

Date: February 10, 2026



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 Interim Superintendent; Susan Patten and Michelle Tanner, USDB Associate Superintendents; Angela Doan and Ashley Biehl, Assistant Attorneys General (AAG); Andrea Curtin and Amy Magruder, Secretaries; Cindy Andersen and Bethany Andersen, Interpreters.

Others Present: Jerry Record and Alex Farah, USBE IT/Media Production Specialists; Deborah Jacobson, Assistant Superintendent; Kathy Carlisle, Katherine Crum, and Robbin Clark, USDB staff; Alisa Ensign, parent of a deaf student; Jonathan Helgesen, Extracurricular Director for USDB; and Closed Captioning Services.

USDB Committee Chair LeAnn Wood called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m.

INFORMATION: Public Comment

1. Jonathan Helgesen, Extracurricular Director for USDB, spoke about the need for additional funding for this program.
2. Alisa Ensign, parent of a deaf student, spoke in favor of H.B. 448 and the work for this Committee.
3. Sarah Erb, parent of a blind student, provided written comments about the Bridges Program.

6.2 INFORMATION: Update on Utah Schools for the Deaf and Blind

Committee Discussion: Updates were provided by Associate Superintendents Susan Patten and Michelle Tanner on various educational programs and initiatives for the schools for the blind and schools for the deaf, with discussions highlighting enrichment activities, funding needs, and upcoming events.

MOTION FOR THE BOARD: No motion.

6.3 INFORMATION: Advisory Council Update

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Committee Discussion: Interim Superintendent Nielsen shared updates from the USDB Advisory Council, including they had more public comment at the last meeting and that these meetings will be recorded and posted for more transparency.

MOTION FOR THE BOARD: No motion.

6.4 ACTION: General Session Legislation and Potential Recommendations

Committee Discussion: Interim Superintendent Nielsen reviewed bills and answered Board member questions about pending legislation, especially House Bill 448.

There was no Committee Action.

MOTION FOR THE BOARD: No motion.

6.5 ACTION: Bridges to Community Readiness — Post High Program Policy

Committee Discussion: While USDB has historically supported post-high students, this policy formally codifies the Bridges to Community Readiness (BCR) program's unique competency-based model and distinguishes it from standard high school coursework. This policy establishes the formal purpose, structure, and operational framework for the Bridges to Community Readiness (BCR) Post High Program at the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind. The program provides intensive, individualized instruction in the Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC) to bridge the gap between graduation and adulthood for students with vision impairments. The Bridges to Community Readiness Program (BCR) is designed to ensure students are prepared for successful transitions to college, the workforce, or community life.

Committee Action: Member Longacre moved to postpone this agenda item to next month's Committee meeting and to have a discussion in closed session.

Motion passed unanimously.

MOTION FOR THE BOARD: No motion.

6.6 ACTION: 6.08 Immunization Policy

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Committee Discussion: Staff presented the updated USDB Immunization Policy for Board consideration and approval. This update ensures USDB remains in full compliance with the Utah State Board of Education (USBE) Rule R277-800 and the 2025–2026 Utah Department of Health and Human Services requirements. The policy outlines the necessary documentation for enrollment, procedures for conditional enrollment, and the process for medical or personal exemptions to ensure the continued health and safety of our students across all campuses and outreach programs.

Committee Action: Member Longacre moved to add at the end of the Purpose statement, “USDB recognizes the rights of parents and guardians to make healthcare decisions for their children within the options allowed by Utah law.”

Motion passed unanimously.

Committee Action: Member Boothe moved that the Committee approve the 6.08 Immunization Policy, Draft 1, as amended, on first reading and forward to the Board for approval on second and final reading.

Motion passed unanimously.

MOTION FOR THE BOARD: That the Board approve the 6.08 Immunization Policy, Draft 2, on second and final reading.

6.7 **ACTION: 5.32 Educator Standards and LEA Reporting**

Committee Discussion: Staff presented the USDB Educator Standards and LEA Reporting Policy. This policy ensures full compliance with USBE Rule R277-217 by clarifying the ethical and professional expectations for all licensed USDB personnel. The update establishes rigorous protocols for the mandatory reporting of educator misconduct to the Utah Professional Practices Advisory Commission (UPPAC) and outlines the 48-hour self-reporting requirement for arrests or citations. Additionally, the policy provides specific guidance on maintaining professional boundaries, adapted to the unique instructional needs of students with sensory impairments, to ensure a safe and professional learning environment.

Committee Action: Member Longacre moved to add the words “support and” after the word “which” and before the word “require” in Section 3.1.

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In context: USDB adopts the professional standards articulated in R277-217-3, which [support and](#) require educators to maintain the highest standards of integrity, responsibility, and ethical conduct.

Motion passed unanimously.

Committee Action: Member Boothe moved that the Committee approve the 5.32 Educator Standards and LEA Reporting Policy, Draft 1, as amended, on first reading and forward to the Board for approval on second and final reading.

Motion passed unanimously.

MOTION FOR THE BOARD: That the Board approve 5.32 Educator Standards and LEA Reporting Policy, Draft 2, on second and final reading.

6.8 ACTION: 2026-2027 Calendar

Committee Discussion: Staff presented the 2026-2027 Utah Schools for the Deaf and Blind calendars for approval.

Committee Action: Member Boothe moved that the Committee approve the 2026-2027 school calendars as proposed and forward to the Board for approval on second and final reading.

MOTION FOR THE BOARD: That the Board approve the 2026-2027 school calendars.

2.1 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 Boothe made a motion to adjourn.

Motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 11:19 a.m.