

John D. Johnson proposes the following substitute bill:

**Public Education Revisions**

2026 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

**Chief Sponsor: John D. Johnson**

House Sponsor: R. Neil Walter

---

---

**LONG TITLE**

**General Description:**

This bill amends provisions and programs regarding the operation of the public education system.

**Highlighted Provisions:**

This bill:

- corrects references regarding the State Superintendent's Annual Report;
- authorizes the State Board of Education (state board) to appoint the state superintendent of public instruction as the superintendent of the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (USDB) and provides associated delegation authority;
- renames the Catalyst Center Grant Program to the Applied Educational Experience Grant Program and amends associated provisions regarding eligibility for and use of program funds;
- aligns terminology regarding juvenile justice reintegration to apply to all local education agencies rather than only school districts;
- amends provisions to allow the USDB to coordinate with the state security chief rather than the county security chief of the county for each USDB campus;
- allows the state board to reduce suicide prevention grant amounts in certain circumstances; and
- makes technical and conforming changes.

**Money Appropriated in this Bill:**

None

**Other Special Clauses:**

None

**Utah Code Sections Affected:**

AMENDS:

29 **53E-1-203**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapters 298, 327

30 **53E-8-204**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapter 509

31 **53F-9-501**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2019, Chapter 186

32 **53G-8-213**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapter 348

33 **53G-8-701.5**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapter 388

34 **53G-8-701.6**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapters 388, 470

35 **53G-8-701.8**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, First Special Session, Chapter 11

36 **53G-9-702**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2023, Chapters 98, 328

37 RENUMBERS AND AMENDS:

38 **53F-5-224**, (Renumbered from 53E-3-507.1, as last amended by Laws of Utah  
39 2025, First Special Session, Chapter 9)

---

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

42 Section 1. Section **53E-1-203** is amended to read:

43 **53E-1-203 . State Superintendent's Annual Report.**

- 44 (1) The state board shall prepare and submit to the governor, the Education Interim  
45 Committee, and the Public Education Appropriations Subcommittee, by January 15 of  
46 each year, an annual written report known as the State Superintendent's Annual Report  
47 that includes:
- 48 (a) the operations, activities, programs, and services of the state board;
  - 49 (b) subject to Subsection (4)(b), all reports listed in Subsection (4)(a); and
  - 50 (c) data on the general condition of the schools with recommendations considered  
51 desirable for specific programs, including:
    - 52 (i) a complete statement of fund balances;
    - 53 (ii) a complete statement of revenues by fund and source;
    - 54 (iii) a complete statement of adjusted expenditures by fund, the status of bonded  
55 indebtedness, the cost of new school plants, and school levies;
    - 56 (iv) a complete statement of state funds allocated to each school district and charter  
57 school by source, including supplemental appropriations, and a complete  
58 statement of expenditures by each school district and charter school, including  
59 supplemental appropriations, by function and object as outlined in the United  
60 States Department of Education publication "Financial Accounting for Local and  
61 State School Systems";
    - 62 (v) a statement that includes data on:

- 63 (A) fall enrollments;  
64 (B) average membership;  
65 (C) high school graduates;  
66 (D) all employees, including data reported by school districts on educator ratings  
67 described in Section 53G-11-511;  
68 (E) pupil-teacher ratios;  
69 (F) average class sizes;  
70 (G) average salaries;  
71 (H) applicable private school data; and  
72 (I) data from statewide assessments described in Section 53E-4-301 for each  
73 school and school district;
- 74 (vi) statistical information for each school district and charter school regarding:  
75 (A) student attendance by grade level;  
76 (B) the percentage of students chronically absent;  
77 (C) the percentage of student excused absences; and  
78 (D) the percentage of student unexcused absences;
- 79 (vii) statistical information regarding incidents of delinquent activity in the schools,  
80 at school-related activities, on school buses, and at school bus stops; and  
81 (viii) other statistical and financial information about the school system that the state  
82 superintendent considers pertinent.
- 83 (2)(a) For the purposes of Subsection (1)(c)(v):  
84 (i) the pupil-teacher ratio for a school shall be calculated by dividing the number of  
85 students enrolled in a school by the number of full-time equivalent teachers  
86 assigned to the school, including regular classroom teachers, school-based  
87 specialists, and special education teachers;
- 88 (ii) the pupil-teacher ratio for a school district shall be the median pupil-teacher ratio  
89 of the schools within a school district;
- 90 (iii) the pupil-teacher ratio for charter schools aggregated shall be the median  
91 pupil-teacher ratio of charter schools in the state; and  
92 (iv) the pupil-teacher ratio for the state's public schools aggregated shall be the  
93 median pupil-teacher ratio of public schools in the state.
- 94 (b) The report shall:  
95 (i) include the pupil-teacher ratio for:  
96 (A) each school district;

