

**R. Neil Walter** proposes the following substitute bill:

**Public Education Revisions**

2026 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

**Chief Sponsor: John D. Johnson**

House Sponsor: R. Neil Walter

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**LONG TITLE**

**General Description:**

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

**Highlighted Provisions:**

This bill:

- defines terms, including "general control and supervision" of the public education system;
- corrects references regarding the State Superintendent's Annual Report;
- allows the State Board of Education (state board) to authorize the state superintendent of public instruction to appoint and supervise the superintendent of the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (USDB);
- 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;
- amends the allowable use of funds in the Grow Your Own Educator Pipeline Program for paraprofessionals;
- 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;
- includes a coordination clause with H.B. 1, Public Education Base Budget Amendments, to adjust language regarding the Applied Educational Experience Grant Program; and
- makes technical and conforming changes.

**Money Appropriated in this Bill:**

29 None

30 **Other Special Clauses:**

31 This bill provides a special effective date.

32 This bill provides a coordination clause.

33 **Utah Code Sections Affected:**

34 AMENDS:

35 **53E-1-102 (Effective 05/06/26)**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapter 343

36 **53E-1-203 (Effective 05/06/26)**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapters 298,  
37 327

38 **53E-8-204 (Effective 05/06/26)**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapter 509

39 **53E-10-310 (Effective 05/06/26)**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, First Special  
40 Session, Chapter 9

41 **53F-5-218 (Effective 05/06/26)**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2023, Chapters 136,  
42 342

43 **53F-9-204 (Effective 07/01/26)**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapters 413,  
44 433

45 **53G-8-213 (Effective 05/06/26)**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapter 348

46 **53G-8-701.5 (Effective 05/06/26)**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapter 388

47 **53G-8-701.6 (Effective 05/06/26)**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapters 388,  
48 470

49 **53G-8-701.8 (Effective 05/06/26)**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, First Special  
50 Session, Chapter 11

51 **53G-9-702 (Effective 05/06/26)**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2023, Chapters 98, 328

52 RENUMBERS AND AMENDS:

53 **53F-5-224 (Effective 05/06/26)**, (Renumbered from 53E-3-507.1, as last amended  
54 by Laws of Utah 2025, First Special Session, Chapter 9)

55 **Utah Code Sections affected by Coordination Clause:**

56 **53F-9-204 (Effective 07/01/26)**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapters 413,  
57 433



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

60 Section 1. Section **53E-1-102** is amended to read:

61 **53E-1-102 (Effective 05/06/26). Public education code definitions.**

62 Unless otherwise indicated, as used in this title, Title 53F, Public Education System --

- 63 Funding, and Title 53G, Public Education System -- Local Administration:
- 64 (1) "Bullying" means the same as that term is defined in Section 53G-9-601.
- 65 (2) "Charter agreement" means an agreement made in accordance with Section 53G-5-303
- 66 that authorizes the operation of a charter school.
- 67 (3) "Charter school governing board" means the board that governs a charter school.
- 68 (4) "District school" means a public school under the control of a local school board.
- 69 (5) "General control and supervision" means, including as used in Utah Constitution,
- 70 Article X, Section 3, that the state board shall direct and manage all aspects of the public
- 71 education system in accordance with laws the Legislature makes, including in relation to
- 72 compliance and monitoring of an LEA under Section 53E-3-401.
- 73 [~~5~~] (6) "Individualized education program" or "IEP" means a written statement for a
- 74 student with a disability that is developed, reviewed, and revised in accordance with the
- 75 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. Sec. 1400 et seq.
- 76 [~~6~~] (7) "LEA governing board" means:
- 77 (a) for a school district, the local school board;
- 78 (b) for a charter school, the charter school governing board; or
- 79 (c) for the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind, the state board.
- 80 [~~7~~] (8) "Local education agency" or "LEA" means:
- 81 (a) a school district;
- 82 (b) a charter school; or
- 83 (c) the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind.
- 84 [~~8~~] (9) "Local school board" means a board elected under Title 20A, Chapter 14, Part 2,
- 85 Election of Members of Local Boards of Education.
- 86 [~~9~~] (10) "Minimum School Program" means the same as that term is defined in Section
- 87 53F-2-102.
- 88 [~~10~~] (11) "Parent" means a parent or legal guardian.
- 89 [~~11~~] (12) "Public education code" means:
- 90 (a) this title;
- 91 (b) Title 53F, Public Education System -- Funding; and
- 92 (c) Title 53G, Public Education System -- Local Administration.
- 93 [~~12~~] (13) "Section 504 accommodation plan" means a plan developed in accordance with
- 94 Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. Sec. 701 et seq., for a student
- 95 with a disability, to meet the student's educational needs and ensure equitable access to a
- 96 free appropriate public education.

97     ~~[(13)]~~ (14) "School nurse" means a registered nurse:

98         (a) who holds:

99             (i) a license under Title 58, Chapter 31b, Nurse Practice Act; or

100            (ii) a multistate license as that term is defined in Section 58-31e-102; and

101         (b) whose primary role is the care of a defined group of students enrolled in the public  
102             school system.

103     ~~[(14)]~~ (15) "State board" means the State Board of Education.

104     ~~[(15)]~~ (16) "State superintendent" means the state superintendent of public instruction  
105         appointed under Section 53E-3-301.

106         Section 2. Section **53E-1-203** is amended to read:

107             **53E-1-203 (Effective 05/06/26). State Superintendent's Annual Report.**

108     (1) The state board shall prepare and submit to the governor, the Education Interim  
109         Committee, and the Public Education Appropriations Subcommittee, by January 15 of  
110         each year, an annual written report known as the State Superintendent's Annual Report  
111         that includes:

112         (a) the operations, activities, programs, and services of the state board;

113         (b) subject to Subsection (4)(b), all reports listed in Subsection (4)(a); and

114         (c) data on the general condition of the schools with recommendations considered  
115             desirable for specific programs, including:

116             (i) a complete statement of fund balances;

117             (ii) a complete statement of revenues by fund and source;

118             (iii) a complete statement of adjusted expenditures by fund, the status of bonded  
119                 indebtedness, the cost of new school plants, and school levies;

120             (iv) a complete statement of state funds allocated to each school district and charter  
121                 school by source, including supplemental appropriations, and a complete  
122                 statement of expenditures by each school district and charter school, including  
123                 supplemental appropriations, by function and object as outlined in the United  
124                 States Department of Education publication "Financial Accounting for Local and  
125                 State School Systems";

126         (v) a statement that includes data on:

127             (A) fall enrollments;

128             (B) average membership;

129             (C) high school graduates;

130             (D) all employees, including data reported by school districts on educator ratings

- 131 described in Section 53G-11-511;
- 132 (E) pupil-teacher ratios;
- 133 (F) average class sizes;
- 134 (G) average salaries;
- 135 (H) applicable private school data; and
- 136 (I) data from statewide assessments described in Section 53E-4-301 for each
- 137 school and school district;
- 138 (vi) statistical information for each school district and charter school regarding:
- 139 (A) student attendance by grade level;
- 140 (B) the percentage of students chronically absent;
- 141 (C) the percentage of student excused absences; and
- 142 (D) the percentage of student unexcused absences;
- 143 (vii) statistical information regarding incidents of delinquent activity in the schools,
- 144 at school-related activities, on school buses, and at school bus stops; and
- 145 (viii) other statistical and financial information about the school system that the state
- 146 superintendent considers pertinent.
- 147 (2)(a) For the purposes of Subsection (1)(c)(v):
- 148 (i) the pupil-teacher ratio for a school shall be calculated by dividing the number of
- 149 students enrolled in a school by the number of full-time equivalent teachers
- 150 assigned to the school, including regular classroom teachers, school-based
- 151 specialists, and special education teachers;
- 152 (ii) the pupil-teacher ratio for a school district shall be the median pupil-teacher ratio
- 153 of the schools within a school district;
- 154 (iii) the pupil-teacher ratio for charter schools aggregated shall be the median
- 155 pupil-teacher ratio of charter schools in the state; and
- 156 (iv) the pupil-teacher ratio for the state's public schools aggregated shall be the
- 157 median pupil-teacher ratio of public schools in the state.
- 158 (b) The report shall:
- 159 (i) include the pupil-teacher ratio for:
- 160 (A) each school district;
- 161 (B) the charter schools aggregated; and
- 162 (C) the state's public schools aggregated; and
- 163 (ii) identify a website where pupil-teacher ratios for each school in the state may be
- 164 accessed.

