

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27

Early Literacy
2026 GENERAL SESSION
STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Ann Millner

House Sponsor: Karen M. Peterson

LONG TITLE

General Description:

This bill establishes a framework of literacy interventions in kindergarten through grade 3 within the public education system.

Highlighted Provisions:

This bill:

- ▶ defines terms;
- ▶ establishes a third-grade level reading goal for 2030;
- ▶ requires a local education agency (LEA) to, based on the student's performance on a benchmark reading assessment, provide a student with an individualized reading plan that identifies specific reading interventions to remediate a reading deficiency, including considering retention in lower grades and requiring retention in grade 3 except in cases of certain good cause exemptions;
- ▶ requires regional education service agencies and certain school districts to provide formal professional learning and information training in the science of reading;
- ▶ dedicates a certain amount of funding to provide literacy training and paraprofessionals who support literacy;
- ▶ requires certain school performance monitoring;
- ▶ excludes the practice of "three-cueing" from an LEA's reading curriculum;
- ▶ requires the State Board of Education (state board) to distribute funding to regional education service agencies and certain school districts for literacy coaching and training;
- ▶ requires the Utah Board of Higher Education to partner with the state board in certain duties regarding teacher preparation programs;
- ▶ requires the use of a certain portion of a school's allocation under the Teacher and Student Success Program on literacy interventions if the school's third grade students score

28 below the statewide benchmark goal;

29 ▸ includes science of reading and literacy as components of an elementary educator
30 evaluation;

31 ▸ requires the Center for the School of the Future at Utah State University, in collaboration
32 with the Utah Board of Higher Education, to develop a plan to improve science of
33 reading knowledge and ability in teacher graduates from a state institution of higher
34 education; and

35 ▸ makes technical and conforming changes.

36 **Money Appropriated in this Bill:**

37 None

38 **Other Special Clauses:**

39 This bill provides a special effective date.

40 **Utah Code Sections Affected:**

41 AMENDS:

42 **53E-3-1001 (Effective 07/01/26)**, as enacted by Laws of Utah 2022, Chapter 285 and
43 further amended by Revisor Instructions, Laws of Utah 2022, Chapter 285

44 **53E-3-1003 (Effective 07/01/26)**, as enacted by Laws of Utah 2022, Chapter 285

45 **53E-4-307 (Effective 07/01/26)**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2024, Chapter 60

46 **53E-6-302 (Effective 07/01/26)**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2024, Chapter 51

47 **53G-7-205 (Effective 07/01/26)**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2019, Chapter 293

48 **53G-7-1304 (Effective 07/01/26)**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2024, Chapter 372

49 **53G-7-1305 (Effective 07/01/26)**, as enacted by Laws of Utah 2019, Chapter 505

50 **53G-11-507 (Effective 07/01/26) (Repealed 07/01/29)**, as last amended by Laws of Utah
51 2024, Chapter 484

52 ENACTS:

53 **53F-2-424 (Effective 07/01/26)**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

54 **53G-10-801 (Effective 07/01/26)**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

55 **53G-10-802 (Effective 07/01/26)**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

56 **53G-10-803 (Effective 07/01/26)**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

57 **53G-10-805 (Effective 07/01/26)**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

58 RENUMBERS AND AMENDS:

59 **53G-10-804 (Effective 07/01/26)**, (Renumbered from 53E-3-1002, as enacted by
60 Laws of Utah 2022, Chapter 285)

61 **53G-10-806 (Effective 07/01/26)**, (Renumbered from 53G-10-306, as enacted by

62 Laws of Utah 2022, Chapter 285)

63

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

65 Section 1. Section **53E-3-1001** is amended to read:

66 **53E-3-1001 (Effective 07/01/26). Statewide goal -- Emphasis on early literacy.**

67 (1) As used in this section:

68 (a) "Benchmark reading assessment" means the statewide benchmark assessment in
 69 reading described in Section 53E-4-307 that a school district or charter school
 70 administers to students in kindergarten through grade 3 at the beginning, middle, and
 71 end of the school year.

72 (b) "Reading on grade level" means that a student scores at or above the benchmark for
 73 the relevant grade level on the benchmark reading assessment.

74 (2) To achieve a strenuous statewide goal of [70% in third grade-level proficiency on
 75 the state-administered reading assessment by July 1, 2027,] 80% of students reading on
 76 grade level on the end-of-year benchmark reading assessment in grade 3 by July 1, 2030:

77 (a) the state board shall:

78 [(1)] (i) analyze, align, and target resources, including digital software and tools, in
 79 existing state programs and the programs enacted in Laws of Utah 2022, Chapter
 80 285, as appropriate, to support early literacy within the state; and

81 [(2)] (ii) identify opportunities to incentivize and support LEAs and elementary
 82 schools to analyze data, align plans, and target resources from existing local and
 83 LEA programs to support early literacy within the state, resulting in a
 84 comprehensive statewide alignment of early literacy plans[-] ; and

85 (b) each LEA shall engage in targeted literacy interventions in accordance with Section
 86 53G-10-306.

87 Section 2. Section **53E-3-1003** is amended to read:

88 **53E-3-1003 (Effective 07/01/26). Science of reading.**

89 (1) As used in this section:

90 (a) "Educator preparation program" means the same as that term is defined in Section
 91 53E-6-302.

92 (b) "Panel" means the science of reading panel that the state board establishes in
 93 accordance with this section.

94 (c) "Science of reading" means the same as that term is defined in Section 53G-10-801.

95 [(e)] (d) "University teacher preparation program" means a program described in Section

96 53E-6-302.

97 (2) The state board shall establish an expert science of reading panel consisting of up to six
98 experts who have:

99 (a) knowledge and a research background in the science of reading and the science of
100 reading instruction; and

101 (b) experience translating the science of reading into effective reading instructional
102 practices.

