The Report of the
Accreditation Visiting Team

Bountiful Junior High School

30 West 400 North
Bountiful, Utah 84010

February 23-24, 2011

Utah State Office of Education
250 East 500 South
P.O. Box 144200
Salt Lake City, Utah 84114-4200

THE REPORT OF THE
VISITING TEAM REVIEWING

Bountiful Junior High School

30 West 400 North
Bountiful, Utah 84010

February 23-24, 2011

UTAH STATE OFFICE OF EDUCATION

Larry K. Shumway, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Public Instruction

DIVISION OF
STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND SCHOOL SUCCESS

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FOREWORD

The purpose of the accreditation process is to stimulate school growth and improvement so as to increase the quality of instruction and student achievement. In these efforts, the school staff makes a comprehensive evaluation of the school's programs, operations, and results. The school determines how actual practices align to stated objectives and resulting outcomes in a three-step evaluation: (1) self-evaluation, (2) on-site evaluation by an external team of educators, and (3) implementation using units of the evaluation to improve the school by effecting thoughtful change.

The evaluation, February 23-24, 2011, was conducted because of the school's desire to ensure quality education for all students in the school, and to increase student achievement.

The entire staff of Bountiful Junior High School is commended for the time and effort devoted to studying and evaluating the various facets of the total program and to preparing the materials used by the Visiting Team. The excellent leadership given by Principal Vickie Ingram is also commended.

The staff and administration are congratulated for their desire for excellence at Bountiful Junior High School and for their professional attitude which made it possible for them to see weaknesses and strengths and to suggest procedures for improvements.

While these recommendations may be used to solicit financial support to acquire some of the materials, equipment, and services needed to carry out a more effective program, it is most important that the faculty and administration utilize them as they continue to evaluate and modify course offerings and administrative and classroom procedures to more dramatically increase student achievement at Bountiful Junior High School.

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*** CMAC Representative Appointment
****USBA Advisory Representative Appointment
*****Charter School Representative Appointment

12/28/2010

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Chris Hall ..... Social Studies Supervisor
Bonnie Flint ..... World Languages Supervisor
Cheryl Wilson ..... New Teacher Mentoring

BOUNTIFUL JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF

School Administration

Vickie Ingram ..... Principal
Cheryl May ..... Assistant Principal

Counseling

Kellie Robb ..... Counselor
Debbie Wosnik ..... Counselor
Stephanie Daines ..... Counselor

Support Staff

Jake Zollinger ..... School Psychologist
Officer Ben Wright ..... School Resource Officer
Tony Poloni ..... School Technology Specialist
Diane Bingham ..... Administrative Secretary
Renee Shegrud ..... Attendance Secretary
Patty Thomas ..... Registrar/Counseling Secretary
Janet Schieving ..... In-School Suspension/Citizenship
Carol Chapple ..... Head Custodian
Don Karmondy ..... Assistant Head Custodian
Claudia Stewart ..... Cafeteria Manager
Marion Borschell ..... Cafeteria Accounts
Tammy Pickering ..... Special Education Aide
Megan Barton ..... Special Education Aide

Faculty

Lorrina Allred
Gail Ballew
Yunliang Bao
Jacqueline Barnes
Sharalyn Beazer
Angela Bird
Bill Blankenagel
Jennifer Bott
Michelle Browning
Barbara Bushnell
Jason Coyle
Becky Dunleavy
Janet Eggers
Jenny Fox
Jennifer Gottfredson
Gregory Kovacs
Christie Krivanec
Deanne Maggio
Jan Moore
Margaret Mumford
Bart Nelson
Wendy Parker
Carrie Sonntag
Steven Spendlove
Mark Spragg
Dyan Stewart
Emily Wadley
Marcel Walker
McRae Whitlock
Linda Yarrow

BOUNTIFUL JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

MISSION STATEMENT

Bountiful Junior High embraces educational excellence and encourages personal success through service and life-long learning.

BELIEF STATEMENTS

- BJH provides a safe environment where individuality and diversity are valued.
- BJH students, faculty, and staff show mutual respect for each other.
- BJH students take responsibility for their own choices and accept the consequences.
- BJH instruction offers a variety of teaching methods and assessments to support individual learning styles.

