

Agency: UTAH STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Request Title: *Suicide Prevention Program Amendment*

Purpose Statement:

This request seeks a minor amendment to Utah Code §53G-9-702 to provide the Utah State Board of Education (USBE) with the necessary flexibility to distribute all appropriated funds for school-based suicide prevention programs.

What is the nature of your request?

POLICY REQUEST – You are seeking changes to Utah State Code to improve your program/services.

Rationale:

Current law requires USBE to allocate "at least \$1,000" per school annually for the implementation of vital suicide prevention programs. While the state is committed to this goal, annual legislative appropriations have consistently fallen short of the amount required to meet this statutory floor. For example, in Fiscal Year 2025, the appropriation was approximately \$536,000 short of the mandated level.

This gap between the appropriated amount and the statutory requirement places USBE in an impossible position, unable to fully comply with the law as written. It creates a technical, unfunded mandate that administratively prevents the efficient distribution of available funds to schools.

Expected outcomes:

The proposed amendment would adjust the code to allow USBE to distribute the appropriated funds on a pro-rata basis to all schools, ensuring every dollar reaches students. This small but critical change will:

Ensure Statutory Compliance: It aligns the law with the reality of the appropriations process, allowing USBE to lawfully distribute the maximum amount of funding possible each year.

Guarantee Fund Distribution: It ensures that every dollar appropriated for this critical purpose gets to our schools without delay, rather than being held up by an administrative conflict in the code.

Maintain Program Integrity: It provides a stable and predictable mechanism for LEAs to receive their share of these critical funds, preserving the integrity of the statewide suicide prevention effort.

USBE Lead Point of Contact:

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USBE Section: Prevention

POLICY REQUEST

1. Section(s) of State Code to be addressed (if none, insert "N/A"):

53G-9-702. Youth suicide prevention programs

2. What are the suggested legislative solutions? Include code references and suggested language where possible:

53G-9-702. Youth suicide prevention programs -- State board to develop model programs.

(7) (a) Subject to legislative appropriation and except as provided in Section 53F-2-525, the state board may distribute money to a school district

or charter school to be used to implement evidence-based practices and programs, or emerging best practices and programs, for preventing suicide in the school district or charter school.

(b) The state board shall ensure that an LEA's allocation of funds from the board's distribution of money under Subsection (7)(a) provides an amount ~~[equal to at least]~~ up to \$1,000 per school.