103 (3) The panel shall:

104 (a) meet no less than once every quarter;

105 (b) provide expertise to and serve in a consultancy capacity to the state board on
106 implementation of:

107 (i) the early literacy emphases described in Section 53E-3-1001; and

108 (ii) educator preparation programs;

109 (c) in consultation with the state board:

110 (i) provide advanced professional learning opportunities in the science of reading and
111 the science of reading instruction for public schools and educator preparation
112 programs as needed to expand statewide capacity;

113 (ii) partner with ULEAD, as that term is defined in Section 53E-10-701, to develop
114 and implement an online repository of digital science of reading and science of
115 reading instruction resources that is accessible to public school teachers, school
116 leaders, parents, and educator preparation programs and associated faculty;

117 (iii) develop professional learning modules to support teachers and school leaders;
118 and

119 (iv) coordinate with educator preparation programs, university teacher preparation
120 program faculty, deans of education, and literacy leadership fellows to advance
121 the science of reading and the science of reading instruction; and

122 (d) take part in the hiring of the additional faculty members~~[described in Subsection~~
123 ~~53E-6-302(6)]~~, with two panel members participating in the hiring process.

124 (4) The state board may collaborate with panel members to conduct periodic reviews of:

125 (a) student outcome data;

126 (b) science of reading and science of reading instruction implementation fidelity in
127 public schools and educator preparation programs through onsite visits; and

128 (c) advise LEAs regarding the science of reading and the science of reading instruction
129 curriculum and intervention programs.

- 130 (5) A panel member:
- 131 (a) may not receive compensation or benefits for the member's service on the panel; and
- 132 (b) may receive per diem and reimbursement for travel expenses that the panel member
- 133 incurs as a panel member at the rates that the Division of Finance establishes under:
- 134 (i) Sections 63A-3-106 and 63A-3-107; and
- 135 (ii) rules that the Division of Finance makes under Sections 63A-3-106 and
- 136 63A-3-107.

137 (6) The state board shall provide staff support to the panel.

138 Section 3. Section **53E-4-307** is amended to read:

139 **53E-4-307 (Effective 07/01/26). Benchmark assessments in reading -- Report to**

140 **parent.**

141 (1) As used in this section:

142 (a) "Benchmark reading assessment" means an assessment that:

143 (i) measures key literacy skills, including phonemic awareness, sound-symbol

144 recognition, alphabet knowledge, decoding and encoding skills, and

145 comprehension, to determine a student's specific strengths and weaknesses in a

146 skill area; and

147 (ii) a school district or charter school administers to students in kindergarten through

148 grade 3 at the beginning, middle, and end of the school year.

149 [(a)] (b) "Competency" means a demonstrable acquisition of a specified knowledge, skill,

150 or ability that has been organized into a hierarchical arrangement leading to higher

151 levels of knowledge, skill, or ability.

152 [(b)] ~~"Diagnostic assessment" means an assessment that measures key literacy skills,~~

153 ~~including phonemic awareness, sound-symbol recognition, alphabet knowledge,~~

154 ~~decoding and encoding skills, and comprehension, to determine a student's specific~~

155 ~~strengths and weaknesses in a skill area.]~~

156 (c) "Dyslexia" means a learning disorder that:

157 (i) is neurological in origin and is characterized by difficulties with:

158 (A) accurate or fluent word recognition; and

159 (B) poor spelling and decoding abilities; and

160 (ii) typically results from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is

161 often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the provision of

162 effective classroom instruction.

163 (d) "Evidence-based" means the same as that term is defined in Section 53G-11-303.

- 164 (e) "Evidence-informed" means the same as that term is defined in Section 53G-11-303.
- 165 (2) The state board shall approve a benchmark assessment for use statewide by school
 166 districts and charter schools to assess the reading competency of students in grades 1
 167 through 6 as provided by this section.
- 168 (3) A school district or charter school shall:
- 169 (a) administer benchmark assessments to students in kindergarten and grades 1, 2, and 3
 170 at the beginning, middle, and end of the school year using the benchmark assessment
 171 approved by the state board; and
- 172 (b) after administering a benchmark assessment, report the results to a student's parent.
- 173 (4)(a) If a benchmark assessment or supplemental reading assessment indicates a student
 174 lacks competency in a reading skill, is demonstrating characteristics of dyslexia, or is
 175 lagging behind other students in the student's grade in acquiring a reading skill, the
 176 school district or charter school shall:
- 177 ~~[(i) administer diagnostic assessments to the student;]~~
- 178 ~~[(ii)]~~ (i) using data from the ~~[diagnostic]~~ benchmark reading assessment, provide
 179 specific, focused, and individualized intervention or tutoring to develop the
 180 reading skill, in accordance with Title 53G, Chapter 10, Part 8, Literacy
 181 Interventions, potentially including the creation of an individual reading plan, as
 182 that term is defined in Section 53G-10-801;
- 183 ~~[(iii)]~~ (ii) administer formative assessments and progress monitoring at recommended
 184 levels for the benchmark assessment to measure the success of the focused
 185 intervention;
- 186 ~~[(iv)]~~ (iii) in addition to the notice described in Section 53G-10-802:
- 187 (A) inform the student's parent of activities that the parent may engage in with the
 188 student to assist the student in improving reading proficiency; and
- 189 ~~[(v)]~~ (B) provide information to the parent regarding appropriate interventions
 190 available to the student outside of the regular school day that may include
 191 tutoring, before and after school programs, or summer school; and
- 192 ~~[(vi)]~~ (iv) provide instructional materials that are evidence-informed for core
 193 instruction and evidence-based for intervention and supplemental instruction.
- 194 (b) Nothing in this section or in Section 53F-4-203 or 53G-11-303 requires a reading
 195 software product to demonstrate the statistically significant effect size described in
 196 Subsection 53G-11-303(1)(a) in order to be used as an instructional material
 197 described in Subsection (4)(a)(vi).

198 (5)(a) In accordance with Section 53F-4-201 and except as provided in Subsection (5)(b),
199 the state board shall contract with one or more educational technology providers for a
200 benchmark assessment system for reading for students in kindergarten through grade
201 6.

202 (b) If revenue is insufficient for the benchmark assessment system for the grades
203 described in Subsection (5)(a), the state board shall first prioritize funding a
204 benchmark assessment for students in kindergarten through grade 3.

205 (6) A student with dyslexia is only eligible for special education services if the student
206 meets federal eligibility criteria.