DESIRED RESULTS FOR STUDENT LEARNING (DRSLs)

Eagles Communicate Effectively
Agree to Work Cooperatively
Gain Strong Character Traits
Life-long Learners
Employ Functional Skills
Solve Problems with Thinking Skills
= Productive Members of the Working Community

Date of Visit: February 23-24, 2011

MEMBERS OF THE VISITING TEAM

Lori Gardner, Park City School District, Visiting Team Chair

Karen Bedont, Lighthouse High School, Carbon School District

Joanne Fraser, Scott M. Matheson Junior High School, Granite School District

Christine Rydalch, Wasatch Junior High School, Granite School District

VISITING TEAM REPORT

BOUNTIFUL JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

CHAPTER 1: SCHOOL PROFILE

Bountiful Junior High School has a storied and historic past. It started as a high school in 1914 and has undergone several updates during its existence, but continues to serve as a center for the community it serves.

Currently, the school has 594 students in grades seven through nine. Students come from five different elementary schools and transition to two high schools. It is the smallest junior high in Davis School District. The student population has remained consistent over the last six years: 96 percent Caucasian, with the next largest ethnic group being Hispanics at three percent. The number of students on free and reduced-price lunch has wavered between 22 and 32 percent since 2005, and has increased slightly to 34 percent this past year. Students receiving special education services represent about eight percent of the total population. Generally speaking, the school serves a homogenous, stable community.

Vickie Ingram is the principal of the school, having assumed the position in the summer of 2010. Dr. Cheryl May, the assistant principal, is in her second year at Bountiful Junior High. The one thing that has not been constant at the school has been its administration: the school has had three principals in the last three years and four different assistant principals. Of the 30 teachers, the average total years spent teaching is 15, and the average total years spent teaching at Bountiful Junior High is 10. Twenty-six teachers have spent more than five years at the school.

It was clear to the Visiting Team that Bountiful Junior High holds a special place with stakeholders and district leaders.

a) What significant findings were revealed by the school's analysis of its profile?

The school’s data reveals that the majority of students are experiencing academic success at the school. CRT scores show steady improvements in Language Arts, with accompanying closure of achievement gaps for students identified as of ethnic minority or economically disadvantaged. Scores on the Language Arts, Algebra, Geometry, Science 7, and Earth Systems CRTs are above the district average; however, the data reveals declines in Math 7, Pre-algebra, and Science 8.

The data also reveals issues relative to grades. Forty-one to 52 percent of students, dependent on grade, are on the honor roll. However, over the last five years, 20-23 percent of freshmen exit with credit deficiencies. The school has accurately interpreted the data to determine a need for more effective interventions.

Discipline data confirms the perception that the school is safe and the rates of inappropriate behavior are low. The school has done an effective job of using discipline and attendance data to develop and implement positive support programs.

b) What modifications to the school profile should the school consider for the future?

In 2005, the Visiting Team recommended that the school expand its use of data to provide a deeper understanding of student achievement and the school climate. The school has clearly acted upon that recommendation to the extent that the school profile incorporates a lot of data. Now, as the school moves forward, it is recommended that the staff collaborate to become discerning users of the data. The Visiting Team recommends that the school study what data is needed to drive instructional decisions and measure student achievement. In an effort to make the self-study a working document, it is recommended that the school create a format that encapsulates current data and trends in a manner that is useful to stakeholders.

Suggested Areas for Further Inquiry:

- The Visiting Team recommends that, as the school is implementing a new discipline system, it also develop the means to track data to provide information for the program's evaluation.

- The Visiting Team also recommends that a closer look be given to those students who are failing classes in order to determine, based on data, what sort of support or intervention needs to be provided.

CHAPTER 2: NORTHWEST ACCREDITATION COMMISSION (NORTHWEST) TEACHING AND LEARNING STANDARDS

Mission, Beliefs and Desired Results for Student Learning (DRSLs):

a) To what degree were the school's mission statement, beliefs, and DRSLs developed and/or revised collaboratively by the school community to define a compelling purpose and vision for the school and to support student achievement?

