

Advocacy Office Report

**Trust Lands Administration
Board Meeting:**

January 22, 2026

2026 General Session



Key Bill: SB43



Continued legislative outreach, including use of individual stat sheets



Facilitation of weekly collaboration meetings during the legislative session.



SB43

Land Trusts Protection and Advocacy Office Amendments

Sponsors: Sen. Derrin Owens & Rep. Jefferson Burton

SB43 clarifies the authority, purpose, and duties of the Advocacy Office and creates accountability requirements for trust distributions to institutional beneficiaries in UT Code § 53D-2.

SB43 is based on outcomes from a study group established by the legislature to address findings and recommendations about the Advocacy Office in the 2024 OLAG Trust System audit.

A COMPREHENSIVE STATUTORY REMEDY TO THE 2024 TRUST SYSTEM AUDIT:

Audit Recommendations to the Legislature:

1.1 Consider creating guidelines on trust distribution use for institutional beneficiaries.
Resolved on lines 843-850

1.2 Consider requiring beneficiary spending plans & publicly noticed year end summaries.
Resolved on lines 851-855

2.1 Consider clarifying the Advocacy Office responsibilities and role.
Resolved on lines 498-501, 549-577

2.2 Consider adding institutional beneficiary distribution review to Advocacy Office.
Resolved on lines 783-784, 861-863

*Other audit recommendations have been addressed administratively.

KEY ELEMENTS OF THE BILL

Re-titles & clarifies the authority and purpose of the Advocacy Office as an agent to represent, advise, safeguard, and advocate for current and future trust beneficiaries.

Centrally lists the trust beneficiaries, assigns authorized liaisons, and articulates their rights and interests.

Creates more accountability for distributions to institutional beneficiaries by requiring spending plans, accounting standards, and reporting.

Establishes shared governance and oversight of the Advocacy Office between the State Treasurer and a seven member advisory council responsible for strategic planning and rulemaking.

Refines the director's role and responsibilities:

- Clarifies qualifications, at-will nature of the position, and removal process.
- Revised duties include: distribution monitoring, dispute resolution, notification, protocols and training development, and accountability.

Strengthens the Trust by clarifying interactions in the system with intentional checks and balances. Improves the process and composition for the nominating committees of the trustee boards.



Endorsed by the JLC of the Utah School Boards & Superintendents Associations, the Utah PTA, and other trust advocacy stakeholders.

2026 UTAH GENERAL SESSION

Quantity Grants & In Lieu Selections

Outstanding Beneficiary Acreage Balances

Trust Beneficiary	Grant Acreage	Remaining Surface	Remaining Mineral	Outstanding Grants
Public Schools	6,040,000	3,191,905	4,130,093	\$2M + in lieu
Reservoirs	500,000	35,631	96,894	~30 acres
Utah State University	200,000	27,140	53,805	~1930 acres
University of Utah	156,080	16,016	38,394	~40 acres
Schools for the Deaf	100,000	4,691	11,793	
Utah State Hospital	100,000	7	9,675	
Schools for the Blind	100,000	451	12,412	
Miners Hospital	100,000	4,810	53,479	~5 acres
Colleges of Education	100,000	4,516	20,792	
Juvenile Justice Services	100,000	14	9,056	
College of Mines	100,000	5,860	16,741	
Public Buildings	64,000	0	7,100	
Total	7,660,080	3,291,041	4,460,234	

Outreach Initiatives:

- **Beneficiary Visits**
- **Media Outreach: \$134M School LAND Trust Distributions**
- **Early-stage Social Media Pilot**
- **Annual Report FY 25**



Annual Beneficiary Visits

Highlights:

- All 12 beneficiary institutions visited
- Visits reviewed trust distributions, current asset maps, potential legislation, relevant trust matters and updated key contacts
- Began engagement with the Capitol Preservation Board to discuss the Public Buildings Trust
- Utah Colleges of Education Deans (UCED) appointed a representative from USU to be the liaison for Colleges of Education

 PUBLIC SCHOOLS	 UNIVERSITY OF UTAH
 SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND	 COLLEGE OF MINES & EARTH SCIENCES
 SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF	 COLLEGES OF EDUCATION
 UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY	 JUVENILE JUSTICE AND YOUTH SERVICES
 MINERS HOSPITAL	 RESERVOIRS
 UTAH STATE HOSPITAL	 PUBLIC BUILDINGS

Media Outreach: \$134M School LAND Trust Distributions

Earned Media Coverage:

- Extensive earned media reach statewide
- Multi-platform coverage secured, including TV, print, and digital media
- High-visibility broadcast highlighted by KSL News at 10
- Campaign momentum exceed expectations; total coverage surpassed the fall “Welcome Back to School” effort.



