

# State Charter School Board Member Profiles



**Kristin Elinkowski, Board Chair.** Ms. Elinkowski is the owner of an internet/direct response marketing company. She formerly served as the president of the Board of Directors at North Davis Preparatory Academy. Mrs. Elinkowski previously worked as a congressional staff assistant to Congressman James V. Hansen, and as a campaign manager for several local campaigns. Mrs. Elinkowski has served as the vice chair on the Layton City Planning Commission and has volunteered on several committees in her community. She is an Honorary Commander at the 388th Fighter Wing at Hill Air Force Base, a graduate of Weber State University, and the proud parent, along with her husband Ron, of three great kids.  
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**DeLaina Tonks, Board Vice Chair.** Ms. Tonks is currently the director at Mountain Heights Academy, an online public charter school. She previously taught high school French and Spanish and worked as an online instructional designer in Upper Arlington, Ohio. Mrs. Tonks is a 2014 “Best of State – Principal” winner and was named as one of Utah Business's “30 Women to Watch.” She serves as a member of the national Association of American Educators Foundation Board, Argosy University's Educational Program Advisory Committee, President Holland's Community Advisory Council at UVU, and has enjoyed previous service as the Draper Youth Council Chair, Legislative District 27 Chair, and as a member of the Utah Immigration Commission, and the State Board of Education's Digital Literacy Task Force. Mrs. Tonks holds a BA in French and Spanish teaching from BYU, an MA in Second Language Acquisition from The Ohio State University and is currently pursuing a PhD in Instructional Psychology and Technology at Brigham Young University. She and her husband, Paul, live on top of a mountain with their four fabulous children, three cats, two bettas, and one turtle.  
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**“Advancing choice, innovation, and student success through rigorous authorizing and supportive oversight.” —SCSB Mission**



**James R. Moss.** Mr. James Moss is an attorney specializing in employment law and business litigation with Payne & Fears LLP. He has been involved with the J. Reuben Clark Law Society as the Chair of the Service and Outreach Committee, and Chair of the Orange County Chapter. He has also served on the Community Council for Wasatch High School and on the Education Committee for the Utah Valley Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Moss has tutored English-language learners in elementary schools. Jim received degrees in Political Science and Law from Brigham Young University, and an Ed.D. from the University of Southern California, where he focused on charter schools and labor law issues. Jim grew up in Orem, and now lives with his wife and five children in Midway. He enjoys mountain biking, skiing and traveling with his family. [jim@paynefears.com](mailto:jim@paynefears.com)— 385-202-2680.



**Bryan Bowles, Ph.D.** Dr. Bryan Bowles is a visionary school leader with a 30+–year track record. He is an associate clinical professor at Brigham Young University, and is a former: superintendent of Davis School District, professor at the University of Utah, principal at Bountiful High School, curriculum supervisor at Davis School District, consultant with Simply Associates/Franklin Covey, senior vice president of the Polynesian Cultural Center, theatre director for Promised Valley Playhouse, teacher at Bountiful High School, board president of the National Federation of Urban/Suburban School Districts, Weber State University Board of Directors member, WestEd Board of Directors member, president of the Utah School’s Superintendent Association, Utah Superintendent of the Year, Jewell Bindrup award winner, Karen J. Ashton award winner, Northern Utah Curriculum Consortium award winner, Utah Association of Student Councils Principal of the Year, Milton Bennion Fellow at the University of Utah, Northern Utah Curriculum Consortium Lifetime Achievement Award winner, and winner of the Davis Chamber of Commerce Legacy Award.  
[Bryan.bowles@byu.edu](mailto:Bryan.bowles@byu.edu) —385-499-9279.



**Cynthia Phillips.** Ms. Cynthia Phillips is currently the Executive Director of the Weilenmann School of Discovery, a public charter school located in Park City, UT. Cindy has been a teacher and administrator in secondary schools for the past 33 years during which she has taught Latin, history, English, and ancient Greek. She has never let her administrative assignments take her fully out of the classroom since teaching and students are her love and passion. Prior to her administrative and teaching positions at the Weilenmann School, Cindy was an administrator and teacher at the Waterford School in Sandy, UT. Cindy is currently a member of the Lone Peak Hospital Board in Draper, UT, a member of the Northeastern Utah Educational Services Board, and a member of the Utah Professional Practices Advisory Commission. Cindy holds a BA in Latin from Brigham Young University, an MA in Classics from Tufts University, an MA in history from the University of Utah, and she is currently a PhD candidate in comparative languages and cultural studies at the University of Utah. Cindy and her husband, Greg, reside in Sandy, UT and Midway, UT. They have five children and eight grandchildren. [Cynthiakimballphillips@gmail.com](mailto:Cynthiakimballphillips@gmail.com) — 801-759-9374.



