

Proposal: Utah State Board of Education Statewide Listening Tour Visiting Utah Regional Service Centers and Six High-Population Communities | Draft for Review

1. Overview

The Utah State Board of Education (the “Board”) will conduct a statewide tour to (1) listen to constituents and education partners, and (2) share the Board’s Strategic Plan and other current work. The tour will include visits within each of Utah’s Regional Service Centers (RSCs) and five additional stops in Utah’s more highly populated communities to ensure broad geographic coverage and meaningful opportunities for public input.

2. Purpose and Objectives

- **Listen and learn:** Gather input from educators, families, students, school and district leaders and community organizations.
- **Share direction and progress:** Provide a clear, consistent overview of the Board’s Strategic Plan, key initiatives, and current work.
- **Build relationships:** Strengthen two-way communication between the Board and local communities, including rural LEAs.
- **Increase transparency and trust:** Create a public-facing forum where constituents can ask questions, share experiences, and understand decision-making processes.
- **Inform future action:** Summarize themes and recommendations to support Board planning, policy work, and legislative engagement.

3. Guiding Principles

- **Statewide representation:** Ensure regional balance and accessible meeting locations.
- **Consistency with flexibility:** Use a repeatable meeting format while allowing time for region-specific topics.
- **Action-oriented follow-through:** Communicate what was heard and how it will be used.

4. Proposed Stops and Itinerary Framework

This proposal is designed to accommodate visits within all Utah Regional Service Centers (RSCs) areas. In addition, the tour will include 5 stops in Utah’s more highly populated communities. Specific venues and dates will be finalized in coordination with local partners, Board schedules, and available facilities.

Contact Person and Email: Board Member Jennie Earl, jennie.earl@schools.utah.gov

This draft is for consideration during the April 3, 2026, Finance Committee Meeting.

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Stop Type	Location (City/Area)	Host / Venue (TBD)	Notes
Central Utah Educational Services (CUES)	TBD	TBD	Main: (435) 896-4469
Northeastern Utah Educational Services (NUES)	TBD	TBD	Main: (435) 654-1921
Southwest Educational Development Center (SEDC)	TBD	TBD	Main: (435) 586-2865
Southeast Education Service Center (SESC)	TBD	TBD	Main: (435) 637-1173
Salt Lake County/Tooele	TBD	TBD	
Salt Lake County/Lehi	TBD	TBD	
Ogden/Layton/Logan area	TBD	TBD	
St. George/Cedar City			
Provo/Orem/Payson	TBD	TBD	

Each Regional Service Center will be asked to help identify a primary local contact for scheduling, venue coordination, and outreach to regional stakeholders.

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5. Engagement Format (Recommended)

5.1 Standard Meeting Agenda (60-90 minutes)

1. **Welcome and purpose** (5 min)
2. **Strategic Plan overview** (10 min): priorities, goals, measures of success, and how public input informs the work
3. **Highlights of current Board work** (10 min): key initiatives and recent accomplishments
4. **Constituent listening session** (45–60 min): facilitated Q&A plus structured prompts
5. **Closing** (5 min) How to stay connected with the Board

5.2 Listening Prompts and Feedback Collection

- **What is working well** in your schools/communities that the state should protect or scale?
- **What barriers** are limiting student success (academic, attendance, behavior, mental health, staffing, facilities, transportation, etc.)?
- **What supports** from USBE would make the greatest difference in the next 12–24 months?
- **How should we measure progress** toward the Strategic Plan goals?
- **What should the Board hear** that may not show up in statewide data?
- **Closing question:** If you could change one thing to improve student outcomes, what would it be?

Feedback will be collected through (a) facilitated discussion notes and optional written comment cards. A short post-tour synthesis report will identify recurring themes, region-specific considerations, and suggested next steps for the Board.

6.1 Transportation

Transportation will be arranged based on distance, number of participants, and cost-effectiveness. Options may include state fleet vehicles, or group transportation (e.g., van) when multiple Board members and staff are traveling together. Routing will be planned to minimize total drive time and to reduce overnight stays where possible while still supporting evening community meetings.

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6.2 Lodging (Hotels Where Needed)

Hotels will be booked when same-day round-trip travel is not reasonable, or when meeting times require an overnight stay. Lodging selections will prioritize proximity to meeting sites; cost controls aligned with state travel policy, safety, and accessibility.

6.3 Accessibility, Language Access, and Accommodations

The tour will include reasonable accommodations upon request (e.g., interpretation, CART/closed captioning, and translated materials) and will offer multiple ways to provide feedback (in-person and online).

7. Staffing and Roles

- **Board Chair/Designee:** Opening remarks, Strategic Plan overview, closing summary.
- **Board Members:** Participate in listening, responding to questions, and share the work of the Board.
- **Executive staff:** Coordinate agenda, schedule facilities, ensure alignment of content, track commitments and follow-ups.
- **Facilitator/Moderator:** Manage meeting flow, ensure respectful dialogue, and balance participation.
- **Note taker(s):** Capture themes, questions, and action items using a consistent template.
- **Communications support:** Public notices, media coordination, talking points, and post-event summaries.

8. Communications and Outreach

- **Announcement and schedule:** Publish dates/locations on the USBE website and share through email lists and partner networks.
- **Targeted invitations:** Coordinate with districts, charter LEAs, RSCs, parent groups, and community organizations to invite diverse participants.
- **Consistent materials:** Provide a one-page Strategic Plan summary, slide deck, and FAQ to ensure consistent messaging across stops.
- **Public participation options:** Possible online form for those unable to attend and include it on all promotional materials.
- **Post-stop recap:** Share a brief “What We Heard” summary after each region and a final statewide summary report.

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9. Budget Framework Total (\$35,500)

A detailed budget will be developed once the number of tour days, routing, and participants are confirmed. The budget will include the following categories:

- **Transportation:** mileage/fuel, vehicle rental (if needed), parking, and other travel-related costs. (\$5,000-10,000 includes lodging, meals, mileage)
- **Lodging:** hotels for overnight stays based on the route and meeting schedule.
- **Meals and per diem:** as permitted by applicable travel policy.
- **Facilities and setup:** room rental (if applicable), A/V, microphones, and basic signage. (\$2,000)
- **Accessibility and language services:** interpretation, captioning, and translation as needed. (\$1,000)
- **Materials:** printing of handouts (one page with QR Code for additional materials), feedback cards, and name tents. (\$1,000)
- **Board Member Compensation:** Each member can sign up for three meetings (\$13,500)
- **Staff Member support:** Online support and in attendance (TBD – estimate \$8,000)

10. Risk Management and Meeting Protocols

- **Meeting norms:** Establish and read a short participation statement to support respectful, orderly public comment.
- **Documentation:** Use a standardized note template; avoid collecting sensitive student information during public comment.
- **Venue coordination:** Confirm capacity, safety procedures, and points of contact at each location.
- **Contingencies:** Provide a virtual option if weather, venue issues, or other disruptions occur.

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