

# UTAH STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

**Subject:**

ACTION: R277-406, Early Learning Program and Benchmark Assessments (Amendment)

**Agenda item type:**

Action Item

**Recommended Action:**

MOTION FOR THE BOARD: That the Board approve R277-406, Early Learning Program and Benchmark Assessments, Draft 2, on second and final reading.

**Purpose of Memo:**

Result of legislative action

**Background:**

**Summary of Program:** Utah administrative rule R277-406 establishes the framework for the state's K-3 Early Learning program, aiming to build strong student foundations in reading and mathematics by requiring strict adherence to evidence-based practices like the "Science of Reading." LEAs are legally required to administer state-approved benchmark reading assessments three times a year, provide targeted remediation and parental notifications for students scoring below benchmarks, and consistently report their performance and intervention data to the state via the UTREx system.

**Proposed Revisions:** Staff is recommending changes to R277-406 due to the passage of HB 312 during the 2026 legislative session which repealed early learning plans 53G-7-218, 53E-3-521. The amendments clarify that USBE will designate the statewide mathematics assessment. They also define funding responsibility: if state funds are available, USBE will assume financial responsibility for the assessment. If state funds are not available, LEAs will be responsible for covering the cost.

The definition of reading at grade level will be amended.

Staff will present R277-406, Early Learning Program and Benchmark Assessments, Draft 1, for consideration and approval.

Authorizing, and Implemented or Interpreted Law: [Art X Sec 2](#); [Art X Sec 3](#); [53E-3-401\(4\)](#); [53G-7-503](#)

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**Attachments:**

1. R277-406 - Draft 2 - May 2026 Board
2. R277-406 - Draft 1 - April 2026 Committee
3. USBE MOY 25-26 Math Data Review 3-19-26