- 165 (3) For each operation, activity, program, or service provided by the state board, the annual  
166 report shall include:
- 167 (a) a description of the operation, activity, program, or service;
- 168 (b) data and metrics:
- 169 (i) selected and used by the state board to measure progress, performance,  
170 effectiveness, and scope of the operation, activity, program, or service, including  
171 summary data; and
- 172 (ii) that are consistent and comparable for each state operation, activity, program, or  
173 service;
- 174 (c) budget data, including the amount and source of funding, expenses, and allocation of  
175 full-time employees for the operation, activity, program, or service;
- 176 (d) historical data from previous years for comparison with data reported under  
177 Subsections (3)(b) and (c);
- 178 (e) goals, challenges, and achievements related to the operation, activity, program, or  
179 service;
- 180 (f) relevant federal and state statutory references and requirements;
- 181 (g) contact information of officials knowledgeable and responsible for each operation,  
182 activity, program, or service; and
- 183 (h) other information determined by the state board that:
- 184 (i) may be needed, useful, or of historical significance; or
- 185 (ii) promotes accountability and transparency for each operation, activity, program,  
186 or service with the public and elected officials.
- 187 (4)(a) Except as provided in Subsection (4)(b), the annual report shall also include:
- 188 (i) the report described in Section 53E-3-507 by the state board on career and  
189 technical education needs and program access;
- 190 (ii) the report described in Section 53E-3-515 by the state board on the Hospitality  
191 and Tourism Management Career and Technical Education Pilot Program;
- 192 (iii) the report described in Section 53E-3-516 by the state board on certain incidents  
193 that occur on school grounds;
- 194 (iv) the report described in Section 53E-4-202 by the state board on the development  
195 and implementation of the core standards for Utah public schools;
- 196 (v) the report described in Section 53E-5-310 by the state board on school ~~turnaround~~  
197 improvement and leadership development;
- 198 (vi) the report described in Section 53E-10-308 by the state board and Utah Board of

199 Higher Education on student participation in the concurrent enrollment program;  
 200 (vii) the report described in Section 53F-5-506 by the state board on information  
 201 related to personalized, competency-based learning;  
 202 (viii) the report described in Section [53G-8-203] 53G-8-301 by the state board on  
 203 LEAs' policies and procedures related to physical restraint and interventions; and  
 204 (ix) the report described in Section 53G-9-802 by the state board on dropout  
 205 prevention and recovery services.

206 (b) The Education Interim Committee or the Public Education Appropriations  
 207 Subcommittee may request a report described in Subsection (4)(a) to be reported  
 208 separately from the State Superintendent's Annual Report.

209 (5) The annual report shall be designed to provide clear, accurate, and accessible  
 210 information to the public, the governor, and the Legislature.

211 (6) The state board shall:

212 (a) submit the annual report in accordance with Section 68-3-14; and

213 (b) make the annual report, and previous annual reports, accessible to the public by  
 214 placing a link to the reports on the state board's website.

215 (7)(a) Upon request of the Education Interim Committee or Public Education  
 216 Appropriations Subcommittee, the state board shall present the State Superintendent's  
 217 Annual Report to either committee.

218 (b) After submitting the State Superintendent's Annual Report in accordance with this  
 219 section, the state board may supplement the report at a later time with updated data,  
 220 information, or other materials as necessary or upon request by the governor, the  
 221 Education Interim Committee, or the Public Education Appropriations Subcommittee.

222 Section 3. Section **53E-8-204** is amended to read:

223 **53E-8-204 (Effective 05/06/26). Authority of the state board -- Rulemaking --**  
 224 **Superintendent -- Advisory council.**

225 (1)(a) The state board is the governing board of the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the  
 226 Blind.

227 (b) The state board shall, as the state board determines necessary, establish committees,  
 228 policies, or processes necessary to the function and oversight of the Utah Schools for  
 229 the Deaf and the Blind.

230 ~~(2)(a) The state board shall appoint a superintendent for the Utah Schools for the Deaf~~  
 231 ~~and the Blind.]~~

232 (a) With the approval of the state board, the state superintendent of public instruction

233 shall appoint and supervise a superintendent of the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the  
234 Blind who reports directly to the state superintendent.

235 (b) The state board shall make rules in accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah  
236 Administrative Rulemaking Act, regarding the qualifications, terms of employment,  
237 and duties of the superintendent for the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind.

238 (3) The superintendent shall:

239 (a) subject to the approval of the state board, appoint an associate superintendent to  
240 administer the Utah School for the Deaf based on:

241 (i) demonstrated competency as an expert educator of deaf persons; and

242 (ii) knowledge of school management and the instruction of deaf persons; and

243 (b) subject to the approval of the state board, appoint an associate superintendent to  
244 administer the Utah School for the Blind based on:

245 (i) demonstrated competency as an expert educator of blind persons; and

246 (ii) knowledge of school management and the instruction of blind persons, including  
247 an understanding of the unique needs and education of deafblind persons.

248 (4) The state board shall:

249 (a) approve the annual budget and expenditures of the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the  
250 Blind; and

251 (b) administer the financial operations of the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind.

252 (5)(a) The state board shall submit a report in accordance with Section 53E-1-201 on the  
253 Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind.

254 (b) The state board shall ensure that the report described in Subsection (5)(a) includes:

255 (i) a financial report;

256 (ii) a report on Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind programs and activities; and

257 (iii) a report of student academic performance.

258 Section 4. Section **53E-10-310** is amended to read:

259 **53E-10-310 (Effective 05/06/26). Utah first credential program.**

260 (1) As used in this section:

261 (a) "Eligible institution" means an institution of higher education as defined in Section  
262 53H-1-101.

263 (b) "First credential" means a certificate awarded by the state board to an eligible student  
264 who meets the criteria described in Subsection (7).

265 (c)(i) "Industry-recognized credential" means a credential that is:

266 (A) developed and offered by, or endorsed by, a nationally recognized industry

- 267 association or organization representing a sizable portion of the industry sector;
- 268 (B) sought or accepted by employers within the industry or sector as a recognized,
- 269 preferred, or required credential for recruitment, screening, hiring, retention, or
- 270 advancement purposes; and
- 271 (C) regularly reviewed, updated, and validated by the issuing body to ensure
- 272 ongoing alignment with industry standards and labor market needs.
- 273 (ii) "Industry-recognized credential" may also include a credential offered through a
- 274 catalyst center as described in Section [~~53E-3-507.1~~] 53F-5-224.
- 275 (d) "Master credential list" means the list of approved industry-recognized credentials
- 276 maintained by the state board in accordance with this section.
- 277 (e) "Program" means the first credential program described in this section.
- 278 (f) "Technical college" means the same as that term is defined in Section 53H-1-101.
- 279 (2) The commissioner of higher education, the state superintendent of public instruction,
- 280 and the governor's education advisor shall establish the First Credential Oversight
- 281 Committee comprised of:
- 282 (a) representatives from industries, including:
- 283 (i) members of professional associations or trade groups; and
- 284 (ii) employers from high-demand sectors as the state board determines in
- 285 collaboration with the Utah Board of Higher Education and the Department of
- 286 Workforce Services;
- 287 (b) representatives from education including:
- 288 (i) members from the state board;
- 289 (ii) the director of the Catalyst Center Grant Program described in Section [
- 290 ~~53E-3-507.1~~] 53F-5-224;
- 291 (iii) LEA administrators, such as a superintendent or charter school director;
- 292 (iv) professionals from institutions of higher education, including technical colleges;
- 293 (v) career and technical education specialists; and
- 294 (vi) Talent Ready Utah; and
- 295 (c) workforce development experts, including representatives from the Department of
- 296 Workforce Services.
- 297 (3) The state board shall staff the First Credential Oversight Committee.
- 298 (4) The First Credential Oversight Committee shall develop a first credential master plan,
- 299 which shall include:
- 300 (a) a framework for developing and maintaining the master credential list;

- 301 (b) a comprehensive needs assessment framework that evaluates:
- 302 (i) resources available through institutions of higher education, including:
- 303 (A) faculty expertise and availability;
- 304 (B) facilities and equipment;
- 305 (C) existing certification programs; and
- 306 (D) potential for program expansion;
- 307 (ii) industry partnership opportunities, including:
- 308 (A) geographical proximity to potential partners;
- 309 (B) willingness of local industries to participate;
- 310 (C) capacity for work-based learning placements; and
- 311 (D) alignment between industry needs and educational capabilities; and
- 312 (iii) general resource availability, including:
- 313 (A) current funding streams and potential funding sources;
- 314 (B) existing technology infrastructure;
- 315 (C) qualified personnel and staffing needs; and
- 316 (D) professional development requirements;
- 317 (c) credential approval processes;
- 318 (d) methods for ensuring industry demand alignment;
- 319 (e) wage considerations for occupations associated with approved credentials;
- 320 (f) clear definitions of industry-recognized credentials;
- 321 (g) strategies for promoting stackability and sequencing of credentials;
- 322 (h) approaches to ensure regional relevance of credentials;
- 323 (i) mechanisms for collaboration between educational institutions, industry partners, and
- 324 workforce development agencies;
- 325 (j) strategies for continuous evaluation and improvement of the program;
- 326 (k) the creation of a credentials review committee, including membership and duties;
- 327 (l) in accordance with Subsection (17), an established framework of planning,
- 328 implementation, and student outcome performance funding for an LEA administering
- 329 first credential programming;
- 330 (m) a weighted system for the master credential list that:
- 331 (i) assigns higher values to credentials based on:
- 332 (A) alignment with high-demand, high-wage occupations;
- 333 (B) incorporation of multiple learning pathways, including coursework,
- 334 apprenticeships, internships, work-based learning, and related service