The school community has refined the mission statement, beliefs, and DRSLs collectively since the last full accreditation visit. Through numerous administrative changes, the faculty and staff have continued to work on their original DRSLs, and the current administration has embraced the faculty's efforts. The Visiting Team feels that the DRSLs have been refined into a more understandable and teachable form since the last visit. The faculty is to be commended for its efforts to focus on the process of DRSL

implementation through all of the changes. It is apparent that the DRSLs create a vision, or direction, for the entire school.

b) *To what extent do the school's mission and beliefs align to support the school's DRSLs?*

The Visiting Team believes that the school's mission and belief statements align directly with the school's DRSLs. It is evident that the DRSLs encompass the vision of the school and that the focus of all is on students becoming successful, happy, and productive adults.

c) *Describe the indicators (measures) that have been developed to assess the school's progress in assessing the DRSLs.*

The Visiting Team found that the Character Education DRSL is being assessed through the use of a pre- and post-test format. Individual teachers are also using various forms of DRSL assessments. It is recommended that a more objective and school-wide assessment approach be developed and implemented to provide a more accurate measurement of teaching and curriculum effectiveness in all six DRSL areas.

d) *To what extent do the school's mission, beliefs, and DRSLs guide the procedures, policies and decisions of the school, and appear evident in the culture of the school?*

It quickly became apparent to the Visiting Team that the mission, beliefs, and DRSLs are a driving force at Bountiful Jr. High School. This information is not only visible throughout the entire school, but can be seen in action as well. Students are taught Character Education, one of the DRSLs, on a continuous basis through advisory, and are exposed to specific character education lessons weekly. The Visiting Team strongly recommends that the faculty incorporate the teaching and assessment of more of the DRSLs into all courses on a more global basis.

Curriculum:

a) *To what extent does the staff work collaboratively to ensure the curriculum is based on clearly defined standards, the Utah Core Curriculum, reflecting the Utah* Life Skills: A Guide to Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions for Success*?*

The faculty of Bountiful Junior High is well versed in the State Core Curriculum and the Davis Essential Skills and Knowledge (DESK) standards, which support the State Core. Teachers effectively use these defined standards in their department planning and in their grade-level team planning to ensure that students receive quality instruction to the extent that this collaboration takes place. Some departments have used an "interdisciplinary planning wheel" to collaborate at integrating the curriculum. The CRT data shows consistent improvement in some areas, and the need for consistent improvement in others. The Visiting Team encourages Bountiful Junior High to continue with the

collaboration that has taken place and to find ways to begin this collaboration where it is lacking.

b) *To what extent does the curriculum engage **all** students in inquiry, problem-solving, and higher-order thinking skills?*

There is evidence that teachers are adapting curriculum to meet the needs of ESL, resource, and struggling students. Fourteen of the school's thirty teachers have an ESL endorsement and make accommodations for the instruction of the ESL students in their regular classrooms. Specific curricula and classes have been developed for students struggling with reading and math. The students will benefit from the core class honors program, which will be implemented next year. The Visiting Team encourages the faculty and administration to continue to monitor the changing needs of the student body and make additional modifications as needed.

c) *To what extent does the teaching staff work collaboratively to support the development of a curriculum that focuses on the school's DRSLs?*

The school has implemented an advisory period in the middle of the day in which character education is uniformly presented to each grade level. This instruction is in direct support of the DRSLs. The leadership committee and faculty worked together to determine the focus and sequence of this instruction. Teachers also routinely incorporate the DRSLs into their instruction. The DRSLs are prominently displayed in all classrooms and public areas as a constant reminder of expectations for students.

d) *How does the staff use assessments to drive curriculum to ensure that **all** students can reach the intended learning outcomes?*

There is evidence that some departments are using common assessments in conjunction with the standardized test scores to drive their revisions of curriculum and teaching strategies. Currently this remains a departmental activity; the Visiting Team encourages the whole faculty to review standardized test scores together and to determine ways in which each department and teacher can help students to achieve success in all areas.

Instruction:

a) *To what extent do teachers use a variety of instructional strategies to enhance student learning?*

The Visiting Team observed a variety of instructional strategies that engaged students with different learning styles. The school has been trained in the Multiple Intelligences model. Teachers are using this model in the classroom to present effective instruction for multiple learning styles. The Visiting Team observed direct instruction, technology-enhanced group work, collaborative learning activities, role playing, white board activities, review games, individual student projects, and independent student seatwork.

There is strong evidence that the faculty is committed to quality instruction for all students.

b) *To what extent have the school and the staff developed strategies for instruction that build the capacity for explicitly teaching the identified DRSL in every classroom?*

While the DRSLs are prominently displayed in each classroom, teachers need to reinforce their meaning with students. Some teachers guide students to connect classroom assignments to specific DRSLs. Each department has adopted a specific DRSL to apply and integrate specifically to their curriculum so that throughout the day students are reminded of them. Teachers regularly wear colored t-shirts that display the DRSL for their department.

