

1     **R277. Education, Administration.**

2     **R277-920. School Improvement and Leadership Development.**

3     **R277-920-1. Authority, [and] Purpose, and Oversight Category.**

4             (1) This rule is authorized by:

5                 (a) Utah Constitution [Article X, Section 3](#), which vests general control and  
6                 supervision over public education in the Board;

7                 (b) Subsection [53E-3-401](#)(4), which allows the Board to make rules to execute  
8                 the Board's duties and responsibilities under the Utah Constitution and state law; and

9                 (c) [Title 53E, Chapter 5, Part 3](#), School Improvement and Leadership

10             Development, which requires the Board to make rules to establish:

11                 (i) an appeal process for the denial of a school improvement plan;

12                 (ii) provisions regarding funding distributed to a springboard school or elevate  
13                 school;

14                 (iii) criteria for granting an extension to a springboard school;

15                 (iv) criteria for exiting a school that has demonstrated sufficient improvement;

16                 (v) implications for a springboard school; and

17                 (vi) eligibility criteria, application procedures, selection criteria, and procedures  
18                 for awarding incentive pay for the School Leadership Development Program.

19                 (2) The purpose of this rule is to:

20                 (a) enact provisions governing school improvement efforts; and

21                 (b) implement and administer [Title 53E, Chapter 5, Part 3](#), School Improvement  
22                 and Leadership Development.

23                 (3) This rule is categorized as Category 4 as described in Rule [R277-111](#).

24

25     **R277-920-2. Definitions.**

26             (1) "Appeal committee" means the committee established by Section R277-920-  
27             6.

28 (2) "Baseline performance" means the percentage of possible points earned by  
29 a school through the school accountability system in the year the school was identified  
30 as a springboard school.

31 (3) "Committee" means a school improvement committee established in  
32 accordance with Subsection [53E-5-303\(1\)](#) or [53E-5-304\(4\)](#).

33 (4) "Continuous improvement expert" means the same as that term is defined in  
34 Section 53E-5-301.

35 (5) "Elevate school" means the same as that term is defined in Section 53E-5-  
36 301.

37 (6) "High performing charter school" means the same as that term is defined in  
38 Section [53E-5-306](#).

39 (7) "Non-Title I school" means a school that does not receive funds under the  
40 Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, Title I, 20 U.S.C. Sec. 6301 et seq.

41 [— (8) "School improvement grant" means a Title I grant under the Elementary and  
42 Secondary Education Act, 20 U.S.C. Sec. 6303(g).

43 (9) "School in critical needs status" means a school that is a:

44 (a) high school with a four year adjusted cohort graduation rate of less than or  
45 equal to 67% for three school years on average;

46 (b) Title I school that does not exit targeted needs status; or

47 \_\_\_\_\_ (c) Title I school that:

48 (i) has not been identified as a school meeting the definition of Subsection (9)(a),  
49 (9)(b), or (14); and

50 (ii) performed in the lowest 5% of Title I schools over the past three years on  
51 average according to the percentage of points earned under the school accountability  
52 system.

53 (10) "School in targeted needs status" means a school that is identified as a  
54 targeted support and improvement school with one or more student groups as  
55 described in Section R277-920-5.]

56           ([11]8) "School leader" means the same as that term is defined in Section [53E-5-309](#).

58           ([12]9) "School improvement plan" means a school improvement plan described  
59 in Section R277-920-8.

60           ([13]10) "School improvement program" means the school improvement and  
61 leadership development program described in [Title 53E, Chapter 5, Part 3, School](#)  
62 [Improvement and Leadership Development](#).

63           ([14]11) "Springboard school" means the same as that term is defined in Section  
64 [53E-5-301](#).

65           ([15]12) "State review panel" means a state review panel appointed by the  
66 Superintendent that includes at least three members who each have demonstrated  
67 expertise in two or more of the following fields:

68           (a) leadership at the school district or school level;

69           (b) standards-based elementary or secondary curriculum instruction and  
70 assessment;

71           (c) instructional data management and analysis;

72           (d) educational program evaluation;

73           (e) educational program management;

74           (f) teacher leadership;

75           (g) change management;

76           (h) organizational management; or

77           (i) school budgeting and finance.

