

**R277. Education, Administration.**

**R277-477. Distributions of Funds from the Trust Earnings Account and Administration of the School LAND Trust Program.**

**R277-477-1. Authority and Purpose.**

(1) This rule is authorized by:

(a) Utah Constitution Article X, Section 3, which vests general control and supervision over public education in the Board;

(b) Subsection 53F-2-404(4), which allows the Board to adopt rules regarding the time and manner in which a student count shall be made for allocation of funds; and

(c) Subsection 53E-3-401(4), which allows the Board to make rules to execute the Board's duties and responsibilities under the Utah Constitution and state law.

(2) The Board is the primary beneficiary representative and advocate for the beneficiaries of the School Trust corpus and the School LAND Trust Program.

(3) The purpose of this rule is to:

(a) provide financial resources to a public school to implement a component of a school's improvement plan or charter document in order to enhance and improve student academic achievement;

(b) provide a means to involve a parent of a school's student in decision-making regarding the expenditure of School LAND Trust Program funds allocated to the school;

(c) provide direction in the distribution of funds from the Trust Earnings Account, as funded in Subsection 53F-2-404(3);

(d) provide for appropriate and adequate oversight of the expenditure and use of funds by a designated local board of education, an approving entity, and the Board;

(e) provide for proper allocation of funds as stated in Subsections 53F-2-404(3) and (4), and the appropriate and timely distribution of the funds;

(f) enforce compliance with statutory and rule requirements, including the responsibility for a school community council to notify school community members regarding the use of funds; and

(g) define the roles, duties, and responsibilities of the School Children's Trust Director within the USOE.

**R277-477-2. Definitions.**

(1) "Approving entity" means an LEA governing board, university, or other legally authorized entity that may approve or reject a plan for a district or charter school.

(2)(a) "Charter trust land council" means a council comprised of a two person majority of elected parents of students attending the charter school convened to act in lieu of the school community council for the charter school.

(b) "Charter trust land council" includes a charter school governing board if:

(i) the council meets the two-parent majority requirement; and

(ii) the charter school governing board chooses to serve as the charter trust land council.

(3) "Council" means a school community council or a charter trust land council.

(4) "Digital citizenship" means the same as that term is defined in Section 53G-7-1202.

(5) "Fall enrollment report" means the audited census of students registered in Utah public schools as reported in the audited October 1 Fall Enrollment Report of the previous year.

(6) "Funds" means School LAND Trust program funding as defined in Subsection 53F-2-404(3)(a).

(7) "Most critical academic need" means an academic need identified in a school's improvement plan or school's charter.

(8)(a) "Principal" means an administrator licensed as a principal in the state and employed in that capacity at a school.

(b) "Principal" includes the director of a charter school.

(9) "Satellite charter school" has the same meaning as that term is defined in R277-482.

(10) "School Children's Trust Director" means the Director appointed by the Board under Section 53E-3-514.

(11) "Student" means a child in public school grades kindergarten through 12 counted on the fall enrollment report of a school district, charter school, or USDB.

(12) "Trust Earnings Account" means the restricted account within the Uniform School Fund created under Subsection 53F-9-201(2).

**R277-477-3. Distribution of Funds - Local Board or Local Charter Board Approval of School LAND Trust Plans.**

(1) A public school receiving School LAND Trust Program funds shall have:

(a) a school community council as required by Section 53G-7-1202 and Rule R277-491;

(b) a charter school trust land council as required by Subsection 53F-2-404(9); or

(c) an approved exemption under this rule.

(2) A public school receiving School LAND Trust Program funds shall submit a principal assurance form, as described in Section R277-491-5 and Subsection 53F-2-404(5)(c), prior to the public school receiving a distribution of School LAND Trust Program funds.

(3) A charter school that elects to receive School LAND Trust funds shall:

(a) have a charter trust land council;

(b) be subject to Section 53G-7-1203 if the charter trust land council is not a charter school governing board; and

(c) receive training about Section 53G-7-1203.