- 97 (B) the charter schools aggregated; and  
98 (C) the state's public schools aggregated; and  
99 (ii) identify a website where pupil-teacher ratios for each school in the state may be  
100 accessed.
- 101 (3) For each operation, activity, program, or service provided by the state board, the annual  
102 report shall include:
- 103 (a) a description of the operation, activity, program, or service;  
104 (b) data and metrics:  
105 (i) selected and used by the state board to measure progress, performance,  
106 effectiveness, and scope of the operation, activity, program, or service, including  
107 summary data; and  
108 (ii) that are consistent and comparable for each state operation, activity, program, or  
109 service;
- 110 (c) budget data, including the amount and source of funding, expenses, and allocation of  
111 full-time employees for the operation, activity, program, or service;  
112 (d) historical data from previous years for comparison with data reported under  
113 Subsections (3)(b) and (c);  
114 (e) goals, challenges, and achievements related to the operation, activity, program, or  
115 service;  
116 (f) relevant federal and state statutory references and requirements;  
117 (g) contact information of officials knowledgeable and responsible for each operation,  
118 activity, program, or service; and  
119 (h) other information determined by the state board that:  
120 (i) may be needed, useful, or of historical significance; or  
121 (ii) promotes accountability and transparency for each operation, activity, program,  
122 or service with the public and elected officials.
- 123 (4)(a) Except as provided in Subsection (4)(b), the annual report shall also include:
- 124 (i) the report described in Section [53E-3-507] 53F-5-224 by the state board on career  
125 and technical education needs and program access;  
126 (ii) the report described in Section 53E-3-515 by the state board on the Hospitality  
127 and Tourism Management Career and Technical Education Pilot Program;  
128 (iii) the report described in Section 53E-3-516 by the state board on certain incidents  
129 that occur on school grounds;  
130 (iv) the report described in Section 53E-4-202 by the state board on the development

- 131 and implementation of the core standards for Utah public schools;
- 132 (v) the report described in Section 53E-5-310 by the state board on school [turnaround]
- 133 improvement and leadership development;
- 134 (vi) the report described in Section 53E-10-308 by the state board and Utah Board of
- 135 Higher Education on student participation in the concurrent enrollment program;
- 136 (vii) the report described in Section 53F-5-506 by the state board on information
- 137 related to personalized, competency-based learning;
- 138 (viii) the report described in Section [53G-8-203] 53G-8-301 by the state board on
- 139 LEAs' policies and procedures related to physical restraint and interventions; and
- 140 (ix) the report described in Section 53G-9-802 by the state board on dropout
- 141 prevention and recovery services.
- 142 (b) The Education Interim Committee or the Public Education Appropriations
- 143 Subcommittee may request a report described in Subsection (4)(a) to be reported
- 144 separately from the State Superintendent's Annual Report.
- 145 (5) The annual report shall be designed to provide clear, accurate, and accessible
- 146 information to the public, the governor, and the Legislature.
- 147 (6) The state board shall:
- 148 (a) submit the annual report in accordance with Section 68-3-14; and
- 149 (b) make the annual report, and previous annual reports, accessible to the public by
- 150 placing a link to the reports on the state board's website.
- 151 (7)(a) Upon request of the Education Interim Committee or Public Education
- 152 Appropriations Subcommittee, the state board shall present the State Superintendent's
- 153 Annual Report to either committee.
- 154 (b) After submitting the State Superintendent's Annual Report in accordance with this
- 155 section, the state board may supplement the report at a later time with updated data,
- 156 information, or other materials as necessary or upon request by the governor, the
- 157 Education Interim Committee, or the Public Education Appropriations Subcommittee.
- 158 Section 2. Section **53E-8-204** is amended to read:
- 159 **53E-8-204 . Authority of the state board -- Rulemaking -- Superintendent --**
- 160 **Advisory council.**
- 161 (1)(a) The state board is the governing board of the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the
- 162 Blind.
- 163 (b) The state board shall, as the state board determines necessary, establish committees,
- 164 policies, or processes necessary to the function and oversight of the Utah Schools for

- 165 the Deaf and the Blind.
- 166 (2)(a) The state board shall appoint a superintendent for the Utah Schools for the Deaf  
167 and the Blind.
- 168 (b) The state board shall make rules in accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah  
169 Administrative Rulemaking Act, regarding the qualifications, terms of employment,  
170 and duties of the superintendent for the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind.
- 171 (c)(i) The state board may appoint the state superintendent as the superintendent for  
172 the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind under Subsection (2)(a).
- 173 (ii) If the state board appoints the state superintendent as the superintendent under  
174 Subsection (2)(c)(i), the state superintendent may delegate duties regarding the  
175 role of superintendent for the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind to another  
176 employee of the state board.
- 177 (3) The superintendent shall:
- 178 (a) subject to the approval of the state board, appoint an associate superintendent to  
179 administer the Utah School for the Deaf based on:
- 180 (i) demonstrated competency as an expert educator of deaf persons; and  
181 (ii) knowledge of school management and the instruction of deaf persons; and
- 182 (b) subject to the approval of the state board, appoint an associate superintendent to  
183 administer the Utah School for the Blind based on:
- 184 (i) demonstrated competency as an expert educator of blind persons; and  
185 (ii) knowledge of school management and the instruction of blind persons, including  
186 an understanding of the unique needs and education of deafblind persons.
- 187 (4) The state board shall:
- 188 (a) approve the annual budget and expenditures of the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the  
189 Blind; and
- 190 (b) administer the financial operations of the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind.
- 191 (5)(a) The state board shall submit a report in accordance with Section 53E-1-201 on the  
192 Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind.
- 193 (b) The state board shall ensure that the report described in Subsection (5)(a) includes:
- 194 (i) a financial report;  
195 (ii) a report on Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind programs and activities; and  
196 (iii) a report of student academic performance.
- 197 Section 3. Section **53F-5-224**, which is renumbered from Section 53E-3-507.1 is renumbered  
198 and amended to read:

**[53E-3-507.1] 53F-5-224 . Applied Professional Education Experience Grant**

**Program.**

(1) As used in this section:

(a) "Advisory board" means a group of individuals comprising industry, postsecondary, and community representatives who review program direction and ensure alignment with workforce needs.