78           [——] (16) "Title I school" means a school that receives funds under the ~~Elementary~~  
79 ~~and Secondary Education Act of 1965, Title I, 20 U.S.C. Sec. 6301 et seq.~~

80           [——] (17) "ESSA state plan" means the ~~Revised State Template for the Consolidated~~  
81 ~~State Plan: The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, Every Student~~  
82 ~~Succeeds Act incorporated by reference in Section R277-920-3.~~

84 **R277-920-3. Revised State Template for the Consolidated State Plan: The**  
85 **Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 Incorporated by Reference.**  
86 ——— (1) This rule incorporates by reference the Revised State Template for the  
87 Consolidated State Plan: The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, Every  
88 Student Succeeds Act, which provides clarification of the requirements and the state's  
89 plan for seven federal Title programs including school improvement.  
90 ——— (2) A copy of the manual is located at:  
91 ——— (a) <https://schools.utah.gov/administrative/rules/documentsincorporated>; and  
92 ——— (b) the Utah State Board of Education.]

93

94 **R277-920-[4]3. [Superintendent's]Identification of [Schools for Critical Needs**  
95 **Status and]Springboard and Elevate Schools[--- Readiness Review].**

96 (1) [Subject to Subsection (2), on or before October 31, the]The Superintendent  
97 shall recommend[identify schools for critical needs status and] springboard schools  
98 every four years after release of assessment data consistent with Subsection 53E-5-  
99 302(1)(a).  
100 ——— (2) The Superintendent shall make the identification under:  
101 ——— (a) Subsection R277-920-2(9)(a) beginning with the 2021-22 school  
102 accountability results and every three years thereafter, consistent with the ESSA state  
103 plan;  
104 ——— (b) Subsection R277-920-2(9)(b) beginning with the 2023-24 school  
105 accountability results and every year thereafter, consistent with the ESSA state plan;  
106 ——— (c) Subsection R277-920-2(9)(c) beginning with the 2021-2022 school  
107 accountability results and every three years thereafter, consistent with the ESSA state  
108 plan; and  
109 ——— (d) Subsection R277-920-2(14) beginning with the 2024-25 school accountability  
110 results and every four years thereafter, consistent with Subsection 53E-5-302(1)(a).

111 (3)(a) Except as provided in Subsection (3)(b), schools in critical needs status  
112 are required to comply with Title 53E, Chapter 5, Part 3, School Improvement and  
113 Leadership Development.

114 (b) A school in critical needs status is exempt from the requirement to contract  
115 with continuous improvement expert described in Section 53E-5-305.]

116 (2) In every year the Board does not designate springboard schools, the  
117 Superintendent shall recommend elevate schools consistent with Section 53E-5-302.1.

118 (3)(a) If an elevate school meets the criteria for a springboard school, the school  
119 shall move to springboard school status.

120 (b) A re-designated springboard school shall begin on the springboard timeline  
121 and meet all springboard exit criteria.

122 (c) The Superintendent shall consider all of a school's accomplishments under  
123 elevate status in evaluating progress towards springboard exit criteria.

124

125 **[R277-920-5. Superintendent's Identification of Schools for Targeted Needs  
126 Status and Elevate Schools.]**

127 (1) As used in this section, "student groups" means a group of ten or more  
128 students:

129 (a) who are economically disadvantaged;

130 (b) with disabilities;

131 (c) who are English learners;

132 (d) who are African American;

133 (e) who are American Indian;

134 (f) who are Asian;

135 (g) who are Hispanic;

136 (h) who are Multiple races;

137 (i) who are Pacific Islander; or

138 (j) who are White.