207 Section 4. Section **53E-6-302** is amended to read:

208 **53E-6-302 (Effective 07/01/26). Educator preparation programs.**

209 (1) As used in this section:

210 (a) "Center" means the Center for the School of the Future at Utah State University
211 established in Section 53H-4-304.

212 (b) "Educator preparation program" means:

213 (i) a university teacher education program; or

214 (ii) a program that prepares individuals using an alternative pathway to licensure, as
215 the state board provides, that does not include content or time requirements that
216 conflict with the content or time requirements described in rule made by the state
217 board in accordance with Subsection (2).

218 ~~[(b)]~~ (c) "Required literacy preparation assessment" means the same as that term is
219 defined in Section 53E-6-301.

220 (d) "Science of reading" means the same as that term is defined in Section 53G-10-801.

221 ~~[(e)]~~ (e) "University teacher preparation program" means a program that an institution of
222 higher education offers to prepare educators for licensure.

223 (2) In accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act, the
224 state board shall make rules that establish standards for approval of an educator
225 preparation program.

226 (3) The state board shall ensure that standards adopted under Subsection (2):

227 (a) meet or exceed generally recognized national standards for preparation of educators;
228 and

229 (b) include requirements for educator preparation programs to:

230 (i) provide instruction in the science of reading; and

231 (ii) prepare license applicants to pass the required literacy preparation assessment at

232 no cost to the applicants for the preparation, including providing ongoing
 233 preparation for up to three total attempts of the required literacy preparation
 234 assessment.

235 (4) The Utah Board of Higher Education and the state board shall each designate an
 236 employee of [~~the state~~] each board's staff to jointly:

237 (a) work with education deans of state institutions of higher education to coordinate
 238 university teacher preparation programs that may include:

239 (i) monitoring courses for university teacher preparation programs; and

240 (ii) working with course instructors for university teacher preparation programs;

241 (b) act as a liaison between:

242 (i) the Utah Board of Higher Education;

243 (ii) the state board;

244 ~~[(ii)]~~ (iii) local school boards or charter school governing boards; and

245 ~~[(iii)]~~ (iv) representatives of university teacher preparation programs; and

246 (c) report the employee's findings and recommendations for the improvement of teacher
 247 preparation programs to:

248 (i) the state board; and

249 (ii) education deans of state institutions of higher education.

250 (5) The state board, in consultation with the Utah Board of Higher Education, shall:

251 (a) in good faith, consider the findings and recommendations described in Subsection
 252 (4)(c); and

253 (b) in accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act,
 254 make rules, as the state board determines is necessary, to implement
 255 recommendations described in Subsection (4)(c).

256 [~~(6) Subject to legislative appropriations, the Utah Board of Higher Education shall:~~]

257 [~~(a) provide matching funds to each of the state's institutions of higher education with a
 258 university teacher preparation program:~~]

259 [~~(i) to hire an additional faculty member who has training in the science of reading
 260 and the science of reading instruction; and]~~]

261 [~~(ii) in an amount equal to 75% of the cost of making the hire described in Subsection
 262 (6)(a) if the institution provides 25% of the cost; and]~~]

263 [~~(b) consult the state superintendent regarding:~~]

264 [~~(i) criteria for the hire described in Subsection (6)(a) that would qualify for a
 265 distribution of funding; and]~~]

- 266 ~~[(ii) an individual institution's fulfillment of the criteria described in Subsection~~
267 ~~(6)(b)(i) before distributing funding.]~~
- 268 (6) The center shall develop a plan, in collaboration with the Utah Board of Higher
269 Education and the state board, to improve, for elementary teacher graduates and
270 elementary administrator preparation graduates from a state institution of higher
271 education:
- 272 (a) the knowledge of the science of reading; and
- 273 (b) the ability to apply the science of reading instruction with a focus on how the
274 instruction leads to third-grade proficiency in reading and writing.
- 275 ~~[(7) An institution that hires an additional faculty member shall coordinate with the science~~
276 ~~of reading panel described in Section 53E-3-1003 to include two members of the panel~~
277 ~~in the institution's hiring process.]~~
- 278 ~~[(8)]~~ (7) The Utah Board of Higher Education and the state board shall jointly:
- 279 (a) monitor accreditation of university programs regarding the science of reading
280 preparation described in Subsection (3)(b)~~[-at the institutions described in Subsection~~
281 ~~(6)(a)]; and~~
- 282 (b)(i) develop strategies to provide support for preparation programs with low rates
283 of passage on the required literacy preparation assessment; and
- 284 (ii) provide increasing levels of support to a preparation program with low rates of
285 passage on the required literacy preparation assessment for two consecutive years.
- 286 Section 5. Section **53F-2-424** is enacted to read:
- 287 **53F-2-424 (Effective 07/01/26). Literacy interventions.**
- 288 (1) As used in this section:
- 289 (a) "Member school district" means a school district that is a member of a specific
290 regional education service agency.
- 291 (b) "Regional education service agency" means the same as that term is defined in
292 Section 53G-4-410.
- 293 (2) Subject to legislative appropriations, and except as provided in Subsection (4), the state
294 board shall:
- 295 (a) allocate the following for literacy coaching and training in accordance with Section
296 53G-10-804:
- 297 (i) a base funding amount of at least \$75,000 to each regional education service
298 agency and to each school district that is not a member of a regional education
299 service agency; and

- 300 (ii) the remainder of legislative appropriations for literacy coaching and training
 301 within school districts, distributed based on:
 302 (A) for a school district that is not a member of a regional education service
 303 agency, the school district's average daily membership; and
 304 (B) for a regional education service agency, the average daily membership within
 305 each member school district; and
 306 (b) proportionally distribute at least \$15,000,000 to the school districts and regional
 307 education service agencies described in Subsection (2)(a)(ii) to provide
 308 paraprofessionals who support literacy.
 309 (3) Subject to legislative appropriations, and except as provided in Subsection (4), the state
 310 board shall allocate at least \$1,000,000 to the State Charter School Board for distribution
 311 to each charter school, in consultation with each charter authorizer, for literacy coaching,
 312 training, and interventions within charter schools.
 313 (4) For fiscal year 2027, the state board shall use \$150,000, proportionally divided from the
 314 funding described in Subsections (2) and (3), to fund the science of reading plan
 315 described in Subsection 53E-6-302(6).

