

Budget Brief – Science Educational Outreach

PED BB-014

SUMMARY

The Science Educational Outreach program assists Utah’s professional science organizations in providing their expertise in teaching the State’s science core curriculum in the public schools. Professional organizations match state revenues which support and enhance the delivery of science education through demonstrations, presentations, and educational activities in the public schools.

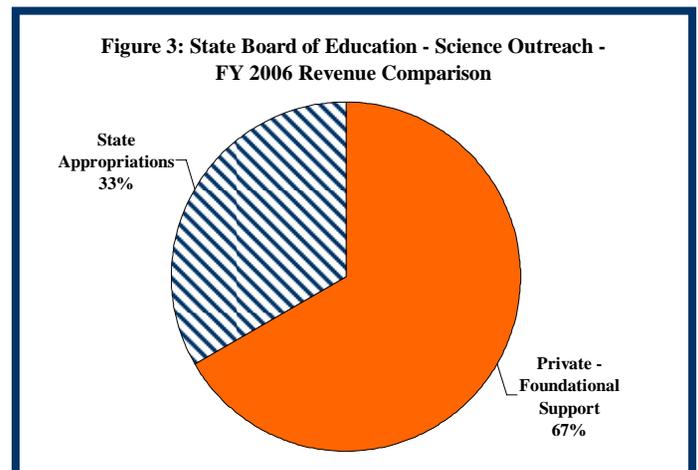
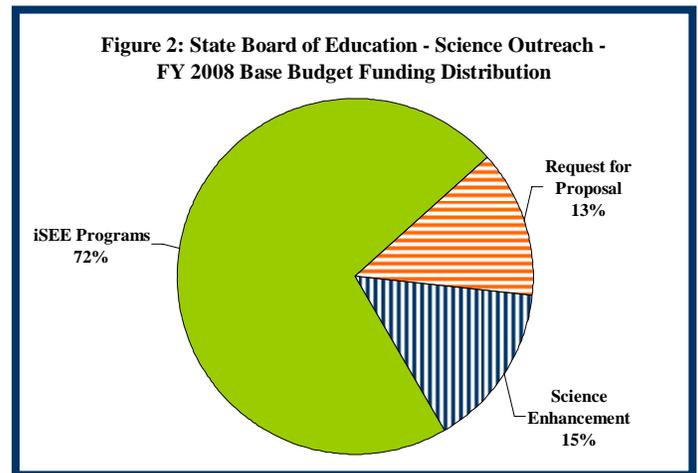
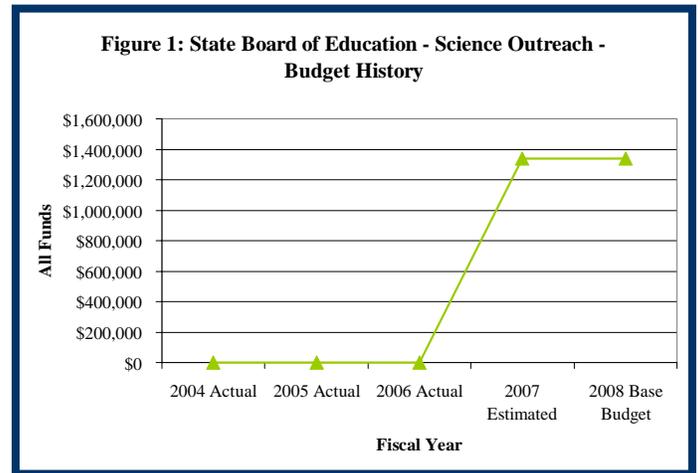
The program ensures that each of the 40 school districts have the opportunity to receive services in a balanced and comprehensive manner over three years. Schools receive services through three programs: the Informal Science Education Enhancement (iSEE), a Request for Proposal (RFP) program, and a Science Enhancement program.

Program History

Science outreach programs in the public schools began in the 1970s when the Legislature provided revenue to the Hansen Planetarium (now Clark Planetarium) to conduct educational programs and demonstrations. During the 2006 General Session, the Legislature bifurcated the Fine Arts and Sciences program into two separate budgetary line-items, the Fine Arts Educational Outreach program and the Science Educational Outreach. Each program provides the same type of services in the schools (demonstrations, presentations & educational activities), but differ significantly in subject matter. Legislators determined that bifurcation would provide greater visibility to the specific needs of each program and allow the Legislature to focus appropriations to meet specific goals by content area.

Figure 1 shows the total base budget for the science outreach program. Total program funding in FY 2008 totals \$1,339,400. Funding is split among the three operating programs; with the greatest portion (\$959,400) supporting the iSEE program, as seen in Figure 2.

