

Date: August 12, 2025



Utah State Board of Education

The meeting was conducted virtually via Zoom. Zoom recording link below: https://schools-utah.gov.zoom.us/rec/share/B2of3xLSeFTa6jj63M2KV1rF_BMzxQIxU9v2Tv5u1kqk3cDKaG0EiTdF0UnQ_5TG.CHIHARhgPvLplZDj?pwd=DCG4fo1K8Zy8WSRlXQAAIAAAAszBQPIJS_wQN85HQbjriXJStrdjzZ2HGunKVr8nvo1QR-pLbpBbDzOudmpu5q53zAwMDAwNA

Members Present: Chair LeAnn Wood, Vice Chair Randy Boothe, Member Jennie Earl, Member Joann Brinton, and Member Cindy Davis

USDB Committee Staff: Leah Voorhies, USBE Deputy Superintendent; Joel Coleman, USDB Superintendent; Susan Patten and Michelle Tanner, USDB Associate Superintendents; Vicki Summers USDB Finance Manager; Ashley Biehl, Assistant Attorney General (AAG); Andrea Curtin, Secretary; Cindy Andersen, Interpreter; and Tony Bonny, Interpreter

Others Present: Jerry Record and Alex Farah, USBE IT/Media Production Specialists; Deborah Jacobson, Assistant Superintendent; Sarah Erb, public; Dwight Overgaard, USDB; Erica Jensen, USDB; Brandon Watts, USDB; Erica Jensen, USDB; Karen Borg, USDB; Sharon Draper, USDB; Debbie Davis, USBE Chief Audit Executive, Jake Davis, Office of the Legislative Auditor General (OLAG); and Closed Captioning Services.

USDB Committee Chair LeAnn Wood called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

6.2 INFORMATION: Public Comment

1. Kiara Guymon, spoke in support of allowing hearing siblings to attend school with their deaf siblings at USDB.
2. Sarah Erb, spoke in favor of USDB services.
3. Additional written public comments are added at the end of this summary.

6.3 ACTION: USDB Safety Assessments

Committee Discussion: USDB Staff request legislature change to allow safety inspections to be from the state security chief instead of the county security chiefs.

Committee Action: Member Davis moved the Committee recommends the Board request a Code change to reflect the safety assessments for USDB buildings change from county security chief to state safety chief and also direct staff to bring waiver language back to Committee.

Motion passed unanimously.

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Motion for the Board: The Board request a code change to reflect the safety assessments for USDB building change from the county security chief to the state safety chief and bring any waiver language back to the Committee.

6.4 ACTION: Deaf and Blind Schools Strategic Plans

Committee Discussion: Staff will present the Deaf and Blind Schools Strategic Plans for approval. Staff showed their work on each Strategic Plan. Staff will bring back to the Committee in November Strategic Plans for the next school year.

Committee Action: No motion for the Board

6.5 ACTION: R277- 800, Utah Schools for the Deaf and Blind (USDB) (Amendment)

Committee Discussion: The Board will review R277-800-9, which governs the enrollment of hearing siblings at the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (USDB). This rule allows USDB, under certain conditions, to enroll the hearing sibling of a student who is deaf or hard of hearing and is already enrolled in a USDB campus program.

Key provisions of the rule include:

- Eligibility is limited to siblings of currently enrolled students.
- Enrollment is restricted to one hearing sibling per class.
Each case must be individually evaluated by the USDB Superintendent, with consideration given to:
 - The educational benefit for both the deaf student and the hearing sibling.
 - The impact on other students in the program.
 - The sibling's behavior history or any conditions that could affect the classroom environment.
 - The sibling's willingness to learn American Sign Language (ASL) and engage with Deaf culture.

Hearing siblings who are enrolled are entitled to the same rights as traditional public school students. The USDB can rescind this opportunity at any time. Given current budget constraints, it is important to consider whether the rule needs to include language that indicates this is also subject to available funding or whether any updates or clarifications are necessary.

Reference: Utah State Board of Education Rule R277-800-9

<https://www.schools.utah.gov/adminrules/R277-800>.

Staff will present R277-800, Utah Schools for the Deaf and Blind (USDB), Draft 1, for consideration and approval. Authorizing, and Implemented or Interpreted Law: [Art X Sec 3](#); [53E-3-401](#)(4); [53E-8-204](#); [53E-8-402](#); [53E-8-409](#).

Committee Action: Member Davis made a motion that the Committee approve R277-800, Utah Schools for the Deaf and Blind (USDB), Draft 1, on first reading and forward to the Board for approval on second and final reading.

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Motion passed unanimously.

Motion for the Board: The Board approve R277-800, Utah Schools for the Deaf and Blind (USDB), Draft 1, on second and final reading.

6.6 ACTION: Use of Student-Owned Devices During School Hours

Committee Discussion: Staff will bring Draft 1 of the Use of Student-Owned Devices During School Hours policy for the Committee consideration. The Committee decided this was a school policy and didn't need the Board approval.

Committee Action: No motion for the Board.

6.7 Closed Session – Closed in accordance with the Utah Open and Public Meetings Act

Committee Action: Member Earl moved to go into Executive Session to discuss the character and professional competency of staff.

Motion passed unanimously.

Committee Action: Member Davis made a motion to come out of Executive Session.

Motion passed unanimously.

Committee Action: Member Brinton made a motion to adjourn.

Motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 12:02 p.m.