**Michelle Smith.** Ms. Smith is passionate about charter schools. She was a grassroots education activist who worked closely with members of the legislature authorizing the establishment of permanent charter schools. She also helped found the Utah Association of Public Charter Schools and helped pass legislation establishing the Utah State Charter School Board. She has been a primary founder of both Timpanogos Academy and Karl G. Maeser Preparatory Academy and she was a founder of Freedom Academy in Provo and Summit Academy in Draper. She has assisted the founders of many other Utah charter schools including Odyssey, Lincoln, Mountainville, and Noah Webster Academies. Mrs. Smith has been married to serial entrepreneur and former Utah State Charter School Board member Eric Smith for twenty-seven years. She is the mother of seven children ages nine to twenty-three years old, and the grandmother of a five-month old. She enjoys international travel and speaks conversational Spanish and rudimentary French, Italian and Hebrew. [michelle@smithfam.org](mailto:michelle@smithfam.org) —801-836-6978.



**Krystle Bassett.** Ms. Bassett is a facilitator of positive change. A graduate of Westminster College and Utah State University. She is the innovation specialist at Juab School District, one of two Utah districts in the Digital Promise League of Innovative Schools.

She is a passionate promoter of personalized learning, edtech integration, and revitalizing teacher professional development. Krystle has helped teachers innovate, create, and incorporate research-based best practices in their classrooms for the last thirteen years.

As both an earner and advocate, Krystle leads the micro-credential professional learning program for the district. She has earned the following micro-credentials: Student Voice and Choice, Cultivating a Growth Mindset, Data-driven Interventions, Why Use Tech in the Classroom, Sketchnoting, and Understanding Your Leadership Strengths. She believes micro-credentials have potential to advance excellence in teaching and learning.

In 2017, Ms. Bassett was co-facilitator of a session at the Symposium on the Currency of Micro-credentials in Washington, D.C. In 2018 she led a roundtable discussion on micro-credentials and professional learning at the Ed Elements PL Summit in San Francisco. [krystlebassett@gmail.com](mailto:krystlebassett@gmail.com) —801-610-1388.

**“Every student has access to an excellent education that meets their unique learning needs.” —SCSB Vision**

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# State Charter School Board

## Staff Profiles



**Executive Director Jennifer Lambert.** Ms. Lambert is the executive director for the State Charter School Board and has worked in public education for over ten years. She is the nurturer of the thriving collaborative culture that exists in the State Charter School Board office. Previously, Ms. Lambert was the research consultant for the SCSB, the coordinator over Data & Statistics at the Utah State Board of Education, a researcher at the Utah Education Policy Center, and an instructor at the University of Utah. Ms. Lambert is an avid healthy eating, family oriented, life-long learning, community leader. [Jennifer.Lambert@schools.utah.gov](mailto:Jennifer.Lambert@schools.utah.gov) —801-538-7676.



**Authorizing and School Support Specialist Marie Steffensen.** Ms. Steffensen is the specialist for authorizing and school support with the State Charter School Board (SCSB); which means that she is charged with guiding prospective schools through the proposal process, as well as providing support for Utah's charter schools. Ms. Steffensen earned her undergraduate degree from the University of Utah and began her teaching career at a brand-new charter school. After teaching for six years, she moved into coaching and administrative roles, and assisted in opening an expansion of a charter school. She earned her graduate degree from Western Governors University, and went on to open another charter school, this time as the executive director. She is deeply committed to helping schools succeed. When she's not opening or supporting schools, she loves to spend time with her husband, Brian, their two kids, and their sweet old dog, [Marie.Steffensen@schools.utah.gov](mailto:Marie.Steffensen@schools.utah.gov)—801-538-7990.