Record-breaking \$134 million headed to Utah schools from Utah Land Trusts

 KSL News Utah
453K subscribers

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Utah schools will get a record \$134 million in 2026 trust lands money, a 20% bump

BY KATIE MCKELLAR - JANUARY 7, 2026 6:04 AM



 KSLTV.com

Record-breaking \$134 million headed to Utah schools from Utah Land Trusts

Utah schools are preparing for a record-breaking infusion of \$134 million next year — and not a dollar of it comes from taxpayers.

1 day ago

 Park Record

Park City School District to receive \$1 million from School LAND Trust Fund — \$168,600 more than last year

The School and Institutional Trust Funds Office has announced that the Trust Lands Permanent Funds will distribute a record-breaking \$134...

1 day ago

 San Juan Record |

Local schools get \$780K in trust funds

The School and Institutional Trust Funds Office announced that the Trust Lands Permanent Funds will distribute a record-breaking \$134...

23 hours ago

 The Herald Journal

Utah Schools set to receive record amount of School LAND Trust funds

Utah's School and Institutional Trust Funds Office (SITFO) announced Monday that the Trust Lands Permanent Funds will distribute a record...

1 day ago

 Cache Valley Daily

Utah school trust distribution jumps 20%, sending \$3.9M to Cache County schools

NORTH LOGAN — Utah public schools will receive a record-breaking \$134 million from the Trust Lands Permanent Funds for the 2026-27 school...

1 day ago



Early-Stage Social Media Pilot

Establishing a Social Media Presence

Purpose

- Maintain a basic, current social media presence so the office is visible and accessible when searched.

Platforms

- X and LinkedIn; selected to reach audiences not widely served by other Trust entities through social media

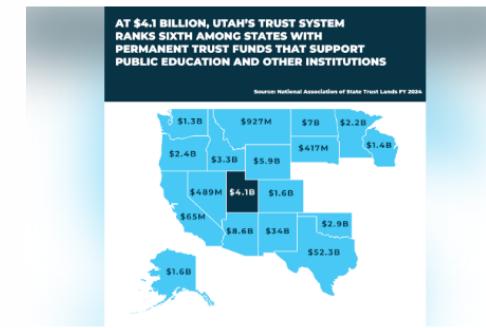
Content Focus

- Established emphasis areas: Trust System awareness, beneficiary outreach, Advocacy Office role, and stakeholder collaboration.
- Guided by social media policy and best-practice guidelines



Utah Land Trusts Protection & Advocacy Office

Because of Utah's Trust System, classrooms, campuses, and public institutions across the state receive consistent, long-term support. Now ...more



9 · 3 reposts

How are Utah's Trust Land Permanent Funds invested for the long-term benefit of schools and other designated trust institutions? 🏛️ ↗ ...more



10 · 1 comment · 2 reposts



Early-Stage Social Media Pilot

Establishing a Social Media Presence

Next Steps

- Maintain consistent, policy-aligned content on X and LinkedIn
- Use pilot findings to inform future social media strategy



Utah Land Trusts Protection & Advocacy ...  90 posts



Utah Land Trusts Protection & Adv...  @UtTrust... - Nov 7, 2025  ...
An inspiring visit to Utah Schools for the Deaf and Blind (@UtSchoolsDB).
Trust land distributions help provide critical funding for specialized programs and enriched learning opportunities that help students thrive.
#UtahEducation #TrustLands



Utah Land Trusts Protection & Ad...  @UtTrust... - Dec 17, 2025  ...
Located on Trust Lands, this resource development could translate into lasting support for Utah k-12 students. Royalties from this project would support the Permanent School Fund.



Utah House Majority  @utahhousereps - Dec 16, 2025  ...
Utahns have been mining for generations, and the story isn't over.

With 16 rare earth and critical minerals, this massive reserve will help the United States compete with China and power the next generation of tech with products mined and processed right here in Utah.

MINING[er]COM

Massive critical minerals deposit found in Utah



FY 2025 Annual Report

- Fulfills the requirements of §53D-2-203(5)
- Supports awareness and understanding of the Trust System
- Provides a concise overview of the history and governance of the Trust's
- Outlines the Advocacy Office's mission and responsibilities
- Summarizes the financial performance of each beneficiary's trust assets

[Excerpts of Annual Report](#)

