

1 **School Swimming and Lifeguarding Programs**

2026 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

**Chief Sponsor: Jen Plumb**

House Sponsor:

---

---

2 **LONG TITLE**3 **General Description:**

4 This bill enacts provisions in public education related to water safety.

5 **Highlighted Provisions:**

6 This bill:

7 

- 8 ▶ defines terms;
- 9 ▶ requires the inclusion of water safety instruction in the public education core curriculum

10 standards for physical education;

11 

- 12 ▶ allows the exemption of a student from required water safety instruction under certain

13 circumstances;

14 

- 15 ▶ allows a local education agency (LEA) to:
  - 16 • provide swim instruction, lifeguard certification training, and swim instructor

17 certification training as courses under certain conditions;

18 

- 19 • construe the completion of certain courses toward physical education credit

20 requirements or other requirements; and

21 

- 22 • enter into an agreement with certain providers to offer certain programs; and

23 

- 24 ▶ grants rulemaking authority to the State Board of Education.

25 **Money Appropriated in this Bill:**

26 None

27 **Other Special Clauses:**

28 This bill provides a special effective date.

29 **Utah Code Sections Affected:**30 **ENACTS:**31 **53G-10-410**, Utah Code Annotated 195332 **53G-10-411**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

---

---

29 *Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*30 Section 1. Section **53G-10-410** is enacted to read:

31           **53G-10-410 . Water safety instruction -- Requirements.**

32           (1) The state board shall:

33           (a) make standards to develop and implement water safety instruction as part of the core  
34           curriculum standards for instruction in physical education, beginning with the  
35           2028-2029 academic year;

36           (b) consult with the American Red Cross or other similar organization to make the  
37           standards described in Subsection (1)(a); and

38           (c) ensure that the standards described in Subsection (1)(a) include instruction in:

39            (i) safe behaviors in and around water;

40            (ii) water condition awareness;

41            (iii) the importance of pool barriers and fencing;

42            (iv) the proper use of flotation devices;

43            (v) the importance of swim lessons;

44            (vi) the proper supervision of swim areas;

45            (vii) the importance of avoiding alcohol and substance use in and around water;

46            (viii) recognizing when someone is in trouble and calling for help; and

47            (ix) emergency response techniques, including:

48              (A) calling for emergency assistance; and

49              (B) CPR training described in Section 53G-10-408.

50           (2) Beginning in the 2028-2029 academic year, an LEA may ensure that each student  
51           receives instruction on water safety as described in this section.

52           (3) A student is exempt from completing water safety instruction if:

53            (a) the student's parent or legal guardian requests that the student be exempt from water  
54           safety instruction; or

55            (b) the student has an IEP, and water safety instruction is inconsistent with the student's  
56           IEP.

57           (4) Nothing in this section requires access to a body of water for practical instruction in the  
58           concepts described in this section.

59           Section 2. Section **53G-10-411** is enacted to read:

60           **53G-10-411 . Swim instruction -- Swim instructor certification training --**

61           **Lifeguard certification training -- Requirements.**

62           (1) As used in this section:

63            (a) "Lifeguard certification training" means a training and certification program for a  
64           student who is at least 15 years old and that is certified by the American Red Cross or

65       an equivalent program approved by the Department of Health and Human Services  
66       that:

67       (i) a certified lifeguard instructor teaches at a public or private facility;  
68       (ii) a student may take to satisfy credit requirements or other requirements for  
69       physical education; and  
70       (iii) offers an opportunity for a student to enter the work force as a lifeguard after  
71       certification.

72       (b)(i) "Swim instruction" means swim lessons from a certified swim instructor that  
73       instruct a student in knowing how to:

74       (A) enter and exit water that is over the head;  
75       (B) float or tread water for at least one minute;  
76       (C) turn over and around in the water;  
77       (D) swim at least 25 yards; and  
78       (E) safely exit the water.

79       (ii) "Swim instruction" includes swim lessons at the beginning, intermediate, and  
80       advanced levels, including other distinctions of skill and ability, as the state board  
81       defines in rule.

82       (c) "Swim instructor certification training" means a training and certification program  
83       for a student who is at least 15 years old and that:

84       (i) is certified by the American Red Cross or an equivalent program approved by the  
85       Department of Health and Human Services;  
86       (ii) a certified lifeguard instructor or swim instructor teaches at a public or private  
87       facility;  
88       (iii) a student may take to satisfy credit requirements or other requirements for  
89       physical education; and  
90       (iv) offers an opportunity for a student to enter the work force as a swim instructor  
91       after certification.

92       (2) Beginning with the 2026-2027 academic year, and subject to Subsection (3), an LEA  
93       may include courses for swim instruction, lifeguard certification training, or swim  
94       instructor certification training for credit, including toward a credit requirement or other  
95       requirements for physical education.

96       (3) Subject to Subsection (4) or (5), a student may receive credit toward a credit  
97       requirement or other requirements for physical education by:

98       (a) completing a course in swim instruction;

99        (b) completing a swim instruction certification training program; or  
100        (c) completing a lifeguard certification training program.

101        (4)(a) If an LEA does not have access to an LEA pool, the LEA may partner with a  
102        recreation center, public facility, another LEA, or a private facility that is under the  
103        supervision of a certified lifeguard, to provide swim instruction to the LEA's students  
104        as part of physical education within the core standards.

105        (b) An LEA shall construe the completion of a swim instruction course outside of the  
106        school day or school year toward a credit requirement or other requirements for  
107        physical education for a student if the student's parent submits an application for  
108        credit to the LEA that includes a certification or verification from the relevant  
109        instructor verifying:

110        (i) the number of swim instruction hours the course comprised; and  
111        (ii) the minimum required instruction described in Subsection (1).

112        (5)(a) An LEA may partner with a recreation center or other public or private facility  
113        under the supervision of a certified lifeguard to provide lifeguard certification  
114        training or swim instructor certification training to the LEA's students as part of  
115        physical education within the core standards.

116        (b) An LEA shall construe the completion of a lifeguard certification training program  
117        or a swim instructor certification training program toward a credit requirement or  
118        other requirements for physical education for a student if the student's parent submits  
119        an application to the LEA that includes a certification or verification from the  
120        relevant instructor verifying:

121        (i) the number of lifeguard certification training hours or swim instructor certification  
122        training hours the course comprised; and  
123        (ii) the minimum required instruction described in Subsection (1).

124        (6) The state board shall, in accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative  
125        Rulemaking Act, make rules to implement this section.

126        **Section 3. Effective Date.**

127        This bill takes effect on July 1, 2026.