c) an LEA may require a student at any grade level to provide materials or pay an
- 265 additional fee for a discretionary project or a project in which the student engages in
- 266 addition to a required classroom project; and

- 267 (d) nothing in this section entitles a student to an approval of the student's request
 268 described in Subsection (3)(a).
- 269 (4)(a) An LEA may not require a fee for:
- 270 (i) elementary school activities that are part of the regular school day; or
 271 (ii) for supplies a student uses during the regular elementary school day.
- 272 (b) An elementary school or elementary school teacher:
- 273 (i) may compile and provide to an elementary school student's parent a suggested list
 274 of supplies for use during the regular school day so that a parent may furnish, only
 275 on a voluntary basis, the listed supplies for student use; and
- 276 (ii) shall ensure that the list described in Subsection (4)(b)(i) includes the following
 277 language before identifying the supplies:
 278 "NOTICE: THE ITEMS ON THIS LIST WILL BE USED DURING THE
 279 REGULAR SCHOOL DAY. THEY MAY BE BROUGHT FROM HOME ON A
 280 VOLUNTARY BASIS, OTHERWISE, THEY WILL BE FURNISHED BY THE
 281 SCHOOL."
- 282 (5)(a) Notwithstanding Section 53E-3-401, if the state board finds that an LEA has
 283 violated a provision of this part, the state board shall impose corrective action against
 284 the LEA, including:
- 285 (i) requiring an LEA to repay the fee the LEA improperly charged;
 286 (ii) withholding state funds; or
 287 (iii) suspending the LEA's authority to charge fees for an amount of time the state
 288 board specifies.
- 289 (b) In accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act, the
 290 state board shall make rules:
- 291 (i) that require notice and an opportunity to be heard for an LEA affected by a state
 292 board action described in this Subsection (5); and
- 293 (ii) to administer this Subsection (5).
- 294 Section 4. Section **53G-7-505** is amended to read:
- 295 **53G-7-505 . Approval and notice of student fees and waivers.**
- 296 (1) An LEA governing board shall annually:
- 297 (a) adopt fee policies and a fee schedule; and
 298 (b) provide the fee schedule to each student and parent.
- 299 (2) For the fee schedule, the LEA governing board shall:
- 300 (a) before approving the fee schedule, provide at least two opportunities for the public to

- 301 comment on the proposed fee schedule;
- 302 (b) encourage public participation in the development of the fee schedule; and
- 303 (c) approve the fee schedule in a regularly scheduled public meeting.
- 304 (3)(a) The fee schedule shall include the following:
- 305 (i) a specific amount for each fee on the fee schedule;
- 306 (ii) if a student is responsible for multiple fees related to one activity, class, or
- 307 program, a clear and easy to understand delineation of each fee and the fee total
- 308 for each activity, class, or program;
- 309 (iii) the LEA's fee waiver policy, including an easily understandable statement
- 310 informing a parent that a student:
- 311 (A) may be eligible to have one or more fees waived; and
- 312 (B) may appeal the LEA's decision if the LEA denies a request for a fee waiver;
- 313 and
- 314 (iv) a corresponding spending plan for each fee.
- 315 (b) The LEA shall:
- 316 (i) publish the fee schedule on each of the LEA's school's websites; and
- 317 (ii) ~~[include a copy of the LEA's fee schedule with]~~ beginning for the 2026-2027
- 318 school year, clearly identify any fee for each activity, course, or program
- 319 alongside the description of the activity, course, or program in the LEA's
- 320 registration materials.

321 **Section 5. Repealer.**

322 This bill repeals:

323 Section **53G-7-506, State policy on providing free textbooks.**

324 **Section 6. Effective Date.**

325 This bill takes effect:

- 326 (1) except as provided in Subsection (2), May 7, 2025; or
- 327 (2) if approved by two-thirds of all members elected to each house:
- 328 (a) upon approval by the governor;
- 329 (b) without the governor's signature, the day following the constitutional time limit of
- 330 Utah Constitution, Article VII, Section 8; or
- 331 (c) in the case of a veto, the date of veto override.