

USBE Legislative Request Form

(Policy, Funding, & Efficiency / Reductions)

2027 General Session

SECTION 1: THE BOTTOM LINE

Request Title: Purple Star Schools Program

USBE Lead Point of Contact:

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- USBE Section: Comms

Director Reviewer: Ryan Bartlett

Nature of Request (Select all that apply):

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

☒ **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):

Funding for the Purple Star Schools program will support the development and recognition of schools committed to serving military-connected students and families. Requested funds will be used to

purchase Purple Star Schools recognition materials, including banners and signage; support school recognition ceremonies and outreach events; develop and distribute informational resources at military and community events; and provide promotional and educational materials that increase awareness of the program. These resources will help strengthen partnerships between schools, military installations, and communities while recognizing schools that demonstrate a commitment to supporting military-connected students.

SECTION 2: THE BUSINESS CASE

The Problem:

The Purple Star Schools program currently has no dedicated funding to support implementation, recognition, or outreach activities. As the program continues to grow, schools and military-connected families benefit from consistent resources that promote awareness, recognize participating schools, and strengthen partnerships with military and community organizations.

The Source:

This request originated through conversations with members of the Utah State Board of Education who recognize the value of expanding the Purple Star Schools program and have expressed support for its continued growth. In addition, military stakeholders and community partners have identified the need for dedicated funding to strengthen the program, increase outreach, and provide consistent recognition and resources for participating schools. There has been strong support for this request from education and military partners, and no significant opposition has been identified

Projected Results:

1. Program Expansion – Boosting the total count of certified Purple Star Schools.
2. Operational Quality – Evaluating annual deployment and sustainability data submitted by participating institutions

Consequence of Inaction:

Without dedicated funding, the Purple Star Schools program will continue to operate without the resources needed to support statewide growth, consistent implementation, and meaningful recognition of participating schools. Outreach to schools and military-connected communities will be more restricted, recognition materials and ceremonies will be reduced or unavailable, and opportunities to share resources and best practices will be constrained. As a result, the pace of program expansion and the ability to sustain high-quality implementation across participating schools may be significantly limited.

Evidence & Data:

The Purple Star Schools program is supported by research conducted by the Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC) in partnership with the Center for Public Research and Leadership (CPRL) at Columbia University. Their 2021 and 2022 evaluations found that Purple Star Schools improve support for military-connected students by strengthening school transition processes, increasing staff awareness of military family needs, enhancing communication with families, and building sustainable school practices. The research also recommends continued state investment in program implementation, outreach, recognition, and professional learning to ensure long-term quality and expansion. Additional guidance from the U.S. Department of Defense's DefenseState Liaison Office identifies Purple Star Schools as a best practice for improving educational experiences for military-connected students and recommends strengthening implementation through dedicated resources.

SECTION 3: FUNDING, OFFSETS, & EFFICIENCIES

Financial Ask:

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

- **FY 2027 Ongoing Requested:** \$10,000-\$15,000
- **FY 2027 One-Time Requested:** \$_____
- **Proposed Offsets / Savings:** \$_____

Future Obligations:

☐ Yes

☒ 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		\$ 10,000-\$15,000 ongoing

New USBE FTEs Requested: 0

Can current FTEs be assigned these responsibilities? Explain.

Yes, CassieHays, Parent Liaison and Engagement Specialist currently oversees the Purple Star Schools program and will continue to do so. It is within legislation that assists military families within the scope of her position.

If no FTEs are required, explain.

Performance Measures:

Measure	Baseline (2026)	Year 1 Target
Purple Star Schools designated	178	210–220
New schools designated annually	78 added in 2025–26	30–40 additional schools yearly
Annual self-assessment	Basic Information	51% of schools identify an exemplary practices that can be shared statewide.
Statewide recognition event	None	1 annual awards ceremony
Military/community outreach events	Informal	3-5 events annually