~~[(a)]~~ (b) "[Catalyst] Applied professional education experience center" or "APEX center" means a program or facility operated by an LEA that:

- (i) provides learning experiences and instruction that replicate professional environments and workplace practices, including experiences obtained through the Utah First Credential program described in Section 53E-10-310;
- (ii) provides profession-based learning experiences by partnering with local industry, business, and community organizations to develop and implement student projects that address specific needs or objectives identified by those partners;
- (iii) aligns programs with high-skill, high-demand career pathways and postsecondary education opportunities;
- (iv) incorporates industry-standard tools, technologies, and methods into instruction and student work;
- (v) prioritizes student activities and profession-based learning projects to build durable professional skills aligned with industry standards and needs;
- (vi) facilitates mentorship and participation by industry professionals to guide a student and evaluate the student's work;
- (vii) includes an advisory board composed of industry, postsecondary, and community representatives to review program direction and ensure alignment with workforce needs; and
- (viii) establishes programs or activities that address gaps in training or resources within the local or regional workforce.

(c) "Consortium" means two or more LEAs located within the same career and technical education geographic planning region.

~~[(b)]~~ (d) "Director" means the employee described in Subsection (3).

~~[(e)]~~ (e) "LEA" means:

- (i) a school district;
- (ii) charter school; or
- (iii) the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind.

233 [(d)] (f) "Program" means the [~~Catalyst Center~~] Applied Professional Education  
234 Experience Grant Program created in this section.

235 (g) "Unwarranted duplication" means the overlap of resources that lead to inefficiencies,  
236 wasted resources, or a lack of coordination in providing comprehensive career and  
237 technical education programs.

238 (2) Subject to legislative appropriation as described in Section 53F-9-204, the state board  
239 shall establish the [~~Catalyst Center~~] Applied Professional Education Experience Grant  
240 Program to provide funding to an LEA to create or expand an existing [~~catalyst~~] APEX  
241 center.

242 (3) The state board shall hire a director to oversee the program who:

243 (a) has demonstrated abilities in:

244 (i) developing and implementing innovative initiatives that transform traditional  
245 education delivery models;

246 (ii) establishing public-private partnership frameworks that create student pathways  
247 into high-growth industries; and

248 (iii) scaling programs that integrate real-world experiences directly into educational  
249 environments;

250 (b) possesses expertise in:

251 (i) managing complex multi-stakeholder initiatives across education, industry, and  
252 government sectors;

253 (ii) implementing data-driven organizational change strategies; and

254 (iii) developing sustainable funding models for innovative education programs;

255 (c) maintains active leadership roles in:

256 (i) state or national workforce innovation organizations;

257 (ii) industry associations focused on talent development; and

258 (iii) public-private collaboratives addressing workforce transformation;

259 (d) reports directly to the state superintendent or a deputy superintendent to ensure  
260 appropriate program oversight and cross-departmental coordination while  
261 maintaining distinct program objectives and outcomes;

262 (e) establishes formal collaboration mechanisms with the state board's career and  
263 technical education director to align [~~catalyst~~] APEX center initiatives with existing  
264 career and technical education programs; and

265 (f) facilitates training and a collaborative network of experienced [~~catalyst~~] APEX center  
266 administrators and instructors across all participating LEAs.

- (4) The director:
- (a) shall:
    - (i) administer the program;
    - (ii) collaborate with the director of career and technical education to align the program with the career and technical education standards described in Section [ 53E-3-507] 53F-5-224;
    - (iii) create a web-based application system to streamline submissions and allow for linked supporting documentation;
    - (iv) ensure that grant funds are used in accordance with this section; and
    - (v) allow grant funds to be used for planning, including:
      - (A) feasibility studies;
      - (B) stakeholder engagement;
      - (C) labor market analysis;
      - (D) initial program design and rollout; and
      - (E) teacher and staff training specific to the delivery of profession-based learning;
  - and
  - (b) may collaborate with the Utah System of Higher Education and the First Credential Oversight Committee established in Section 53E-10-310.
- (5) An LEA applying for a grant shall demonstrate capacity for workforce alignment programs within the LEA or provide a plan to establish or enhance alignment by:
- (a) describing current or planned efforts to align programming with labor market needs and local industry demands;
  - (b) outlining steps to establish or enhance partnerships with:
    - (i) local industries and employers to ensure workforce relevance; or
    - (ii) technical colleges, degree-granting institutions, or other postsecondary entities to support postsecondary transitions for students;
  - (c) identifying proposed programming goals and how the goals address gaps in regional workforce training or opportunities; and
  - (d) as the LEA determines relevant, planning to incorporate:
    - (i) career and technical student organizations;
    - (ii) advisory boards with representation from local industries and workforce experts;
    - (iii) professional learning opportunities for instructors to improve workforce-focused skills; and
    - (iv) strategies for using labor market data to refine and improve program offerings.