These efforts are instrumental in initial implementation efforts. The faculty and administration have collaborated in an effort to explicitly teach character education. Effort has been made this year to assess the work through pre- and post-tests.

The Visiting Team recommends that the faculty actively move toward the integration of DRSLs through the development of a plan to explicitly teach the indicators, the creation of assessment tools to measure effectiveness, and professional development to enhance teachers' instructional capacity.

c) *To what extent is the school's professional development program guided by identified instructional needs, and how does it provide opportunities for teachers to develop and improve their instructional strategies that support student learning?*

The school's professional development has included some meaningful instruction that has been useful for improving classroom instruction. Each year the Building Leadership Team has defined a plan for professional development. The school's action plan and the review of standardized test data have guided the leadership team in selecting the yearly topics. The Visiting Team recommends that the leadership team survey teachers as an additional tool in the selection process.

The team also recommends that, as the leadership team defines the topic for learning, it also include a plan for the incorporation of new learning into the classroom. Goals and expectations for implementation need to be articulated, and the administration needs to be committed to holding people accountable to the work. Follow-up training, peer observation, coaching, and opportunities for collaboration should also be considered to embed the learning into instruction. Measurement tools to assess the effectiveness of the implementation of the professional learning should be used.

d) *To what extent are teachers proficient in their content area, knowledgeable about current research on effective instructional approaches, and reflective on their own practices?*

The teachers at Bountiful Junior High are to be commended for their proficient and knowledgeable teaching. Parents, students and the administration have all acknowledged that teachers know their subjects, care about their students, and provide opportunities to remediate students who need additional help. It is apparent that teachers are reflective on their own practice.

e) *To what extent does the school effectively implement a well-defined plan for the integration of technology into its curriculum, instruction, and assessments?*

Bountiful Junior High has a purposeful and effective plan to increase the use of technology in the school. Teachers work well within the budget restrictions of the Davis School District and the Community Council. The Visiting Team encourages the school to continue to implement additional resources as possible.

Assessment:

a) *To what extent has the staff developed classroom or school-wide assessments with performance standards based on clearly articulated expectations for student achievement?*

The Visiting Team found that the Bountiful Junior High School staff has recognized the need for a school-wide assessment with performance-based standards. One of the action plan's components is for the development of multiple assessment measures to guide instruction. The faculty will receive training on the use of rubrics and will be expected to submit at least one example of a rubric each year. The Visiting Team recommends that this also include the expectation that the rubric be used with students and that teachers engage in collaborative study of their effectiveness in measuring student success.

At this time, some teachers employ common assessments in their teaching and learning. Some departments are collaborating to develop common assessments. The Visiting Team encourages additional collaboration between teachers in each department to create and practice common assessments and to adhere to common expectations within the department.

Teaming has provided an avenue for an alternative school-wide assessment. Each team discusses and evaluates student achievement within a controlled environment (service project, Reality Town, character development, etc.) as well as the assessment of the project/activity itself. Self-reflection is an important proponent to this type of assessment and is commended.

b) *To what extent does the school have a process to fairly and equitably assess school-wide and individual progress in achieving academic expectations?*

Bountiful Junior High School does a commendable job of using standardized test scores to assess school-wide progress. Teachers are starting to collaborate to develop formative

means of assessing individual student progress as a means of providing interventions and additional support.

The Visiting Team recommends the development of, and focus on, assessments that will provide accurate data on individual academic achievement in each department. This will enable teachers to make better decisions to help students master curriculum as well provide data to inform school-wide academic progress.

c) *To what extent does the professional staff use data to assess the success of the school in achieving its academic expectations?*

The Visiting Team found that, at this point, standardized testing data is only being discussed within the core departments. There has been little presentation of the data to the entire faculty to assess the success of the school.

This process has been discussed with the new administration, and plans are being made for the inclusion of all professional staff in the discussion of school-wide data. The Vising Team encourages the full disclosure of data to all members of the professional staff and stakeholders in the school.

d) *To what extent does the school's professional development program allow for opportunities for teachers to collaborate in developing a broad range of student assessment strategies?*

The Visiting Team found that Bountiful Junior High School faculty members have received professional development related to student assessment strategies. Many faculty members currently use those strategies. The Visiting Team encourages all departments to review assessment strategies and integrate those strategies into daily lesson plans.

The Visiting Team found that Bountiful Junior High School faculty members have received professional development related to Multiple Intelligences. The Visiting Team encourages all departments to consider these concepts as they collaborate and develop a broad range of assessment strategies.

