

# VOTER INFORMATION PAMPHLET

OPEN FOR IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING THE PROPOSED

CREATION OF A NEW SCHOOL DISTRICT

PROPOSITION #11



GENERAL ELECTION DAY

NOVEMBER 5, 2025

## TITLE AND BALLOT LANGUAGE

PROPOSITION #11

### CREATION OF A NEW SCHOOL DISTRICT

Shall a new school district be created from Alpine School District that would include the boundaries of the cities of Lehi, American Fork, Highland, Alpine, Cedar Hills, the portion of Draper located within Utah County and certain portions of unincorporated Utah County?

YES

NO

## ARGUMENTS FOR AND AGAINST THE PROPOSITION

*The arguments for or against a ballot proposition are the opinions of the authors.*

### ARGUMENT FOR PROPOSITION 11

As residents of Alpine, American Fork, Cedar Hills, Draper, Highland, and Lehi, we have the opportunity to build a better future for our children by voting YES on Prop 11 to create a new school district. Our city councils unanimously voted to give us the ability to establish a district that maximizes tax savings, increases representation, and balances educational resources.

#### Tax Savings and Financial Stability

Creating a new district offers significant tax savings over staying in the Alpine School District (ASD). LRB Public Finance Advisors, Utah's trusted, independent financial experts, studied the feasibility of forming a new district, concluding that our property owners will likely experience tax savings compared to staying in ASD. Additionally, the western cities are voting to create their own district, leaving us to face increasing financial burdens if we remain in ASD.

In Orem's 2022 Voter Information Pamphlet, opponents acknowledged the high costs of operating their schools, stating, "Alpine currently subsidizes Orem schools with \$21 million annually." These opponents formed an Orem-based group to oppose Prop 11, aiming to continue depending on our tax dollars to support their low-enrollment schools. The LRB study highlights the growing \$21 million annual deficit in ASD's southern region, projected to total \$131 million over five years.

Due to deficit spending outside our area, staying together could lead to higher taxes, project delays, school closures, reduced services, and financial strain on employees. By creating three equitable districts, each can better address its needs without negatively impacting students and educators in other areas.

#### Responsive Representation

Establishing a new district is crucial to addressing our community's unique needs. ASD's vast size and varying stages of growth make it difficult to align educational priorities, as evidenced by the 2022 bond failure. Currently, only two board members live in our area, each representing over 56,000 residents. Voting YES will expand our area's representation to seven members, ensuring decisions are made by leaders who understand and prioritize our schools.

#### Balanced Resources and Teacher Support

With 35,000 students, our new district will be Utah's sixth-largest, benefiting from economies of scale while delivering tailored solutions. Similar-sized districts in Utah already enjoy smaller class sizes compared to ASD, which has the second-highest student-to-teacher ratio in the state. Focused support will elevate student success by attracting and retaining top-tier educators with better resources and leadership opportunities.

ASD's 85,000-student size has led to a one-size-fits-all approach, neglecting specific school needs. Our area, educating 41% of ASD's students, receives only 22% of Dual Language Immersion programs and faces cuts to 40% of our Advanced Learning Labs. We serve 28% of ASD's disadvantaged students but receive just 10% of the funding given to support them. A new district will ensure fairer resource distribution, greater community involvement, and improved teacher support.

Don't be swayed by groups seeking to keep our tax contributions to cover their deficit spending. By voting YES, we're creating a financially sustainable district where every student can succeed.

Vote YES on Prop 11 to ensure our tax dollars support our schools.

**Submitted by Heather Newall** (Lehi City Council), **Clark Taylor** (American Fork City Council), **Kurt Ostler** (Highland City Mayor), **Denise Andersen** (Cedar Hills Mayor), **Stacy Bateman** (ASD Board of Education)

### ARGUMENT AGAINST PROPOSITION 11

#### Splitting ASD Means Taxes Go Up and Services Go Down

Splitting Alpine School District (ASD) may seem feasible, but it's detrimental to students, educators, and the community. Financially burdensome, academically risky, and disruptive, a split would unnecessarily dismantle one of Utah's highest-performing districts.