- (6)(a) An LEA may apply for a grant by submitting an application to the state board.
- (b) The application shall include:
- (i) a plan to:
    - (A) create or expand one or more ~~[catalyst]~~ APEX centers; or
    - (B) create or expand current career and technical education offerings within the LEA to bring the LEA's career and technical education offerings in alignment with the definition of ~~[a-catalyst]~~ an APEX center in Subsection (1);
  - (ii) a detailed multi-year budget, identifying proposed expenditures for each year of the grant;
  - (iii) justification for any capital expenditures, including plans for building use;
  - (iv) a description of how the grant will be used to improve student outcomes, including:
    - (A) increased access to career pathway offerings;
    - (B) measurable improvements in career readiness, including certifications, credentials, or apprenticeships;
    - (C) increased offerings that advance students' progression toward postsecondary education or advanced training; and
    - (D) plans for enhanced student engagement through real-world, profession-based learning;
  - (v) evidence of any existing partnerships with industry, including letters of collaboration;
  - (vi) evidence of alignment with the LEA's strategic plan and local labor market needs;
  - (vii) an explanation of how awarded funds will be used without unnecessary carryforward;
  - (viii) a description of well-defined metrics the LEA will use to establish and measure student proficiency;
  - ~~[(viii)]~~ (ix) as applicable, a description of how the ~~[catalyst]~~ APEX center programming will align with or enhance programs funded by the weighted pupil unit add-on described in Section 53F-2-311;
  - ~~[(ix)]~~ (x) for applications submitted by a consortium of LEAs, a description of how:
    - (A) the ~~[catalyst]~~ APEX center will serve students across the consortium;
    - (B) costs and resources will be shared; and
    - (C) economies of scale will be achieved; and
  - ~~[(x)]~~ (xi) a description of any proposed planning activities, including expected

- timelines and outcomes.
- (7)(a) The director shall:
- [(a)] (i) prioritize an LEA that:
    - [(i)] (A) proposes innovative programming supported by local labor market data;
    - [(ii)] (B) collaborates with local postsecondary institutions and industry;
    - [(iii)] (C) demonstrates the ability to sustain the [catalyst] APEX center after the grant period;
    - [(iv)] (D) demonstrates a strong focus on student outcomes and workforce alignment;
    - [(v)] (E) addresses gaps in high-demand, high-skill career pathways;
    - [(vi)] (F) ensures funds are used to enhance programming quality before expansion; and
    - [(vii)] (G) provides for a large number of students to participate in [catalyst] APEX center programs without limiting participation to students based on socio-economic challenges;
  - [(b)] (ii) allow an LEA to apply for:
    - [(i)] (A) smaller grants to bring existing career and technical education programs to high-quality standards the state board establishes;
    - [(ii)] (B) larger multi-year grants for capital expenditures and program expansion; and
    - [(iii)] (C) ensure that grant funding does not duplicate existing resources provided by other state or local entities;
  - [(c)] (iii) consider the unique challenges and opportunities faced by rural LEAs in developing and sustaining a career and technical education program or [catalyst] APEX center, including:
    - [(i)] (A) encouraging collaborative applications from rural consortia or regional education service agencies described in Section 53G-4-410 to maximize resources and impact; and
    - [(ii)] (B) grant awards that consider both rural and non-rural applicants, recognizing regional workforce needs and program readiness; and
  - [(d)] (iv) allow an LEA to propose [a-catalyst] an APEX center collocated on the campus of an institution of higher education if the application includes evidence of an agreement between the LEA and the institution of higher education.
- (b) The LEA:

- 369           (i) shall direct the coordination with local postsecondary institutions and industry  
370           described in Subsection (7)(a)(i)(B) in a manner that the LEA determines is in the  
371           best interest of the program; and
- 372           (ii) may tailor the level of collaboration described in Subsection (7)(a)(i)(B) to the  
373           individual needs of each program and of each offering within the program.
- 374           (c) Nothing in Subsection (7)(a)(i)(G) allows the director to prioritize an LEA with more  
375           students over an LEA with fewer students.
- 376           (8)(a) An LEA that receives a grant shall use program funds to plan for, create, establish,  
377           enhance, or expand an APEX center that:
- 378           (i) provides learning experiences and instruction that:
- 379                   (A) replicates professional environments and workplace practices;  
380                   (B) builds leadership skills;  
381                   (C) builds durable professional skills;  
382                   (D) allows students to advance as the students demonstrate proficiency through  
383                   well-defined metrics;  
384                   (E) uses student projects that address the specific needs or objectives of industry  
385                   partners;  
386                   (F) incorporates industry-standard tools, technologies, and methods;  
387                   (G) provides opportunities for students to develop a product or presentation that  
388                   the students or an industry partner shares with an audience; and  
389                   (H) facilitates mentorship by industry professionals to guide and evaluate the  
390                   student's work;
- 391           (ii) aligns programming with labor market needs and local industry demands;  
392           (iii) establishes or enhances partnerships with:
- 393                   (A) local industries and employers to ensure workforce relevance; or  
394                   (B) as the LEA determines, technical colleges, degree-granting institutions, or  
395                   other postsecondary entities to support postsecondary transitions for students;
- 396           (iv) addresses gaps in regional workforce training or opportunities;  
397           (v) incorporates:
- 398                   (A) career and technical student organizations as the LEA determines relevant;  
399                   (B) advisory boards with representation from local industries and workforce  
400                   experts;  
401                   (C) professional learning opportunities for instructors to improve  
402                   workforce-focused skills; and

