

# School Safety & Security Specialist Onboarding Guide

Comprehensive Orientation, Mandates, Duties, and Implementation Roadmap

Utah State Board of Education

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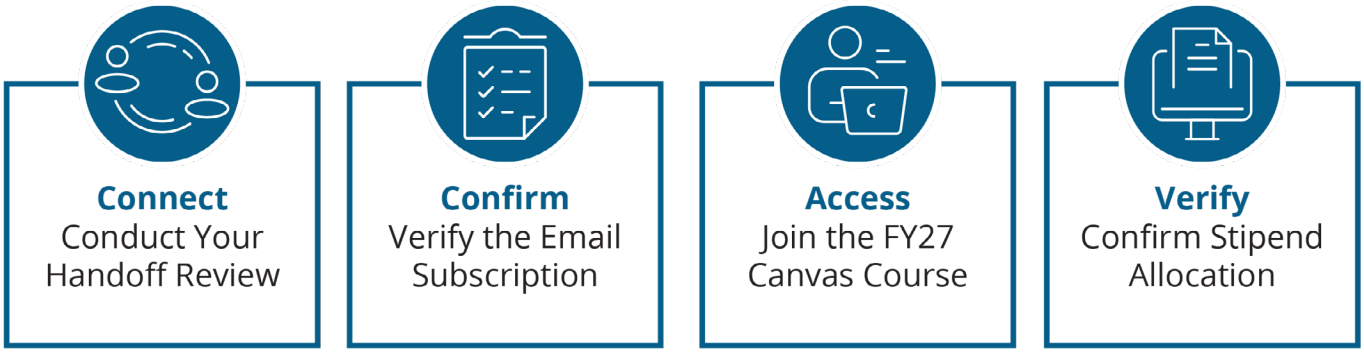
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# Purpose

Welcome and congratulations on being designated as your school's School Safety and Security Specialist (SSSS, Specialist) for the 2026-2027 academic year. This guide translates the official Utah State Board of Education (USBE) School Safety Center (SSC) onboarding orientation into an actionable, fully structured reference manual. Your role is essential in building a comprehensive safety culture across Utah public schools.

## Immediate First Steps for New Specialists

1. **Conduct Handoff Review:** Connect with your school's outgoing Specialist to review historical emergency preparedness files, threat assessment records, and ongoing security initiatives.
2. **Verify Email Subscription:** Check your email inbox and spam/junk folders for messages from schoolsafetyprograms@schools.utah.gov to confirm inclusion on the statewide Specialist email listserv.
3. **Access FY27 Canvas Course:** Accept your Canvas course invitation (sent via notifications@instructure.com) to access the required FY27 training modules, recordings, exit tickets, Q&A boards, and Collaboration forms.
4. **Confirm Stipend Distribution:** Verify with your Local Education Agency (LEA) Business Administrator or School Safety and Security Director the distribution details of your $3,000 stipend.




# The Utah School Safety Center

In the Spring of 2019, the Utah State Legislature passed House Bill (H.B.) 120: Student and School Safety Assessment. The establishment of H.B. 120 formed the Utah School Safety Center (SSC), a group of professionals from the Utah State Board of Education (USBE), the Department of Public Safety (DPS), the Office of Substance Use and Mental Health (OSUMH), and State Charter School Board (SCSB). The SSC also includes a liaison to SafeUT at the Huntsman Mental Health Institute (HMHI). SSSSs function as a direct extension of this multi-agency team at the building level, ensuring that state-level resources, technical assistance, and statutory protocols are actively integrated into daily school operations.

## Mission Statement

To work collaboratively to provide technical assistance, training, and resources that support Local Education Agencies' commitment to ensuring school safety and improving the climate of school communities.

## Vision

That each student learns in a safe and healthy school environment.

## Where Do You Fit In?

As a School Safety and Security Specialist, you serve as a building-level extension of the Utah School Safety Center, helping connect statewide support and resources with the day-to-day safety needs of your school



## Utah Legislative Framework and School Safety Evolution

Utah's school safety requirements have evolved through multiple legislative sessions. While not exhaustive, the statutes highlighted below represent key milestones that have shaped Utah's school safety framework and continue to influence current programs, policies, and responsibilities.

- **2019 House Bill (H.B.) 120: School Safety Assessment**
  Established the multi-agency SSC; created statewide school climate and data-sharing frameworks
- **2023 H.B. 61: School Safety Requirements**
  Mandated an SSS in every K-12 public school; created the State Security Chief position (DPS); established ongoing $3,000 stipend per per eligible school, for one Specialist
- **2023 H.B. 140: Standard Response Protocol to Active Threats in Schools**
  Adopted the Standard Response Protocol (SRP) framework; required every K-12 public school to use SRP
- **2024 H.B. 84: School Safety Amendments**
  Renamed role to 'School Safety and Security Specialist (SSSS)'; established regulations for armed School Guardians, mandated wearable panic alert devices for all lead teachers; required school safety data to be displayed on the parent portal
- **2025 H.B. 40: School Safety Amendments**
  Mandated a three-year Utah School Safety Needs Assessment; required emergency responder access boxes at main school entry points, required AEDs in new school construction/remodels
- **2025 H.B.104: Firearm Safety in Schools Amendments**
  Enacted additional firearm safety compliance protocols across K-12 public schools
- **2026 H.B. 44: School Security Personnel**
  Updated wearable panic alert devices for all school safety personnel, required USBE to administer stipends for School Guardians, prohibits certain devices in schools, established visitor management best practices for an LEA
- **2026 Senate Bill (S.B.) 51: School Safety Modifications**
  Created a statewide student threat flag system, enabled cross-LEA threat information sharing, codified threat assessment team composition, established privacy and immunity protections, required annual reporting to Legislature

## Legislative Job Duties

Under Utah Code Section 53G-8-701.6, Specialists are assigned specific statutory responsibilities related to facility security, emergency readiness, threat assessment, and ongoing school safety. These responsibilities fall into seven key areas.




