

Dec 5, 2025

Utah State Board of Education

The meeting was conducted in hybrid format.

Members Present: Cindy Davis, Cole Kelley, Randy Boothe, Matt Hymas, and Christina Boggess (CB – present unless noted).

Committee Staff: Deborah Jacobson, and Cammy Wilcox.

Others Present: Sam Urie, Michael Iwasaki, Dale Frost, Winona Moss, Jared Felt, Katrina Brinkley, Paula Plant, Todd Hauber, Noralee Green, Greg Connell, Jeff Conley, Aaron Brough, and Alex Farah.

Committee Chair Davis called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

USBE Staff Highlights:

- Jeff Conley, Fiscal Monitor, Financial Ops
- Carson Miller, Asset Management and Support Help Desk, IT

Public Comment:

There were no requests for public comments.

5.2 Small School District Capital Projects for FY26

Committee Discussion: The Small District Capital Projects Fund was created during the 2022 General Session in House Bill 475, "Use of Public Education Stabilization Account One-time Funding." The program supports capital development (construction of new schools, additions, renovations) in small school districts. Capital project applications are reviewed by an advisory panel to the State Board of Education, which acts on recommendations of the panel. For FY26, the Legislature appropriated \$12.5 million to the fund.

Member Boothe raised concerns about the decreasing funding levels and suggested conducting a long-range study on facility needs. The committee also discussed the challenges faced by rural districts in accessing capital funds and the impact of federal lands on local tax bases.

Committee Action:

Member Hymas Motion:

That the Committee approve the FY26 Small School District Capital Projects as recommended by the review panel and forward the recommendation to the Board for approval. – CB absent.

The motion passed unanimously

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MOTION FOR THE BOARD:

That the Board approves the FY26 Small School District Capital Projects as recommended by the review panel.

5.3 R277-726, Statewide Online Education Program (Amendment)

Committee Discussion: Language on appropriations for special populations was removed during the last amendments to R277-726. However, USBE still has responsibility for these populations. Staff recommend that we add a section to the rule on Limited Appropriations for Home Schools and update the title to Section 9 to reflect Limited Appropriations for Small Schools to distinguish the two funding sources. Additionally, staff recommend updating the Tier 3 requirements for small schools.

Staff presented R277-726, Statewide Online Education Program, Draft 1, for consideration and approval.

Authorizing, and Implemented or Interpreted Law: [Art X Sec 3](#); [53F-4-510](#); [53F-4-514](#); [53E-3-401](#)

Committee Action:**Member Boothe Motion:**

That the Committee approves R277-726, Statewide Online Education Program, Draft 1, as amended, on first reading and forward to the Board for approval on second and final reading.

The motion passed unanimously

Member Davis Amendment:

On line 211 Replace "ensuring" with "consider" and strike the words "is included"

The motion passed unanimously

Member Boggess Motion:

That the Committee directs staff to draft a definition of "homeschool student" within the context of current statute and SOEP.

The motion passed unanimously

MOTION FOR THE BOARD:

That the Board approves R277-726, Statewide Online Education Program, Draft 2, on second and final reading.

5.4 Rural School Sports Facilities Program

Committee Discussion: The Small District Athletic Facilities Grants program was created during the 2025 General Session in House Bill 462, "Rural School Funding Amendments". Grant will be provided to rural secondary schools to support the maintenance and improvement of athletic facilities. These one-time grants will be distributed using a formula that accounts for county classification and student enrollment. Rural secondary schools often face greater challenges in securing additional funding for athletic facilities or allocating local property tax revenues for these purposes compared to schools in larger, more populated areas. This funding aims to help bridge that gap and ensure students in rural communities have access to safe and well-maintained athletic facilities. For FY26, the legislature appropriated \$4,390,000. Projects are limited to grants of \$500,000 per school.

Director Urie presented the Rural School Sports Facilities Program report, highlighting \$4.39 million in funded projects and \$10.7 million in total requests.

5.5 School Children's Trust Quarterly Report

Committee Discussion: The Finance Committee has requested a quarterly report update from the School Children's Trust concerning the Utah Trust System activities, the School LAND Trust Program and School Councils. Director Plant reported on the School Children's Trust program, including updates on legislation, distribution to schools, and compliance efforts.

5.6 Minimum School Program Mid-year Updates

Committee Discussion: After receiving Oct 1 student and educator data, the Minimum School Program budgets and payments for LEAs are updated from estimates made in the spring, known as the "Legislative Estimates", to actual headcounts in a process known as the Mid-year Updates. Staff presented an update on the process.

Information Request: Staff were asked to compile enrollment and kindergarten trend data by district and, where possible, by individual school. This data should support analysis of shifts between district and charter schools, with attention to rural, suburban and urban areas. Staff will report back if completing the analysis requires more than five working hours.

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**5.7 Recognition of Progress, Achievements, or Improvements**

Chair Davis and Assistant Superintendent Jacobson recognized the team's success in a recent federal funds audit conducted by GPP Analytics, which was presented at yesterday's Board meeting.

5.7.1 INFORMATION: Program Monthly Report (PMR) on USIMS

Committee Information: The Utah Schools Information Management System (USIMS) is an ongoing project that will modernize USBE's legacy data systems and enable real-time access to and secure movement of data to support effective decision-making at all levels of the education system.

Staff shared a summary of changes since last month's report.

5.7.2 INFORMATION: Program Monthly Report (PMR) on Utah Grants

Committee Information: Utah Grants is USBE's system for managing the entire grant process—applications, awards, payments, and monitoring. It serves USBE staff, LEAs, and CBO partners, with ongoing development to meet agency needs and ensure proper safeguards.

There was no presentation to the Committee this month.

OTHER ACTION: Grant Application Policy Review

The committee discussed reviewing the grant application process and internal control policies, particularly focusing on the ability for staff to apply for grants while ensuring board approval for acceptances over a certain amount.

Member Kelley Motion:

That the Committee directs staff to review the internal control policy surrounding the grant application process and bring an action item back to the Committee for any parts that require Board involvement.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:05 p.m.