- 403                   (D) strategies for using labor market data to refine and improve program offerings;  
404                   (vi) focuses on the unique needs and circumstances of the local student body,  
405                   community, and industry partners; and  
406                   (vii) aligns with state board standards for CTE quality.
- 407       [(a)] (b) An LEA that receives a grant:
- 408               (i) may coordinate and collaborate with the Utah Board of Higher Education or an  
409               individual institution of higher education; and
- 410               (ii) shall submit an annual report to the state board.
- 411       [(b)] (c) The report described in Subsection (8)(b) shall include:
- 412               (i) the use of grant funds;
- 413               (ii) progress in meeting proposed goals and benchmarks, including student  
414               proficiency measurements using the well-defined metrics described in Subsection  
415               (6)(b)(viii);
- 416               (iii) updates on partnerships with industry and postsecondary institutions;
- 417               (iv) a demonstration of the alignment of programming with labor market data; and
- 418               (v) a description of student participation and outcomes.
- 419       [(c)] (d) The state board shall ensure that awarded funds:
- 420               (i) are used in accordance with an LEA's application; and
- 421               (ii) that are not used are returned for reallocation.
- 422       [(d)] (e) Upon request, the director shall submit a report on the program to the Education  
423               Interim Committee and the Public Education Appropriations Subcommittee.
- 424       (9) The Talent Ready Utah Program described in Section 53H-13-303 and the Utah Leading  
425               through Effective, Actionable, and Dynamic Education established in Section  
426               53E-10-702, shall collaborate with the state board to develop and execute a marketing  
427               and outreach plan for the [~~Catalyst Center~~] Applied Professional Education Experience  
428               Grant Program.
- 429       (10) Talent Ready Utah and the Utah Leading through Effective, Actionable, and Dynamic  
430               Education shall:
- 431               (a) execute the marketing and outreach plan described in Subsection (9); and
- 432               (b) submit an annual report to the state board that includes:
- 433                   (i) the number of LEAs reached through marketing efforts;
- 434                   (ii) a description of outreach activities and events conducted; and
- 435                   (iii) feedback from LEAs regarding program accessibility and clarity.
- 436       (11) The state board:

- (a) may provide up to 1% of the funds appropriated by the Legislature as described in Section 53F-9-204 to administer the program;
- (b) in fiscal year 2026, shall provide up to 1% of the funds appropriated by the Legislature as described in Section 53F-9-204 to Talent Ready Utah and the Utah Leading through Effective, Actionable, and Dynamic Education for the purposes described in Subsections (9) and (10); and
- (c) shall make rules in accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act, to implement this Subsection (11).

Section 4. Section **53F-9-501** is amended to read:

**53F-9-501 . Hospitality and Tourism Management Education Account -- Uses -- Costs.**

- (1) There is created an expendable special revenue fund known as the "Hospitality and Tourism Management Education Account," which the state board shall use to fund the Hospitality and Tourism Management Career and Technical Education Pilot Program created in Section 53E-3-515.
- (2) The account consists of:
- (a) distributions to the account under Section 59-28-103;
  - (b) interest earned on the account;
  - (c) appropriations made by the Legislature; and
  - (d) private donations, grants, gifts, bequests, or money made available from any other source to implement Section ~~[53E-3-507]~~ 53F-5-224 or 53E-3-515.
- (3) The state board shall administer the account.
- (4) The cost of administering the account shall be paid from money in the account.
- (5) Interest accrued from investment of money in the account shall remain in the account.

Section 5. Section **53G-8-213** is amended to read:

**53G-8-213 . Reintegration plan for student alleged to have committed violent felony or weapon offense.**

- (1) As used in this section, "multidisciplinary team" means:
- (a) the local education agency;
  - (b) the juvenile court;
  - (c) the Division of Juvenile Justice and Youth Services;
  - (d) a school safety and security specialist designated under Section 53G-8-701.6;
  - (e) school safety and security director designated under Section 53G-8-701.8;
  - (f) a school resource officer if applicable; and

(g) any other relevant party that should be involved in a reintegration plan.

- (2) If ~~[a school district]~~ an LEA receives a notification from the juvenile court or a law enforcement agency that a student was arrested for, charged with, or adjudicated in the juvenile court for a serious offense, the LEA and the relevant school shall develop a reintegration plan for the student with a multidisciplinary team, the student, and the student's parent or guardian, within five school days after the day on which the ~~[school]~~ LEA receives a notification.
- (3) The relevant school described in Subsection (2) may deny admission to the student until the school completes the reintegration plan under Subsection (2).
- (4) The reintegration plan under Subsection (2) shall address:
- (a) a behavioral intervention for the student;
  - (b) a short-term mental health or counseling service for the student;
  - (c) an academic intervention for the student; and
  - (d) if the serious offense was directed at a school employee or another student within the school, notification of the reintegration plan to that school employee or student and the student's parent.
- (5) ~~[A school district]~~ An LEA may not reintegrate a student into a school where:
- (a) a student or staff member has a protective order against the student being reintegrated; or
  - (b) a student or staff member is the victim of a sexual crime or forcible felony committed by the student being reintegrated.
- (6)(a) Notwithstanding Subsection (2), ~~[a school district]~~ an LEA may elect to not integrate a student into a school if the student has committed, or allegedly committed, a forcible felony.
- (b) If ~~[a school district]~~ an LEA elects to not integrate a student under Subsection (6)(a), the ~~[school district]~~ LEA shall provide alternative education options for the student.
- (7) A reintegration plan under this section is classified as a protected record under Section 63G-2-305.
- (8) All other records of disclosures under this section are governed by Title 63G, Chapter 2, Government Records Access and Management Act, and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. Sec. 1232g.