**Authorizing and School Support Assistant Jenna Magnetti.** Ms. Magnetti is an office specialist II and a part of the Authorizing and School Support team alongside Marie Steffensen; which allows the SCSB staff to be more present in schools offering support and expertise. Jenna enjoys spending time with her two boys, as well as cooking, traveling, and watching football. [Jenna.Magnetti@schools.utah.gov](mailto:Jenna.Magnetti@schools.utah.gov) —801-538-7505





**Supportive Oversight Coordinator Michael Clark.** Mr. Clark is the State Charter School Board's coordinator for supportive oversight, has been in charter schools for 13 years, serving both as a teacher and as an administrator. He has a bachelor's degree from Southern Utah University, a Master's in Education from Western Governors University, and a Master's in Education Leadership from Utah State University. When a stakeholder calls our office with a complaint, they are met with Michael's understanding and expertise. Mr. Clark has an affinity for Volkswagen Beetles, chemistry, and is the proud father of six.

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**Executive Assistant James Madsen.** Mr. Madsen has worked in the Utah State Board of Education office building for nearly five years, with the last three spent serving as the executive assistant for the State Charter School Board. He has been an office manager for over a decade and ran a music studio in conjunction/before that. He holds a Bachelor of Arts in English with an emphasis on creative writing from Westminster College. Mr. Madsen is an avid Jazz fan (both the team, and the music), outdoor enthusiast, and lover of animals. Naturally introverted, Mr. Madsen has been taught teamwork by his Guide Dog, Ion. [James.Madsen@schools.utah.gov](mailto:James.Madsen@schools.utah.gov) —801-538-7720.

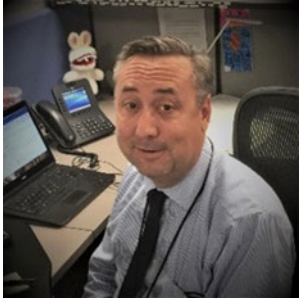


**Financial Auditor Stewart Okobia.** Mr. Okobia is the finance auditor for the State Charter School Board. He was born in New Jersey but doesn't remember anything about it because his family moved to Africa when he was one. He returned to the U.S with his family when he was 13, settling in Utah. He has also lived in Texas and Colorado but has always called Utah home. Mr. Okobia is a passionate Utah Jazz fan who was fond of representing his home team by wearing their jersey when he lived in other states. During his free time, he enjoys soccer, volleyball, yoga, hiking, and travelling. [Stewart.Okobia@schools.utah.gov](mailto:Stewart.Okobia@schools.utah.gov) —801-538-7817.



**Data Steward/UCAP Builder Amber Hellstrom.** Ms. Hellstrom is an IT analyst II and data steward for the State Charter School Board. She currently develops and maintains the web application Utah Charter Access Point (UCAP). Ms. Hellstrom was a track and field athlete at the University of Utah and the Utah 4A High School Discus State Champion. She has used her academic and athletic experience to teach mathematics and physical education, as well as to coach basketball and track and field for various schools in Weber School District. She got her Bachelor of Science, with an emphasis in exercise and sports science, from the University of Utah, her level IV Mathematics Endorsement from Utah State University, and her Software Development Certificate from Ogden-Weber Technical College. She presently has her Secondary Level 2 Teaching License for the State of Utah. Ms. Hellstrom now lives with her husband and four children in Plain City, UT. She is a fan of local college athletics and the Utah Jazz. She enjoys playing sports, camping, fishing, reading and spending time with her family. [Amber.Hellstrom@schools.utah.gov](mailto:Amber.Hellstrom@schools.utah.gov) —801-538-7823.





**Supportive Oversight Specialist Brett Campbell.** Dr. Campbell is the State Charter School Board's supportive oversight specialist. He has taught in junior high and high school classrooms. He has worked as a district administrator and been involved in teacher education for 12 years. He earned his bachelor's degree at Weber State University, and his Master of Arts and Ph.D. at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. He enjoys traveling around Utah visiting schools. He and his wife are parents to five children and are expecting their first grandchild. [Brett.Campbell@schools.utah.gov](mailto:Brett.Campbell@schools.utah.gov) —801-538-7571.



**Supportive Oversight Research Consultant Greg Connell.** Mr. Connell is the State Charter School Boards supportive oversight's research consultant. Greg recently graduated from The Bush School of Government and Public Service at Texas A and M University with an MPA. He has experience in the educational world as a paraeducator, substitute teacher and water polo coach. He loves the outdoors and especially loves to fish. When not on the river, Greg enjoys sports, cooking food and spending time with his family. He and his wife have two beautiful little girls and another baby on the way. Greg dreams of building sailboats and making pizza.

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