#### Financial Burden

Splitting ASD would be costly. Education funding in Utah is already insufficient, and whether ASD remains whole or splits, costs will increase. Keeping ASD intact allows 14 cities to share these expenses, rather than burdening 2-3 smaller districts.

ASD currently has the lowest administrative costs with the highest spending of available funds on students in the state of Utah. Creating new districts means replicating expenses by taking money away from students.

The economy of scale within ASD benefits all stakeholders. For employees, it enables competitive wages, affordable insurance, and early retirement benefits, fostering recruitment of the best teachers, staff loyalty and reducing turnover. Removing these benefits could lead to an exodus of experienced educators, affecting the classroom experience for all students. Smaller districts would also lose out on competitive pricing for materials, supplies, and construction, further straining budgets. While some may argue for keeping tax dollars local, this approach is shortsighted; funds do not stretch as far when divided among multiple districts.

#### Academic Risks

Splitting ASD also poses academic risks. The district's strong performance comes largely from pooling resources and posing academic challenges to increase student learning. These could be at risk. Student success could also be jeopardized as new school boards disrupt long-standing educational initiatives aligned with the ASD Vision for Learning. Maintaining the same focus across multiple districts begs the question of why to split in the first place if the goal is to preserve current practices.

Loss of teacher talent would further amplify academic challenges. A potential bidding war for educators could leave students as the biggest losers, especially if programs such as Dual Language Immersion (DLI) and Advanced Learning Lab (ALL) are altered or cut due to cost constraints. Vulnerable student populations—including those in special education, English language learners, and marginalized groups—would be particularly affected, as smaller districts struggle to provide the same level of support currently provided by ASD. All students deserve opportunities to thrive, not merely survive.

#### Community Partnerships

ASD's current structure fosters mutually beneficial partnerships among its cities. Each area contributes unique strengths that create a balanced ecosystem of collaboration and compromise. The south and central parts of the district subsidize growth in the west, while the growing student population in the west supports programs in the central and south. A larger group of communities working together is better equipped to weather changing demographics and inevitable economic fluctuations.

ASD is not perfect, but it is financially responsible, academically strong, and committed to continuous improvement. Splitting the district would delay progress, and create an uncertain future that is not in the best interest of students. Keeping ASD intact ensures stability, economic efficiency, and a collective strength that benefits everyone involved, especially our children.

**Submitted by Kate Ross** (Resident of Lehi, Principal of Oak Canyon Junior High, ASD), **Sam Beeson** (Resident of American Fork, Teacher at American Fork High School, ASD), **Reed Hodson** (Resident of Highland, Former Principal at Highland Elementary), **Dr. Joseph Jensen** (Resident of American Fork, Director of Admin Development, ASD), **Dr. Kevin Thomas** (Resident of Cedar Hills, Director of HR, ASD)

### REBUTTAL TO ARGUMENT FOR PROPOSITION 11

A vote for Prop 11 is a vote to split ASD three ways. This option is most expensive to taxpayers, most disruptive to student learning, most damaging to vulnerable populations, and least desired by voters.

ASD consistently delivers what parents and students expect of a high-achieving district—quality education, strong programs, and stability. When surveyed, 86% of parents agree their students are receiving a good education in ASD. There's no guarantee that new, smaller districts will be able to match, let alone improve upon, what we already have.

While elected city officials should be trusted to run successful cities, experienced educators and administrators should be trusted to run successful school districts. Cities underestimate what it takes to run a highly successful district like ASD. Anyone who's undertaken a major project knows that cost estimates are most often low. This was true for residents and district leaders in the Jordan-Canyons district split. They saw immediate tax hikes, frozen salaries, job loss, and program cutbacks. Is this something we are willing to risk?