Section 6. Section **53G-8-701.5** is amended to read:

**53G-8-701.5 . School safety needs assessment -- School safety personnel -- Alternative requirements.**

(1)(a) In accordance with Subsections (1)(c) through (e), no later than October 15 of an applicable year, an LEA shall:

- (i) ensure a school safety needs assessment the state security chief selects in collaboration with the school safety center is conducted in accordance with Subsection (1)(b) for each school or K-12 campus within the LEA to determine the needs and deficiencies regarding:
  - (A) appropriate school safety personnel, including necessary supports, training, and policy creation for the personnel;
  - (B) physical building security and safety, including required upgrades to facilities and safety technology;
  - (C) a school's current threat and emergency response protocols, including any emergency response agreements with local law enforcement;
  - (D) cardiac emergency preparedness, including an inventory of whether automated external defibrillators are present and accessible, maintenance status, and current staff training offerings; and
  - (E) compliance with universal access key box requirements under Section 53G-8-805; and
- (ii) report the results of the school safety needs assessment for each school within the LEA to the state security chief and the School Safety Center.

(b)(i) The school safety specialist described in Section 53G-8-701.6, in collaboration with the county security chief or, regarding the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind, the state security chief, and with the local law enforcement of relevant jurisdiction over the school as described in Section 53-25-701, shall conduct the school safety needs assessment for each school.

(ii) A school safety and security director may fulfill the role of a school safety and security specialist in conducting the school safety needs assessment.

(c) The school safety needs assessment required under Subsection (1)(a)(i) shall be conducted at least once every three years for each school or K-12 campus.

(d) An LEA may implement a rotating or staggered schedule for conducting school safety needs assessments among the buildings within the LEA, provided that:

- (i) each school within a K-12 campus is assessed at least once every three years; and
- (ii) the LEA documents the rotating or staggered assessment schedule and shares this schedule with the state security chief, the School Safety Center, the county security chief regarding a school other than the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the

- 539                    Blind, and the local law enforcement of relevant jurisdiction as described in  
540                    Section 53-25-701.
- 541            (e) The LEA shall update the assessment schedule as necessary to ensure compliance  
542                    with the three-year assessment requirement under Subsection (1)(c).
- 543            (f) The state board shall use the results of the school safety needs assessment for each  
544                    school within an LEA to award a grant to an LEA in accordance with Section  
545                    53F-5-220.
- 546            (g) Any information or record detailing a school's needs assessment results is:  
547                    (i) a private, controlled, or protected record under Title 63G, Chapter 2, Government  
548                    Records Access and Management Act; and  
549                    (ii) available only to:  
550                            (A) the state security chief;  
551                            (B) the School Safety Center;  
552                            (C) members of an LEA governing board;  
553                            (D) administrators of the LEA and school the needs assessment concerns;  
554                            (E) only to the extent necessary to award a grant under Section 53F-5-220, the  
555                            state board;  
556                            (F) the applicable school safety personnel described in Subsection (2);  
557                            (G) a local law enforcement agency that would respond to the school in case of an  
558                            emergency; and  
559                            (H) the county security chief regarding a school other than the Utah Schools for  
560                            the Deaf and the Blind.
- 561            (h) An individual who intentionally or knowingly provides the information described in  
562                    Subsection (1)(g) to an individual or entity not listed in Subsection (1)(g)(ii) is guilty  
563                    of a class B misdemeanor.
- 564            (2)(a) An LEA shall ensure each school within the LEA has the following school safety  
565                    personnel:  
566                            (i) a school safety and security specialist described in Section 53G-8-701.6; and  
567                            (ii) based on the results of the needs assessment described in Subsection (1), at least  
568                            one of the following:  
569                                    (A) a school resource officer;  
570                                    (B) a school guardian; or  
571                                    (C) an armed school security guard.
- 572            (b) In addition to the school safety personnel described in Subsection (2)(a), an LEA

