

1 **Rural School Funding Amendments**

2025 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Tiara Auxier

Senate Sponsor:

3 **LONG TITLE**

4 **General Description:**

5 This bill creates the Rural School Sports Facilities Grant Program.

6 **Highlighted Provisions:**

7 This bill:

- 8 ▶ defines terms;
- 9 ▶ creates the Rural School Sports Facilities Grant Program to fund the construction or
- 10 refurbishment of sports facilities in rural public schools;
- 11 ▶ requires the Utah State Board of Education to administer the program;
- 12 ▶ allows a local education agency to apply for funds from the program;
- 13 ▶ requires the state board to report on the program upon request; and
- 14 ▶ makes technical changes.

15 **Money Appropriated in this Bill:**

16 None

17 **Other Special Clauses:**

18 This bill provides a special effective date.

19 **Utah Code Sections Affected:**

20 AMENDS:

21 **53E-1-201**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2024, Chapters 3, 460 and 525

22 **53F-9-204**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2024, Chapter 322

23 ENACTS:

24 **53F-10-303**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

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

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

28 **53E-1-201 . Reports to and action required of the Education Interim Committee.**

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

- 31 (a) the report described in Section 9-22-109 by the STEM Action Center Board,
32 including the information described in Section 9-22-113 on the status of the computer
33 science initiative and Section 9-22-114 on the Computing Partnerships Grants
34 Program;
- 35 (b) the prioritized list of data research described in Section 53B-33-302 and the report on
36 research and activities described in Section 53B-33-304 by the Utah Data Research
37 Center;
- 38 (c) the report described in Section 53B-1-402 by the Utah Board of Higher Education on
39 career and technical education issues and addressing workforce needs;
- 40 (d) the annual report of the Utah Board of Higher Education described in Section
41 53B-1-402;
- 42 (e) the reports described in Section 53B-28-401 by the Utah Board of Higher Education
43 regarding activities related to campus safety;
- 44 (f) the State Superintendent's Annual Report by the state board described in Section
45 53E-1-203;
- 46 (g) the annual report described in Section 53E-2-202 by the state board on the strategic
47 plan to improve student outcomes;
- 48 (h) the report described in Section 53E-8-204 by the state board on the Utah Schools for
49 the Deaf and the Blind;
- 50 (i) the report described in Section 53E-10-703 by the Utah Leading through Effective,
51 Actionable, and Dynamic Education director on research and other activities;
- 52 (j) the report described in Section 53F-2-522 regarding mental health screening
53 programs;
- 54 (k) the report described in Section 53F-4-203 by the state board and the independent
55 evaluator on an evaluation of early interactive reading software;
- 56 (l) the report described in Section 63N-20-107 by the Governor's Office of Economic
57 Opportunity on UPSTART;
- 58 (m) the reports described in Sections 53F-5-214 and 53F-5-215 by the state board
59 related to grants for professional learning and grants for an elementary teacher
60 preparation assessment;
- 61 (n) upon request, the report described in Section 53F-5-219 by the state board on the
62 Local Innovations Civics Education Pilot Program;
- 63 (o) the report described in Section 53F-5-405 by the state board regarding an evaluation
64 of a partnership that receives a grant to improve educational outcomes for students

- 65 who are low income;
- 66 (p) the report described in Section 53B-35-202 regarding the Higher Education and
67 Corrections Council;
- 68 (q) the report described in Section 53G-7-221 by the state board regarding innovation
69 plans;
- 70 (r) the reports described in Section 53F-6-412 regarding the Utah Fits All Scholarship
71 Program.
- 72 (2) In accordance with applicable provisions and Section 68-3-14, the following occasional
73 reports are due to the Education Interim Committee:
- 74 (a) in 2027, 2030, 2033, and 2035, the reports described in Sections 53B-1-116,
75 53B-1-117, and 53B-1-118;
- 76 (b) if required, the report described in Section 53E-4-309 by the state board explaining
77 the reasons for changing the grade level specification for the administration of
78 specific assessments;
- 79 (c) if required, the report described in Section 53E-5-210 by the state board of an
80 adjustment to the minimum level that demonstrates proficiency for each statewide
81 assessment;
- 82 (d) the report described in Section 53E-10-702 by Utah Leading through Effective,
83 Actionable, and Dynamic Education;
- 84 (e) if required, the report described in Section 53F-2-513 by the state board evaluating
85 the effects of salary bonuses on the recruitment and retention of effective teachers in
86 high poverty schools;
- 87 (f) upon request, the report described in Section 53F-10-303 by the state board regarding
88 the Rural School Sports Facilities Grant Program;
- 89 [(f)] (g) upon request, a report described in Section 53G-7-222 by an LEA regarding
90 expenditure of a percentage of state restricted funds to support an innovative
91 education program;
- 92 [(g)] (h) the reports described in Section 53G-11-304 by the state board regarding
93 proposed rules and results related to educator exit surveys; and
- 94 [(h)] (i) the report described in Section 26B-5-113 by the Office of Substance Use and
95 Mental Health, the state board, and the Department of Health and Human Services
96 regarding recommendations related to Medicaid reimbursement for school-based
97 health services.
- 98 Section 2. Section **53F-9-204** is amended to read:

99 **53F-9-204 . Public Education Economic Stabilization Restricted Account.**

- 100 (1) There is created within the Uniform School Fund a restricted account known as the
101 "Public Education Economic Stabilization Restricted Account."
102 (2)(a) Except as provided in Subsection (2)(b), the account shall be funded from the
103 following revenue sources:
104 (i) 15% of the difference between, as determined by the Office of the Legislative
105 Fiscal Analyst:
106 (A) the estimated amount of ongoing Income Tax Fund and Uniform School Fund
107 revenue available for the Legislature to appropriate for the next fiscal year; and
108 (B) the amount of ongoing appropriations from the Income Tax Fund and Uniform
109 School Fund in the current fiscal year; and
110 (ii) other appropriations as the Legislature may designate.
111 (b) If the appropriation described in Subsection (2)(a) would cause the ongoing
112 appropriations to the account to exceed 11% of Uniform School Fund appropriations
113 described in Section 53F-9-201.1 for the same fiscal year, the Legislature shall
114 appropriate only those funds necessary to ensure that the ongoing appropriations to
115 the account equal 11% of Uniform School Fund appropriations for that fiscal year.
116 (3) Subject to the availability of ongoing appropriations to the account, in accordance with
117 Utah Constitution, Article X, Section 5, Subsection (4), the ongoing appropriation to the
118 account shall be used to fund:
119 (a) except for a year described in Subsection (3)(b), one-time appropriations to the
120 public education system; and
121 (b) the Minimum School Program for a year in which Income Tax Fund revenue and
122 Uniform School Fund revenue are insufficient to fund:
123 (i) ongoing appropriations to the public education system; and
124 (ii) enrollment growth and inflation estimates, as defined in Section 53F-9-201.1.
125 (4)(a) The account shall earn interest.
126 (b) All interest earned on account money shall be deposited in the account.
127 (5) On or before December 31, 2023, and every three years thereafter, the Office of the
128 Legislative Fiscal Analyst shall:
129 (a) review the percentages described in Subsections (2)(a)(i) and (2)(b); and
130 (b) recommend to the Executive Appropriations Subcommittee any changes based on
131 the review described in Subsection (5)(a).
132 (6) In preparing budget bills for a given fiscal year, the Executive Appropriations

133 Committee shall make the one-time appropriations described in Subsection (3)(a) by
 134 appropriating at least the lesser of 10% of the total amount of the one-time
 135 appropriations; or

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

138 (b) the amount to make the distribution required under Section 53F-2-527[-] ; and

139 (c) the cost of the Rural School Sports Facilities Grant Program described in Section
 140 53F-10-303.

141 Section 3. Section **53F-10-303** is enacted to read:

142 **53F-10-303 . Rural School Sports Facilities Grant Program.**

143 (1) As used in this section:

144 (a) "Eligible school" means a public school within a school district:

145 (i) located in a county of the fourth, fifth, or sixth class, as defined in
 146 Section17-50-501; or

147 (ii) with fewer than 3,000 students enrolled in a public school.

148 (b) "Program" means the Rural School Sports Facilities Grant Program created in
 149 Subsection (2).

150 (c) "Sports facility" means an indoor or outdoor facility primarily designed and used for
 151 athletic activities, physical education, or school-sponsored sports programs.

152 (2) There is created the Rural School Sports Facilities Grant Program to provide funding to
 153 an eligible school for the construction or refurbishment of a sports facility.

154 (3) The state board shall:

155 (a) in accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act,
 156 make rules to:

157 (i) create an application process for a school district to apply for program funds;

158 (ii) select a school to receive program funds in accordance with Subsection (3)(b); and

159 (iii) establish a system to distribute program funds to a school the state board selects
 160 to receive program funds through the program; and

161 (b) subject to legislative appropriations, prioritize applications and distribute program
 162 funds to an eligible school based on:

163 (i) the greatest need for program funds;

164 (ii) the financial feasibility of a sports facility construction or refurbishment project;
 165 and

166 (iii) the potential benefit program funds may have on the community.

- 167 (4)(a) A school district with jurisdiction over an eligible school may submit an
168 application to receive program funds under this section.
- 169 (b) In the school district's application, the school district shall:
- 170 (i) identify an eligible school within the school district that wishes to receive program
171 funds;
- 172 (ii) evidence the need for construction or refurbishment of a sports facility;
- 173 (iii) describe the proposed sports facility project; and
- 174 (iv) estimate a budget and timeline for the completion of the sports facility project.
- 175 (5) A school district to which the state board awards program funds shall submit a report to
176 the state board, by December 31 each year while construction is ongoing, detailing:
- 177 (a) how a school is using program funds to complete the sports facility project;
- 178 (b) budget and timeline updates related to the construction or refurbishment of the sports
179 facility; and
- 180 (c) the progress of the construction or refurbishment of a sports facility.
- 181 (6) Subject to legislative appropriations, the state board may award up to \$500,000 to each
182 eligible school the state board selects under the program.
- 183 (7) Upon request of the Education Interim Committee, the state board shall report to the
184 Education Interim Committee on:
- 185 (a) the number of applications the state board accepts;
- 186 (b) the dollar amount of program funds the state board awards under this section;
- 187 (c) the implementation of the program; and
- 188 (d) the use of program funds.
- 189 **Section 4. Effective Date.**
- 190 This bill takes effect on July 1, 2025.