

Tiara Auxier proposes the following substitute bill:

Statewide Catalyst Campus Model

2025 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Mike Schultz

Senate Sponsor: Ann Millner

LONG TITLE

General Description:

This bill establishes a grant program to help local education agencies create or expand catalyst centers.

Highlighted Provisions:

This bill:

- creates the Catalyst Center Grant Program (program) to support local education agencies (LEA) in creating or expanding catalyst centers;
- allows for multi-year grants and capital expenditures;
- requires alignment with labor market needs, LEA strategic plans, and state career and technical education goals;
- establishes accountability measures, including limits on carryforward funds and annual reporting;
- requires Talent Ready Utah and the Utah Leading through Effective, Actionable, and Dynamic Education to create a marketing campaign for the program;
- exempts certain individuals from educator licensing requirements;
- amends the Public Education Economic Stabilization Restricted Account to fund the program;
- creates requirements related to art and fine arts credits; and
- makes technical changes.

Money Appropriated in this Bill:

None

Other Special Clauses:

None

Utah Code Sections Affected:

AMENDS:

29 **53E-6-204**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2019, Chapter 186

30 **53F-9-204**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2024, Chapter 322

31 ENACTS:

32 **53E-3-507.1**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

33 **53G-10-307**, Utah Code Annotated 1953



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

36 Section 1. Section **53E-3-507.1** is enacted to read:

37 **53E-3-507.1 . Catalyst Center Grant Program.**

38 (1) As used in this section:

39 (a) "Catalyst center" means a program or facility operated by an LEA that:

40 (i) provides learning experiences and instruction that replicate professional
41 environments and workplace practices;

42 (ii) provides profession-based learning experiences by partnering with local industry,
43 business, and community organizations to develop and implement student projects
44 that address specific needs or objectives identified by those partners;

45 (iii) aligns programs with high-skill, high-demand career pathways and
46 postsecondary education opportunities;

47 (iv) incorporates industry-standard tools, technologies, and methods into instruction
48 and student work;

49 (v) prioritizes student activities and profession-based learning projects to build
50 durable professional skills aligned with industry standards and needs;

51 (vi) facilitates mentorship and participation by industry professionals to guide a
52 student and evaluate the student's work;

53 (vii) includes an advisory board composed of industry, postsecondary, and
54 community representatives to review program direction and ensure alignment with
55 workforce needs; and

56 (viii) establishes programs or activities that address gaps in training or resources
57 within the local or regional workforce.

58 (b) "Director" means the employee described in Subsection (3).

59 (c) "LEA" means:

60 (i) a school district;

61 (ii) charter school; or

62 (iii) the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind.

- 63 (d) "Program" means the Catalyst Center Grant Program created in this section.
- 64 (2) Subject to legislative appropriation as described in Section 53F-9-204, the state board
65 shall establish the Catalyst Center Grant Program to provide funding to an LEA to create
66 or expand an existing catalyst center.
- 67 (3) The state board shall hire a director to oversee the program who:
- 68 (a) has demonstrated abilities in:
- 69 (i) developing and implementing innovative initiatives that transform traditional
70 education delivery models;
- 71 (ii) establishing public-private partnership frameworks that create student pathways
72 into high-growth industries; and
- 73 (iii) scaling programs that integrate real-world experiences directly into educational
74 environments;
- 75 (b) possesses expertise in:
- 76 (i) managing complex multi-stakeholder initiatives across education, industry, and
77 government sectors;
- 78 (ii) implementing data-driven organizational change strategies; and
- 79 (iii) developing sustainable funding models for innovative education programs;
- 80 (c) maintains active leadership roles in:
- 81 (i) state or national workforce innovation organizations;
- 82 (ii) industry associations focused on talent development; and
- 83 (iii) public-private collaboratives addressing workforce transformation;
- 84 (d) reports directly to the state superintendent or a deputy superintendent to ensure
85 appropriate program oversight and cross-departmental coordination while
86 maintaining distinct program objectives and outcomes;
- 87 (e) establishes formal collaboration mechanisms with the state board's career and
88 technical education director to align catalyst center initiatives with existing career
89 and technical education programs; and
- 90 (f) facilitates training and a collaborative network of experienced catalyst center
91 administrators and instructors across all participating LEAs.
- 92 (4) The director shall:
- 93 (a) administer the program;
- 94 (b) collaborate with the director of career and technical education to align the program
95 with the career and technical education standards described in Section 53E-3-507;
- 96 (c) create a web-based application system to streamline submissions and allow for linked