139       (2)(a) Subject to Subsection (2)(b), the Superintendent shall identify for targeted  
140       needs status any school with one or more student groups who:  
141        (i) for two consecutive years, is assigned a percentage of possible points in the  
142       state's accountability system that is equal to or below:  
143        (A) 35.5% of the total points possible for a school that is an elementary or middle  
144       school; or  
145        (B) 38% of the total points possible for a school that enrolls students who are in  
146       grade 12; and  
147        (ii) is not currently identified for critical needs status under Section R277-920-4.  
148       (b) The Superintendent shall make the identification under Subsection (2)(a)  
149       beginning with the 2018-2019 school accountability results and every year thereafter.  
150       (3) A school identified under Subsection (2) shall develop and implement a plan  
151       to improve performance of the student group that was the subject of the identification  
152       under Subsection (2), in accordance with the Elementary and Secondary Education Act  
153       of 1965, 20 U.S.C. Sec. 6301 et seq.  
154       (4) To exit targeted needs status, a school shall demonstrate that the school no  
155       longer meets the criteria for which the school was identified for two consecutive years  
156       within four school years after the month in which the school was identified.  
157       (5) The Superintendent shall identify a Title I school that does not meet the exit  
158       criteria described in Subsection (4) as a school with chronically underperforming student  
159       groups as described in Section R277-920-4.  
160       (6) For each year the Board is required to identify elevate schools as described  
161       in Section 53E-5-302.1, the]  
162       (4) The Superintendent shall:  
163        (a) accept applications as described in Subsection 53E-5-302.1(1)(a);  
164        (b) identify elevate schools as described in Subsection 53E-5-302.1(1)(b); and  
165        (c) conduct a needs assessment for each elevate school as described in  
166       Subsection 53E-5-302.1(1)(c).  
167

168 **[R277-920-6. Identification of New Schools due to Statewide Assessment System**  
169 **Irregularities During the 2020 COVID-19 Pandemic.**

170 \_\_\_\_\_ The Superintendent may not identify a new school for critical needs status based  
171 on school accountability results from the 2019-20 school year due to the waiver to  
172 administer assessments described in Section 53E-4-315.]

173

174 **R277-920-[7]4. Superintendent Review of Continuous Improvement Expert**  
175 **Proposals for Springboard and Elevate Schools.**

176 (1) The Superintendent shall review and approve a springboard or elevate  
177 school's proposal described in Subsection [53E-5-303](#)(1)(d).

178 (2) [On or before January 15, a] A local education board of a springboard or  
179 elevate school shall submit [a proposal described in] evidence of compliance with  
180 Subsection [53E-5-303](#)(1) or Subsection [53E-5-304](#)(4) to the Superintendent [for  
181 approval] within one year of identification.

182

183 **R277-920-[8]5. School Improvement Plan Submission and Approval Process for**  
184 **Springboard and Elevate Schools.**

185 (1) In addition to the requirements described in Subsection 53E-5-303(5), a  
186 springboard school, elevate school shall create a school improvement plan and include  
187 at least the following:

188 (a) a request to the local school board and district superintendent for:  
189 (i) additional resources;  
190 (ii) personnel; or  
191 (iii) exemptions from district policy that may be contributing to the low  
192 performance of the district school; and

193 (b) a plan for management of school personnel, including:  
194 (i) recruitment of an educator or school leader; and  
195 (ii) professional development for an educator or school leader.

196       (2) A local education board shall include in the plan a strategy for sustaining  
197 school improvement efforts after a school exits critical needs status].

198       ([3]1)(a) A local education board may approve or deny a plan in whole or in part,  
199 if the part of the plan the board denies is severable from the part of the plan the board  
200 approves.

201       (b) A local education board shall give a reason for a denial of each part of a  
202 plan.

203       ([4]2) A local education board shall submit a school improvement plan in  
204 accordance with Subsection [53E-5-303](#)(7) or Subsection [53E-5-304](#)(9) to the Board.

205       ([5]3) In accordance with Subsection [53E-5-305](#)(3), the Board may review and  
206 approve or deny a school improvement plan in whole or in part, if the part of the school  
207 improvement plan the Board denies is severable from the part of the school  
208 improvement plan the Board approves.

209

210 **R277-920-[9]6. Appeal Process for Denial of a Springboard or Elevate School  
211 Improvement Plan.**

212       (1) A committee or local education board may appeal the denial of a plan, in  
213 whole or in part, by following the procedures and requirements of this section.

214       (2) An appeal authorized by this rule:

215           (a) is an informal adjudicative proceeding under Section [63G-4-203](#); and  
216           (b) shall be resolved by the date specified in Subsection [53E-5-305](#)(6)(b).

217       (3)(a) A principal, on behalf of a committee, may request that the local education  
218 board reconsider the denial of a plan:

219           (i) by electronically filing the request:

220              (A) with the chair of the local education board; and  
221              (B) on a form provided on the Board website; and

222           (ii) within five ~~calendar~~business days of the denial.

