

USHE Weekly Legislative Report
Fifth Week: February 23-27, 2015
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This is the fourth weekly report for 2015 on the legislative session from the perspective of the Utah System of Higher Education, for distribution to Regents, Presidents, and Trustees.

2015-2016 Budget. With [revised revenue projections](#) announced last week, significant budget decisions continue to loom before a final budget takes shape, including Medicaid expansion and possible gas tax revisions. There is still a lot of work to be done on the budget as well as several bills that continue their march through the legislative process.

Key Legislation of Interest to USHE

- [HB 123, Tuition and Fees Assistance for Utah National Guard Members*](#) by Rep. Val Peterson, expands the allowable tuition assistance for a Utah National Guard member to include fees. The bill has passed the Senate and the House and awaits the Governor's signature.
- [HB 198, Strengthening College and Career Readiness*](#) by Rep. Patrice Arent, creates the Strengthening College and Career Readiness Program to improve students' college and career readiness through enhancing the skill level of school counselors for college and career counseling. The bill was passed by the House and awaits further consideration by the Senate Education Committee.
- [HB 210, Early College High Schools*](#) by Rep. Val Peterson, distinguishes an early college high school from a regularly authorized charter school. Utah's early college high schools operate in partnership with seven USHE institutions. The bill was passed unanimously by the House Education Committee and awaits consideration by the full House.
- [HB 257, Educator Licensing Amendments**](#) by Rep. Norm Thurston, modifies provisions relating to educational personnel preparation programs. It restricts the State Board of Education to only recognize education programs that are accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) of which only one USHE institution is accredited. The bill awaits consideration by the House Education Committee.
- [HB 335, STEM Action Center Amendments](#) by Rep. Jon Stanard, creates the Southern Utah STEM Center. The bill requires the State STEM Action Center to coordinate with Southern Utah University and Dixie State University to promote science, technology, engineering, and mathematics education and professional development in southern Utah. The bill awaits consideration by a House standing committee.
- [HB 337, Career and Technical Education Comprehensive Study](#) by Rep. Rich Cunningham, creates a Career and Technical Education (CTE) Board, and directs the Board to conduct a comprehensive study, which includes: an inventory of all CTE programs in Utah; the amount of funding dedicated to the program; the number of CTE certificates issued since 2010; employment information for students who have completed the program since October 1, 2010; and the extent to which overlap or duplication exists between the program and other CTE programs. The bill awaits consideration by a House standing committee.
- [HB 344, Longitudinal Data Center Management Act](#) by Rep. Jacob Anderegg, modifies the Utah Data Alliance by establishing the State Longitudinal Data Center. The bill establishes

the position of state longitudinal data coordinator within the Governor's Office of Management and Budget, and defines procedures for government entities to access educational longitudinal data. USHE is working with the sponsor to address concerns. The bill awaits consideration by a House standing committee.

- [HB 409, Amendments to the Procurement Code](#) by Rep. V. Lowry Snow, proposes changes to the state procurement code that allows institutional procurement officers to make more direct decisions and have direct accountability of purchasing action. The bill also allows for exemptions for individual financial advisors associated with an organization's contracted financial retirement manager. The bill awaits consideration by a House standing committee.
- [HR 5, House Resolution Regarding Mathematics Proficiency among High School Students](#), by Rep. Steve Eliason, expresses support for a requirement that a Utah high school student pass a math course all four years of high school unless the student demonstrates math proficiency. The resolution awaits consideration by a House standing committee.
- [SB 64 \(2nd Substitute\), Utah Educational Savings Plan Amendments*](#) by Sen. Todd Weiler, modifies tax credit provisions related to the Utah Educational Savings Plan to allow for a portion of an individual income tax refund to be contributed to a qualifying Utah Educational Savings Plan. The bill also makes technical and conforming changes. The bill has passed the Senate and the House and awaits the Governor's signature.
- [SB 196, Math Competency Initiative](#) by Sen. Ann Millner, designates several pathways for high school students to demonstrate quantitative literacy before graduation. Students who plan to attend college will have to show math competency at a college-entry level. The bill also requires the Board of Regents to develop ways for students to earn college credit as they fulfill math requirements in high school and to expand concurrent enrollment. The bill passed the full Senate and awaits consideration in the House.
- [SB 232, Higher Education Performance Funding*](#) by Sen. Stephen Urquhart, is companion legislation to the funding priorities established by the Board of Regents. The bill directs the Board to establish performance funding for higher education institutions. It also requires the Board of Regents and USHE institutions to annually report to the Higher Education Appropriations Subcommittee on the use of performance funding. The bill unanimously passed the Senate Education Committee and awaits consideration by the full Senate.
- [SB 219, World Language Proficiency Recognition](#) by Sen. Howard Stephenson, attempts to modify the Regents' Scholarship to match a proposed graduation requirement in world language proficiency for high school graduation. The Commissioner's Office is working to make modifications to improve alignment of the proposal to the college readiness objectives of the Regents' Scholarship. The bill awaits consideration by the full Senate.
- [SB 253, Exceptions for Privately Funded Scholarships](#) by Sen. Scott Jenkins, modifies provisions related to verification requirements for receipt of state, local, or federal public benefits. Highlighted Provisions: This bill exempts certain publicly funded scholarships from verification requirements and makes technical changes. The bill awaits consideration by the Senate Education Committee.
- [SB 273, Higher Education Tax Credits](#) by Sen. Jim Dabakis, enacts a nonrefundable tax credit for certain parents whose adjusted gross income is less than 200% of the federal poverty guideline for certain higher education costs, and provides that the tax credit is subject to apportionment. The bill awaits consideration by the Senate Revenue & Taxation Committee.

* USHE has taken an official position in support; ** USHE has taken an official position in opposition.

For more information on legislation, committee agendas, or to view or listen to floor debates, see:

<http://le.utah.gov/>