- 97 supporting documentation;
- 98 (d) ensure that grant funds are used in accordance with this section; and
- 99 (e) allow grant funds to be used for planning, including:
- 100 (i) feasibility studies;
- 101 (ii) stakeholder engagement;
- 102 (iii) labor market analysis;
- 103 (iv) initial program design and rollout; and
- 104 (v) teacher and staff training specific to the delivery of profession-based learning.
- 105 (5) An LEA applying for a grant shall demonstrate capacity for workforce alignment
- 106 programs within the LEA or provide a plan to establish or enhance alignment by:
- 107 (a) describing current or planned efforts to align programming with labor market needs
- 108 and local industry demands;
- 109 (b) outlining steps to establish or enhance partnerships with:
- 110 (i) local industries and employers to ensure workforce relevance; or
- 111 (ii) technical colleges, degree-granting institutions, or other postsecondary entities to
- 112 support postsecondary transitions for students;
- 113 (c) identifying proposed programming goals and how the goals address gaps in regional
- 114 workforce training or opportunities; and
- 115 (d) as the LEA determines relevant, planning to incorporate:
- 116 (i) career and technical student organizations;
- 117 (ii) advisory boards with representation from local industries and workforce experts;
- 118 (iii) professional learning opportunities for instructors to improve workforce-focused
- 119 skills; and
- 120 (iv) strategies for using labor market data to refine and improve program offerings.
- 121 (6)(a) An LEA may apply for a grant by submitting an application to the state board.
- 122 (b) The application shall include:
- 123 (i) a plan to:
- 124 (A) create or expand one or more catalyst centers; or
- 125 (B) create or expand current career and technical education offerings within the
- 126 LEA to bring the LEA's career and technical education offerings in alignment
- 127 with the definition of a catalyst center in Subsection (1);
- 128 (ii) a detailed multi-year budget, identifying proposed expenditures for each year of
- 129 the grant;
- 130 (iii) justification for any capital expenditures, including plans for building use;

- 131 (iv) a description of how the grant will be used to improve student outcomes,
132 including:
133 (A) increased access to career pathway offerings;
134 (B) measurable improvements in career readiness, including certifications,
135 credentials, or apprenticeships;
136 (C) increased offerings that advance students' progression toward postsecondary
137 education or advanced training; and
138 (D) plans for enhanced student engagement through real-world, profession-based
139 learning;
140 (v) evidence of any existing partnerships with industry, including letters of
141 collaboration;
142 (vi) evidence of alignment with the LEA's strategic plan and local labor market needs;
143 (vii) an explanation of how awarded funds will be used without unnecessary
144 carryforward;
145 (viii) as applicable, a description of how the catalyst center programming will align
146 with or enhance programs funded by the weighted pupil unit add-on described in
147 Section 53F-2-311;
148 (ix) for applications submitted by a consortium of LEAs, a description of how:
149 (A) the catalyst center will serve students across the consortium;
150 (B) costs and resources will be shared; and
151 (C) economies of scale will be achieved; and
152 (x) a description of any proposed planning activities, including expected timelines
153 and outcomes.
- 154 (7) The director shall:
- 155 (a) prioritize an LEA that:
156 (i) proposes innovative programming supported by local labor market data;
157 (ii) collaborates with local postsecondary institutions and industry;
158 (iii) demonstrates the ability to sustain the catalyst center after the grant period;
159 (iv) demonstrates a strong focus on student outcomes and workforce alignment;
160 (v) addresses gaps in high-demand, high-skill career pathways;
161 (vi) ensures funds are used to enhance programming quality before expansion; and
162 (vii) provides for a large number of students to participate in catalyst center programs
163 without limiting participation to students based on socio-economic challenges;
164 (b) allow an LEA to apply for:

- 165 (i) smaller grants to bring existing career and technical education programs to
166 high-quality standards the state board establishes;
- 167 (ii) larger multi-year grants for capital expenditures and program expansion; and
168 (iii) ensure that grant funding does not duplicate existing resources provided by other
169 state or local entities;
- 170 (c) consider the unique challenges and opportunities faced by rural LEAs in developing
171 and sustaining a career and technical education program or catalyst center, including:
- 172 (i) encouraging collaborative applications from rural consortia or regional education
173 service agencies described in Section 53G-4-410 to maximize resources and
174 impact; and
- 175 (ii) grant awards that consider both rural and non-rural applicants, recognizing
176 regional workforce needs and program readiness; and
- 177 (d) allow an LEA to propose a catalyst center collocated on the campus of an institution
178 of higher education if the application includes evidence of an agreement between the
179 LEA and the institution of higher education.
- 180 (8)(a) An LEA that receives a grant:
- 181 (i) may coordinate and collaborate with the Utah Board of Higher Education or an
182 individual institution of higher education; and
- 183 (ii) shall submit an annual report to the state board.
- 184 (b) The report shall include:
- 185 (i) the use of grant funds;
186 (ii) progress in meeting proposed goals and benchmarks;
187 (iii) updates on partnerships with industry and postsecondary institutions;
188 (iv) a demonstration of the alignment of programming with labor market data; and
189 (v) a description of student participation and outcomes.
- 190 (c) The state board shall ensure that awarded funds:
- 191 (i) are used in accordance with an LEA's application; and
192 (ii) that are not used are returned for reallocation.
- 193 (d) Upon request, the director shall submit a report on the program to the Education
194 Interim Committee and the Public Education Appropriations Subcommittee.
- 195 (9) The Talent Ready Utah Program described in Section 53B-34-103 and the Utah Leading
196 through Effective, Actionable, and Dynamic Education established in Section
197 53E-10-702, shall collaborate with the state board to develop and execute a marketing
198 and outreach plan for the Catalyst Center Grant Program.

199 (10) Talent Ready Utah and the Utah Leading through Effective, Actionable, and Dynamic
 200 Education shall:

201 (a) execute the marketing and outreach plan described in Subsection (9); and

202 (b) submit an annual report to the state board that includes:

203 (i) the number of LEAs reached through marketing efforts;

204 (ii) a description of outreach activities and events conducted; and

205 (iii) feedback from LEAs regarding program accessibility and clarity.

206 (11) The state board:

207 (a) may provide up to 1% of the funds appropriated by the Legislature as described in
 208 Section 53F-9-204 to administer the program;

209 (b) in fiscal year 2026, shall provide up to 1% of the funds appropriated by the
 210 Legislature as described in Section 53F-9-204 to Talent Ready Utah and the Utah
 211 Leading through Effective, Actionable, and Dynamic Education for the purposes
 212 described in Subsections (9) and (10); and

213 (c) shall make rules in accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative
 214 Rulemaking Act, to implement this Subsection (11).

215 Section 2. Section **53E-6-204** is amended to read:

216 **53E-6-204 . Exemptions from licensure.**

217 (1) Except as otherwise provided by statute or rule, a spouse of an individual serving in
 218 the armed forces of the United States while the individual is stationed within this state
 219 may work as an educator without being licensed under this title if:

220 [(1)] (a) the spouse holds a valid educator license issued by any other state or jurisdiction
 221 recognized by the state board; and

222 [(2)] (b) the license is current and the spouse is in good standing in the state or
 223 jurisdiction of licensure.

224 (2) An individual with industry experience as an LEA determines, may work as an educator
 225 without being licensed under this title if the individual:

226 (a) demonstrates expertise related to a career and technical education course or catalyst
 227 center program;

228 (b) passes a criminal background check as required by Section 53G-11-402; and

229 (c) completes any training required by the LEA prior to or during the teaching
 230 assignment.

231 (3) Notwithstanding any other provision of state law, an educator employed pursuant to
 232 Subsection (2) shall be considered qualified in determining the state funding distribution

233 of career and technical education funding.

234 Section 3. Section **53F-9-204** is amended to read:

235 **53F-9-204 . Public Education Economic Stabilization Restricted Account.**

236 (1) There is created within the Uniform School Fund a restricted account known as the
237 "Public Education Economic Stabilization Restricted Account."