(4) A charter school that is a small or special school may receive an exemption from the charter land trust council composition requirements contained in Subsection 53F-2-404(9) upon application to the Board if the small or special school demonstrates and documents a good faith effort to recruit members to the charter trust land council.

(5) The principal of a charter school that elects to receive School LAND Trust funds shall submit a plan to the School Children's Trust Section on the School LAND Trust website:

(a) no later than April 1; or

(b) for a newly opening charter school, no later than November 1 in the school's first year in order to receive funding in the year the newly opening charter school opens.

(6)(a) An approving entity:

(i) shall consider a plan annually; and

(ii) may approve or disapprove a school plan.

(b) If an approving entity does not approve a plan, the approving entity shall:

(i) provide a written explanation why the approving entity did not approve the plan; and

(ii) request that the school revise the plan, consistent with Section 53F-2-404.

(7)(a) To receive funds, the principal of a public school shall submit a School LAND Trust plan to the School Children's Trust Section annually through the School LAND Trust website using the form provided.

(b) The Board may grant an exemption from a school using the Superintendent-provided form, described in Subsection (7)(a), on a case-by-case basis.

(8) In addition to the requirements of Subsection (6), the School LAND Trust plan described in Subsection (7)(a) shall include the date the council voted to approve the plan.

(9)(a) The principal of a school shall ensure that a council member has an opportunity to provide a signature indicating the member's involvement in implementing the current School LAND Trust plan and developing the school plan for the upcoming year.

(b) The principal shall collect a council member's signature, as described in Subsection (9)(a), digitally or through a paper form created by the Membership Form on the website and uploaded to the database.

(c) An LEA or district school, upon the permission of the LEA's governing board, may design the LEA or district school's own form to collect the information required by this Subsection (9).

(10)(a) An approving entity shall establish a timeline, including a deadline, for a school to submit a school's School LAND Trust plan.

(b) A timeline described in Subsection (10)(a) shall:

(i) require a school's School LAND Trust plan to be submitted to the approving entity with sufficient time so that the approving entity may approve the school's School LAND Trust plan no later than May 15 of each year; and

(ii) allow sufficient time for a council to reconsider and amend the council's School LAND Trust plan if the approving entity rejects the school's plan and still allow the school to meet the May 15 approving entity's approval deadline.

(c) After an approving entity has completed the approving entity's review, the approving entity shall notify the School Children's Trust Section that the review is complete.

(11)(a) Prior to approving a plan, an approving entity shall review a School LAND Trust plan under the approving entity's purview to confirm that a School LAND Trust plan contains:

(i) academic goals;

(ii) specific steps to meet the academic goals described in Subsection (11)(a)(i);

(iii) measurements to assess improvement; and

(iv) specific expenditures focused on student academic improvement.

(b) The approving entity shall determine whether a School LAND Trust plan is consistent with the approving entity's pedagogy, programs, and curriculum.

(c) Prior to approving a School LAND Trust plan, the president or chair of the approving entity shall provide training annually on the requirements of Section 53F-2-404 to the members of the approving entity.

(12)(a) After receiving the notice described in Subsection (10)(c), the School Children's Trust Section shall review each School LAND Trust plan for compliance with the law governing School LAND Trust plans.

(b) The School Children's Trust Section shall report back to the approving entity concerning which School LAND Trust plans were found to be out of compliance with the law.

(c) An approving entity shall ensure that a School LAND Trust plan that is found to be out of compliance with the law by the School Children's Trust Section is amended or revised by the council to bring the school's School LAND Trust plan into compliance with the law.

(13) If an approving entity fails to comply with Subsection (12)(c), the School Children's Trust Director shall report the failure to the Audit Committee of the Board as described in Section R277-477-9.

**R277-477-4. Appropriate Use of School LAND Trust Program Funds.**

(1) Parents, teachers, and the principal, in collaboration with an approving entity, shall use School LAND Trust Program funds in data-driven and evidence-based ways to improve educational outcomes, including:

(a) strategies that are measurable and show academic outcomes with multi-tiered systems of support; and

(b) counselors and educators working with students and families on academic and behavioral issues when a direct impact on academic achievement can be measured.

