

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. McCarty served 40 years in the Granite School District as a public-school principal and district office administrator. He has an undergraduate degree from the University of California at Berkeley. His Masters and Doctorate were earned from Brigham Young University. He taught over 30 years at Brigham Young University in the Departments of Education, Family Life and Psychology as an adjunct professor. Paul served as the Utah Transit Authority (UTA) Board Director of Light Rail Development & Construction and Vice President of the UTA Board of Directors prior to the 2002 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City. Among his UTA responsibilities was the research and development of viability and feasibility studies which included the Light Rail/TRAX Final Environmental Impact Study and the UTA Preliminary Engineering for Light Rail/TRAX Construction Reports. He also spent three years as the UTA Board Director responsible for Internal Audits and transportation feasibility studies.

Dr. McCarty has been involved in multiple public school evaluative studies researching and organizing data and criteria needed to determine the type and quality of educational necessities required to meet the Granite School District's future needs. The primary goal of the feasibility studies was to help the Granite School District understand what it has in terms of school facilities and what is needed to satisfy anticipated changes in future capacity needs and educational programs.

Dr. McCarty was elected as members of the Draper City Council and Canyons School Board. He was involved in the 2007 creation of a new school district in Utah, and the 2008 development and organization of the Canyons School District. Among honors and recognitions received include the Jon & Karen Huntsman Award for Excellence in Education, Granite School District Principal of the Year, Utah Principal of the Year, United States Air Force (USAF) Distinguished Civic Leader of Utah, Honored Utah Public School Administrator and Principal Recognition – Utah House & Senate Joint Resolution 23; National Instructional Technology Leader – The Smithsonian Institute, Washington DC.

Michael D. Wankier, CPA, will lead the financial analysis part of the Feasibility Study. His experience includes being the former Chief Financial Officer (CFO) and Executive Vice President of the Larry H. Miller Management Corporation in Salt Lake City, Utah. The Larry H. Miller Corporation was a regional conglomerate of family-owned businesses in automotive sales and service, auto finance, auto ancillary products, movie theater exhibition, professional sports (incl. Utah Jazz Basketball), real estate management, and other related businesses. Mr. Wankier is a licensed CPA in the State of Utah. His college degrees are from Southern Utah University. Mr. Wankier's professional experience includes complex consolidations, including foreign operations while managing large financial and accounting departments.

Mr. Wankier currently serves on the Board of Trustees at Southern Utah University. Throughout his career, Mr. Wankier has been involved in the evaluation of the financial feasibility for various projects including: business acquisitions, commercial real estate construction, large event arenas, remodel, sports complexes, mixed-use development projects, and other real estate development projects. His clients have included other entities involved in the businesses of automotive sales and service, convention meeting, sports entertainment and tourism/hospitality industries.

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. Mr. Christensen received a B.A. from Brigham Young University and a J.D. from the University of the Pacific. During his time in law school, Christensen was a legislative assistant for the Governor of California (1978), and also a judicial law clerk (1979-1980). His legal practice includes school & education law, real estate law, business law, family law, civil litigation & appeals, criminal law, government regulations and public policy. He served as an elected member in the Utah House of Representatives for eight years.

Mr. Christensen served as Chair or Vice-Chair for many of the following Standing Committees: Judiciary, Public Education, Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice, Health & Human Services, Business & Economic Development, Retirement & Independent Entities, Public Education Appropriations Committee, Utah Constitution Revision Commission, Judicial Review Committee, Utah Commission on Civic & Character Education, Water Law, Parental Rights, and Child

Welfare. Representing the State of Utah, he was a member of the U.S. Trade Mission to Israel and Jordan with the Utah Governor and Utah Office of Economic Development.

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.