316 Section 6. Section **53G-7-205** is amended to read:

317 **53G-7-205 (Effective 07/01/26). Assessment of emerging and early reading skills**

318 **-- Resources provided by school districts.**

- 319 (1) The Legislature recognizes that well-developed reading skills help:
 320 (a) children to succeed in school, develop self esteem, and build positive relationships
 321 with others;
 322 (b) young adults to become independent learners; and
 323 (c) adults to become and remain productive members of a rapidly changing
 324 technology-based society.
 325 (2)(a) Each potential kindergarten student, the student's parent, and kindergarten
 326 personnel at the student's school may participate in an assessment of the student's
 327 reading and numeric skills.
 328 (b) The state board, in cooperation with the state's school districts, may develop the
 329 assessment instrument and any additional materials needed to implement and
 330 supplement the assessment program.
 331 (3) The potential kindergarten student's teacher may use the assessment in planning and
 332 developing an instructional program to meet the student's identified needs.
 333 (4)(a) Each school is encouraged to schedule the assessment early enough before the

334 kindergarten starting date so that a potential kindergarten student's parent has time to
335 develop the child's needed skills as identified by the assessment.

336 (b) Based on the assessment under Subsection (2), the school shall provide the potential
337 student's parent with[-] :

338 (i) appropriate resource materials to assist the parent at home in the student's literacy
339 development[-] ; and

340 (ii) information regarding the individualized reading plan process described in
341 Chapter 10, Part 8, Literacy Interventions.

342 Section 7. Section **53G-7-1304** is amended to read:

343 **53G-7-1304 (Effective 07/01/26). Program requirements -- LEA governing board**
344 **student success framework -- LEA distribution -- School allocation -- Reporting.**

345 (1)(a) To receive an LEA distribution, an LEA governing board shall:

346 (i) adopt an LEA governing board student success framework to provide guidelines
347 and processes for a school within the LEA governing board's LEA to follow in
348 developing a teacher and student success plan; and

349 (ii) submit the adopted LEA governing board student success framework to the state
350 board.

351 (b) An LEA governing board may include in the LEA governing board's student success
352 framework any means reasonably designed to improve school performance or student
353 academic achievement, including:

354 (i) school personnel stipends for taking on additional responsibility outside of a
355 typical work assignment;

356 (ii) professional learning;

357 (iii) additional school employees, including counselors, social workers, mental health
358 workers, tutors, media specialists, information technology specialists, or other
359 specialists;

360 (iv) technology;

361 (v) before- or after-school programs;

362 (vi) summer school programs;

363 (vii) community support programs or partnerships;

364 (viii) early childhood education;

365 (ix) class size reduction strategies;

366 (x) augmentation of existing programs;

367 (xi) the pilot program described in Section 53G-7-1307; or

- 368 (xii) other means.
- 369 (c) An LEA governing board student success framework may not support the use of
370 program money:
- 371 (i) to supplant funding for existing public education programs;
- 372 (ii) for district administration costs; or
- 373 (iii) for capital expenditures.
- 374 (2)(a) ~~[An]~~ Subject to Subsection (2)(e), an LEA governing board shall use an LEA
375 distribution as follows:
- 376 (i) for increases to base salary and salary driven benefits for school personnel that,
377 except as provided in Subsection (2)(c)(i), total 25% or less of the LEA
378 distribution; and
- 379 (ii) except as provided in Subsection (2)(b)(ii) and in accordance with Subsection (3),
380 for each school within the LEA governing board's LEA, an allocation that is equal
381 to the product of:
- 382 (A) the percentage of the school's prior year average daily membership compared
383 to the total prior year average daily membership for all schools in the LEA; and
- 384 (B) the remaining amount of the LEA governing board's LEA distribution after
385 subtracting the amounts described in Subsections (2)(a)(i) and (2)(b)(ii).
- 386 (b)(i) In accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act,
387 the state board shall make rules for an LEA governing board to calculate and
388 distribute a school allocation for a school in the school's first year of operation.
- 389 (ii) In accordance with Subsection (3) and the rules described in Subsection (2)(b)(i),
390 an LEA governing board shall distribute a school allocation for a school in the
391 school's first year of operation.
- 392 (c) Except as provided in Subsection (2)(d) or (2)(e), the LEA governing board of a
393 school district may use up to 40% of an LEA distribution for the purposes described
394 in Subsection (2)(a)(i), if:
- 395 (i) the LEA governing board has:
- 396 (A) approved a board local levy for the maximum amount allowed under Section
397 53F-8-302; or
- 398 (B) after the LEA governing board has submitted an LEA governing board student
399 success framework to the state board, increased the board local levy described
400 in Section 53F-8-302 by at least .0001 per dollar of taxable value; and
- 401 (ii) the school district's average teacher salary is below the state average teacher

- 402 salary described in Subsection [~~(2)(f)~~] (2)(g).
- 403 (d) The LEA governing board of a school district in a county of the fourth, fifth, or sixth
404 class or the LEA governing board of a charter school may use up to 40% of an LEA
405 distribution for the purposes described in Subsection (2)(a)(i), if the LEA's average
406 teacher salary is below the state average teacher salary described in Subsection [~~(2)(f)~~]
407 (2)(g).
- 408 (e) The LEA governing board of an LEA with a school performing below the statewide
409 goal described in Section 53E-3-1001 for third-grade reading shall ensure that the
410 school's teacher and student success plan that the LEA governing board approves in
411 accordance with Section 53G-7-1305 allocates at least 50% of the school's total
412 distribution for:
- 413 (i) evidence-based strategies and practices for addressing low literacy rates in
414 alignment with the science of reading; and
- 415 (ii) reading interventions in accordance with Chapter 10, Part 8, Literacy
416 Interventions.
- 417 [~~(e)~~] (f) An LEA governing board shall annually report information as requested by the
418 state board for the state board to calculate a state average teacher salary.
- 419 [~~(f)~~] (g) The state board shall use the information described in Subsection (2)(c)(ii) to
420 calculate a state average teacher salary amount and a state average teacher benefit
421 amount.
- 422 (3) An LEA governing board shall allocate a school allocation to a school with a teacher
423 and student success plan that is approved as described in Section 53G-7-1305.
- 424 (4)(a) Except as provided in Subsection (4)(b), a school shall use a school allocation to
425 implement the school's success plan.
- 426 (b) A school may use up to 5% of the school's school allocation to fund school personnel
427 retention at the principal's discretion, not including uniform salary increases.
- 428 (c) A school may not use a school allocation for:
- 429 (i) capital expenditures; or
- 430 (ii) a purpose that is not supported by the LEA governing board student success
431 framework for the school's LEA.
- 432 (5) A school that receives a school allocation shall annually:
- 433 (a) submit to the school's LEA governing board a description of:
- 434 (i) the budgeted and actual expenditures of the school's school allocation;
- 435 (ii) how the expenditures relate to the school's success plan; and