223       (b) The reconsideration request may include a modification to the plan if the  
224 committee approves the modification.

225 (c) The local education board shall respond to the request within [ten calendar]

226 five business days by:

227 (i) refusing to reconsider its action;

228 (ii) approving a plan, in whole or in part; or

229 (iii) denying a plan modification.

(d) The principal may appeal the denial of a plan under this Subsection (3):

231 (i) by electronically filing an appeal with the Superintendent on a form provided  
232 on the Board website; and

233 (ii) within five ~~calendar~~business days of the denial.

234 (e) An appeal filed under this subsection shall be resolved in accordance with  
235 Subsections (4) and (5).

236 (4) A district superintendent, on behalf of a local school board, or a charter  
237 school governing board chair, on behalf of a charter school governing board, may  
238 appeal the Board's denial of a plan:

239 (a) by electronically filing an appeal with the Superintendent on a form provided  
240 on the Board website; and

241 (b) within five [calendar]business days of the denial.

242 (5)(a) At least three members of a Board committee, appointed by the Board as  
243 the appeal committee, shall review the written appeal.

244 (b) The appeal committee may ask the principal, district superintendent, local  
245 school board chair, or charter school governing board chair to:

246 (i) provide additional written information; or

247 (ii) appear personally and provide information.

248 (c) The appeal committee shall make a written recommendation within five

249 business days of receipt of the appeal request to the Board to accept, modify, or reject  
250 the plan and give a reason for the recommendation.

251 (6) The Board may accept or reject the appeal committee's recommendation and  
252 the Board's decision is the final administrative action.

253

254 **R277-920-[10]7. Springboard and Elevate School Program Funding.**

255 [—— (1) The Superintendent shall annually designate an amount of funds available  
256 for distribution to springboard and elevate schools under this section, taking into  
257 consideration:

258 ——— (a) encumbered funds; and  
259 ——— (b) other program obligations.]

260 ([2]1) [On or before January 30 of the school year in which a springboard or  
261 elevate school is identified, the] Subject to legislative appropriations, the Superintendent  
262 shall distribute at least \$375,000 one-time per springboard or elevate school to each  
263 local education board of a springboard or elevate school.

264 [—— (3) The Superintendent shall distribute any funds available for distribution under  
265 Subsection (1) after the allocation of funds described in Subsection (2) to local  
266 education boards of springboard and elevate schools on a prioritized basis taking need  
267 for the funds, as demonstrated by the needs assessment conducted in accordance with  
268 Section 53E-5-302, into account.]

269 ([4]2)(a) The local education board shall use at least a portion of the funding  
270 distributed under Subsections (2) and (3) to contract with a continuous improvement  
271 expert, including travel costs, in accordance with Sections [53E-5-303](#) and [53E-5-304](#).

272 (b) A local education board shall use funding available after the allocation of  
273 funds under Subsection (4)(a) only for interventions identified in a school improvement  
274 plan.

275 ([5]3) The Superintendent may review uses of funds and contracts with  
276 continuous improvement experts.

277 ([6]4) The Superintendent may provide funding to a school that remains in the  
278 school improvement program beyond the school's identified exit year.

279

280 **R277-920-[11]8. School Leadership Development Program.**

281 [—— (1) A school leader may apply to participate in the School Leadership  
282 Development Program if the school leader:

283 \_\_\_\_\_ (a) is assigned to a school in critical needs status; or  
284 \_\_\_\_\_ (b) is nominated by the school leader's district superintendent or charter school  
285 governing board to participate.]

286        ([2]1) An eligible school leader who meets the requirements of [Subsection (1)]  
287 Section 53E-5-309 may apply to participate in the School Leadership Development  
288 Program by electronically submitting an application to the Superintendent on a form  
289 [provided on the Board website] and by the date specified on the Board website.

290        ([3]2)[(a)] The Superintendent shall select [a]up to 15 school leaders to  
291 participate in the School Leadership Development Program based on the following  
292 selection criteria:

293        (a) first priority shall be given to a school leader who has not received prior  
294 School Leadership Development Program training; and

295        (b) [first]second priority shall be given to a school leader who is assigned to a  
296 springboard school or elevate school[;]

297        (ii) ~~second priority is given to a school leader who is assigned to a school in~~  
298 ~~critical needs status that is not a springboard school or elevate school; and~~  
299        (iii) ~~third priority is given to a school leader who is nominated by the school~~  
300 ~~leader's district superintendent or charter school governing board].~~

301        [(b) Notwithstanding Subsection (3)(a), the Superintendent may give priority to a  
302 school leader who has not received prior leadership training before selecting a school  
303 leader who has received prior leadership training.]