The Visiting Team recognizes the work of the school teams and focus groups as they work to develop collaboration opportunities and review/assess the achievements of student development through a broad range of student opportunities.

e) *To what extent is there organizational agreement on the use of a school-wide scoring tool to assess the identified DRSL?*

The Visiting Team was provided with data on a school-wide scoring tool that assessed the Character Traits DRSL. This was the only scoring tool provided as a means to assess individual DRSLs. As the school brings each DRSL into focus, additional scoring tools need to be developed to guide teaching and learning.

CHAPTER 3: NORTHWEST SUPPORT STANDARDS

Leadership and Organization:

a) *To what extent does the school leadership promote quality instruction by fostering an academic learning climate that actively supports teaching and learning?*

The leadership of Bountiful Junior High School has established a school climate that actively supports teaching and learning. The principal supports shared leadership and works with teachers to create opportunities for shared decision-making. Teachers feel ownership for school programs and practices. Parents and students feel that there is open communication and that their needs and interests are considered.

It is clear to the Visiting Team that stakeholders have high standards for the learning that takes place in the school, and that this is cultivated by school leaders.

b) *To what extent does the school leadership employ effective decision making that is data-driven, research-based, and collaborative to monitor progress in student achievement and instructional effectiveness?*

The school leadership employs three stakeholder groups to provide guidance for school improvement: the Joint School Staff Committee, the School Community Council, and the Building Leadership Team. Each group meets regularly and uses data for decision making. The administration provides guidance and direction to the groups and fosters the use of research and best practice in developing the school improvement plan.

Along with the aforementioned groups, grade level teams meet regularly. The teams routinely use data to drive instructional decisions. Counselors and administrators participate in grade level meetings. Formative assessment data is regularly analyzed as teachers discuss how to best support learning.

The Visiting Team commends the school for its attention to data-driven decision making. It recommends that attention be given to the assessments needed to fully implement the DRSLs.

c) *To what extent does the school leadership provide skillful stewardship by ensuring management of the organization, operations, and allocation and use of resources at the school for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment which aligns with the school goals, DRSLs, and school improvement?*

It has been a primary commitment of the administration to promote a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment. To that end, a behavior management system has been implemented within the last two years to address student behavior. Considerable effort has been given to educate students, parents, and teachers on the impact of bullying and harassment.

Principal Ingram has empowered teachers to become active drivers of school reform. Having been in the school for less than a year, she has trusted the work done by the faculty and staff to engage in continuous reform. Assistant Principal May facilitates improvement by providing data and support for effective programs.

The Visiting Team found the school orderly, students happy to be there, and the teachers dedicated to the school community. This is a clear demonstration of the effectiveness of the administrative team.

d) *To what extent does the school leadership empower the entire school community and encourage commitment, participation, collaboration, and shared responsibility for student learning through meaningful roles in the decision-making process?*

Both the School Community Council and the Parent-Teacher Association have considerable influence on what occurs in the school. Their wholehearted support for teachers and the administration lends to the shared commitment of stakeholders for the school's success.

The administration has worked to establish open communication with parents. The weekly e-mail sent by the principal is credited with strengthening the ties with parents. The expectation that teachers will create informative, up-to-date webpages is also creating a stronger link between home and school.

The Building Leadership Team's use of surveys has done a great deal to demonstrate that the opinions of teachers, parents and students are given real consideration in program planning.

e) *To what extent has the school established a formal system through which each student has an adult staff member who knows the student well and assists the student in achieving the school-wide expectations for student learning?*

Bountiful Junior High has, since its last visit, implemented an advisory program that seeks to create significant relationships between teachers and students. It has also implemented teaming to create smaller learning communities. The effect of these two programs is that students feel safe and connected to the school.

Of note, parents and students report that counselors know students especially well and are advocates for their success.

Both parents and students reported to the Visiting Team that they were unclear as to the purpose of advisory, and wished that more time could be given to work completion or homework assistance. Teachers were enthusiastic about the advisory curriculum, and especially its tie to service learning. As the Visiting Team observed advisory classes, it was apparent that the effectiveness of the curriculum that is used is totally dependent on the degree to which the teacher adapts it to make it engaging and worthwhile to students.

Teaming is still in its infant stages in that the teachers feel part of a team, but that is not the students' perception.