- 335 opportunities;
- 336 (C) industry recognition and portability; and
- 337 (D) stackability with other credentials or degrees; and
- 338 (ii) uses the weighted values to:
- 339 (A) determine incentive funding levels;
- 340 (B) prioritize program expansion support; and
- 341 (C) guide student career planning; and
- 342 (n) guidelines for LEAs to procure industry-recognized certification program licenses,
- 343 including:
- 344 (i) verification that certifications appear on the master credential list;
- 345 (ii) requirement for competency-based assessments in proctored environments;
- 346 (iii) documentation of local industry endorsement; and
- 347 (iv) alignment with state and federal computer science initiatives where applicable,
- 348 including the Computer Science for Utah Grant Program described in Section
- 349 53H-13-306.
- 350 (5) In accordance with the Utah First Credential Master Plan, the state board shall:
- 351 (a) ensure that the credentials review committee membership reflects a balance of
- 352 perspectives and expertise;
- 353 (b) develop an online application and submission system for credentialing organizations
- 354 and providers to submit programs for inclusion in the master credential list;
- 355 (c) establish and maintain the master credential list based on the recommendations of the
- 356 credentials review committee;
- 357 (d) develop clear mechanisms for students to understand how earning one credential can
- 358 lead to higher-level certifications or degrees; and
- 359 (e) foster partnerships between high schools, technical colleges, employers, and
- 360 apprenticeship programs to ensure students have access to meaningful work-based
- 361 learning opportunities.
- 362 (6) The state board shall:
- 363 (a) automatically include on the initial master credential list any existing credential that:
- 364 (i) meets the definition of industry-recognized credential under this section; and
- 365 (ii) is currently recognized by the state board or Utah Board of Higher Education as
- 366 of July 1, 2024; and
- 367 (b) review all automatically included credentials within one year to ensure ongoing
- 368 compliance with program requirements.

- 369 (7) The state board shall award a first credential certificate to an eligible student who  
370 completes one of the following:
- 371 (a) concurrent enrollment courses, composed of:
- 372 (i) between 12 and 18 core general education credits, or as industry standards dictate,  
373 with courses from different general education categories; or
- 374 (ii) a prescribed set of courses as the Utah Board of Higher Education designates;
- 375 (b) an industry-recognized credential included on the master credential list;
- 376 (c) 300 hours of completion through a youth apprenticeship program that:
- 377 (i) is described in Sections 35A-6-102 and 35A-6-104.5; and
- 378 (ii) includes courses that fulfill the requirements for an industry-recognized credential  
379 included on the master credential list;
- 380 (d) completion of a technical college certificate; or
- 381 (e) completion of a Career and Technical Education Pathway program.
- 382 (8) The Utah Board of Higher Education shall ensure that credits earned for a first  
383 credential certificate are:
- 384 (a) accepted and transferable to institutions of higher education, including technical  
385 colleges;
- 386 (b) applicable towards relevant degree programs; and
- 387 (c) recognized by relevant industries as adequate preparation for employment.
- 388 (9) Subject to legislative appropriations, the Utah Board of Higher Education shall award a  
389 first credential scholarship to each student who earns a first credential certificate.
- 390 (10) The first credential scholarship may be used at the following institutions:
- 391 (a) an institution of higher education as defined in Section 53H-1-101; or
- 392 (b) a private, nonprofit college or university in the state that is accredited by the  
393 Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities.
- 394 (11) The Utah Board of Higher Education shall annually determine the first credential  
395 scholarship amount based on:
- 396 (a) the number of eligible students; and
- 397 (b) appropriations made by the Legislature.
- 398 (12) A student may use the first credential scholarship for:
- 399 (a) tuition and fees;
- 400 (b) books and supplies; or
- 401 (c) other educational expenses as the Utah Board of Higher Education determines.
- 402 (13) The Utah Board of Higher Education shall ensure the scholarship is valid for use

- 403 within three years from the date the student graduates from high school.
- 404 (14) A student may earn the first credential scholarship in addition to any other  
405 state-sponsored scholarships for which the student may be eligible.
- 406 (15) The first credential oversight committee shall present the master plan described in  
407 Subsection (4) to the Education Interim Committee by the November 2025 interim  
408 committee meeting.
- 409 (16) Every three years, the First Credential Oversight Committee shall:
- 410 (a) review the Utah First Credential Master Plan;
- 411 (b) as needed, create a list of recommendations and update the Utah First Credential  
412 Master Plan;
- 413 (c) report the list of recommendations and the updated Utah First Credential Master Plan  
414 to:
- 415 (i) the state board;
- 416 (ii) the Utah Board of Higher Education;
- 417 (iii) the Department of Workforce Services;
- 418 (iv) the Education Interim Committee; and
- 419 (v) the Economic Development and Workforce Services Interim Committee.
- 420 (17)(a) The state board shall administer a first credential grant program for an LEA and  
421 award a grant in accordance with the following process.
- 422 (b) The First Credential Oversight Committee shall establish:
- 423 (i) a needs assessment tool that evaluates:
- 424 (A) an LEA's current first credential offering;
- 425 (B) an LEA's capacity to develop or expand a first credential pathway;
- 426 (C) resources and support needed for a first credential program, including  
427 resources available through institutions of higher education, industry  
428 partnership opportunities, and general resource availability; and
- 429 (D) each potential barrier to implementation; and
- 430 (ii) a continuum of need to place each applying LEA.
- 431 (c) An LEA seeking a first credential grant shall submit to the First Credential Oversight  
432 Committee:
- 433 (i) a completed needs assessment; and
- 434 (ii) a grant application that contains:
- 435 (A) current first credential data, including current credentials offered;
- 436 (B) preliminary goals for creating or expanding first credential opportunities

- 437 within the LEA; and
- 438 (C) if applicable, plans for procurement of industry certification program licenses,
- 439 including certification details and alignment with master credential list,
- 440 documentation of employer endorsements, assessment and proctoring
- 441 procedures, and integration with existing computer science programs.
- 442 (d) The First Credential Oversight Committee shall:
- 443 (i) review each submitted application and needs assessment;
- 444 (ii) assign the LEA a placement on the continuum of need; and
- 445 (iii) provide to the LEA a specific requirement for an implementation plan based on:
- 446 (A) the LEA's continuum placement;
- 447 (B) each identified area for growth;
- 448 (C) each available resource; and
- 449 (D) each additional factor the First Credential Oversight Committee determines
- 450 relevant.
- 451 (e) An LEA shall submit to the First Credential Oversight Committee an implementation
- 452 plan that includes:
- 453 (i) specific goals for expanding a first credential opportunity;
- 454 (ii) each implementation step and timeline;
- 455 (iii) a detailed cost projection; and
- 456 (iv) each additional element the committee requires based on the needs assessment
- 457 results.
- 458 (f) The First Credential Oversight Committee shall:
- 459 (i) review the implementation plan;
- 460 (ii) direct technical assistance to the LEA in accordance with the LEA's
- 461 implementation plan;
- 462 (iii) provide feedback to the LEA to improve the implementation plan;
- 463 (iv) approve each implementation plan that meets the established criteria; and
- 464 (v) award an implementation grant for each approved plan.
- 465 (g) Subject to legislative appropriations, the state board shall:
- 466 (i) award an incentive grant to an LEA that:
- 467 (A) has implemented an approved plan;
- 468 (B) increases the number of students who earn a first credential certificate; and
- 469 (C) achieves each established implementation goal; and
- 470 (ii) in accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act,

471 and in collaboration with the First Credential Oversight Committee, establish by  
472 rule:

- 473 (A) tiers for incentive grant awards;
- 474 (B) performance metrics for continued funding;
- 475 (C) reporting requirements for a grant recipient;
- 476 (D) requirements for reporting certification program outcomes and industry  
477 alignment;
- 478 (E) procedures for coordinating with computer science initiative grants; and
- 479 (F) guidelines for certification program procurement and implementation.

480 (18) In accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act, and in  
481 collaboration with the Utah Board of Higher Education and the Department of  
482 Workforce Services, the state board shall make rules to implement the provisions of this  
483 section.

484 Section 5. Section **53F-5-218** is amended to read:

485 **53F-5-218 (Effective 05/06/26). Grow Your Own Educator Pipeline Program.**

486 (1) As used in this section:

487 (a) "Paraprofessional" means an individual who:

- 488 (i) works with students in an LEA as a paraprofessional or in a similar teaching  
489 assistant position; and
- 490 (ii) is not licensed to teach.

491 (b) "Program" means the Grow Your Own Educator Pipeline Program that this section  
492 creates.

493 (c) "School counselor" means an educator who is:

- 494 (i) licensed as a school counselor in accordance with state board rule; and
- 495 (ii) assigned to provide direct and indirect services to students in accordance with a  
496 school counseling program model that the state board provides.

