

Effective 5/13/2014

53A-1a-1002 UPSTART program to develop school readiness skills of preschool children.

- (1) UPSTART, a pilot project that uses a home-based educational technology program to develop school readiness skills of preschool children, is established within the public education system.
- (2) UPSTART is created to:
 - (a) evaluate the effectiveness of giving preschool children access, at home, to interactive individualized instruction delivered by computers and the Internet to prepare them academically for success in school; and
 - (b) test the feasibility of scaling a home-based curriculum in reading, math, and science delivered by computers and the Internet to all preschool children in Utah.
- (3) The State Board of Education shall contract with an educational technology provider, selected through a request for proposals process, for the delivery of a home-based educational technology program for preschool children that meets the requirements of Subsection (4).
- (4) A home-based educational technology program for preschool children shall meet the following standards:
 - (a) the contractor shall provide computer-assisted instruction for preschool children on a home computer connected by the Internet to a centralized file storage facility;
 - (b) the contractor shall:
 - (i) provide technical support to families for the installation and operation of the instructional software; and
 - (ii) provide for the installation of computer and Internet access in homes of low income families that cannot afford the equipment and service;
 - (c) the contractor shall have the capability of doing the following through the Internet:
 - (i) communicating with parents;
 - (ii) updating the instructional software;
 - (iii) validating user access;
 - (iv) collecting usage data;
 - (v) storing research data; and
 - (vi) producing reports for parents, schools, and the Legislature;
 - (d) the program shall include the following components:
 - (i) computer-assisted, individualized instruction in reading, mathematics, and science;
 - (ii) a multisensory reading tutoring program; and
 - (iii) a validated computer adaptive reading test that does not require the presence of trained adults to administer and is an accurate indicator of reading readiness of children who cannot read;
 - (e) the contractor shall have the capability to quickly and efficiently modify, improve, and support the product;
 - (f) the contractor shall work in cooperation with school district personnel who will provide administrative and technical support of the program as provided in Section 53A-1a-1003;
 - (g) the contractor shall solicit families to participate in the program as provided in Section 53A-1a-1004; and
 - (h) in implementing the home-based educational technology program, the contractor shall seek the advise and expertise of early childhood education professionals within the Utah System of Higher Education on issues such as:
 - (i) soliciting families to participate in the program;
 - (ii) providing training to families; and
 - (iii) motivating families to regularly use the instructional software.

- (5) The contract shall provide funding for a home-based educational technology program for preschool children for one year with an option to extend the contract for additional years or to expand the program to a greater number of preschool children, subject to the appropriation of money by the Legislature for UPSTART.
- (6)
 - (a) The State Board of Education shall issue a request for proposals for a home-based educational technology program for preschool children that takes effect upon the expiration of the pilot project on July 1, 2019, provided that the Legislature reauthorizes and funds the program.
 - (b) The State Board of Education shall evaluate a proposal based on:
 - (i) whether the home-based educational technology program meets the standards specified in Subsection (4);
 - (ii) the results of an independent evaluation of the home-based educational technology program;
 - (iii) the experience of the home-based educational technology program provider; and
 - (iv) the per pupil cost of the home-based educational technology program.

Amended by Chapter 102, 2014 General Session