- 573 shall designate a school safety and security director described in Section 53G-8-701.8.
- 574 (c) The same individual may serve in more than one of the roles listed in Subsections  
575 (2)(a) and (b) if the school notifies the School Safety Center and the state security  
576 chief of the decision to have the same individual serve in multiple roles as described  
577 in this Subsection (2).
- 578 (d) An LEA may implement the requirements of Subsection (2)(a)(ii) before the LEA  
579 has completed the school safety needs assessment described in Subsection (1).
- 580 (e) The state security chief in consultation with the School Safety Center shall establish  
581 a timeline for an LEA to comply with the school safety personnel requirements of  
582 this Subsection (2).
- 583 (3)(a) An LEA, school administrator, or private school may apply to the state security  
584 chief for an approved alternative to the requirements described in:
- 585 (i) Section 53-22-105;  
586 (ii) this section;  
587 (iii) Section 53G-8-701.6;  
588 (iv) Section 53G-8-701.8; and  
589 (v) Section 53G-8-704.
- 590 (b) In approving or denying an application described in Subsection (3)(a), the state  
591 security chief may consider factors that impact a school or LEA's ability to adhere to  
592 the requirements of this section, including the school or LEA's:
- 593 (i) population size;  
594 (ii) staffing needs or capacity;  
595 (iii) geographic location;  
596 (iv) available funding; or  
597 (v) general demonstration of need for an alternative to the requirements of this  
598 section.
- 599 (4) A private school shall identify an individual at the private school to serve as the safety  
600 liaison with the local law enforcement of relevant jurisdiction and the state security chief.
- 601 Section 7. Section **53G-8-701.6** is amended to read:
- 602 **53G-8-701.6 . School safety and security specialist.**
- 603 (1) As used in this section, "principal" means the chief administrator at a public school,  
604 including:
- 605 (a) a school principal;  
606 (b) a charter school director; or

(c) the superintendent of the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind.

(2)(a) Subject to Subsection (2)(b) and except as provided in Subsection 53G-8-701.5(3), every campus within an LEA shall designate a school safety and security specialist from the employees of the relevant campus.

(b) The school safety and security specialist:

(i) may not be a principal; and

(ii) may be the school safety and security director at one campus within the LEA.

(3) The school safety and security specialist shall:

(a) report directly to the principal;

(b) oversee school safety and security practices to ensure a safe and secure school environment for students and staff;

(c) ensure adherence with all policies, procedures, protocols, rules, and regulations relating to school safety and security through collaborating and maintaining effective communications with the following as applicable:

(i) the principal;

(ii) school staff;

(iii) the school resource officer;

(iv) the armed school security guard;

(v) the school guardian;

(vi) local law enforcement;

(vii) the county security chief regarding a school other than the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind;

(viii) the school safety and security director;

(ix) the LEA; and

(x) school-based behavioral and mental health professionals;

(d) in collaboration with the county security chief or, regarding the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind, the state security chief, and with the local law enforcement of relevant jurisdiction over the school as described in Section 53-25-701:

(i) conduct the school safety needs assessment described in Section 53G-8-701.5;

(ii) in accordance with Sections 53-25-701 and 53G-8-701.5, submit the completed assessments to the School Safety Center created in Section 53G-8-802 by October 15 of each year; and

(iii) review the results of the school safety needs assessment to recommend and implement improvements to school facilities, policies, procedures, protocols,

- 641 rules, and regulations relating to school safety and security;
- 642 (e) participate on the multidisciplinary team that the school establishes;
- 643 (f) conduct a behavioral threat assessment when the school safety and security specialist
- 644 deems necessary using an evidence-based tool the state security chief recommends in
- 645 consultation with the school safety center and the Office of Substance Use and
- 646 Mental Health;
- 647 (g) regularly monitor and report to the principal, local law enforcement, and, if
- 648 applicable, the LEA superintendent or designee, security risks for the school resulting
- 649 from:
- 650 (i) issues with school facilities; or
- 651 (ii) the implementation of practices, policies, procedures, and protocols relating to
- 652 school safety and security;
- 653 (h) coordinate with local first responder agencies to implement and monitor safety and
- 654 security drills in accordance with policy and applicable procedures and protocols;
- 655 (i) ensure that school staff, and, when appropriate, students, receive training on and
- 656 remain current on the school's safety and security procedures and protocols;
- 657 (j) following an event where security of the school has been significantly compromised,
- 658 organize a debriefing with the individuals listed in Subsection (3)(c) following the
- 659 recommendations from the state security chief, in collaboration with the School
- 660 Safety Center, regarding strengthening school safety and security practices, policies,
- 661 procedures, and protocols;
- 662 (k) abide by any LEA, school, or law enforcement agency policy outlining the chain of
- 663 command;
- 664 (l) during an emergency, coordinate with the following individuals as applicable, the:
- 665 (i) school resource officer;
- 666 (ii) school guardians;
- 667 (iii) armed school security guards;
- 668 (iv) school administrators; and
- 669 (v) responding law enforcement officers;
- 670 (m) follow any LEA, school, or law enforcement agency student privacy policies,
- 671 including state and federal privacy laws;
- 672 (n) participate in an annual training the state security chief selects in consultation with
- 673 the School Safety Center; and
- 674 (o) remain current on:

- (i) a comprehensive school guideline the state security chief selects;
- (ii) the duties of a school safety and security specialist described in this Subsection (3);
- and
- (iii) the school's emergency response plan.

(4) During an active emergency at the school, the school safety and security specialist is subordinate to any responding law enforcement officers.

Section 8. Section **53G-8-701.8** is amended to read:

**53G-8-701.8 . School safety and security director.**

(1) Except as provided in Subsection 53G-8-701.5(3), an LEA shall designate a school safety and security director as the LEA point of contact for the county security chief regarding a school other than the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind, local law enforcement, and the state security chief.