- 436 (iii) how the school measures the success of the school's participation in the program;
 437 and
 438 (b) post on the school's website:
 439 (i) the school's approved success plan;
 440 (ii) a description of the school's school allocation budgeted and actual expenditures
 441 and how the expenditures help the school accomplish the school's success plan;
 442 and
 443 (iii) the school's current level of performance, as described in Section 53G-7-1306,
 444 according to the indicators described in Section 53E-5-205 or 53E-5-206.

445 Section 8. Section **53G-7-1305** is amended to read:

446 **53G-7-1305 (Effective 07/01/26). Teacher and student success plans -- Plan**
 447 **review and approval.**

448 (1)(a) The principal of a school shall develop the school's teacher and student success
 449 plan:

- 450 (i) in accordance with the LEA governing board student success framework for the
 451 school's LEA;
 452 (ii) by integrating school-specific goals and criteria for improving the school's
 453 performance within the state accountability system;~~and~~
 454 (iii) if the school has a school turnaround plan as defined in Section 53E-5-301, in
 455 accordance with the school's school turnaround plan~~[-]~~ ; and
 456 (iv) if the school is performing below the statewide goal described in Section
 457 53E-3-1001 for third-grade reading, in accordance with Subsection
 458 53G-7-1304(2)(e).

459 (b) A principal shall solicit input on developing a success plan from:

- 460 (i) for a district school or charter school:
 461 (A) the school community council, as defined in Section 53G-7-1202; or
 462 (B) the charter trust land council, as described in Section 53G-7-1205;
 463 (ii) school-level educators;
 464 (iii) parents of students at the school; and
 465 (iv) school-level administrators.

466 (c) A principal may solicit input on developing a success plan from:

- 467 (i) students;
 468 (ii) support professionals; or
 469 (iii) other community stakeholders.

- 470 (2)(a) The principal of a school shall submit a proposed success plan to the school's LEA
471 governing board.
- 472 (b) An LEA governing board shall:
- 473 (i) annually review each success plan submitted for a school within the LEA
474 governing board's LEA;
- 475 (ii) in a regularly scheduled LEA governing board meeting, approve or disapprove
476 each submitted success plan; and
- 477 (iii) upon disapproval of a success plan:
- 478 (A) explain in writing the reason for disapproval;
- 479 (B) make recommendations for revision; and
- 480 (C) allow the principal who submitted the success plan to resubmit a revised plan
481 for review and approval.
- 482 (3) An LEA governing board shall make the LEA governing board's best efforts to help a
483 school complete the approval process described in Subsection (2) on or before June 30
484 of each year.
- 485 (4) A council, as defined in Section 53G-7-1206, shall select a component of the approved
486 success plan for the council's school to address within the council's School LAND Trust
487 Program, in accordance with Section 53G-7-1206.

488 Section 9. Section **53G-10-801** is enacted to read:

489 **Part 8. Literacy Interventions**

490 **53G-10-801 (Effective 07/01/26). Definitions.**

491 As used in this part:

- 492 (1) "Above typical academic progress" means a score for the progress metric on the
493 benchmark reading assessment that demonstrates the rate of a student's progress toward
494 achieving grade-level benchmarks that is higher than typical academic progress.
- 495 (2) "Benchmark reading assessment" means the statewide benchmark assessment in reading
496 described in Section 53E-4-307.
- 497 (3) "Individualized reading plan" means a plan described in Section 53G-10-802 that
498 defines the reading interventions a student will receive in given intervention settings to
499 remediate a reading deficiency that the benchmark reading assessment identifies.
- 500 (4)(a) "Intervention setting" means the setting in which a student receives a reading
501 intervention.
- 502 (b) "Intervention setting" includes:
- 503 (i) a teacher leading an intervention during regular classroom work;

- 504 (ii) a paraprofessional leading an intervention;
505 (iii) an after-school or extended-day program;
506 (iv) a summer school program;
507 (v) an at-home activity; and
508 (vi) an online activity.
- 509 (5) "Literacy team" means the following group of individuals who unite to establish and
510 monitor the progress of an individualized reading plan for a student:
- 511 (a) the student's parents;
512 (b) at the discretion of the student's parents, the student;
513 (c) the student's teacher, including general and special education;
514 (d) for a student scoring well below benchmark on a benchmark reading assessment, a
515 representative of the LEA who is knowledgeable about available literacy resources
516 and who has the authority to commit literacy resources; and
517 (e) depending on the circumstances of the student and availability in the LEA, other
518 educators or support personnel, including a therapist, counselor, social worker,
519 translator, friend, or parent advocate.
- 520 (6)(a) "Reading intervention" means an evidence-based instructional strategy,
521 instructional methodology, technique, or resource that assists a student in becoming a
522 successful reader, able to read at or above grade level, and ready for promotion to the
523 next grade.
- 524 (b) "Reading intervention" includes:
- 525 (i) dyad reading in which two individuals, typically a skilled reader and a developing
526 reader, sit side-by-side and read the same text aloud together;
527 (ii) decoding text in which an individual translates printed letters and words into
528 speech through phonics;
529 (iii) a targeted literacy skill intervention resource that is aligned with the science of
530 reading;
531 (iv) a word list;
532 (v) phoneme and grapheme mapping;
533 (vi) handwriting practice;
534 (vii) reading protocols;
535 (viii) retelling;
536 (ix) vocabulary practice;
537 (x) retention in the student's current grade level; and