(2) School LAND Trust Program expenditures are required to have a direct impact on the instruction of students in the particular school's areas of most critical academic need.

(3) A school may not use School LAND Trust Program funds for the following:

(a) to cover the fixed costs of doing business;

(b) for construction, maintenance, facilities, overhead, security, or athletics; or

(c) to pay for non-academic in-school, co-curricular, or extracurricular activities.

(4) A school district or local school board may not require a council or school to spend the school's School LAND Trust Program funds on a specific use or set of uses.

(5)(a) A council may budget and spend no more than \$7,000 for in-school civic and character education, including student leadership skills training and digital citizenship training as described in Section 53G-7-1202.

(b) A school may designate School LAND Trust Program funds for an in-school civic or character education program or activity only if the plan clearly describes how the program or activity has a direct impact of the instruction of students in school's areas of most critical academic need.

(6) Notwithstanding other provisions in this rule, a school may use funds as needed to implement a student's Individualized Education Plan.

(7) Student incentives implemented as part of an academic goal in the School LAND Trust Program may not exceed \$2 per awarded student in an academic school year.

**R277-477-5. Distribution of Funds - Determination of Proportionate Share.**

(1)(a) A local school board or charter school governing board shall report the prior year expenditure of distributions for each school.

(b) The total expenditures each year described in Subsection (1)(a) may not be greater than the total available funds for any school or school district.

(c) A school district shall adjust the current year distribution of funds received from the School LAND Trust Program as described in Section 53F-2-404, as necessary to maintain an equal per student distribution within a school district based on school openings and closings, boundary changes, and other enrollment changes occurring after the fall enrollment report.

(2) A charter school and each of the charter school's satellite charter schools are a single LEA for purposes of public school funding.

(3)(a) For purposes of this Subsection (3) and Subsection (4), "qualifying charter school" means a charter school that:

(i) would receive more funds from a per pupil distribution than the charter school receives from the base payment described in Subsection (2)(c); and

(ii) is not a newly opening charter school as described in Subsection (3).

(b) The Superintendent shall distribute the funds allocated to charter schools as described in this Subsection (2).

(c) The Superintendent shall first distribute a base payment to each charter school that is equal to the product of:

(i) an amount equal to the total funds available for all charter schools; and

(ii) at least 0.4%.

(d) After the Superintendent distributes the amount described in Subsection (2)(c), the Superintendent shall distribute the remaining funds to qualifying charter schools on a per pupil basis.

(4)(a) The Superintendent shall distribute an amount of funds to a newly opening charter school that is equal to the greater of:

(i) the base payment described in Subsection (2)(c); or

(ii) a per pupil amount based on the newly opened charter school's projected October 1 enrollment count.

(b) The Superintendent shall increase or decrease a newly opening charter school's first year distribution of funds in the school's second year to reflect the newly opening charter school's actual first year October 1 enrollment.

(5) If a school chooses not to apply for funds or does not meet the requirements for receiving funds, the USOE shall retain the funds allocated for that school and include those funds in the statewide distribution for the following school year.

**R277-477-6. School LAND Trust Program - Implementation of Plans and Required Reporting.**

(1) A school shall implement a plan as approved.

(2)(a) The principal shall submit a plan amendment authorized by Subsection 53F-2-404(6)(d)(iii) through the School LAND Trust website for approval, including the date the council approved the amendment and the number of votes for, against, and absent.

(b) The approving entity shall:

(i) consider the amendment for approval; and

(ii) approve an amendment before the school uses funds according to the amendment.

(c) The School Children's Trust Section shall review an amendment for compliance with statute and rule before the school uses funds according to the amendment.

(3)(a) A school shall provide an explanation for any carryover that exceeds one-tenth of the school's allocation in a given year in the School LAND Trust Plan or final report.

(b) The USOE shall consider a district or school with a consistently large carryover balance over multiple years as not making adequate and appropriate progress on an approved plan.

(c) The Board may take corrective action to remedy excessive carryover balances as outlined in Section R277-477-9.