238 (2)(a) Except as provided in Subsection (2)(b), the account shall be funded from the
239 following revenue sources:

240 (i) 15% of the difference between, as determined by the Office of the Legislative
241 Fiscal Analyst:

242 (A) the estimated amount of ongoing Income Tax Fund and Uniform School Fund
243 revenue available for the Legislature to appropriate for the next fiscal year; and

244 (B) the amount of ongoing appropriations from the Income Tax Fund and Uniform
245 School Fund in the current fiscal year; and

246 (ii) other appropriations as the Legislature may designate.

247 (b) If the appropriation described in Subsection (2)(a) would cause the ongoing
248 appropriations to the account to exceed 11% of Uniform School Fund appropriations
249 described in Section 53F-9-201.1 for the same fiscal year, the Legislature shall
250 appropriate only those funds necessary to ensure that the ongoing appropriations to
251 the account equal 11% of Uniform School Fund appropriations for that fiscal year.

252 (3) Subject to the availability of ongoing appropriations to the account, in accordance with
253 Utah Constitution, Article X, Section 5, Subsection (4), the ongoing appropriation to the
254 account shall be used to fund:

255 (a) except for a year described in Subsection (3)(b), one-time appropriations to the
256 public education system~~[-and]~~ , including at least \$65,000,000 to the Catalyst Center
257 Grant Program described in Section 53E-3-507.1; and

258 (b) the Minimum School Program for a year in which Income Tax Fund revenue and
259 Uniform School Fund revenue are insufficient to fund:

260 (i) ongoing appropriations to the public education system; and

261 (ii) enrollment growth and inflation estimates, as defined in Section 53F-9-201.1.

262 (4)(a) The account shall earn interest.

263 (b) All interest earned on account money shall be deposited in the account.

264 (5) On or before December 31, 2023, and every three years thereafter, the Office of the
265 Legislative Fiscal Analyst shall:

266 (a) review the percentages described in Subsections (2)(a)(i) and (2)(b); and

267 (b) recommend to the Executive Appropriations [~~Subcommittee~~] Committee any changes
 268 based on the review described in Subsection (5)(a).

269 (6) In preparing budget bills for a given fiscal year, the Executive Appropriations
 270 Committee shall make the one-time appropriations described in Subsection (3)(a) by
 271 appropriating at least the lesser of 10% of the total amount of the one-time appropriations[
 272 ~~;~~ ~~or~~] to:

273 (a) the cost of providing 32 paid professional hours for teachers in accordance with
 274 Section 53F-7-203; and

275 (b) the amount to make the distribution required under Section 53F-2-527.

276 Section 4. Section **53G-10-307** is enacted to read:

277 **Part 3. Miscellaneous Curriculum and Credit Requirements**

278 **53G-10-307 . Art or fine arts education -- Definition -- Credit requirements.**

279 (1) As used in this section, "art" or "fine arts" means:

280 (a) courses, instruction, or experiences in visual arts, music, dance, or theater;

281 (b) courses, instruction, or experiences in applied crafts and technical arts that
 282 incorporate artistic elements, including:

283 (i) woodworking;

284 (ii) metalworking and welding;

285 (iii) traditional handcrafts;

286 (iv) architectural trades, including carpentry, plumbing, masonry, and stonework;

287 (v) automotive design and customization;

288 (vi) digital design and animation; or

289 (vii) other similar courses that combine technical skill with artistic expression; and

290 (c) other forms of creative or interpretive expression as an LEA determines.

291 (2) For purposes of meeting art or fine arts credit requirements the state board or an LEA
 292 establishes, the LEA shall accept for an art or fine arts credit any course listed in
 293 Subsection (1) that:

294 (a) incorporates artistic or creative elements in the curriculum;

295 (b) includes instruction in principles of design, form, or aesthetic expression; and

296 (c) provides students opportunities for creative expression and artistic application of
 297 technical skills.

298 (3) Nothing in this section:

299 (a) prevents an LEA from:

300 (i) establishing the LEA's own additional criteria for artistic and creative elements in

301 courses accepted for fine arts credit; or
302 (ii) offering additional courses for fine arts credit; or
303 (b) requires an LEA to offer all courses listed in Subsection (1).
304 **Section 5. Effective Date.**
305 This bill takes effect on May 7, 2025.