### Explore each area below for additional details and expectations.

- **Training & Professional Development:** Participate in the required School Safety and Security Specialist Training Program, hosted by the SCC.
- **Utah School Safety Needs Assessment:** Conduct the Utah School Safety Needs Assessment at least once every 3 years in collaboration with the County Security Chief and local law enforcement. Review results to recommend and implement facility and procedural safety enhancements.
- **Reporting and Facility Oversight:** Report directly to the school principal; monitor and report facility security risks; oversee adherence to SRP and emergency policies.
- **Multidisciplinary Team Membership:** Serve as an active member of the school's multidisciplinary team; conduct behavioral threat assessments using an evidence-based tool, such as the Comprehensive School Threat Assessment Guidelines (CSTAG).
- **Emergency Planning and Drill Coordination:** Coordinate with local first responder agencies to monitor and execute required emergency drills; ensure all staff and students receive ongoing safety protocol training.
- **Post-Event Debriefing and Continuous Improvement:** Organize a formal post-event debriefing following any significant compromise of school security to evaluate response actions and strengthen future protocols.
- **Policy Compliance and Student Privacy:** Follow established LEA and law enforcement chains of command, adhere strictly to student privacy regulations (FERPA), and remain current on CSTAG, Specialist duties, emergency preparedness, response, and recovery plans.

## School Safety Definitions

The SSC recognizes that school safety is a three-prong approach, and Utah Code Section 53G-8-102 defines the following common school safety terms as:

- **School safety** means the physical space, culture, and climate of a school;
- **Physical space** means the way in which a building is designed and structured to promote safety, including the minimum safety and security standards as described in Section 53-22-102;
- **Culture** means the beliefs, values, and practices that shape how a school functions and influences student learning and well-being through policies, procedures, and safety protocols; and
- **Climate** means the perceptions and experiences of students, staff, parents, and the community regarding the school's environment and the resources that support the experiences.



# FY27 Program Training Calendar, Canvas Requirements, and Stipend

Specialists receive up to an annual $3,000 stipend in recognition of their additional safety responsibilities. Fulfillment of the required training program and Canvas modules is mandatory for stipend eligibility. Specialists have the opportunity to earn additional relicensure credit by scoring a 5/5 on exit tickets.

## FY27 SSSS Training Program

### Required

**Program Updates and FERPA Exceptions and Records Management**

September 23, 2026 | 2:30 - 3:30 p.m.

Register via the Zoom registration link.

**Addressing School Safety Through Culture & Climate**

December 9, 2026 | 2:30 - 3:30 p.m.

Register via the Zoom registration link.

**2027 Legislative Updates | School Safety**

April 28, 2027 | 2:30 - 3:30 p.m.

Register via the Zoom registration link.

### Optional

**To Be Determined**

March 17, 2026 | 2:30 - 3:30 p.m.

Register via the Zoom registration link.

**School Safety Center Conference**

June 9–10, 2027

Attendance is strongly encouraged.

## Canvas Course Expectations

- [ ] **Access the FY27 Canvas Course**

  Invitations sent via notifications@instructure.com by end of September 2026.

- [ ] **Complete Required Trainings**

  Specialists must complete Trainings #1, #2, and #4. Specialists may attend each training live or watch the recording once it becomes available in the **FY27 SSSS Canvas Course** or **SSSS YouTube playlist**.

- [ ] **Complete Each Module In Sequence**

  Video reviews, exit tickets, and Q&A boards must be completed in Canvas and are required before the next module is available.

- [ ] **Meet Module Deadlines**

  Complete corresponding module requirements before the next training to maintain stipend eligibility.

**Submit Principal & SSSS Forms**

Forms are to be uploaded in the Canvas course.

- [ ] Principal & SSSS Collaboration Form, due October 31, 2027
- [ ] Principal & SSSS Exit Feedback Form, due May 31, 2027

- [ ] **Complete the Course by May 31, 2027**

All Canvas course modules, exit tickets, Principal & SSSS forms, and other requirements must be completed by the course close date.

- [ ] **Earn Relicensure Credit**

Specialists must score **5/5 on an exit ticket** to earn relicensure credit. All credit will be awarded in Altitude by **June 30, 2027**.

- [ ] **Receive Stipend Distribution**

**$3,000 in ongoing funds** are distributed directly to local LEAs/districts for Specialist compensation.

## Key Resources

- Utah School Safety Center Webpage
- Utah School Safety Playbook: A Guide for Utah Public Schools
- USBE Learning Portal

**Contact Information**

For questions, please contact schoolsafetyprograms@schools.utah.gov.

## Timeline of Important Dates

Use this timeline to keep track of key FY27 trainings, deadlines, forms, and program milestones.

**Sep 22** 2026
Access to FY27 SSSS Canvas Course

**Sep 23** 2026
**SSSS Training #1** *Required*
Program Updates and FERPA Exceptions and Records Management

**Oct 31** 2026
**Principal - SSSS**
Collaboration Form Due

**Dec 9** 2026
**SSSS Training #2** *Required*
Addressing School Safety Through Culture & Climate

**Mar 17** 2027
**SSSS Training #3** *Optional*
To Be Determined

**Apr 28** 2027
**SSSS Training #4** *Required*
Legislative Updates

**May 31** 2027
**Principal & SSSS**
Exit Feedback Form Due

**May 31** 2027
FY27 SSSS Canvas Course closes

**Jun 9-10** 2027
Utah School Safety Conference

**Jun 30** 2027
Altitude Credit awarded