Each participating organization matches state revenues appropriated for educational outreach programs. Figure 3 compares the state appropriation to the level of private/foundation revenue supporting educational outreach programs.



ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Appropriations Committee has made base budget allocations to the appropriations subcommittee. The budget detail table on page 3 does not include funding for the recommendations made in this brief or other budget priorities the subcommittee may wish to consider. Legislators may wish to consider the following issues and recommendations:

Additional iSEE Outreach Provider – at the conclusion of FY 2007, another science RFP participant will meet the requirements to become a statewide iSEE outreach provider. The State Board of Education has approved the transition of Red Butte Garden into the iSEE program and requests \$120,000 in ongoing Uniform School Fund revenue to support this transition.

Recommendation: The Analyst recommends that the Legislature provide an increased appropriation of \$120,000 in ongoing Uniform School Fund revenue to the iSEE program to support an additional statewide science outreach provider.

PROGRAM ACCOUNTABILITY

Each year organizations participating in educational outreach report to the Utah State Office of Education. Organizations report the following information to the USOE: the number of districts served, the number of public schools served, the total number of teachers and students participating in outreach programs, and the total number of instructional hours provided in the schools. Figure 4 provides these data for FY 2005 and FY 2006. The data provided includes both Fine Art and Science organizations. Accountability reports beginning with FY 2007 will include separate accounts for fine arts organizations and science organizations.

FY 2006 shows a decline in the number of schools, students, and teachers served. Further, the number of instructional hours also decreased. State revenue allocations to the Fine Arts and Sciences program remained flat for 3 years (FY 2004 to FY 2006), likely resulting in the decrease in the reported accountability measures. Organizations received a significant operating increase in FY 2007 (9 percent), which should begin to reverse the decline in FY 2007.

Measure	FY 2005	FY 2006
School Districts	40	40
Public Schools	788	764
Total Students	799,152	634,052
Total Teachers	38,989	26,955
Instructional Hours	25,005	20,715

Source: Utah State Office of Education, POPS Annual Report.
Note: Data includes both Fine Arts and Science Outreach program bifurcation began in FY 2007.

BUDGET DETAIL

The FY 2008 base budget includes a total appropriation of \$1,339,400 which supports three programs. FY 2007 represents the first year of funding for the Science Educational Outreach Program so a budget history is not available. The FY 2007 appropriation represents an increase of 9 percent from the FY 2006 appropriation in the Science Outreach Programs. FY 2007 represents the first year for the Science Outreach RFP and Science Enhancement programs.

Overview of Programs

The largest of the three programs is the iSEE program. iSEE organizations have fully developed statewide educational outreach programs and each organization receives an ongoing allocation of state funds. These funding levels and program participation are evaluated every four years. Currently, four professional organizations participate in the iSEE program. These organizations include: the Clark Planetarium, Discovery Gateway, the Living Planet Aquarium, and the Utah Museum of Natural History. The iSEE FY 2008 base budget totals \$959,400 in ongoing Uniform School Fund Revenue. Annual allocations for participating organizations range from \$499,000 for the Clark Planetarium to \$68,000 for Discovery Gateway.

Please refer to Chapter 18 in the Compendium of Budget Information for more detail on individual program regulations.

BUDGET DETAIL TABLE

State Board of Education - Science Outreach						
Sources of Finance	FY 2006 Actual	FY 2007 Appropriated	Changes	FY 2007 Revised	Changes	FY 2008* Base Budget
Uniform School Fund	0	1,339,400	0	1,339,400	0	1,339,400
Total	\$0	\$1,339,400	\$0	\$1,339,400	\$0	\$1,339,400
Programs						
Science Outreach Programs	0	959,400	0	959,400	0	959,400
Requests for Proposals	0	180,000	0	180,000	0	180,000
Science Enhancement	0	200,000	0	200,000	0	200,000
Total	\$0	\$1,339,400	\$0	\$1,339,400	\$0	\$1,339,400

*Does not include amounts in excess of subcommittee's state fund allocation that may be recommended by the Fiscal Analyst.

LEGISLATIVE ACTION

This section provides a guide of what actions might be taken if the Legislature wishes to adopt the recommendations presented in this brief.

1. Review and adopt the base budget for the Science Educational Outreach programs.
2. Consider issues and recommendations discussed in this brief. The subcommittee may wish to include \$120,000 in ongoing Uniform School Fund revenue to support the inclusion of another statewide outreach provider in the iSEE program.