- 538 (xi) other strategies that are aligned with the science of reading to meet student needs
539 in improving literacy.
- 540 (7) "Reading on grade level" means the same as that term is defined in Section 53E-3-1001.
- 541 (8) "Regional education service agency" means the same as that term is defined in Section
542 53G-4-410.
- 543 (9) "Retention" means a reading intervention through which a student who does not meet a
544 specific reading benchmark or satisfy a good cause exemption repeats the grade in the
545 subsequent school year to provide the student with additional time and intensive,
546 targeted reading intervention to remediate a learning deficiency before advancing to a
547 grade for which the student is not prepared to succeed academically.
- 548 (10) "Science of reading" means an interdisciplinary body of scientific evidence that:
- 549 (a) informs how students learn to read and write proficiently;
550 (b) explains why some students have difficulty with reading and writing;
551 (c) indicates that all students benefit from explicit and systematic instruction in
552 phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, comprehension, and writing to
553 become effective readers; and
- 554 (d) does not rely on any model of teaching students to read based on meaning, structure
555 and syntax, and visual cues, including a three-cueing approach.
- 556 (11) "Three-cueing" means a model of teaching students to read based on visual memory
557 and contextual deduction as the primary basis for teaching word recognition rather than
558 more effective methods, including sounding out words or using a phonics-based
559 approach.
- 560 Section 10. Section **53G-10-802** is enacted to read:
- 561 **53G-10-802 (Effective 07/01/26). Individualized reading plan.**
- 562 (1) For each student in kindergarten through grade 3 who scores below or well below grade
563 level on a benchmark reading assessment, the LEA shall:
- 564 (a) provide to the student's parent, in writing or through the LEA's standard
565 parent-communication portal:
- 566 (i) notification that the student has demonstrated a substantial deficiency in reading;
567 (ii) a description of the current services that the student receives;
568 (iii) a description of the process for establishing an individualized reading plan to
569 identify reading interventions;
- 570 (iv) notification that retention, especially in earlier grades, can benefit the student's
571 reading proficiency;

- 572 (v) notification that, if the student scores below benchmark on the benchmark reading
573 assessment at the end of third grade, the student is subject to retention under
574 Section 53G-10-803;
- 575 (vi) notification that the benchmark reading assessment is not the sole determinant of
576 promotion and that additional evaluations and assessments are available to parents
577 and the LEA to determine a student's reading proficiency and readiness for
578 promotion to the next grade level; and
- 579 (vii) a statement that connects the child's proficiency in reading to long-term
580 outcomes of success; and
- 581 (b) coordinate with the student's literacy team to establish an individualized reading plan
582 for:
- 583 (i) a student in kindergarten who scores well below benchmark on the mid-year or
584 end-of-year benchmark reading assessment;
- 585 (ii) a student in grade 1, 2, or 3 who scores below or well below benchmark on a
586 benchmark reading assessment;
- 587 (iii) a student whom an LEA promotes to grade 4 in accordance with Subsection
588 53G-10-803(2)(b)(ii) and has not scored at or above benchmark on a benchmark
589 reading assessment during grade 4; and
- 590 (iv) a student in kindergarten or grade 4:
- 591 (A) who does not score at or above benchmark on a benchmark reading
592 assessment;
- 593 (B) who is not a student described in Subsection (1)(b)(i) or (1)(b)(iii); and
- 594 (C) whose parent requests that the student receive an individualized reading plan.
- 595 (2)(a) The literacy team for a student described in Subsection (1)(b) shall:
- 596 (i) within 45 days after the day on which the LEA provides the first notice described
597 in Subsection (1)(a) during a given school year, meet and jointly establish an
598 individualized reading plan for the student that includes:
- 599 (A) identification of the student's specific reading deficiencies;
- 600 (B) a description of the reading interventions and intervention settings the LEA
601 will provide to the student to remediate the identified reading deficiencies in
602 accordance with Section 53G-10-803;
- 603 (C) opportunities for the student's parent to be involved in the reading
604 interventions the individualized reading plan identifies;
- 605 (D) a process for monitoring and communicating to the student's parent the extent

- 606 to which the student receives the reading interventions; and
607 (E) a statement that if the student does not score at or above benchmark on the
608 benchmark assessment, the student is subject to retention under Section
609 53G-10-803;
610 (ii) meet at least once annually while the student has an individualized reading plan;
611 and
612 (iii) meet at the request of the parent to review the student's individualized reading
613 plan and progress.
614 (b) After every benchmark reading assessment, the literacy team shall communicate to
615 review and, if necessary, modify the student's individualized reading plan.
616 (3) An LEA shall continue the provision of reading interventions in accordance with a
617 student's individualized reading plan described in Subsection (2)(a) until:
618 (a) the student scores at or above benchmark on the benchmark reading assessment for
619 the student's current grade level; or
620 (b) the literacy team jointly modifies the student's literacy plan.
621 (4) A teacher of a student with an individualized reading plan shall review the student's plan
622 and literacy progress with the student and the student's parent during each parent teacher
623 conference.
624 (5) An LEA shall assign a student with an individualized reading plan under this section to
625 a teacher who has completed or is in the process of completing formal training in the
626 science of reading.
627 (6) Each school and each LEA shall retain a student's individualized reading plan as part of
628 the student's permanent school record.