(4) By approving a plan on the School LAND Trust website, the approving entity affirms that:

(a) the entity has reviewed the plan; and

(b) the plan meets the requirements of statute and rule.

(5)(a) A district or charter school business official shall enter prior year audited expenditures by specific category on the School LAND Trust website on or before October 1.

(b) The expenditure data shall appear in the final report submitted online by a principal, as required by Section 53F-2-404.

(6) A principal shall submit a final report on the School LAND Trust website by October 20 annually.

**R277-477-7. School LAND Trust Program - School Children's Trust Section to Review Compliance.**

(1)(a) The School Children's Trust Section shall review each school's final report for consistency with the approved school plan.

(b) The School Children's Trust Section shall create a list of all schools whose final reports indicate that funds from the School LAND Trust Program were expended inconsistent with the statute, rule, or the school's approved plan.

(c) The School Children's Trust Section shall annually report a school described in Subsection (1)(b) to the school district contact person, district superintendent, and president of the local board of education or charter board, as applicable.

(2) The School Children's Trust Section may visit a school receiving funds from the School LAND Trust Program to discuss the program, receive information and suggestions, provide training, and answer questions.

(3)(a) The School Children's Trust Director shall supervise annual compliance reviews to review expenditure of funds consistent with the approved plan, allowable expenses, and the law.

(b) The School Children's Trust Director shall report annually to the Board Audit Committee on compliance review findings and other compliance issues.

(c) After receiving the report described in Subsection (3)(b)

and any other relevant information requested by the committee, the Board Audit Committee may make a determination regarding questioned expenditures and corrective action as outlined in Section R277-477-9.

**R277-477-8. School Children's Trust Director - Other Provisions.**

(1)(a) The School Children's Trust Director is an employee of the Board, pursuant to Section 53E-3-514 and Board bylaws.

(b) The School Children's Trust Director shall report to the Board Audit Committee monthly.

(c) The School Children's Trust Director shall report day-to-day to the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee.

(2)(a) The School Children's Trust Director shall submit a draft section budget to the Board Audit Committee annually, consistent with Subsection 53E-3-514(5)(a).

(b) The School Children's Trust Director shall include in the draft budget a proposed School LAND Trust Program and training schedule, as described in Subsection 53E-514(13).

(3) In addition to the duties established in 53E-3-514, the School Children's Trust Director shall:

(a) assist the Board as needed as its designee in fulfilling its duties as primary beneficiary representative for school trust lands and funds;

(b) provide independent oversight of an agency managing school trust lands and the permanent State School Fund to ensure the trust assets are managed prudently, profitably, and in the best interest of the beneficiaries;

(c) review and approve a charter school plan on behalf of the State Charter School Board;

(d) provide notice as necessary to the State Charter School Board of changes required of charter schools for compliance with state statute and rule;

(e) review and approve a plan submitted by the USDB governing board as necessary; and

(f) carry out the policy direction of the Board under law and faithfully adhere to the Board-approved budget.

(4) The employees of the School Children's Trust Section report to the School Children's Trust Director.

**R277-477-9. Failure to Comply with Rule.**

(1) If a local school board, school district, district or charter school, or council fails to comply with the provisions of this rule, the School Children's Trust Director may report the failure to the Audit Committee of the Board.

(2) If the Audit Committee of the Board finds that any local school board, school district, district or charter school, or council failed to comply with statute or rule, the Audit Committee may recommend that the Board take any or all of the following actions:

(a) in cooperation with the local school board or charter school governing board, develop a corrective action plan for the school district, district or charter school, or council;

(b) require the school to reimburse the School LAND Trust Program for any inappropriate expenditures;

(c) reduce, eliminate, or withhold future funding; or

(d) any other necessary and appropriate corrective action.

(3) The Board may, by majority vote, take any of the actions outlined in Subsection (2) to correct or remedy a violation of statute or rule by a local school board, school district, district or charter school, or council.

**KEY: schools, school community councils, trust lands funds**

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**Authorizing, and Implemented or Interpreted Law: Art X Sec 3;  
53A-16-101.5(4); 53A-1-401**