

Date: November 10, 2025



Utah State Board of Education

The meeting was conducted virtually via Zoom.

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

USDB Committee Staff: Leah Voorhies, USBE Deputy Superintendent; Darin Nielsen, USDB Assistant Superintendent; Susan Patten and Michelle Tanner, USDB Associate Superintendents; Ashley Biehl, Assistant Attorney General (AAG); Andrea Curtin, Secretary; Cindy Andersen and Bethany Anderson, Interpreters.

Others Present: Jerry Record and Alex Farah, USBE IT/Media Production Specialists; Molly Hart, Superintendent of Public Instruction; Scott Jones, Deputy Superintendent; Deborah Jacobson, Assistant Superintendent, Kelsey James, Jennie Earl, Board Member; Sarah Erb and Alisha Ensign, parents; and Closed Captioning Services.

USDB Committee Chair LeAnn Wood called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

INFORMATION: Public Comment

1. Alisha Ensign, parent of a deaf student and PTA President for USDB, spoke in favor of the services her child has received at USDB.
2. Sarah Erb, parent of a blind student, stated her student currently doesn't receive services from USDB. Her current LEA provides her services for her IEP.

6.2 ACTION: Utah State Board of Education Policy 4002

Committee Discussion: USDB Assistant Superintendent Darin Nielsen explained that the Advisory Council will be meeting on Wednesday to discuss Board Policy 4002 of the Utah State Board of Education and the mandates that the Advisory Council for the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (USDB) meet ten times per year. A recent audit of the USDB identified an inconsistency with this policy, noting that the committee did not meet at the required frequency during 2024. This issue is being addressed to ensure future compliance. The Advisory Council will also be discussing the option of the Advisory Council to serve as the Community Council. It was suggested that the Committee hold this item until next month to receive all the suggested changes.

Committee Action: Member Boothe moved the Committee hold this item until the December Committee meeting after the USDB Advisory Council meeting.

Motion passed unanimously.

Motion for the Board: No motion for the Board currently.

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6.3 ACTION: Reporting Violations of Statute or Board Rule Policy

Committee Discussion: USDB Assistant Superintendent Darin Nielsen presented a new policy that outlines the procedures for the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (USDB) to comply with Utah State Board of Education Rule R277-123-7(5), which requires LEAs to have a policy outlining how they respond to and resolves hotline complaints.

Committee Action: Member Longacre moved to amend USDB policy on reporting violations of statute, 5.1 to read, "Representatives from the USDB shall promptly contact the complainant if contact information is available and a response is requested **within two business days**. The designated USDB staff shall make at least two good-faith attempts to contact the complainant."

Motion passed unanimously with Member Davis absent.

Committee Action: Member Boothe made a motion that the Committee approve the Reporting Violations of Statute or Board Policy, as amended, on first reading and forward to the Board for approval on second and final reading.

Motion passed unanimously with Member Davis absent.

Motion for the Board: That the Board approves the Reporting Violations of Statute or Board Rule Policy, Draft 2 on second and final reading.

6.4 ACTION: Hotline Investigation and Response Policy

Committee Discussion: USDB Assistant Superintendent Darin Nielsen presented the Utah Schools for the Deaf and Blind (USDB) procedures for receiving, investigating, and resolving hotline complaints about alleged violations of statute or USBE rule as required by R277-123-7(5), Draft one.

Committee Action: Member Longacre moved to amend Hotline Investigation and Response Policy to read, "4.1 If the contact information for the complainant is available for the IAD referral, and the complainant requests a response, the LEA must contact the complainant promptly **within two business days**."

Motion passed unanimously with Member Davis absent.

Committee Action: Member Longacre moved to approve the Hotline Investigation and Response Policy, as amended, on first reading and forward to the Board for approval on second and final reading.

Motion passes unanimously with Member Davis absent.

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Motion for the Board: That the Board approve the Hotline Investigation and Response Policy, Draft 2, on final reading.

6.5 ACTION: Student Assessment Policy

Committee Discussion: USDB Assistant Superintendent Darin Nielsen explained that 53E-8-404 establishes the requirement that "The Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind shall annually administer, as applicable, the statewide assessments described in Section 53E-4-301, except a student may take an alternative test in accordance with the student's IEP." This policy is being updated to comply with this requirement and to make other updates related to changes in statewide assessments.

Committee Action: Member Boothe moved to approve the Student Assessment Policy, Draft one, on first reading and forward to the Board on second and final reading.

Motion for the Board: That the Board approve the Student Assessment Policy, Draft one, on second and final reading.

6.6 ACTION: Student Use of Power Tools and Maintenance Equipment

Committee Discussion: Associate Superintendent, Michelle Tanner described the new policy that outlines the requirements for the safe use of power tools and maintenance equipment by students at USDB, ensuring compliance with state and federal laws regarding hazardous occupations for minors. It applies to all USDB students involved in work-based learning, Career and Technical Education (CTE) training, on/off-campus work, and classroom activities using such equipment.

Committee Action: Member Boothe moved to approve the Student Use of Power Tools and Maintenance Equipment Policy, Draft one, on first reading and forward to the Board on second and final reading.

Motion passed unanimously.

Motion for the Board: That the Board approve the Student Use of Power Tools and Maintenance Equipment Policy, Draft one, on second and final reading.

6.7 ACTION: Student Use of Power Tools and Maintenance Equipment Consent Form

Committee Discussion: Associate Superintendent, Michelle Tanner shared the Student Use of Power Tools and Maintenance Equipment Consent Form, Draft one. It outlines the requirements for students to use power tools and maintenance equipment, including student and task information, supervisor training confirmation, and parental/guardian consent.

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Committee Action: Member Boothe moves to approve the Student Use of Power Tools and Maintenance Equipment Consent Form, Draft one, on first reading and forward to the Board on second and final reading.

Motion passed unanimously.

Motion for the Board: That the Board approve the Student Use of Power Tools and Maintenance Equipment Consent Form, Draft one, on second and final reading.

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

A closed session was not held for this meeting.

Committee Action: Member Davis made a motion to adjourn.

Motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 11:06 a.m.