304        ([4]3)(a) In accordance with Subsection 53E-5-309(4), the Superintendent shall  
305 award incentive pay to a school leader within [30]90 days after:

306        (i) the school leader completes the School Leadership Development Program;  
307 and

308        (ii) the school leader's LEA verifies that the school leader entered into a written  
309 agreement as described in Subsection 53E-5-309(4).

310 (b) The Superintendent shall distribute \$400 per full-day session to a school  
311 leader who completes [at least 75% of ]the School Leadership Development Program  
312 sessions.

313 [——— (5) The Superintendent may award incentive pay to a school leader described in  
314 Subsection (5) for up to five years.]

315

316 R277-920-[12]9. Exit Criteria for a Springboard School [and Schools in Critical  
317 Needs Status] -- Extensions -- More Rigorous Interventions.

318 (1) To exit the springboard school program, a springboard school shall  
319 demonstrate, in the third or fourth year after which the school was identified as a  
320 springboard school, that the school:

321 (a) meets individualized exit criteria that is calculated by reducing the gap in  
322 performance by one-third between:

323 (i) the springboard school's baseline performance; and

324 (ii)(A) 55% of the total points possible for a school that is an elementary or  
325 middle school; or

326 (B) 57% of the total points possible for a school that enrolls students in grade 12;  
327 and

328 (b) exceeds the lowest 5% of all schools in the ranking of schools from the year  
329 the school was identified.

330 (2) In determining whether a school has met the criteria described in Subsection  
331 (1), the Superintendent shall apply the indicators, weightings, and threshold scores  
332 described in the version of [Title 53E, Chapter 5, Part 2](#), School Accountability System  
333 that was in place when the school was identified.

334 (3) If a school does not meet the exit criteria described in Subsection (1) in the  
335 fourth year after which the school was identified as a springboard school, the school  
336 may qualify for an extension to continue current school improvement efforts for up to  
337 two years if the school:

338 (a)(i)(A) reduced the gap in performance by one-fourth between:



368 (iv) permanently transfer control of a school to a public or non-profit entity other  
369 than the local education board;

370 (c) if the school is a charter school:

371 (i) require that the charter school governing board be replaced; or

372 (ii) require that the charter school authorizer close the school; or

373 (d) if the school is a charter school, require that the charter school authorizer:

374 (i) replace some or all members of the charter school governing board;

375 (ii) transfer operation and control of the charter school to:

376 (A) a high performing charter school; or

377 (B) the school district in which the charter school is located; or

378 (iii) close the school; or

379 (e) take other action.

380 (6)(a) The Superintendent shall appoint members of a state review panel.

381 (b) The state review panel shall critically evaluate at least:

382 (i) whether the local education agency has the capacity to implement the

383 changes necessary to improve school performance;

384 (ii) whether the school leadership is adequate to implement change to improve  
385 school performance:

386 (iii) whether the school has sufficient authority to implement change;

387 (iv) whether the plan is being implemented with fidelity:

388 (v) whether the state and local education board provided sufficient resources to

389 the school to support school improvement efforts, including whether the local school

390 board prioritized school district funding and resources to the school in accordance

### 391 Section 53E-5-303:

392 (vi) the likely

393 management structure and staffing; and

394 (vii) the necessity that the school remain in operation to serve students.

395 (7) An LEA and charter school authorizer shall develop recommendations under  
396 this section in collaboration with:

- (a) parents of students currently attending the springboard school;
- (b) teachers, principals, and other school leaders at the school;
- (c) stakeholders representing the interests of students with disabilities, English learners, and other vulnerable student populations; and
- (d) other community members and community partners.

402 [—— (8) A school in critical needs status that does not exit critical needs status shall  
403 engage in more rigorous interventions consistent with the ESSA state plan.]

404

405 R277-920-13. Exit Criteria for [a Schools in Critical Needs Status and] Elevate  
406 Schools.

407 [\_\_\_\_\_ (1) A school in critical needs status may exit critical needs status as described in  
408 the ESSA state plan.

