

R277. Education, Administration.

R277-326. Early Learning.

R277-326-1. 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 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;

(c) Section 53F-5-214, which directs the Board to make rules regarding the required elements of the Early Learning Professional Learning Grant and a formula to determine an LEA's grant amount; and

(d) Subsection 53E-3-1002(2), which directs the Board to make rules to allocate funding for early literacy coaches.

(2) The purpose of this rule is to:

(a)(i) provide the required elements for the Early Learning Professional Learning Grant program including eligibility criteria; and

(ii) establish a formula for the grant distribution; and

(b) establish criteria for assignment of early literacy coaches in accordance with Section 53E-3-1002.

R277-326-2. Definitions.

(1) "Early literacy coach" means a coach provided by the Board to assist LEAs with early literacy in accordance with Section 53E-3-1002.

(2) "Evidence-based" means the same as the term is defined in Subsection R277-406-2(3).

(3) "Focused" means professional learning that is targeted to strategies that align with an LEA's plan and goals that would best support improving outcomes.

(4) "Job-embedded" means learning that is during the workday and designed to enhance instructional practices with the intent of improving student learning outcomes.

(5) "Professional learning" means the same as the term is defined in Section 53G-11-303.

(6) "Sustained" means multiple professional learning sessions with ongoing support for implementation of professional learning for long-term change.

R277-326-3. Eligibility and Application.

(1) All LEAs are eligible to apply for the Early Learning Professional Learning Grant.

(2) To receive grants funds, an LEA shall submit an application to the Superintendent, including the LEA's plan:

(a) for the types of professional learning opportunities the LEA plans to utilize including:

(i) comprehensive professional learning opportunities as described in Subsection 53G-11-303(2); and

(ii) job-embedded coaching;

(b) for how the LEA intends to connect professional learning to the LEA's Early Learning Plan goals; and

(c) for how the LEA intends to increase benchmark assessment scores and related outcomes through professional learning opportunities.

(3) An LEA shall only use sustained professional learning opportunities that are evidence-based and focused.

R277-326-4. Distribution and Use of Funds.

(1) The Superintendent may allocate funds annually to one or more Regional Education Service Agencies to provide job-embedded-coaching.

(2) Subject to legislative appropriations, the Superintendent shall distribute the balance of Early Learning Professional Learning Grant funds as follows:

(a) a per teacher allotment shall be calculated by dividing the total amount of grant funds by the total number of preschool through grade 3 teachers of all applicants;

(b) an LEA shall receive a grant amount equal to the product of the per teacher allotment described in Subsection (a) and the total number of preschool through grade 3 teachers in the LEA; and

(c) if an LEA's Early Learning Plan is denied or an LEA chooses to forgo any grant funds, the grant funds may be reallocated to all other eligible LEAs receiving grant funds as described in Subsections (1)(a) and (b).

(3) For purposes of calculating a grant amount in Subsection (1), an LEA shall determine the LEA's total number of preschool through grade 3 teachers by using employee data from the previous school year of the application school year.

(4) An LEA may use the grant funds for the following purposes:

- (a) teacher stipends to attend trainings;
- (b) presenter fees;
- (c) coaching supports;
- (d) substitute teachers;
- (e) to hire a coach or specialist; and
- (f) supplies and materials for teacher professional learning.

(5) An LEA may not use grant funds for:

- (a) the purchase of:
 - (i) property;
 - (ii) equipment;
 - (iii) other services; or
 - (iv) student materials and supplies; or
- (b) travel related expenses.

(6) An LEA shall use the grant funds by the end of the fiscal year in which the funds are received.

(7) The Superintendent may reduce grant funds to an LEA in an amount equal to the LEA's unused prior year program funds.

R277-326-5. Early Literacy Professional Learning Opportunity.

(1) An LEA receiving funding from the Early Literacy Professional Learning Grant shall provide training as required in Subsection 53F-5-214(6).

(2) Pursuant to Subsection 53F-5-214(6)(b)(ii)(E), an educator whose primary assignment is teaching students who are deaf is exempt from the requirement of an early literacy professional learning opportunity.

R277-326-6. Early Literacy Coaches.

(1)(a) The Superintendent shall provide, train, and assign early literacy coaches in accordance with Section 53E-3-1002.

(b) An early literacy coach shall meet minimum qualifications established by the Superintendent.

(c) An early literacy coach may perform responsibilities as directed by the Superintendent including those identified in Subsections 53E-3-1002(2)(c)(i) through (viii).

(d) An early literacy coach may not undertake duties unrelated to literacy coaches, as outlined in Subsection 53E-3-1002(2)(d).

(2) An LEA receiving funds for early literacy coaches may not charge indirect costs.

(3)(a) The Superintendent will determine which schools qualify for assistance from early literacy coaches taking into account the previous year's end-of year assessment data from:

- (i) KEEP Exit: Literacy;
- (ii) Acadience Reading (benchmark and growth); and
- (iii) RISE (English Language Arts proficiency).

(b) The Superintendent shall exclude data:

- (i) for students who were not enrolled a full academic year; and
- (ii) for schools scheduled to close the following year.

(4)(a) The Superintendent shall prioritize services under this program for schools identified in Subsections 53E-3-1002(a)(i) and (ii).

(b) The Superintendent may prioritize services under this program to schools who do not receive support from the Center for Strategic Improvement.

KEY: professional learning, prek-3, early learning, teacher development

Date of Last Change: December 11, 2023

Authorizing, and Implemented, or Interpreted Law: Art X Sec 3; 53E-3-401(4); 53F-5-214

