

# PIONEER SCHOOL DISTRICT PROPOSAL

*When* in the course of growing populations, it becomes necessary for one area to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of other local and similar governing bodies, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Human Nature and of the Governance of Humans entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of the citizens requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

*We hold these truths to be self-evident, that there are certain needs the people have which can best be provided for collectively, that among these is the education of our children.*

That to secure these needs, **local political subdivisions** were created as a vehicle to serve, and be subservient to, the citizens in providing them.

That whenever any political subdivision becomes too large due to natural growth, **it begins to take power unto itself** and assumes the superior role of ruling the descendants of those who created it.

That as that situation becomes apparent, it is the right and duty of the residents to create by division, additional subdivisions as will best involve those citizens in their own governance.

And that in so doing the rising generation may, through their own experience, learn how to govern themselves, thus preserving government of, by, and for the people.

Guiding this resolve has been evidence provided by research that **community-sized school districts are more likely to build modest and appropriately sized schools where parents and teachers are more involved and where students are safer.** Community based districts have been better able to respond to the needs of individual communities and are more likely to reflect local community values instead of current fads.

Smaller school districts have produced significantly better student outcomes with lower per-pupil expenditures nationwide. They are more likely to unite local residents with their neighborhood schools. This improves the district, which raises community pride, and even real estate values. Citizens in community districts are more likely to support bond issues, etc., because they are for their own community.

In smaller districts board members know the schools intimately through **firsthand engagement** rather than through **printouts and manipulatable bureaucratic data.** These conditions cause them to turn their eyes to their real constituencies rather than government and university micromanagers.

**Lower socio-economic areas benefit the most** from smaller districts and the smaller schools these districts usually provide. Poverty is almost wiped-out as a negative influence on test scores when both smaller schools and smaller districts are the governing structure.

Smaller districts provide an **accountability** that cannot be provided by government mandates and accountability schemes. This unshackles educators so they can provide a better product and answer to the parents instead of the state.

Large districts are prone to mission creep, building support activities which rapidly lose any connection to the original goal of educating children and typically spend a smaller percentage of their budget on instruction.

**We therefore petition the Honorable Legislative Body of Utah County, based on this national and logical evidence, to conduct a study of the tax base, revenues, hypothetical budget, boundaries, and other issues and consequences of creating a Pioneer School District within the existing boundaries of Lehi High School as shown on the enclosed map. Upon completion of this study and consequent public input period, we ask you to consider placing the issue to a vote of the citizens residing within the current Alpine School District boundaries in the 2004 general election.**

-by Rep. David N. Cox

Signed by over 1,200 residents in Lehi, Eagle Mountain, Saratoga Springs, and Cedar Fort.