(2) A school safety and security director shall:

(a) participate in and satisfy the training requirements as follows:

(i) only once, the training requirements described in Section 53-22-105 for school guardians; and

(ii) the school resource officer and administrator training the state security chief approves in consultation with the School Safety Center;

(b) if serving as a backup school guardian, satisfy all requirements described in 53-22-105;

(c) if the designee is an employee of an LEA, participate on the multidisciplinary team the LEA establishes;

(d) coordinate security responses among, if applicable, the following individuals in the LEA that employs the school safety and security director:

(i) school safety and security specialists;

(ii) school resource officers;

(iii) armed school security guards; and

(iv) school guardians; and

(e) collaborate and maintain effective communications with local law enforcement, a county security chief or, regarding the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind, the state security chief, the LEA, and school-based behavioral and mental health professionals to ensure adherence with all policies, procedures, protocols, rules, and regulations relating to school safety and security.

(3) A school safety and security director:

- (a) does not have authority to act in a law enforcement capacity; and
- (b) may, at the LEA that employs the director:
  - (i) take actions necessary to prevent or abate an active threat; and
  - (ii) temporarily detain an individual when the school safety and security director has reasonable cause to believe the individual has committed or is about to commit a forcible felony.

(4) Notwithstanding Subsection 76-11-205(4), if a school safety and security director is carrying a firearm, the school safety and security director shall carry the school safety and security director's firearm in a concealed manner and may not, unless during an active threat, display or open carry a firearm while on school grounds.

(5) A school may use the services of the school safety and security director on a temporary basis to satisfy the school safety personnel requirement of Subsection 53G-8-701.5(2).

(6) The state security chief shall:

- (a) for each school safety and security director, track each school safety and security director by collecting the photograph and the name and contact information for each school safety and security director; and
- (b) make the information described in Subsection (6)(a) readily available to each law enforcement agency in the state categorized by LEA.

Section 9. Section **53G-9-702** is amended to read:

**53G-9-702 . Youth suicide prevention programs -- State board to develop model programs.**

(1) As used in the section:

- (a) "Elementary grades" means:
  - (i) kindergarten through grade 5; and
  - (ii) if the associated middle or junior high school does not include grade 6, grade 6.
- (b) "Intervention" means an effort to prevent a student from attempting suicide.
- (c) "Postvention" means mental health intervention after a suicide attempt or death to prevent or contain contagion.
- (d) "Program" means a youth suicide prevention program described in Subsection (2).
- (e) "Public education suicide prevention coordinator" means an individual designated by the state board as described in Subsection (4).
- (f) "Secondary grades" means:
  - (i) grades 7 through 12; and
  - (ii) if a middle or junior high school includes grade 6, grade 6.

(g) "State suicide prevention coordinator" means the state suicide prevention coordinator described in Section 26B-5-611.

(2) In collaboration with the public education suicide prevention coordinator, a school district or charter school shall implement a youth suicide prevention program, which, in collaboration with the training, programs, and initiatives described in Section 53G-9-607, shall include programs and training to address:

(a) for elementary grades and secondary grades:

(i) life-affirming education, including on the concepts of resiliency, healthy habits, self-care, problem solving, and conflict resolution;

(ii) methods of strengthening the family; and

(iii) methods of strengthening a youth's relationships in the school and community; and

(b) for secondary grades:

(i) prevention of youth suicide;

(ii) decreasing the risk of suicide among youth who are:

(A) not accepted by family for any reason, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or questioning youth; or

(B) suffer from bullying;

(iii) youth suicide intervention; and

(iv) postvention for family, students, and faculty.

(3) Each school district and charter school shall ensure that the youth suicide prevention program described in Subsection (2):

(a) considers appropriate coordination with the following prevention programs:

(i) the prevention of bullying and cyber-bullying, as those terms are defined in Section 53G-9-601; and

(ii) the prevention of underage drinking of alcohol and substance abuse under Section 53G-10-406; and

(b) includes provisions to ensure that the school district or charter school promptly communicates with the parent or guardian of a student in accordance with Section 53G-9-604.

(4) The state board shall:

(a) designate a public education suicide prevention coordinator; and

(b) in collaboration with the Department of Health and Human Services and the state suicide prevention coordinator, develop model programs to provide to school districts

and charter schools:

(i) program training; and

(ii) resources regarding the required components described in Subsections (2)(a) and (b).

(5) The public education suicide prevention coordinator shall:

(a) oversee the youth suicide prevention programs of school districts and charter schools; and

(b) coordinate prevention and postvention programs, services, and efforts with the state suicide prevention coordinator.

(6) A public school suicide prevention program may allow school personnel to ask a student questions related to youth suicide prevention, intervention, or postvention.

(7)(a) Subject to legislative appropriation and except as provided in Section 53F-2-525, the state board may distribute money to a school district or charter school to be used to implement evidence-based practices and programs, or emerging best practices and programs, for preventing suicide in the school district or charter school.

(b) The state board shall ensure that an LEA's allocation of funds from the board's distribution of money under Subsection (7)(a) provides[-] :

(i) an amount equal to at least \$1,000 per school[-] ; or

(ii) if appropriations are not available to provide the amount described in Subsection (7)(b)(i), a commensurately lesser amount.

(c)(i) A school shall use money allocated to the school under Subsection (7)(b) to implement evidence-based practices and programs, or emerging best practices and programs, for preventing suicide.

(ii) Each school may select the evidence-based practices and programs, or emerging best practices and programs, for preventing suicide that the school implements.

(8) An LEA may not charge indirect costs to the program.

#### Section 10. **Effective Date.**

This bill takes effect on May 6, 2026.