USBE Legislative Request Form

(Policy, Funding, & Efficiency / Reductions)

2027 General Session

SECTION 1: THE BOTTOM LINE

Request Title: Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind

USBE Lead Point of Contact:

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Nature of Request (Select all that apply):

[ ] **Policy Change:** Creating, amending, or repealing Utah State Code. *(Complete Section 4)*

X **New/Increased Funding:** Seeking new financial resources. *(Complete Section 3)*

[ ] **Efficiency / Reduction:** Proposing the elimination or reduction of a program, mandate, or funding stream. *(Complete Section 3 and/or 4)*

Purpose Statement (BLUF - Bottom Line Up Front):

We are requesting $2, 718 ,766 in funding to secure materials, equipment , and dedicated personnel required to fully remediate the 2025 audit findings and increase compliance levels with Utah State Board Rules and state law including school safety . This investment will stabilize USDB's financial, data, and risk -management infrastructure without diverting critical resources away from direct K -12 classroom instruction.

SECTION 2: THE BUSINESS CASE

The Problem:

This request addresses critical operational and compliance needs identified during two recent audits and subsequent reduction -in-force (RIF) actions at the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (USDB) in 2025. The audits highlighted key inefficiencies requiring immediate rectification, specifically within data and financial management, strategic planning, policy development, and risk management. Over the past eight months, USDB leadership has utilized existing budgetary resources to address these gaps while evaluating the long -term impacts of the staff reductions. This funding request is the direct result of that evaluation, targeting specific areas where additional fiscal support is required to successfully mitigate institutional risk and ensure sustainable, efficient operations moving forward.

Origin of the Request

This request originated directly from the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (USDB) Administrative Team. It was developed through a internal evaluation following the 2025 organizational audits , policy and law compliance review, and subsequent staff reductions.

Compliance and Alignment Gaps

While triggered by internal reviews, critical components of this fiscal request were designed to close newly identified vulnerabilities in state -level alignment. Specifically, the request addresses gaps between current operational capacities and the mandates outlined in Utah State Board Rule and Utah State Law. Funding will ensure that USDB's data systems, risk management frameworks, and financial operations achieve compliance with statutory obligations.

Support and Opposition

- **Support:** There is strong internal consensus and unified support for this request among USDB leadership, administrative staff, and operational teams who recognize the immediate necessity of stabilizing our infrastructure.
- **Opposition:** There is no known opposition to this request. The proposed adjustments focus entirely on administrative remediation, compliance mitigation, and operational efficiency, serving the best interest of students, staff, and state oversight bodies alike.

Projected Results:

If approved, what is the measurable outcome in the K-12 system?

(Please list 1-2 specific performance metrics. Link to existing performance measures will be added here).

Measurable Outcome: If approved, this funding will directly protect the K -12 instructional environment by reducing the operational, financial, and compliance risks caused by recent structural down -sizing. It ensures that USDB leadership can maintain seamless, uninterrupted administrative oversight, directly benefiting the specialized K -12 student populations we serve.

Performance Metrics:

1. Audit Resolution Rate: 100% mitigation and closure of high-risk operational and policy gaps identified in the 2025 audits by the end of Fiscal Year 2027/2028.

Consequence of Inaction:

If this request is not funded, the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind will lack the resource capacity to fully remediate the deficiencies identified in the 2025 audits. The specific, factual impacts of inaction include:

• Operational Over-Extension: Following the 2025 reductions in force (RIF), existing administrative staff will continue to operate beyond sustainable capacity. This heightens the risk of critical oversight errors in data tracking and financial management.

• Delayed Strategic Planning: Without dedicated support, the development of required risk management frameworks and modernized policy updates will be delayed, preventing USDB from establishing a proactive, stabilized operational baseline.

• Indirect Classroom Impact: Unresolved administrative and data inefficiencies will eventually create operational bottlenecks, diverting leadership focus away from supporting direct K -12 instructional services and student outcomes.

Evidence & Data:

1. External Audit Mandates and Gap Analysis

The primary source proving this approach is the formal finding documentation from the two 2025 independent/state audits conducted at

USDB. These audits served as a comprehensive gap analysis, explicitly identifying structural vulnerabilities in data tracking, financial management, and risk mitigation.

2. Internal Capacity and RIF Impact Evaluation

Over the past eight months, USDB leadership conducted an internal operational capacity analysis to evaluate the effects of the 2025 reductions in force (RIF). The data demonstrated that while routine day -to-day operations could be maintained, the specialized workload required to build, implement, and oversee new compliance frameworks, policy developments, and modernized data structures exceed current personnel bandwidth. This analysis indicates that external fiscal intervention is required to achieve compliance without degrading direct K -12 instructional services.

SECTION 3: FUNDING, OFFSETS, & EFFICIENCIES

*(Complete **only** if your request involves financial resources or proposing budget cuts)*

Financial Ask:

(If a field does not apply, enter $0).

- **FY 2027 Ongoing Requested:** $1,440,700
- **FY 2027 One-Time Requested:** $1,278,066

The Offset Strategy:

Due to the comprehensive 2025 reductions in force (RIF) and subsequent organizational restructuring, the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (USDB) has already aggressively identified, defunded, and eliminated positions and inefficient operational streams.

Over the past eight months, USDB leadership evaluated all internal accounts and program allocations. Because we have streamlined our infrastructure to its baseline, there are no known duplicate administrative programs or ineffective funding streams remaining .

Any further reduction or reallocation of existing funds would require cutting direct K -12 instructional programs, specialized classroom technology, or essential student therapies (such as speech -language pathology and orientation/mobility services). Doing so would directly compromise USDB's ability to deliver a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) under federal and state statutory mandates.

Future Obligations:

Does this request create multi-year scale-up costs or ongoing maintenance obligations?

[ ] Yes

X No

If yes, please describe: ____

Itemized Budget Request:

(Please detail how the funding will be utilized across the following categories).

	FY 2027 (Current)	**FY 2028 (proposed)**
TOTAL REQUESTED	**$ 2,718,766**	**$1,440,700**

New USBE FTEs Requested: 7

Can current FTEs be assigned these responsibilities? Explain.

Following the significant 2025 reductions in force (RIF), USDB's existing FTEs are already operating at maximum capacity, having absorbed the baseline operational and instructional tasks of the eliminated positions. Assigning these additional responsibilities to current staff is not viable.

SECTION 4: POLICY & STATUTE

(Complete only if your request involves changing or eliminating Utah State Code)

Code Sections Affected: *(List specific state code references, or write "New Code")*

[Type response here]

Suggested Legislative Solution: *What specific language needs to be added, amended, or repealed?*

[Type response here]

Safeguards: *Does this policy change or program reduction create unintended consequences for specific geographic areas or student populations? How will those be mitigated?*

[Type response here]