

School LAND Trust Program

Problem Statement: Many public schools in Utah face funding disparities that hinder their ability to provide high-quality education and improve student achievement. The Utah School Land Trust Program addresses this problem by providing targeted financial resources to that are directed by local community members to support academic excellence in schools.

Resources:

- FY25 to Schools \$106,221,900
- FY25 Administration and Website \$857,200
- 3 FTE for SCT and for the website, $\frac{1}{4}$ FTE, 4/5 FTE and part time contractor

Core Strategies (Outputs):

- School Children's Trust
 - Provides training and support for stakeholders
 - Verifies compliance prior to distribution of funds and monitors compliance after funds are spent.
- LEA Boards review and approve plans prepared by school councils and oversee implementation
- Each school assembles a parent driven council who review academic data of students and prepare a school specific plan each year to address student academic needs. Principals report annually on the plan implementation.
- Teachers and administrators implement the plans prepared by the school and approved by the LEA Board.

Short Term Outcomes:

- Parental involvement in academic decisions in every Utah public school
- Increasing local revenue stream to address the unique needs of students in each school
- Increasing the # of compliant schools meeting fall, winter and spring due dates to receive funding before the school year begins
- Reduction of annual carry-over indicating plans were implemented as approved

Performance Measure(s) Alignment:

- % increase in high school graduation rate
- % of 1st-8th grade students demonstrating adequate growth in ELA
- % of 1st-8th grade students demonstrating adequate growth in mathematics
- Equitable distribution of resources across LEAs

Financial Data

Annual Distribution of School LAND Trust Funds to Schools
<https://www.schools.utah.gov/schoollandtrust/trustsystem>

Appropriation History by Expenditure Category



USBE Program Support and Administration

USBE Personnel (Roles and Responsibilities)
<p>Training Specialist</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prepares and provides training specific to each stakeholder group (District Boards, Charter Boards, LEA Administrators, Principals, Charter Trust Land Councils, School Community Councils and LEA Business Administrators) prior to each required due date• Reviews available data to understand effectiveness and revises training materials and methods.
<p>Compliance Specialist</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Oversees compliance – tracking requirement completion before funding is distributed and monitoring after plan implementation.• Manages the annual distribution to schools.
<p>Director</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Oversees implementation of the Program• Serves on the Land Trusts Protection and Advocacy Office oversight committee, provides advocacy with policy makers, beneficiaries and the public, implements actions to protect the trusts and supports the Office.• Administers the Trust Lands Advisory Committee (TLAC) to the USBE Board, interacts with the Board on behalf of TLAC and provides communication about the trust system to the USBE Board and superintendency.

Fiscal Administration Requirements
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Receives SITFO quarterly distribution reports, school enrollment data, new and closing school reports and prepares the annual distribution according to the formula in code and rule. Enters the initial distribution calculation on the website and manages enrollment changes from LEAs.• Creates the July distribution to LEAs and subsequent distributions through the Grants Management process.• In the monitoring process, misapplied funds are identified and corrected.

Monitoring/Evaluation Requirements
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Monitor completion of fall reporting requirements• Monitor completion and compliance of prior year Final Reports, Upcoming School Plans and LEA Assurance Reports prior to annual distribution• Annual compliance monitoring of a sample of schools for requirements of seating councils, implementation of plans and planned expenditures consistent with local board approval.

Recommended Alignment to R277-111
Category: 4
Rationale: Staff is dedicated to the Program and annual sample monitoring is conducted.

Policy Questions for the Board

- *The Board could consider the many requirements of councils, made up of volunteers, and consider removing any that may not be necessary or directing local Boards to determine the best method to meet the need for their communities.*
- *The School Children's Trust is seeking funding for an office specialist to support the team. As school populations have increased, especially the increasing number of charter schools, more time is spent on administrative tasks reducing the ability to focus on training and compliance, as identified in code.*
- *An ongoing effort to create a school level 'common needs assessment' would benefit councils who are charged with identifying the 'greatest academic need of students' and with limited time and expertise of volunteer councils, a needs assessment with back-up data would support councils in making better decisions.*