

REPORT TO THE STATE CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD
FROM THE SCHOOL CHILDREN'S TRUST SECTION
UTAH STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
MARCH 2021

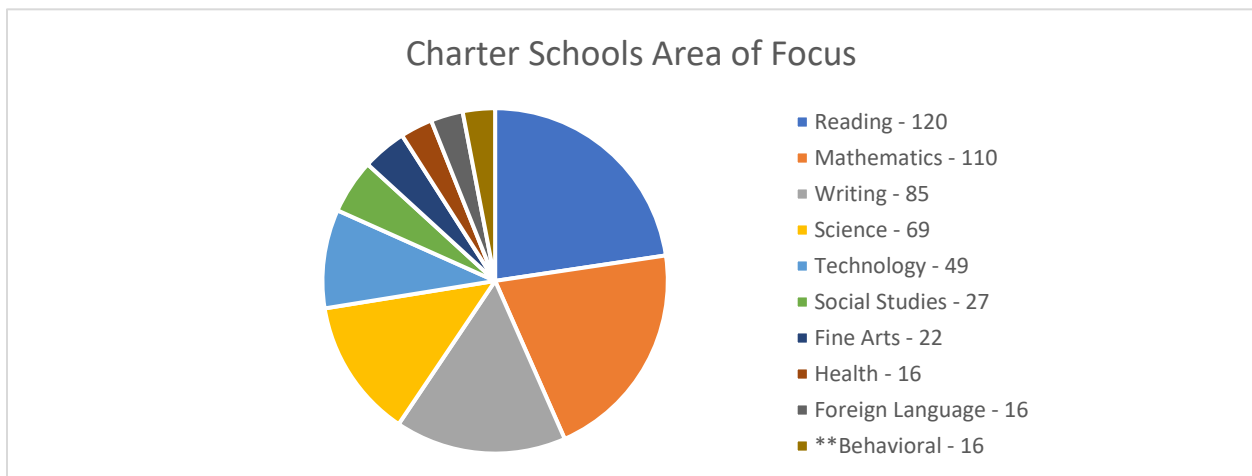
All public charter schools in the state participate in the School LAND Trust Program. Each charter school prepares a plan annually for implementation the following year. Charter schools may use the school's Governing Board or may establish a charter trust land council to prepare the School LAND Trust Plan. In either case, there must be a two-parent or grandparent member majority on the council or Board that prepares a school plan. Most charter schools use a charter trust land council rather than their Governing Board. Plans prepared by charter trust land councils are approved by the Governing Board before plans are sent to the charter authorizer for consideration. In prior years, charter authorizers other than the State Charter School Board were not able to complete the final approval online due to programming limitations. The School LAND Trust website where plans are submitted is currently under reconstruction. Under new development applications, all charter authorizers will have approval capability and will be more engaged in the approval process.

For several years Uintah River Charter School was the only school in the state not receiving funding from the Program. This year the school has an approved plan and received \$41,377 to implement their plan.

The chart below shows how the distributions have increased since the first year of the program.

YEAR	DISTRIBUTION TO CHARTER SCHOOLS	AVERAGE PER PUPIL AMOUNT
2001	\$4,334	\$10.02
2006	\$188,879	\$30.97
2011	\$1,287,300	\$37.68
2016	\$4,439,972	\$73.00
2021	\$10,334,342	\$129.38
2022	\$11,049,346	\$139.55

Listed below are the academic areas charter schools identified to address in their 2019-2020 School LAND Trust plan and the number of schools that identified each area.



***Academic goals may now have behavioral components that support the goal.*

Board rule was amended a year ago to increase flexibility for councils when preparing plans and associated expenditures. Education priorities established in code should be addressed first. After education priorities are addressed, councils may spend School LAND Trust funds for other core standards consistent with Governing Board priorities.

The law requires certain information to be posted on school websites to inform, educate, and encourage parent participation in the School LAND Trust Program. As part of the School Children's Trust compliance responsibilities, a compliance review of the school websites has been conducted the past two years. Since the rules are different for Governing Boards and charter trust land councils, the focus has been on schools that use charter trust land councils. Statute requires that the following information be on the school website:

- member names and contact information
- proposed meeting schedule for the year,
- a summary of the completed plan for 2019-20
- notice of an upcoming meeting with the meeting agenda and draft minutes from the previous meeting
- rules of order and procedure or bylaws
- the TSSA plan.

We are pleased to report that moderate improvement was made from the first to second year specifically in providing member names and contact information on websites. Staff will continue to provide training and encourage compliance.

In addition, the School Children's Trust Section has been tracking carry-over of funds from year to year. The law allows carry-over when carry-over is part of a specific planned purpose, however schools are encouraged to limit carry-over to 10% in any given year. Some schools have historically carried over considerable balances. This has not been a concern for charter schools as a group. The total carry-over in FY18 was 4% and has continued to improve each year.

97% of Charter Schools submit School Plans and Final Reports on time. The Section has worked with councils towards timely submission. It has taken a considerable time commitment by the Section. To maintain timely submissions and be more efficient, staff will first send short and focused reminder emails to the charter directors prior to due dates. A second reminder and third, if necessary, will be sent to the director and Governing Board Chair. A final phone call or message will follow as necessary. We will review the effectiveness of this plan with the investment of time.

Effective School LAND Trust Plans and increased council compliance will protect local decision making and increased funding to schools from the Program. We continue to identify needs, provide training to address the needs, evaluate compliance and review results. The School Children's Trust Section will improve training opportunities this year by providing training in regular meetings offered by the Charter School Section for Governing Boards, regular short and focused training in Director's Meetings, online PowerPoint and video training, and in-person training as COVID restrictions are removed.

We appreciate the opportunity to work with charter schools. We are available to answer questions and concerns. Please feel free to contact us with suggestions on how we can better assist governing boards and councils to ensure the program continues to provide funds to help students improve academic performance.

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