

Why Discovery Education Consultants were Chosen

**** Press Release ****

Apr 11, 2022

The Orem Mayor and members of the City Council reaffirm their intention to proceed with a full and comprehensive Orem school district feasibility study conducted by Discovery Education Consultants (Discovery), led by Dr. Paul McCarty.

As a city council, we recognize what is at stake with this study. The residents of this community are entitled to reliable information and data. The City Council is committed to ensuring the study does just that. Utah State law sets forth that “The determination of all matters relating to the scope, adequacy, and other aspects of a feasibility study is within the exclusive discretion of the city's legislative body (see 53G-3-302(b)(i)). We take that responsibility seriously, and we are committed to doing this right.

The Discovery team has already commenced with their research and analysis and we have every confidence that they will produce a reliable and professional study. What set Discovery Educational Consultants apart in the selection process was their unique ability to interpret data and financial information for educational organization application.

Discovery Education Consultants is made up of Dr. Paul McCarty, LaVar Christensen, Michael D. Wankier. Each of these men are seasoned and celebrated professionals. While the company was recently formed in February of this year, they have 100 years of cumulative knowledge and expertise. DEC brings together expertise from a variety of areas including real estate, finance, education, school district management, and law.

Dr. Paul McCarty has served in education for over 40 years everywhere from the frontline, to middle management, to administration and knows how school districts operate. He has been involved in multiple public school evaluation studies. While working at Granite School District he was intimately involved with a community-driven effort to help understand the capacity of school facilities and identify future needs and educational programs. Many residents have correctly pointed out that Dr. McCarty was involved with the Canyons District School split and is currently involved in a proposed Draper School District split, and while some may see this as concerning, we value his unique experience in this matter. Dr. McCarty is particularly well-suited to conduct this study because he has an experiential understanding of the opportunities and challenges that need to be addressed by this feasibility study.

Michael D. Wankier, CPA, will lead the financial analysis part of the Feasibility Study. His extensive background includes being the former Chief Financial Officer and Executive Vice President of the Larry H. Miller Management Corporation. He also was the Controller for Pinnacle Security and was responsible for the development of an accounting and finance function that supported a multi-million dollar customer base. During his career, he has led financial feasibility studies for various projects including acquisitions, construction projects, and real estate development projects. He has a network within the CPA community that allows him

access to high-level CPAs in both the public and private sectors. In addition, he worked as an Auditor and was rated an exceptional performer at the prestigious Big Four accounting firm KPMG. Early in his career he also worked at Arthur Anderson.

LaVar Christensen brings over 40 years of legal experience to the Discovery team, specifically in education law, real estate law, public policy, and government regulations. He served as an elected member of the Utah House of Representatives for eight years and was Chair or Vice-Chair for many committees including the public education and public education appropriations committees.

Through the city's website, we are providing an avenue for residents to submit questions. We will ensure that those questions are being considered in this study and we will hold our consultants to the highest level of professionalism. You can trust the City Council to ensure that the study focuses on facts, not opinions.

NOTES:

Qualifications of Discovery Education Consultants

Potential Quotes about Discovery Educational Consultants

“School District split studies are rare in nature. To our knowledge, no company exists that does these types of studies exclusively. The formation of Discovery Educational Consultants brings together expertise from a variety of areas (real estate, school district management, and law). While the company was recently formed in February of this year, their knowledge and expertise have been building for more than forty years.”

“What set Discovery Educational Consultants apart in the selection process was their unique ability to interpret data and financial information for educational system application.”

“Through the city’s website, we are providing an avenue for residents to submit questions. We will ensure that those questions are being considered in this study and we will hold our consultants to the highest level of professionalism. You can trust the City Council to ensure that the study focuses on facts, not opinions.”

“As a city council, we recognize what is at stake with this study. The residents of this community are entitled to reliable information and data. The City Council is committed to ensuring the study does just that. Utah State law sets forth that “ The determination of all matters relating to the scope, adequacy, and other aspects of a feasibility study is within the exclusive discretion of the city’s legislative body (see 53G-3-302(b)(i)). We take that responsibility seriously and we are committed to doing this right.”

“Many residents have correctly pointed out that Dr. McCarty was involved with the Canyons District School split and is currently involved in a proposed Draper School District split, and while some may see this as a negative, we value his unique experience in this matter. Dr. McCarty is particularly well-suited to conduct this study because he is intimately familiar with the opportunities and challenges that face a community considering this issue.”

Discovery Education Consultants Team

- Combined with over 60 years of experience in educational studies, real estate, financial and strategic planning research

- As quoted in the proposal, “Though Discovery Educational Consultants was formally organized recently as a legal entity, collectively the principals of Discovery Educational Consultants LLC have multiple years of knowledge and experience in public education, public school administration, school district management, municipal government, school district split, feasibility & assessment, financial studies, real estate assessment, university research and instruction, business and financial management, and educational studies.”

Dr. Paul McCarty

- Served 40 years in the Granite School District. From the front line to middle management to administration, Dr. McCarty has seen how school districts operate.
- Dr. McCarty was a visiting lecturer John Hopkins University
- Dr. McCarty served on the UTA Board of Directors for Light Rail Development and Construction This responsibility included research and financial feasibility studies for the project.
- Dr. McCarty has been involved in multiple public schools evaluative studies. His role was to research and organize the future educational needs of Granite School District. This included a feasibility study to help Granite School District understand the capacity of its school facilities and identify future capacity needs and necessary educational programs
- Dr. McCarty was elected as one of the first school board members of the Canyons School District. He understands firsthand what needs to be considered before forming a new school district.
- Dr. McCarty’s responsibilities included research and creating national presentations on best practices of education leadership, school district management, student learning, and teacher instruction.

LaVar Christensen

- Mr. Christensen brings over 40 years of legal experience, specifically in school & education law, real estate law, public policy, and government regulations.
- Mr. Christensen served as an elected member in the Utah House of Representatives for eight years
- Mr. Christensen served as Chair or Vice-Chair for many standing committees, including the public education and public education appropriations committee.

Michael D. Wankier

- Mr. Wankier was the former CFO and EVP of the Larry H. Miller Management Corporation in Salt Lake City.
- Mr. Wankier has been involved in the evaluation of the financial feasibility of various projects including acquisitions, construction projects, remodels, and other real estate

development projects. Given the amount of real estate involved in this study, this background is extremely valuable.

- Mr. Wankier has received many commendations for his work with complex consolidations, financing of operations, acquisitions, and real estate.
- Mr. Wankier was rated an exceptional performer at KPMG and Arthur Andersen, providing audit, tax, and advisory services.
- Mr. Wankier is a licensed CPA in the State of Utah