497 (d) "School counselor assistant" means a student who is:

- 498 (i) enrolled in an accredited bachelor's degree program in a related field; and
- 499 (ii) completing the student's practicum experience in a school counseling department  
500 under the supervision of a licensed school counselor.

501 (e) "School counselor intern" means a student who is:

- 502 (i) enrolled in an accredited school counselor master's degree program; and
- 503 (ii) completing the student's hours of a supervised counseling internship by applying  
504 appropriate school counseling techniques under the supervision of a licensed

- 505 school counselor.
- 506 (f) "School psychologist" means an individual:
- 507 (i) whom the state board licenses to practice as a school psychologist; and
- 508 (ii) who is assigned to provide direct and indirect services to students within the
- 509 relevant school or LEA seeking program grant funding.
- 510 (g) "School social worker" means an individual:
- 511 (i) whom the state board licenses as a school social worker; and
- 512 (ii) who is assigned to provide direct and indirect services to students within the
- 513 relevant school or LEA seeking program grant funding.
- 514 (h) "Teacher" means an educator who has an assignment to teach in a classroom.
- 515 (2) The Grow Your Own Educator Pipeline Program is a competitive grant program created
- 516 to provide funding to LEAs to award scholarships to paraprofessionals, teachers, school
- 517 counselor assistants, and school counselor interns within the LEA for education and
- 518 training to become licensed teachers, licensed school counselors, licensed school
- 519 psychologists, or licensed school social workers.
- 520 (3)(a) The state board shall use money appropriated for the program to provide funding
- 521 to LEAs that are awarded grants under the program to award scholarships to eligible
- 522 candidates.
- 523 (b) The state board shall:
- 524 (i) determine the amount of an award an LEA receives under the program; and
- 525 (ii) prioritize the amount of an award an LEA receives based upon an LEA's
- 526 identified need.
- 527 (c) The principal within the participating LEA shall nominate a candidate for the
- 528 scholarship awarded under this section.
- 529 (4) An LEA that participates in the program may select a candidate for a scholarship award
- 530 if:
- 531 (a) the candidate is a resident of the state; and
- 532 (b)(i) for a paraprofessional:
- 533 (A) a school district or a charter school has employed the candidate as a
- 534 paraprofessional for at least one year before entering the program; or
- 535 (B) subject to Subsection (5), the candidate has experience outside of the school
- 536 district, the charter school, or the state that is equivalent to the experience
- 537 described in Subsection (4)(b)(i)(A);
- 538 (ii) for a teacher, the candidate:

- 539 (A) was a paraprofessional who was awarded a scholarship;
- 540 (B) was offered employment as a teacher before the teacher completed the training
- 541 to become a professionally licensed teacher; and
- 542 (C) is working as a teacher for the same LEA where the teacher previously
- 543 worked as a paraprofessional and was awarded the scholarship;
- 544 (iii) for a school counselor assistant, the candidate:
- 545 (A) is enrolled in a bachelor's degree program in a related field; and
- 546 (B) demonstrates a commitment to continue the school counselor assistant's
- 547 education after graduation in school counseling;
- 548 (iv) for a school counselor intern, the candidate is enrolled in a school counselor
- 549 master's degree program accredited by:
- 550 (A) the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational
- 551 Programs; or
- 552 (B) another regionally recognized accrediting body that meets the state board's
- 553 standards for school counselor education programs;
- 554 (v) for a school psychologist student, including a student, practicum student, or
- 555 intern, the candidate is enrolled in a school psychology education specialist or
- 556 doctorate program that the National Association of School Psychologists
- 557 accredits; or
- 558 (vi) for a candidate studying to become a school social worker, including a student or
- 559 practicum intern, the candidate is enrolled in a masters level social work program
- 560 that the Council of Social Work Education accredits.
- 561 (5) The percentage of an LEA's paraprofessional scholarship recipients who are eligible for
- 562 a scholarship using equivalent experience under Subsection (4)(b)(i)(B) may not exceed
- 563 20%.
- 564 (6) A scholarship award under the program may only be used for:
- 565 (a) tuition, books, fees, and certification tests for required coursework and licensure;
- 566 (b) stipends for mentors or school counselor assistants; and
- 567 (c) if the LEA pays 0.15 of a full-time equivalent and all employee benefits, payment of
- 568 a 0.35 full-time equivalent for:
- 569 (i) a paraprofessional, up to [~~one semester of student teaching~~] four semesters of
- 570 clinical experience; or
- 571 (ii) a school counselor assistant or school counselor intern, up to two semesters of
- 572 practicum or internship hours.

- 573 (7) An LEA shall ensure that a paraprofessional scholarship recipient is continuously  
 574 employed as a paraprofessional by the paraprofessional's LEA while pursuing a degree  
 575 using scholarship money under the program.
- 576 (8) The state board shall make rules in accordance with this section and Title 63G, Chapter  
 577 3, Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act, to administer the program, including rules  
 578 regarding:
- 579 (a) grant and scholarship application procedures;
  - 580 (b) procedures for distributing scholarship money;
  - 581 (c) assignment and eligibility of qualified mentors;
  - 582 (d) stipends for mentors or school counselor assistants;
  - 583 (e) administrative costs for regional education service agencies, as that term is defined in  
 584 Section 53G-4-410; and
  - 585 (f) eligibility requirements for potential candidates for scholarships regarding the  
 586 completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid and the acceptance of  
 587 other grants, tuition or fee waivers, and scholarships offered to the candidate.

588 Section 6. Section **53F-5-224**, which is renumbered from Section 53E-3-507.1 is renumbered  
 589 and amended to read:

590 **[53E-3-507.1] 53F-5-224 (Effective 05/06/26). Applied Professional Education**  
 591 **Experience Grant Program.**

- 592 (1) As used in this section:
- 593 (a) "Advisory board" means a group of individuals, which may include industry,  
 594 postsecondary, and community representatives, that reviews program direction and  
 595 ensures alignment with workforce needs.
  - 596 [(a)] (b) "[Catalyst] Applied professional education experience center" or "APEX center"  
 597 means a program or facility operated by an LEA that:
    - 598 (i) provides learning experiences and instruction that replicate professional  
 599 environments and workplace practices, including experiences obtained through  
 600 the Utah First Credential program described in Section 53E-10-310;
    - 601 (ii) provides profession-based learning experiences by partnering with local industry,  
 602 business, and community organizations to develop and implement student projects  
 603 that address specific needs or objectives identified by those partners;
    - 604 (iii) aligns programs with high-skill, high-demand career pathways and  
 605 postsecondary education opportunities;
    - 606 (iv) incorporates industry-standard tools, technologies, and methods into instruction

- 607 and student work;
- 608 (v) prioritizes student activities and profession-based learning projects to build
- 609 durable professional skills aligned with industry standards and needs;
- 610 (vi) facilitates mentorship and participation by industry professionals to guide a
- 611 student and evaluate the student's work;
- 612 (vii) includes an advisory board~~[composed of industry, postsecondary, and~~
- 613 ~~community representatives to review program direction and ensure alignment with~~
- 614 ~~workforce needs]~~; and
- 615 (viii) establishes programs or activities that address gaps in training or resources
- 616 within the local or regional workforce.
- 617 (c) "Consortium" means two or more LEAs located within the same career and technical
- 618 education geographic planning region.
- 619 [(b)] (d) "Director" means the employee described in Subsection (3).
- 620 [(e)] (e) "LEA" means:
- 621 (i) a school district;
- 622 (ii) charter school; or
- 623 (iii) the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind.
- 624 [(d)] (f) "Program" means the ~~[Catalyst Center]~~ Applied Professional Education
- 625 Experience Grant Program created in this section.
- 626 (g) "Unwarranted duplication" means the overlap of resources that lead to inefficiencies,
- 627 wasted resources, or a lack of coordination in providing comprehensive career and
- 628 technical education programs.
- 629 (2) Subject to legislative appropriation as described in Section 53F-9-204, the state board
- 630 shall establish the ~~[Catalyst Center]~~ Applied Professional Education Experience Grant
- 631 Program to provide funding to an LEA to create or expand an existing ~~[catalyst]~~ APEX
- 632 center.
- 633 (3) The state board shall hire a director to oversee the program who:
- 634 (a) has demonstrated abilities in:
- 635 (i) developing and implementing innovative initiatives that transform traditional
- 636 education delivery models;
- 637 (ii) establishing public-private partnership frameworks that create student pathways
- 638 into high-growth industries; and
- 639 (iii) scaling programs that integrate real-world experiences directly into educational
- 640 environments;

