

Lincoln Fillmore proposes the following substitute bill:

**School Funding Amendments**

2026 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

**Chief Sponsor: Lincoln Fillmore**

House Sponsor:

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**LONG TITLE**

**General Description:**

This bill modifies provisions regarding weighted pupil units.

**Highlighted Provisions:**

This bill:

- modifies the formula to determine a school district's weighted pupil units by:
  - repealing an exclusion for self-contained classes for children with a disability; and
  - accounting for positive or negative growth based on the current school year's student count; and
- reallocates savings from enrollment decline to special education self-contained weighted pupil units;
- creates special education self-contained weighted pupil units; and
- makes technical and conforming changes.

**Money Appropriated in this Bill:**

None

**Other Special Clauses:**

This bill provides a special effective date.

**Utah Code Sections Affected:**

AMENDS:

**53F-2-302**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2024, Chapter 124

ENACTS:

**53F-2-307.5**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

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

Section 1. Section **53F-2-302** is amended to read:

**53F-2-302 . Determination of weighted pupil units.**

- (1) The number of weighted pupil units in the Minimum School Program for each year is the total of the units for each school district and, subject to Subsection (5), charter school, determined in accordance with this section.
- (2) The number of weighted pupil units is computed by adding the average daily membership of all pupils of the LEA attending schools~~[, other than self-contained classes for children with a disability].~~
- (3)(a) Except as provided in Subsection (3)(b), for a fiscal year beginning on or after July 1, 2023, the number of weighted pupil units for kindergarten students shall be computed by adding the average daily membership of all pupils of the LEA enrolled in kindergarten.
- (b) The number of weighted pupil units is computed by multiplying the average daily membership for the number of students who are enrolled in kindergarten for less than the equivalent length of the schedule for grades 1 through 3, based on the October 1 data described in Section 53F-2-302, by .55.
- (4)(a) The state board shall ~~[use prior year plus growth to determine average daily membership in distributing]~~ distribute money under the Minimum School Program where the distribution is based on kindergarten through grade 12 ADMs ~~[or weighted pupil units.]~~
- ~~[(b) Under prior year plus growth, kindergarten through grade 12 average daily membership for the current year is-]~~based on the actual kindergarten through grade 12 average daily membership for the previous year plus an estimated percentage growth factor.
- ~~[(c)]~~ (b) The growth factor is the percentage increase or decrease in total ~~[average daily membership]~~ student count on the first school day of October in the current year as compared to the total ~~[average daily membership]~~ student count on the first school day of October of the previous year.
- ~~[(d) If the calculations described in Subsections (4)(a) through (c) show a loss in enrollment for an LEA due to factors beyond the LEA's control, the state board may allow a percentage increase in units for the LEA to account for the loss.]~~
- (5) In distributing funds to charter schools under this section, charter school pupils shall be weighted, where applicable, as follows:
- (a) except as provided in Subsection (3)(b), .9 for pupils in kindergarten through grade 6;
- (b) .99 for pupils in grades 7 through 8; and
- (c) 1.2 for pupils in grades 9 through 12.

(6) In preparation of public education budgets, the Executive Appropriations Committee shall reallocate any savings from enrollment decline under Subsection (4) for self-contained special education weighted pupil units under Section 53F-2-307.5.

Section 2. Section **53F-2-307.5** is enacted to read:

**53F-2-307.5 . Self-contained special education weighted pupil units.**

(1) As used in this section:

(a) "LEA" means:

(i) a school district; or

(ii) a charter school.

(b) "Self-contained special education WPU" means a WPU for students in a self-contained classroom for students with disabilities.

(2) A self-contained special education weighted pupil unit is equal to one pupil in average daily membership with a disability in a self-contained special education classroom.

(3)(a) An LEA:

(i) shall use self-contained special education classroom funding under this section to pay the costs of providing a self-contained special education classroom;

(ii) may use self-contained special education weighted pupil units to supplement other state funds, local funds, or federal funds; and

(iii) may not use self-contained special education weighted pupil units to supplant other state funds, local funds, or federal funds.

(b) Notwithstanding Subsection (3)(a), an LEA may expend self-contained special education classroom funding for constructing facilities or altering existing facilities in accordance with Subsection 53F-2-307(4).

(4)(a) The state board shall allocate money appropriated to the state board for self-contained special education weighted pupil units based on an LEA's number of students with a disability in a self-contained special education classroom in accordance with this Subsection (4).

(b) The state board shall use an LEA's average number of self-contained special education weighted pupil units determined by the prior year's average daily membership plus growth.

(c) The growth factor described in Subsection (4)(b) is the percentage change in total enrollment of students in a self-contained special education classroom on the first school day of October in the current school year as compared to the total enrollment of students in a self-contained special education classroom on the first school day of

97                    October in the previous school year.

98            (5) If money appropriated under this chapter for programs for self-contained special  
99                    education weighted pupil units does not meet the costs of LEAs for those programs,  
100                   each LEA shall first receive the amount generated for each student with a disability  
101                   under the basic program.

102                   Section 3. **Effective Date.**

103                   This bill takes effect on July 1, 2027.