Keeping ASD together is the best choice for our communities. As a large, multi-community district, ASD has proven it can handle challenges, from economic changes to political and academic pressures. ASD currently has one of the lowest "per student administrative costs" and more educational programs than almost every district statewide. There is no academic or financial benefit of splitting at this time.

If you don't want ASD to split, or prefer a two-way split, VOTE NO on Prop 11!

**Submitted by Kate Ross** (Resident of Lehi, Principal of Oak Canyon Junior High, ASD), **Sam Beeson** (Resident of American Fork, Teacher at American Fork High School, ASD), **Reed Hodson** (Resident of Highland, Former Principal at Highland Elementary), **Dr. Joseph Jensen** (Resident of American Fork, Director of Admin Development, ASD), **Dr. Kevin Thomas** (Resident of Cedar Hills, Former Principal at Lehi Junior High, Director of HR, ASD)

### REBUTTAL TO ARGUMENT AGAINST PROPOSITION 11

The argument against splitting relies on fear and assumptions while overlooking the financial and academic challenges our communities face by staying in ASD. Facts—not false claims—should drive this decision. The data supports voting YES on Prop 11.

The successful Canyons and Jordan split shows smaller, focused districts lead to improvements. Our proposed district is similar in size to Canyons, which has raised taxes only twice since its creation—compared to ASD's six increases in the last seven years. Since 2009, Canyons has passed two no-tax-increase bonds, completed 27 building projects, expanded programs, and raised graduation rates by 6%, while serving 55% more economically disadvantaged students than ASD.

The claim that bigger districts save money is misleading. In fact, when districts grow too large, inefficiencies increase. ASD doesn't have the lowest administrative costs in Utah; nine other districts spend less per student. ASD currently has one of the lowest "per student administrative costs" and more educational programs than almost every district statewide. There is no academic or financial benefit of splitting at this time.

Change can feel uncertain, but the long-term benefits for students and educators outweigh short-term adjustments. This split ensures 100% of our taxes support our priorities: improving schools, expanding programs, and retaining educators.

This is our only opportunity to form a district with our cities. If we don't vote YES, the most equitable way to split ASD will be lost.

Vote YES to make our schools, students, and employees our top priority.

**Submitted by Heather Newall** (Lehi City Council), **Clark Taylor** (American Fork City Council), **Kurt Ostler** (Highland City Mayor), **Denise Andersen** (Cedar Hills Mayor), **Stacy Bateman** (ASD Board of Education)

## VOTER REGISTRATION OR UPDATE

Voter registration must be received by the County Clerk before 5:00 pm on Friday, October 25, 2024. However, voters may register to vote at an early voting location or at a vote center on Election Day, November 5, 2024. Please bring at least two forms of identification to the polling location. If you recently moved within Utah County, call (801) 851-8128 to update your address. Find more information at [vote.utah.gov](http://vote.utah.gov) or [vote.utahcounty.gov](http://vote.utahcounty.gov).

## VOTE BY MAIL

Ballots will be mailed to registered voters beginning October 15, 2024. Ballots returned through the US Postal Mail must be postmarked no later than November 4, 2024. Ballots can also be returned to any Utah County Elections Drop Box by 8 p.m. on Election Day. Find all Utah County drop box locations at [vote.utahcounty.gov](http://vote.utahcounty.gov).

## IN PERSON OR EARLY VOTING

Early Voting will be held at the Health and Justice Building located at 151 S. University, Suite 1600, Provo, UT 84606. Early voting will be held weekdays from October 28 to November 4, 8am to 5pm. Also open Saturday, November 2, 10am to 3pm. Vote in person on Election Day, November 5, from 7 a.m. - 8 p.m. at any Utah County Vote Center. Find more information at [vote.utah.gov](http://vote.utah.gov) or [vote.utahcounty.gov](http://vote.utahcounty.gov).