- 641 (b) possesses expertise in:
- 642 (i) managing complex multi-stakeholder initiatives across education, industry, and
- 643 government sectors;
- 644 (ii) implementing data-driven organizational change strategies; and
- 645 (iii) developing sustainable funding models for innovative education programs;
- 646 (c) maintains active leadership roles in:
- 647 (i) state or national workforce innovation organizations;
- 648 (ii) industry associations focused on talent development; and
- 649 (iii) public-private collaboratives addressing workforce transformation;
- 650 (d) reports directly to the state superintendent or a deputy superintendent to ensure
- 651 appropriate program oversight and cross-departmental coordination while
- 652 maintaining distinct program objectives and outcomes;
- 653 (e) establishes formal collaboration mechanisms with the state board's career and
- 654 technical education director to align [eatalyst] APEX center initiatives with existing
- 655 career and technical education programs; and
- 656 (f) facilitates training and a collaborative network of experienced [eatalyst] APEX center
- 657 administrators and instructors across all participating LEAs.
- 658 (4) The director:
- 659 (a) shall:
- 660 (i) administer the program;
- 661 (ii) collaborate with the director of career and technical education to align the
- 662 program with the career and technical education standards described in Section [
- 663 53E-3-507] 53F-5-224;
- 664 (iii) create a web-based application system to streamline submissions and allow for
- 665 linked supporting documentation;
- 666 (iv) ensure that grant funds are used in accordance with this section; and
- 667 (v) allow grant funds to be used for planning, including:
- 668 (A) feasibility studies;
- 669 (B) stakeholder engagement;
- 670 (C) labor market analysis;
- 671 (D) initial program design and rollout; and
- 672 (E) teacher and staff training specific to the delivery of profession-based learning;
- 673 and
- 674 (b) may collaborate with the Utah System of Higher Education and the First Credential

- 675 Oversight Committee established in Section 53E-10-310.
- 676 (5) An LEA applying for a grant shall demonstrate capacity for workforce alignment  
677 programs within the LEA or provide a plan to establish or enhance alignment by:
- 678 (a) describing current or planned efforts to align programming with labor market needs  
679 and local industry demands;
- 680 (b) outlining steps to establish or enhance partnerships with:
- 681 (i) local industries and employers to ensure workforce relevance; or  
682 (ii) technical colleges, degree-granting institutions, or other postsecondary entities to  
683 support postsecondary transitions for students;
- 684 (c) identifying proposed programming goals and how the goals address gaps in regional  
685 workforce training or opportunities; and
- 686 (d) as the LEA determines relevant, planning to incorporate:
- 687 (i) career and technical student organizations;  
688 (ii) advisory boards with representation from local industries and workforce experts;  
689 (iii) professional learning opportunities for instructors to improve workforce-focused  
690 skills; and  
691 (iv) strategies for using labor market data to refine and improve program offerings.
- 692 (6)(a) An LEA may apply for a grant by submitting an application to the state board.
- 693 (b) The application shall include:
- 694 (i) a plan to:
- 695 (A) create or expand one or more [~~ecatalyst~~] APEX centers; or  
696 (B) create or expand current career and technical education offerings within the  
697 LEA to bring the LEA's career and technical education offerings in alignment  
698 with the definition of [~~a cataly~~] an APEX center in Subsection (1);
- 699 (ii) a detailed multi-year budget, identifying proposed expenditures for each year of  
700 the grant;
- 701 (iii) justification for any capital expenditures, including plans for building use;  
702 (iv) a description of how the grant will be used to improve student outcomes,  
703 including:
- 704 (A) increased access to career pathway offerings;  
705 (B) measurable improvements in career readiness, including certifications,  
706 credentials, or apprenticeships;  
707 (C) increased offerings that advance students' progression toward postsecondary  
708 education or advanced training; and

- 709 (D) plans for enhanced student engagement through real-world, profession-based  
 710 learning;
- 711 (v) evidence of any existing partnerships with industry, including letters of  
 712 collaboration;
- 713 (vi) evidence of alignment with the LEA's strategic plan and local labor market needs;
- 714 (vii) an explanation of how awarded funds will be used without unnecessary  
 715 carryforward;
- 716 (viii) a description of well-defined metrics the LEA will use to establish and measure  
 717 student proficiency;
- 718 [~~(viii)~~] (ix) as applicable, a description of how the [~~eatalyst~~] APEX center  
 719 programming will align with or enhance programs funded by the weighted pupil  
 720 unit add-on described in Section 53F-2-311;
- 721 [~~(ix)~~] (x) for applications submitted by a consortium of LEAs, a description of how:  
 722 (A) the [~~eatalyst~~] APEX center will serve students across the consortium;  
 723 (B) costs and resources will be shared; and  
 724 (C) economies of scale will be achieved; and
- 725 [~~(x)~~] (xi) a description of any proposed planning activities, including expected  
 726 timelines and outcomes.
- 727 (7)(a) The director shall:
- 728 [~~(a)~~] (i) prioritize an LEA that:
- 729 [~~(i)~~] (A) proposes innovative programming supported by local labor market data;  
 730 [~~(ii)~~] (B) collaborates with local postsecondary institutions and industry;  
 731 [~~(iii)~~] (C) demonstrates the ability to sustain the [~~eatalyst~~] APEX center after the  
 732 grant period;
- 733 [~~(iv)~~] (D) demonstrates a strong focus on student outcomes and workforce  
 734 alignment;
- 735 [~~(v)~~] (E) addresses gaps in high-demand, high-skill career pathways;  
 736 [~~(vi)~~] (F) ensures funds are used to enhance programming quality before  
 737 expansion; and
- 738 [~~(vii)~~] (G) provides for a large number of students to participate in [~~eatalyst~~] APEX  
 739 center programs without limiting participation to students based on  
 740 socio-economic challenges;
- 741 [~~(b)~~] (ii) allow an LEA to apply for:
- 742 [~~(i)~~] (A) smaller grants to bring existing career and technical education programs

- 743 to high-quality standards the state board establishes;
- 744 [(ii)] (B) larger multi-year grants for capital expenditures and program expansion;
- 745 and
- 746 [(iii)] (C) ensure that grant funding does not duplicate existing resources provided
- 747 by other state or local entities;
- 748 [(e)] (iii) consider the unique challenges and opportunities faced by rural LEAs in
- 749 developing and sustaining a career and technical education program or [catalyst]
- 750 APEX center, including:
- 751 [(i)] (A) encouraging collaborative applications from rural consortia or regional
- 752 education service agencies described in Section 53G-4-410 to maximize
- 753 resources and impact; and
- 754 [(ii)] (B) grant awards that consider both rural and non-rural applicants,
- 755 recognizing regional workforce needs and program readiness; and
- 756 [(d)] (iv) allow an LEA to propose [a-catalyst] an APEX center collocated on the
- 757 campus of an institution of higher education if the application includes evidence
- 758 of an agreement between the LEA and the institution of higher education.
- 759 (b) The LEA:
- 760 (i) shall direct the coordination with local postsecondary institutions and industry
- 761 described in Subsection (7)(a)(i)(B) in a manner that the LEA determines is in the
- 762 best interest of the program; and
- 763 (ii) may tailor the level of collaboration described in Subsection (7)(a)(i)(B) to the
- 764 individual needs of each program and of each offering within the program.
- 765 (c) Nothing in Subsection (7)(a)(i)(G) allows the director to prioritize an LEA with more
- 766 students over an LEA with fewer students.
- 767 (8)(a) An LEA that receives a grant shall use program funds to plan for, create, establish,
- 768 enhance, or expand an APEX center that:
- 769 (i) provides learning experiences and instruction that:
- 770 (A) replicates professional environments and workplace practices;
- 771 (B) builds leadership skills;
- 772 (C) builds durable professional skills;
- 773 (D) allows students to advance as the students demonstrate proficiency through
- 774 well-defined metrics;
- 775 (E) uses student projects that address the specific needs or objectives of industry
- 776 partners;

- 777 (F) incorporates industry-standard tools, technologies, and methods;  
 778 (G) provides opportunities for students to develop a product or presentation that  
 779 the students or an industry partner shares with an audience; and  
 780 (H) facilitates mentorship by industry professionals to guide and evaluate the  
 781 student's work;
- 782 (ii) aligns programming with labor market needs and local industry demands;  
 783 (iii) establishes or enhances partnerships with:
- 784 (A) local industries and employers to ensure workforce relevance; or  
 785 (B) as the LEA determines, technical colleges, degree-granting institutions, or  
 786 other postsecondary entities to support postsecondary transitions for students;
- 787 (iv) addresses gaps in regional workforce training or opportunities;  
 788 (v) incorporates:
- 789 (A) career and technical student organizations as the LEA determines relevant;  
 790 (B) advisory boards with representation from local industries and workforce  
 791 experts;
- 792 (C) professional learning opportunities for instructors to improve  
 793 workforce-focused skills; and  
 794 (D) strategies for using labor market data to refine and improve program offerings;
- 795 (vi) focuses on the unique needs and circumstances of the local student body,  
 796 community, and industry partners; and  
 797 (vii) aligns with state board standards for CTE quality.
- 798 [(a)] (b) An LEA that receives a grant:
- 799 (i) may coordinate and collaborate with the Utah Board of Higher Education or an  
 800 individual institution of higher education; and  
 801 (ii) shall submit an annual report to the state board.
- 802 [(b)] (c) The report described in Subsection (8)(b) shall include:
- 803 (i) the use of grant funds;  
 804 (ii) progress in meeting proposed goals and benchmarks, including student  
 805 proficiency measurements using the well-defined metrics described in Subsection  
 806 (6)(b)(viii);  
 807 (iii) updates on partnerships with industry and postsecondary institutions;  
 808 (iv) a demonstration of the alignment of programming with labor market data; and  
 809 (v) a description of student participation and outcomes.
- 810 [(e)] (d) The state board shall ensure that awarded funds:

- 811 (i) are used in accordance with an LEA's application; and  
 812 (ii) that are not used are returned for reallocation.
- 813 ~~[(d)]~~ (e) Upon request, the director shall submit a report on the program to the Education  
 814 Interim Committee and the Public Education Appropriations Subcommittee.
- 815 (9) The Talent Ready Utah Program described in Section 53H-13-303 and the Utah Leading  
 816 through Effective, Actionable, and Dynamic Education established in Section  
 817 53E-10-702, shall collaborate with the state board to develop and execute a marketing  
 818 and outreach plan for the ~~[Catalyst Center]~~ Applied Professional Education Experience  
 819 Grant Program.
- 820 (10) Talent Ready Utah and the Utah Leading through Effective, Actionable, and Dynamic  
 821 Education shall:
- 822 (a) execute the marketing and outreach plan described in Subsection (9); and  
 823 (b) submit an annual report to the state board that includes:  
 824 (i) the number of LEAs reached through marketing efforts;  
 825 (ii) a description of outreach activities and events conducted; and  
 826 (iii) feedback from LEAs regarding program accessibility and clarity.
- 827 (11) The state board:
- 828 (a) may provide up to 1% of the funds appropriated by the Legislature as described in  
 829 Section 53F-9-204 to administer the program;
- 830 (b) in fiscal year 2026, shall provide up to 1% of the funds appropriated by the  
 831 Legislature as described in Section 53F-9-204 to Talent Ready Utah and the Utah  
 832 Leading through Effective, Actionable, and Dynamic Education for the purposes  
 833 described in Subsections (9) and (10); and
- 834 (c) shall make rules in accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative  
 835 Rulemaking Act, to implement this Subsection (11).

836 *The following section is affected by a coordination clause at the end of this bill.*

837 Section 7. Section **53F-9-204** is amended to read:

838 **53F-9-204 (Effective 07/01/26). Public Education Economic Stabilization**  
 839 **Restricted Account.**

- 840 (1) There is created within the Uniform School Fund a restricted account known as the  
 841 "Public Education Economic Stabilization Restricted Account."
- 842 (2)(a) Except as provided in Subsection (2)(b), the account shall be funded from the  
 843 following revenue sources:  
 844 (i) 15% of the difference between, as determined by the Office of the Legislative

- 845 Fiscal Analyst:
- 846 (A) the estimated amount of ongoing Income Tax Fund and Uniform School Fund  
847 revenue available for the Legislature to appropriate for the next fiscal year; and  
848 (B) the amount of ongoing appropriations from the Income Tax Fund and Uniform  
849 School Fund in the current fiscal year; and  
850 (ii) other appropriations as the Legislature may designate.
- 851 (b) If the appropriation described in Subsection (2)(a) would cause the ongoing  
852 appropriations to the account to exceed 11% of Uniform School Fund appropriations  
853 described in Section 53F-9-201.1 for the same fiscal year, the Legislature shall  
854 appropriate only those funds necessary to ensure that the ongoing appropriations to  
855 the account equal 11% of Uniform School Fund appropriations for that fiscal year.
- 856 (3) Subject to the availability of ongoing appropriations to the account, in accordance with  
857 Utah Constitution, Article X, Section 5, Subsection (4), the ongoing appropriation to the  
858 account shall be used to fund:
- 859 (a) except for a year described in Subsection (3)(b) or (c), one-time appropriations to the  
860 public education system~~[-, including at least \$65,000,000 to the Catalyst Center Grant  
861 Program described in Section 53E-3-507.1];~~
- 862 (b) the Minimum School Program for a year in which Income Tax Fund revenue and  
863 Uniform School Fund revenue are insufficient to fund:
- 864 (i) ongoing appropriations to the public education system; and  
865 (ii) enrollment growth and inflation estimates, as defined in Section 53F-9-201.1; and  
866 (c) the minimum basic local amount as defined in Section 53F-2-301 for a year in which  
867 the minimum basic tax rate, as defined in Section 53F-2-301, is insufficient to  
868 generate the amount described in Subsection 53F-2-301(2)(a).
- 869 (4)(a) The account shall earn interest.
- 870 (b) All interest earned on account money shall be deposited in the account.
- 871 (5) On or before December 31, 2023, and every three years thereafter, the Office of the  
872 Legislative Fiscal Analyst shall:
- 873 (a) review the percentages described in Subsections (2)(a)(i) and (2)(b); and  
874 (b) recommend to the Executive Appropriations Committee any changes based on the  
875 review described in Subsection (5)(a).
- 876 (6) In preparing budget bills for a given fiscal year, the Executive Appropriations  
877 Committee shall make the one-time appropriations described in Subsection (3)(a) by  
878 appropriating at least the lesser of 10% of the total amount of the one-time

- 879 appropriations to:
- 880 (a) the cost of providing 32 paid professional hours for teachers in accordance with
- 881 Section 53F-7-203;
- 882 (b) the amount to make the distribution required under Section 53F-2-527;
- 883 (c) the cost of the Stipends for Future Educators Grant Program described in Section
- 884 53F-5-223;[~~and~~]
- 885 (d) the cost of the Rural School Sports Facilities Grant Program described in Section
- 886 53F-10-303[~~;~~] ; and
- 887 (e) \$100,000,000 to the Applied Professional Education Experience Grant Program
- 888 described in Section 53F-5-224.
- 889 (7) No later than October 15 of each year, the state board shall report to the Office of the
- 890 Legislative Fiscal Analyst an estimated cost for each of the one-time appropriations
- 891 described in Subsection (6).
- 892 Section 8. Section **53G-8-213** is amended to read:
- 893 **53G-8-213 (Effective 05/06/26). Reintegration plan for student alleged to have**
- 894 **committed violent felony or weapon offense.**
- 895 (1) As used in this section, "multidisciplinary team" means:
- 896 (a) the local education agency;
- 897 (b) the juvenile court;
- 898 (c) the Division of Juvenile Justice and Youth Services;
- 899 (d) a school safety and security specialist designated under Section 53G-8-701.6;
- 900 (e) school safety and security director designated under Section 53G-8-701.8;
- 901 (f) a school resource officer if applicable; and
- 902 (g) any other relevant party that should be involved in a reintegration plan.
- 903 (2) If [~~a school district~~] an LEA receives a notification from the juvenile court or a law
- 904 enforcement agency that a student was arrested for, charged with, or adjudicated in the
- 905 juvenile court for a serious offense, the LEA and the relevant school shall develop a
- 906 reintegration plan for the student with a multidisciplinary team, the student, and the
- 907 student's parent or guardian, within five school days after the day on which the [~~school~~]
- 908 LEA receives a notification.
- 909 (3) The relevant school described in Subsection (2) may deny admission to the student until
- 910 the school completes the reintegration plan under Subsection (2).
- 911 (4) The reintegration plan under Subsection (2) shall address:
- 912 (a) a behavioral intervention for the student;

- 913 (b) a short-term mental health or counseling service for the student;
- 914 (c) an academic intervention for the student; and
- 915 (d) if the serious offense was directed at a school employee or another student within the
- 916 school, notification of the reintegration plan to that school employee or student and
- 917 the student's parent.
- 918 (5) ~~[A school district]~~ An LEA may not reintegrate a student into a school where:
- 919 (a) a student or staff member has a protective order against the student being
- 920 reintegrated; or
- 921 (b) a student or staff member is the victim of a sexual crime or forcible felony
- 922 committed by the student being reintegrated.
- 923 (6)(a) Notwithstanding Subsection (2), ~~[a school district]~~ an LEA may elect to not
- 924 integrate a student into a school if the student has committed, or allegedly committed,
- 925 a forcible felony.
- 926 (b) If ~~[a school district]~~ an LEA elects to not integrate a student under Subsection (6)(a),
- 927 the ~~[school district]~~ LEA shall provide alternative education options for the student.
- 928 (7) A reintegration plan under this section is classified as a protected record under Section
- 929 63G-2-305.
- 930 (8) All other records of disclosures under this section are governed by Title 63G, Chapter 2,
- 931 Government Records Access and Management Act, and the Family Educational Rights
- 932 and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. Sec. 1232g.
- 933 Section 9. Section **53G-8-701.5** is amended to read:
- 934 **53G-8-701.5 (Effective 05/06/26). School safety needs assessment -- School safety**
- 935 **personnel -- Alternative requirements.**
- 936 (1)(a) In accordance with Subsections (1)(c) through (e), no later than October 15 of an
- 937 applicable year, an LEA shall:
- 938 (i) ensure a school safety needs assessment the state security chief selects in
- 939 collaboration with the school safety center is conducted in accordance with
- 940 Subsection (1)(b) for each school or K-12 campus within the LEA to determine
- 941 the needs and deficiencies regarding:
- 942 (A) appropriate school safety personnel, including necessary supports, training,
- 943 and policy creation for the personnel;
- 944 (B) physical building security and safety, including required upgrades to facilities
- 945 and safety technology;
- 946 (C) a school's current threat and emergency response protocols, including any