409 (2) An elevate school may exit after successful completion of:

410       (1) four years participating in the implementation of a continuous improvement  
411       and innovation system with the relevant and all relevant stakeholders

412 (2) Beginning with the 2026-2027 Elevate cohort, the exit criteria in place for  
413 targeted support and improvement or additional targeted support and improvement for  
414 student groups under the state's ESSA plan..

415

416 **[R277-920-14. Exit Criteria for Schools in a year with Statewide Assessment**  
417 **System Irregularities.**

418 (1) For a school year where there are statewide assessment system  
419 irregularities or a suspension of the administration of statewide assessments:  
420 (a) the Superintendent shall appoint a state review panel; and  
421 (b) the state review panel shall review the data of a school eligible to be  
422 considered for exit at the conclusion of the applicable year and make a recommendation  
423 to the Board on whether the school demonstrated adequate progress to exit the  
424 springboard school program.

425       (2) A state review panel described in Subsection (1) shall review the following  
426       questions to inform the state review panel's recommendation:  
427       (a) whether the school provides evidence of substantial progress and growth;  
428       and  
429       (b) whether the school has qualitative or quantitative data from the  
430       implementation of the school's school improvement plan that also demonstrate  
431       substantial improvement.  
432       (3) For a school whose data are impacted by statewide assessment system  
433       irregularities or a suspension of the administration of statewide assessments during one  
434       or more of the school's designated years in the springboard school program:  
435       (a) the Superintendent shall appoint a state review panel;  
436       (b) the state review panel shall review the data of the school whose data are  
437       impacted by the statewide assessment system irregularities or suspension of statewide  
438       assessment; and  
439       (c) the state review panel shall make a recommendation to the Board whether  
440       the school demonstrated substantial improvement.  
441       (4) A state review panel described in Subsection (3) shall review qualitative and  
442       quantitative data from the implementation of the school's improvement plan.  
443       (5) The qualitative and quantitative data described in Subsection (4) may  
444       include:  
445       (a) local student performance data, including formative assessment data;  
446       (b) for a springboard school that is a high school:  
447       (i) credit earned;  
448       (ii) graduation rate; and  
449       (iii) other types of successful completion, such as earning a GED;  
450       (c) increased attendance;  
451       (d) student engagement or school climate;  
452       (e) parent engagement;  
453       (f) criteria presented by the school being reviewed;

454        (g) if the springboard school is a charter school, whether the charter school is  
455 meeting all minimum standards described in Section 53G-5-303 in the school's charter  
456 agreement with the authorizer, including:  
457        (i) minimum financial standards for operating the charter school;  
458        (ii) minimum standards for student achievement;  
459        (iii) the mission statement and purpose of the charter school;  
460        (iv) the grade levels served;  
461        (v) the maximum number of students; and  
462        (vi) the charter school governing board and structure; and  
463        (h) additional criteria established by the Superintendent.  
464        (6)(a) Notwithstanding other provisions in this Section R277-920-14, for a school  
465 year where there are statewide assessment system irregularities or a suspension of the  
466 administration of statewide assessments, a school eligible to be considered for exit at  
467 the conclusion of the applicable year may elect to remain in the springboard school  
468 program an additional year.  
469        (b) For a school that elects to remain in the program an additional year as  
470 described in Subsection (6)(a), the Superintendent may provide a different standard of  
471 review of the school's data by the state review panel.  
472        (7) For a school that elects to remain in the program an additional year as  
473 described in Subsection (6):  
474        (a) the Superintendent may provide a different standard of review of the school's  
475 data by the state review panel; and  
476        (b) in addition to the information described in Subsection (5), the school shall  
477 provide a request for resources to the Superintendent, including the proposed uses of  
478 the resources, for the school's additional year in the springboard school program.]  
479  
480 **KEY: principals, school improvement[s], school leader[s], Springboard, Elevate**  
481 **Date of Last Change: March 15, 2024**  
482 **Notice of Continuation: June 4, 2021**

483   **Authorizing, and Implemented or Interpreted Law:** [Art X, Sec 3](#); [53E-3-401\(4\)](#); [Title](#)

484   [53E, Chapter 5, Part 3](#)