The Visiting Team commends the school for its work in implementing elements of effective middle schools. The Visiting Team recommends that now is the time for the faculty to conduct an audit of the advisory program, including classroom visits to observe student behavior, and a student survey to guide program refinement. The Visiting Team also recommends that the faculty and administration consider implementations that would take teaming to a deeper level in creating community and connecting learning across the curriculum, especially in the seventh and eighth grades.

CHAPTER 4: NORTHWEST SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT STANDARD

Culture of Continual Improvement:

a) *To what extent has the school developed and implemented a comprehensive school improvement plan using* Collaborating for Student Achievement, *the Utah accreditation/school improvement process that is reviewed and revised on an ongoing basis?*

The Visiting Team commends the faculty and staff of Bountiful Junior High for the degree to which they have kept continuous improvement a focus, given the administrative changes over the last six years. The school has created a school improvement plan that relates directly to the school's mission and belief statements and to its DRSLs. The plan focuses on moving the school forward in a positive direction and helps create a clear vision for all stakeholders. The plan is revised annually, in conjunction with the Community Council, and appropriate revisions are made to improve student success.

b) *To what extent does the school build skills and the capacity for improvement through an aligned and ongoing professional development plan focused on the school's goals for improvement?*

The Visiting Team commends the efforts of Bountiful Jr. High School on providing continual and data-driven professional development opportunities for all staff. The staff is willing to learn and adapt as the data provides evidence that student needs have changed and a need becomes evident. Professional development topics are chosen according to their relevance to the school's goals and beliefs.

The Visiting Team recommends that attention be given to how professional development will move from new learning to embedding practice within everyday teaching and learning in every classroom. Although the faculty has engaged in year-long focused professional development that teachers have found valuable, there is not a plan for

accountability in place to ensure that teachers will use what they learn, and there is not an assessment piece to ascertain whether the learning makes a difference to student success.

c) *To what extent is the new/revised school-wide action plan adequate in addressing the critical areas for follow-up and is there sufficient commitment to the action plan, school-wide and system-wide?*

Staff commitment is very apparent in all facets of the continuous improvement efforts of the school. The staff is determined and focused on providing what is needed for student growth and academic success. However, it is the Visiting Team's finding that the new action plan is too extensive, and will become tedious and overwhelming in its current form. It is highly recommended that the action plan be condensed, with the focus being on the four school goals mentioned in the self-study.

d) *To what extent does the school create conditions that support productive change and continuous improvement?*

The school and administration are very supportive of positive change for school-wide improvement. Staff members have input and decision-making power that has helped to contribute a sense of ownership to overall improvement. Students feel and appreciate the efforts toward improvement made by all staff members that help guide them in a relevant and meaningful manner.

e) *What significant progress has been made in implementing the original action plan since the last full visit?*

Given the administrative changes, it is commendable that the school has moved ahead with any part of the action plan. The first action plan was too broad, and as a result the school focused on one aspect, that of implementing character education in a systemic way through the incorporation of an advisory program.

The faculty and administration, through the course of self-study, have realized that they need to simplify the goals and determine the means to measure them. They also need to review them regularly through the leadership team and continuation of focus groups.

The school clearly understands what is needed to make the action plan something that drives the work of the school.

f) *What significant progress has the school made in addressing the **major** recommendations of the previous Visiting Team and/or review team?*

Bountiful Junior High has revised its action plan to be more manageable and measurable. The school has narrowed the scope to four measurable goals and plans to develop a system to collect and evaluate data. Professional development will be focused on the instructional strategies and assessment methods relative to the goals.

As a result of the major recommendations of the previous Visiting Team, the faculty has participated in middle-level teaming and leadership training. Grade level teams have been organized and meet monthly. An advisory period was added to the schedule to foster stronger relationships between students and teachers and to provide the means to better track and support student achievement.

Significant attention has been given to professional development. Through the work of the leadership team, faculty members have been provided with extensive opportunities to engage in collaborative learning.

CHAPTER 5: COMMUNITY BUILDING

a) To what extent does the school foster community building and working relationships within the school?

Bountiful Junior High School has integrated grade level teams that work closely and collaboratively within the school, provide community building, and fosters collegial working relationships. The use of the block schedule once a quarter provides the additional time necessary to work collaboratively and build those professional working relationships.

The faculty exhibits a high degree of professional respect for one another and commitment to the school. An example of this is the degree to which teachers accept extra duty assignments at the school on a volunteer basis, with all professional staff members participating. Committee meetings are well attended, cooperation between teachers for afterschool student tutoring is ongoing, and in general professional staff morale was high.