- 947 emergency response agreements with local law enforcement;
- 948 (D) cardiac emergency preparedness, including an inventory of whether
- 949 automated external defibrillators are present and accessible, maintenance
- 950 status, and current staff training offerings; and
- 951 (E) compliance with universal access key box requirements under Section
- 952 53G-8-805; and
- 953 (ii) report the results of the school safety needs assessment for each school within the
- 954 LEA to the state security chief and the School Safety Center.
- 955 (b)(i) The school safety specialist described in Section 53G-8-701.6, in collaboration
- 956 with the county security chief or, regarding the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the
- 957 Blind, the state security chief, and with the local law enforcement of relevant
- 958 jurisdiction over the school as described in Section 53-25-701, shall conduct the
- 959 school safety needs assessment for each school.
- 960 (ii) A school safety and security director may fulfill the role of a school safety and
- 961 security specialist in conducting the school safety needs assessment.
- 962 (c) The school safety needs assessment required under Subsection (1)(a)(i) shall be
- 963 conducted at least once every three years for each school or K-12 campus.
- 964 (d) An LEA may implement a rotating or staggered schedule for conducting school
- 965 safety needs assessments among the buildings within the LEA, provided that:
- 966 (i) each school within a K-12 campus is assessed at least once every three years; and
- 967 (ii) the LEA documents the rotating or staggered assessment schedule and shares this
- 968 schedule with the state security chief, the School Safety Center, the county
- 969 security chief regarding a school other than the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the
- 970 Blind, and the local law enforcement of relevant jurisdiction as described in
- 971 Section 53-25-701.
- 972 (e) The LEA shall update the assessment schedule as necessary to ensure compliance
- 973 with the three-year assessment requirement under Subsection (1)(c).
- 974 (f) The state board shall use the results of the school safety needs assessment for each
- 975 school within an LEA to award a grant to an LEA in accordance with Section
- 976 53F-5-220.
- 977 (g) Any information or record detailing a school's needs assessment results is:
- 978 (i) a private, controlled, or protected record under Title 63G, Chapter 2, Government
- 979 Records Access and Management Act; and
- 980 (ii) available only to:

- 981 (A) the state security chief;
- 982 (B) the School Safety Center;
- 983 (C) members of an LEA governing board;
- 984 (D) administrators of the LEA and school the needs assessment concerns;
- 985 (E) only to the extent necessary to award a grant under Section 53F-5-220, the
- 986 state board;
- 987 (F) the applicable school safety personnel described in Subsection (2);
- 988 (G) a local law enforcement agency that would respond to the school in case of an
- 989 emergency; and
- 990 (H) the county security chief regarding a school other than the Utah Schools for
- 991 the Deaf and the Blind.
- 992 (h) An individual who intentionally or knowingly provides the information described in
- 993 Subsection (1)(g) to an individual or entity not listed in Subsection (1)(g)(ii) is guilty
- 994 of a class B misdemeanor.
- 995 (2)(a) An LEA shall ensure each school within the LEA has the following school safety
- 996 personnel:
- 997 (i) a school safety and security specialist described in Section 53G-8-701.6; and
- 998 (ii) based on the results of the needs assessment described in Subsection (1), at least
- 999 one of the following:
- 1000 (A) a school resource officer;
- 1001 (B) a school guardian; or
- 1002 (C) an armed school security guard.
- 1003 (b) In addition to the school safety personnel described in Subsection (2)(a), an LEA
- 1004 shall designate a school safety and security director described in Section 53G-8-701.8.
- 1005 (c) The same individual may serve in more than one of the roles listed in Subsections
- 1006 (2)(a) and (b) if the school notifies the School Safety Center and the state security
- 1007 chief of the decision to have the same individual serve in multiple roles as described
- 1008 in this Subsection (2).
- 1009 (d) An LEA may implement the requirements of Subsection (2)(a)(ii) before the LEA
- 1010 has completed the school safety needs assessment described in Subsection (1).
- 1011 (e) The state security chief in consultation with the School Safety Center shall establish
- 1012 a timeline for an LEA to comply with the school safety personnel requirements of
- 1013 this Subsection (2).
- 1014 (3)(a) An LEA, school administrator, or private school may apply to the state security

- 1015 chief for an approved alternative to the requirements described in:
- 1016 (i) Section 53-22-105;
- 1017 (ii) this section;
- 1018 (iii) Section 53G-8-701.6;
- 1019 (iv) Section 53G-8-701.8; and
- 1020 (v) Section 53G-8-704.
- 1021 (b) In approving or denying an application described in Subsection (3)(a), the state
- 1022 security chief may consider factors that impact a school or LEA's ability to adhere to
- 1023 the requirements of this section, including the school or LEA's:
- 1024 (i) population size;
- 1025 (ii) staffing needs or capacity;
- 1026 (iii) geographic location;
- 1027 (iv) available funding; or
- 1028 (v) general demonstration of need for an alternative to the requirements of this
- 1029 section.
- 1030 (4) A private school shall identify an individual at the private school to serve as the safety
- 1031 liaison with the local law enforcement of relevant jurisdiction and the state security chief.
- 1032 Section 10. Section **53G-8-701.6** is amended to read:
- 1033 **53G-8-701.6 (Effective 05/06/26). School safety and security specialist.**
- 1034 (1) As used in this section, "principal" means the chief administrator at a public school,
- 1035 including:
- 1036 (a) a school principal;
- 1037 (b) a charter school director; or
- 1038 (c) the superintendent of the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind.
- 1039 (2)(a) Subject to Subsection (2)(b) and except as provided in Subsection 53G-8-701.5(3),
- 1040 every campus within an LEA shall designate a school safety and security specialist
- 1041 from the employees of the relevant campus.
- 1042 (b) The school safety and security specialist:
- 1043 (i) may not be a principal; and
- 1044 (ii) may be the school safety and security director at one campus within the LEA.
- 1045 (3) The school safety and security specialist shall:
- 1046 (a) report directly to the principal;
- 1047 (b) oversee school safety and security practices to ensure a safe and secure school
- 1048 environment for students and staff;

- 1049 (c) ensure adherence with all policies, procedures, protocols, rules, and regulations  
1050 relating to school safety and security through collaborating and maintaining effective  
1051 communications with the following as applicable:
- 1052 (i) the principal;
  - 1053 (ii) school staff;
  - 1054 (iii) the school resource officer;
  - 1055 (iv) the armed school security guard;
  - 1056 (v) the school guardian;
  - 1057 (vi) local law enforcement;
  - 1058 (vii) the county security chief regarding a school other than the Utah Schools for the  
1059 Deaf and the Blind;
  - 1060 (viii) the school safety and security director;
  - 1061 (ix) the LEA; and
  - 1062 (x) school-based behavioral and mental health professionals;
- 1063 (d) in collaboration with the county security chief or, regarding the Utah Schools for the  
1064 Deaf and the Blind, the state security chief, and with the local law enforcement of  
1065 relevant jurisdiction over the school as described in Section 53-25-701:
- 1066 (i) conduct the school safety needs assessment described in Section 53G-8-701.5;
  - 1067 (ii) in accordance with Sections 53-25-701 and 53G-8-701.5, submit the completed  
1068 assessments to the School Safety Center created in Section 53G-8-802 by October  
1069 15 of each year; and
  - 1070 (iii) review the results of the school safety needs assessment to recommend and  
1071 implement improvements to school facilities, policies, procedures, protocols,  
1072 rules, and regulations relating to school safety and security;
- 1073 (e) participate on the multidisciplinary team that the school establishes;
- 1074 (f) conduct a behavioral threat assessment when the school safety and security specialist  
1075 deems necessary using an evidence-based tool the state security chief recommends in  
1076 consultation with the school safety center and the Office of Substance Use and  
1077 Mental Health;
- 1078 (g) regularly monitor and report to the principal, local law enforcement, and, if  
1079 applicable, the LEA superintendent or designee, security risks for the school resulting  
1080 from:
- 1081 (i) issues with school facilities; or
  - 1082 (ii) the implementation of practices, policies, procedures, and protocols relating to