629 Section 11. Section **53G-10-803** is enacted to read:

630 **53G-10-803 (Effective 07/01/26). Scaled reading interventions.**

- 631 (1) In identifying reading interventions for a given student, the literacy team shall:
632 (a) ensure that identified reading interventions present the best approach for the student
633 to improve literacy given the student's specific circumstances through:
634 (i) alignment with the science of reading;
635 (ii) research-based reading strategies for which evidence demonstrates success in
636 improving reading among low-performing readers; and
637 (iii) targeting of the student's identified reading deficiencies;
638 (b) recommend a scaled intensity of reading interventions and intervention settings
639 based on:

- 640 (i) the student's historical and current performance on the benchmark assessment
641 relative to the benchmark for the student's grade level;
- 642 (ii) any reading interventions the student has received in a previous grade, including
643 previous retention; and
- 644 (iii) the student's performance in numeracy and other foundational abilities; and
- 645 (c) consider including the following recommended reading interventions for a student in
646 grades 1 through 3 who scores well below benchmark on the end-of-year benchmark
647 reading assessment, in addition to in-school reading interventions:
- 648 (i) screening for dyslexia, including providing information to a parent regarding
649 potential resources and options for screening; and
- 650 (ii) extended learning options, including after-school reading interventions and
651 summer literacy programs.
- 652 (2)(a) An LEA shall consider retention and discuss the value of early retention with the
653 student's parent for:
- 654 (i) a student in kindergarten who scores well below benchmark on the mid-year or
655 end-of-year benchmark reading assessment;
- 656 (ii) a student in grade 1 who:
- 657 (A) scores well below benchmark on the end-of-year benchmark reading
658 assessment; and
- 659 (B) has already had an individualized reading plan before the end-of-year
660 benchmark reading assessment and does not demonstrate above typical
661 academic progress on the benchmark reading assessment;
- 662 (iii) a student in grade 2 who scores well below benchmark on the end-of-year
663 benchmark reading assessment:
- 664 (A) began grade 2 below benchmark on the benchmark reading assessment; or
665 (B) has already had an individualized reading plan before the end-of-year
666 benchmark reading assessment and does not demonstrate above typical
667 academic progress on the benchmark reading assessment; and
- 668 (iv) before the 2029-2030 academic year, a student in grade 3 who does not score at
669 or above benchmark on the end-of-year benchmark reading assessment.
- 670 (b) Beginning with the end-of-year benchmark reading assessment in the 2029-2030
671 academic year, for a student in grade 3 who does not score at or above benchmark on
672 the end-of-year benchmark reading assessment, an LEA:
- 673 (i) except as provided in Subsection (2)(b)(ii), shall retain the student in grade 3; and

- 674 (ii) may promote the student to grade 4 if one of the following good cause
675 exemptions applies:
- 676 (A) the student scores below benchmark, but not well below benchmark, on the
677 benchmark reading assessment and makes typical academic progress on the
678 benchmark reading assessment;
- 679 (B) the school provides intensive reading interventions during the summer
680 between grade 3 and grade 4, and the student improves to at benchmark or
681 above benchmark on a benchmark reading assessment that the school
682 administers during the summer;
- 683 (C) the student is an English learner with limited English proficiency and fewer
684 than three years of instruction in an English language learner program;
- 685 (D) the student has an IEP or Section 504 accommodation plan and if the student's
686 IEP or Section 504 accommodation plan indicates that participation in the
687 benchmark reading assessment is not appropriate, if the student has received
688 intensive reading interventions for two or more years, or if the student has been
689 retained in any of kindergarten or grades 1 through 3;
- 690 (E) the student demonstrates an acceptable level of reading proficiency on an
691 alternative standardized assessment that the LEA superintendent approves or
692 by making above typical academic progress for multiple years on the
693 benchmark reading assessment;
- 694 (F) the student demonstrates through a student portfolio that the student is
695 performing at an equivalent standard of proficiency based on other measures
696 that the individualized reading plan determines;
- 697 (G) the student still demonstrates a reading deficiency after receiving intensive
698 reading interventions for two or more years and after having been retained in
699 any of kindergarten or grades 1 through 3; or
- 700 (H) the student moved to a school for or during grade 3 and had not previously
701 received an individualized reading plan or received intensive reading
702 interventions previously.
- 703 (c) An LEA shall provide a student described in Subsection (2)(b)(ii) intensive reading
704 interventions during grade 4 through an individualized reading plan, which may
705 include an extended instructional day.
- 706 (3)(a) Except as provided in Subsection (3)(b), a student's literacy team shall make the
707 determination of whether a good cause exemption described in Subsection (2)(b)(ii)

- 708 applies.
- 709 (b) If members of a student's literacy team disagree as to whether a good cause
- 710 exemption described in Subsection (2)(b)(ii) applies, an individual whom the LEA's
- 711 superintendent designates shall make the determination of whether a good cause
- 712 exemption applies.
- 713 (4)(a) An LEA shall:
- 714 (i) establish a process for a parent to appeal the determination described in
- 715 Subsection (3) regarding a student's retention or promotion under Subsection (2) if:
- 716 (A) the determination process was erroneous; or
- 717 (B) there is new evidence that is relevant to the determination; and
- 718 (ii) designate an individual or a team within the LEA to review appeals under
- 719 Subsection (4)(a)(i), including an individual who has received formal training in
- 720 and has experience working in the science of reading.
- 721 (b) The state board shall create a model process for the appeals described in Subsection
- 722 (4)(a).

723 Section 12. Section **53G-10-804**, which is renumbered from Section 53E-3-1002 is renumbered
724 and amended to read:

725 **[53E-3-1002] 53G-10-804 (Effective 07/01/26). Literacy coaching -- Professional**
726 **learning.**

- 727 (1) Subject to legislative appropriations, ~~[the state board shall]~~ each regional education
- 728 service agency and each school district that is not within a regional education service
- 729 agency shall:
- 730 (a) provide, train, and assign literacy coaches [to schools with low literacy achievement
- 731 performance]to provide early literacy coaching to teachers in kindergarten through
- 732 grade 3, in accordance with this section[-] ;
- 733 (b) ensure the opportunity for formal professional learning in the science of reading for:
- 734 (i) teachers in kindergarten through grade 3; and
- 735 (ii) elementary school principals and vice principals; and
- 736 (c) ensure that a literacy coach or teacher who has received formal professional learning
- 737 in the science of reading provides training in science of reading concepts to
- 738 paraprofessionals who work in kindergarten through grade 3 within the regional
- 739 education service agency or school district.
- 740 (2) The state board shall make rules, in accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah
- 741 Administrative Rulemaking Act, to:

- 742 ~~[(a) establish criteria to determine which schools qualify for early literacy coaching,~~
743 ~~prioritizing coaching among:]~~
- 744 ~~[(i) schools that participate in partnerships that receive grants under Title 53F,~~
745 ~~Chapter 5, Part 4, Partnerships for Student Success Grant Program; and]~~
- 746 ~~[(ii) schools that fall within the bottom 25% of all schools in literacy achievement~~
747 ~~performance, as the state board further defines;]~~
- 748 ~~[(b)] (a) establish minimum qualifications for early literacy coach positions to ensure~~
749 ~~adequate preparation with necessary expertise;~~
- 750 ~~[(c)] (b) define roles and responsibilities for a literacy coach, including:~~
- 751 (i) assisting educators in analyzing data to inform instructional adjustments;
- 752 (ii) engaging in instructional coaching cycles with educators to build capacity for
753 improved classroom instructional practices;
- 754 (iii) using principles of adult learning to effectively partner with educators to
755 integrate professional learning into classroom practice;
- 756 (iv) leveraging knowledge of the science of reading and evidence-based practices to
757 support educators in maximizing student learning;
- 758 (v) partnering with a school's leader to support school-wide literacy goals to provide
759 a team of support for educators to embed the state-wide goals into instructional
760 plans and practice;
- 761 (vi) delivering consistent and frequent job-embedded professional learning;
- 762 (vii) participating actively in professional learning experiences to deepen knowledge
763 and skills for coaching; and
- 764 (viii) designing and facilitating relevant and cohesive professional learning sessions
765 to strengthen the implementation of these evidence-based practices with
766 educators; and
- 767 ~~[(d)] (c) establish parameters for the relationship between a literacy coach and school or [~~
768 ~~LEA] school district, including ensuring that coaches do not engage in activities or~~
769 ~~duties unrelated to literacy coaching, including:~~
- 770 (i) serving as an evaluator, substitute teacher, clerical aid, recess or lunch aid,
771 behavioral therapist, tester, guidance counselor, interventionist, program manager,
772 or contest leader; or
- 773 (ii) any other assignment that frequently disrupts the coach's ability to support
774 educators in improving instructional practice.
- 775 (3) ~~[The state board]~~ Each regional education service agency and each LEA that is not

- 776 within a regional education service agency shall[:]
 777 [(a)] ensure that at least one staff position [supervises] supports early literacy[=coaches
 778 statewide;] .
 779 [(b) select the pool of candidates for literacy coaching positions and coordinate with
 780 LEAs regarding interviews, final selection, and placement; and]
 781 [(c) annually review coaching placements and adjust placements as necessary, based on
 782 the school's literacy achievement performance and the criteria established under
 783 Subsection (2).]
 784 [(4) The state board shall provide professional learning support in early literacy by:]
 785 [(a) facilitating professional learning opportunities to support literacy coaches statewide
 786 that includes knowledge and skill development in adult learning practices,
 787 job-embedded coaching, and family engagement;]
 788 [(b) providing professional learning regional consultants to:]
 789 [(i) support LEAs and regional education service agencies in designing, facilitating,
 790 monitoring, and adjusting professional learning in early literacy that aligns with
 791 the professional learning standards described in Section 53G-11-303; and]
 792 [(ii) serve a cohort of LEAs within a geographic region of the state; and]
 793 [(c) providing statewide professional learning to support the use of collective efficacy,
 794 including the implementation of professional learning communities and school
 795 leadership teams through 2027.]

796 Section 13. Section **53G-10-805** is enacted to read:

797 **53G-10-805 (Effective 07/01/26). Performance monitoring.**

- 798 (1) The entities described in Subsection (2) shall annually monitor:
 799 (a) student performance within an LEA regarding the statewide goal described in
 800 Section 53E-3-1001 for third-grade reading; and
 801 (b) elementary school performance regarding literacy instruction, science of reading
 802 training, and the provision of reading interventions described in this part.
 803 (2) The following shall provide the monitoring described in Subsection (1):
 804 (a) for a school district, the local governing board;
 805 (b) for a charter school, the charter school's authorizer; and
 806 (c) for all public schools, the state board.

807 Section 14. Section **53G-10-806**, which is renumbered from Section 53G-10-306 is renumbered
 808 and amended to read:

809 **[53G-10-306] 53G-10-806 (Effective 07/01/26). Science of reading curriculum.**

810 (1) Each LEA shall adopt science of reading curriculum and intervention programs as
811 advised by the science of reading panel described in Section 53E-3-1003 and in
812 accordance with this part.

813 (2) An LEA may not include a three-cueing model in any curriculum or pedagogical
814 practice except in relation to an individual student for whom an IEP or Section 504
815 accommodation plan explicitly indicates that the three-cueing approach is appropriate
816 for the student's learning needs.

817 Section 15. Section **53G-11-507** is amended to read:

818 **53G-11-507 (Effective 07/01/26) (Repealed 07/01/29). Components of educator**
819 **evaluation program.**

820 (1) A local school board in consultation with a joint committee established in Section
821 53G-11-506 shall adopt a reliable and valid educator and principal evaluation program
822 that evaluates educators based on educator professional standards established by the
823 state board and includes:

824 (a) a systematic annual evaluation of all provisional, probationary, and career educators;

825 (b) use of multiple lines of evidence, including:

826 (i) self-evaluation;

827 (ii) student and parent input;

828 (iii) for an administrator, employee input;

829 (iv) a reasonable number of supervisor observations to ensure adequate reliability;

830 (v) evidence of professional growth and other indicators of instructional

831 improvement based on educator professional standards established by the state

832 board;~~and~~

833 (vi) for a teacher in kindergarten through grade 3, fluency in and implementation of
834 the science of reading, as that term is defined in Section 53G-10-306;

835 (vii) for a principal of a school that includes kindergarten through grade 3, effective
836 implementation of the science of reading, as that term is defined in Section
837 53G-10-306, within the school; and

838 [(v+)] (viii) student academic growth data, including, in kindergarten through grade 3,
839 student performance and academic progress on the benchmark reading assessment
840 described in Section 53E-4-307;

841 (c) a summative evaluation that differentiates among levels of performance; and

842 (d) for an administrator, the effectiveness of evaluating employee performance in a
843 school or school district for which the administrator has responsibility.

844 (2)(a) An educator evaluation program described in Subsection (1) may include a
845 reasonable number of peer observations.

846 (b) An educator evaluation program described in Subsection (1) may not use
847 end-of-level assessment scores in educator evaluation.

848 Section 16. **Effective Date.**

849 This bill takes effect on July 1, 2026.