- 1083 school safety and security;
- 1084 (h) coordinate with local first responder agencies to implement and monitor safety and  
1085 security drills in accordance with policy and applicable procedures and protocols;
- 1086 (i) ensure that school staff, and, when appropriate, students, receive training on and  
1087 remain current on the school's safety and security procedures and protocols;
- 1088 (j) following an event where security of the school has been significantly compromised,  
1089 organize a debriefing with the individuals listed in Subsection (3)(c) following the  
1090 recommendations from the state security chief, in collaboration with the School  
1091 Safety Center, regarding strengthening school safety and security practices, policies,  
1092 procedures, and protocols;
- 1093 (k) abide by any LEA, school, or law enforcement agency policy outlining the chain of  
1094 command;
- 1095 (l) during an emergency, coordinate with the following individuals as applicable, the:  
1096 (i) school resource officer;  
1097 (ii) school guardians;  
1098 (iii) armed school security guards;  
1099 (iv) school administrators; and  
1100 (v) responding law enforcement officers;
- 1101 (m) follow any LEA, school, or law enforcement agency student privacy policies,  
1102 including state and federal privacy laws;
- 1103 (n) participate in an annual training the state security chief selects in consultation with  
1104 the School Safety Center; and
- 1105 (o) remain current on:  
1106 (i) a comprehensive school guideline the state security chief selects;  
1107 (ii) the duties of a school safety and security specialist described in this Subsection (3);  
1108 and  
1109 (iii) the school's emergency response plan.
- 1110 (4) During an active emergency at the school, the school safety and security specialist is  
1111 subordinate to any responding law enforcement officers.
- 1112 Section 11. Section **53G-8-701.8** is amended to read:  
1113 **53G-8-701.8 (Effective 05/06/26). School safety and security director.**
- 1114 (1) Except as provided in Subsection 53G-8-701.5(3), an LEA shall designate a school  
1115 safety and security director as the LEA point of contact for the county security chief  
1116 regarding a school other than the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind, local law

- 1117 enforcement, and the state security chief.
- 1118 (2) A school safety and security director shall:
- 1119 (a) participate in and satisfy the training requirements as follows:
- 1120 (i) only once, the training requirements described in Section 53-22-105 for school
- 1121 guardians; and
- 1122 (ii) the school resource officer and administrator training the state security chief
- 1123 approves in consultation with the School Safety Center;
- 1124 (b) if serving as a backup school guardian, satisfy all requirements described in
- 1125 53-22-105;
- 1126 (c) if the designee is an employee of an LEA, participate on the multidisciplinary team
- 1127 the LEA establishes;
- 1128 (d) coordinate security responses among, if applicable, the following individuals in the
- 1129 LEA that employs the school safety and security director:
- 1130 (i) school safety and security specialists;
- 1131 (ii) school resource officers;
- 1132 (iii) armed school security guards; and
- 1133 (iv) school guardians; and
- 1134 (e) collaborate and maintain effective communications with local law enforcement, a
- 1135 county security chief or, regarding the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind, the
- 1136 state security chief, the LEA, and school-based behavioral and mental health
- 1137 professionals to ensure adherence with all policies, procedures, protocols, rules, and
- 1138 regulations relating to school safety and security.
- 1139 (3) A school safety and security director:
- 1140 (a) does not have authority to act in a law enforcement capacity; and
- 1141 (b) may, at the LEA that employs the director:
- 1142 (i) take actions necessary to prevent or abate an active threat; and
- 1143 (ii) temporarily detain an individual when the school safety and security director has
- 1144 reasonable cause to believe the individual has committed or is about to commit a
- 1145 forcible felony.
- 1146 (4) Notwithstanding Subsection 76-11-205(4), if a school safety and security director is
- 1147 carrying a firearm, the school safety and security director shall carry the school safety
- 1148 and security director's firearm in a concealed manner and may not, unless during an
- 1149 active threat, display or open carry a firearm while on school grounds.
- 1150 (5) A school may use the services of the school safety and security director on a temporary

1151 basis to satisfy the school safety personnel requirement of Subsection 53G-8-701.5(2).

1152 (6) The state security chief shall:

1153 (a) for each school safety and security director, track each school safety and security  
1154 director by collecting the photograph and the name and contact information for each  
1155 school safety and security director; and

1156 (b) make the information described in Subsection (6)(a) readily available to each law  
1157 enforcement agency in the state categorized by LEA.

1158 Section 12. Section **53G-9-702** is amended to read:

1159 **53G-9-702 (Effective 05/06/26). Youth suicide prevention programs -- State**  
1160 **board to develop model programs.**

1161 (1) As used in the section:

1162 (a) "Elementary grades" means:

1163 (i) kindergarten through grade 5; and

1164 (ii) if the associated middle or junior high school does not include grade 6, grade 6.

1165 (b) "Intervention" means an effort to prevent a student from attempting suicide.

1166 (c) "Postvention" means mental health intervention after a suicide attempt or death to  
1167 prevent or contain contagion.

1168 (d) "Program" means a youth suicide prevention program described in Subsection (2).

1169 (e) "Public education suicide prevention coordinator" means an individual designated by  
1170 the state board as described in Subsection (4).

1171 (f) "Secondary grades" means:

1172 (i) grades 7 through 12; and

1173 (ii) if a middle or junior high school includes grade 6, grade 6.

1174 (g) "State suicide prevention coordinator" means the state suicide prevention coordinator  
1175 described in Section 26B-5-611.

1176 (2) In collaboration with the public education suicide prevention coordinator, a school  
1177 district or charter school shall implement a youth suicide prevention program, which, in  
1178 collaboration with the training, programs, and initiatives described in Section 53G-9-607,  
1179 shall include programs and training to address:

1180 (a) for elementary grades and secondary grades:

1181 (i) life-affirming education, including on the concepts of resiliency, healthy habits,  
1182 self-care, problem solving, and conflict resolution;

1183 (ii) methods of strengthening the family; and

1184 (iii) methods of strengthening a youth's relationships in the school and community;

- 1185                   and
- 1186           (b) for secondary grades:
- 1187               (i) prevention of youth suicide;
- 1188               (ii) decreasing the risk of suicide among youth who are:
- 1189                   (A) not accepted by family for any reason, including lesbian, gay, bisexual,
- 1190                   transgender, or questioning youth; or
- 1191                   (B) suffer from bullying;
- 1192               (iii) youth suicide intervention; and
- 1193               (iv) postvention for family, students, and faculty.
- 1194   (3) Each school district and charter school shall ensure that the youth suicide prevention
- 1195   program described in Subsection (2):
- 1196       (a) considers appropriate coordination with the following prevention programs:
- 1197           (i) the prevention of bullying and cyber-bullying, as those terms are defined in
- 1198           Section 53G-9-601; and
- 1199           (ii) the prevention of underage drinking of alcohol and substance abuse under Section
- 1200           53G-10-406; and
- 1201       (b) includes provisions to ensure that the school district or charter school promptly
- 1202       communicates with the parent or guardian of a student in accordance with Section
- 1203       53G-9-604.
- 1204   (4) The state board shall:
- 1205       (a) designate a public education suicide prevention coordinator; and
- 1206       (b) in collaboration with the Department of Health and Human Services and the state
- 1207       suicide prevention coordinator, develop model programs to provide to school districts
- 1208       and charter schools:
- 1209           (i) program training; and
- 1210           (ii) resources regarding the required components described in Subsections (2)(a) and
- 1211           (b).
- 1212   (5) The public education suicide prevention coordinator shall:
- 1213       (a) oversee the youth suicide prevention programs of school districts and charter
- 1214       schools; and
- 1215       (b) coordinate prevention and postvention programs, services, and efforts with the state
- 1216       suicide prevention coordinator.
- 1217   (6) A public school suicide prevention program may allow school personnel to ask a
- 1218   student questions related to youth suicide prevention, intervention, or postvention.

- 1219 (7)(a) Subject to legislative appropriation and except as provided in Section 53F-2-525,  
1220 the state board may distribute money to a school district or charter school to be used  
1221 to implement evidence-based practices and programs, or emerging best practices and  
1222 programs, for preventing suicide in the school district or charter school.
- 1223 (b) The state board shall ensure that an LEA's allocation of funds from the board's  
1224 distribution of money under Subsection (7)(a) provides[-] ;  
1225 (i) an amount equal to at least \$1,000 per school[-] ; or  
1226 (ii) if appropriations are not available to provide the amount described in Subsection  
1227 (7)(b)(i), a commensurately lesser amount.
- 1228 (c)(i) A school shall use money allocated to the school under Subsection (7)(b) to  
1229 implement evidence-based practices and programs, or emerging best practices and  
1230 programs, for preventing suicide.
- 1231 (ii) Each school may select the evidence-based practices and programs, or emerging  
1232 best practices and programs, for preventing suicide that the school implements.
- 1233 (8) An LEA may not charge indirect costs to the program.

1234 Section 13. **Effective Date.**

- 1235 (1) Except as provided in Subsection (2), this bill takes effect May 6, 2026.  
1236 (2) The actions affecting Section 53F-9-204 (Effective 07/01/26) take effect on July 1, 2026.

1237 Section 14. **Coordinating S.B. 34 with H.B. 1.**

1238 If S.B. 34, Public Education Revisions, and H.B. 1, Public Education Base Budget  
1239 Amendments, both pass and become law, the Legislature intends that, on July 1, 2026, the  
1240 amendments to Subsection 53F-9-204(6)(e) in S.B. 34 supersede the amendments to  
1241 Subsection 53F-9-204(6)(e) in H.B. 1.