The Visiting Team found that the current administration has played a role in the positive school community atmosphere through support and encouragement of school programs, students, and members of the faculty and staff.

b) To what extent does the school extend the school community through collaborative networks that support student learning?

The Visiting Team found that the school community has extended outward through better communication with school stakeholders, as well as the ninth grade service project and the eighth grade Reality Town.

Bountiful Junior High School provides parents with the opportunity to learn the process to access students' online information (grades, citizenship, interventions) each year at the Back to School Night and at SEOPs. Through the student information system, students and parents have the ability to access not only student information, but also school

information. An updated school calendar and teacher web pages contain vital information on school activities, classroom activities, classroom assignments, projects, etc. Bountiful Junior High School sends “mass call-outs” through an automated phone system to parents in the community members with important school information. Weekly e-mails to parents also include important information, events, and student accomplishments. The school marquee is updated weekly to provide information, and hardcopies of the information are available in the office. This access has given parents the ability to support student learning at home.

The ninth grade service project and eighth grade Reality Town activities provide an additional extension of the school into the community. Community partners assist with both these projects through financial support, time, or materials. The Visiting Team recognizes the connections made with the community and encourages the school to continue with activities and projects that will foster collaborative networks in the community.

The Visiting Team recognizes the use of technologically based collaborative networks for the support of student learning and encourages the school to continue with these lines of communication. At the same time, the Visiting Team suggests that the school remember those stakeholders who do not have technological capability, and consider additional means to provide them with the same information through multiple avenues.

c) *To what extent has the school engaged the school community in a collaborative self-study process on behalf of students?*

Bountiful Junior High School engages the school community in several collaborative processes. The school maintains an active PTA Council and School Community Council. Through these organizations, the community was included in the self-study process as group members served on various focus groups and committees. It was reported to the Visiting Team that there was a minimum of two parents on each group/committee as well as several students. Students and parents have also been involved in surveys that resulted in data used for the school improvement plan.

The Visiting Team commends the collaborative efforts and time community members put in to provide feedback to the school in the self-study process.

d) *How are results of school improvement identified, documented, used, and communicated to **all** stakeholders?*

While the School Community Council and PTA were directly involved in the school improvement efforts, direct involvement of other stakeholders was limited. The leadership team and department chairs shared information and collected feedback from teachers. Parents and community members can find information on the school’s website.

The support of stakeholders is important to the success of the school's action plan. The Visiting Team recommends that the school study how best to provide information to all parents, and constructs the information on the website so that it is clear and informative.

CHAPTER 6: MAJOR COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VISITING TEAM

Commendations:

- The Visiting Team commends the fact that, though faced with numerous challenges over the last six years, the faculty has proceeded in working collaboratively to implement grade level teaming and an advisory program, and to improve instructional practices to meet the needs of students.

- The Visiting Team commends the dedication of the faculty and administration to doing what is best for students, which is exceptional and appreciated by parents and especially by students. The willingness of teachers to extend themselves beyond the expectations of their contracts is admirable, and highlights what is special about the school.

- The Visiting Team commends Bountiful Junior High for taking to heart continuous improvement. The school is working together to implement the DRSLs and the action plan. Bountiful Junior High recognizes that, as the needs of students' change, the school must be flexible and adaptable as well.

Recommendations:

- The Visiting Team recommends that the school continue to refine the focus of the action plan to ensure that its goals are realizable. The action plan should be rewritten to emphasize the four stated goals. Focus groups can continue and can set ancillary goals to drive their work, but the emphasis needs to be given to the study of how to best support the overarching school goals.

- The Visiting Team recommends that the DRSLs be aligned with the school goals. Students, parents, and teachers need to clearly understand how the desired results for student learning will either contribute to the achievement of the goals or will be affected by the achievement of the goals. Teachers need to develop a common understanding of what the DRSLs look like in each content area and collaborate in the development of assessment tools, like rubrics, that can be utilized by teachers in different ways across the curriculum. It is expected that by the next full visit, there will be data that can verify students' demonstrated progress with the DRSLs.

- The Visiting Team recommends that, as the school is implementing programs to provide intervention to struggling students, it also study grading practices and other data to more clearly identify the gaps in student knowledge and performance that lend to academic failure. This will allow for the effective allocation of resources to best meet the needs of students.

- Bountiful Junior High has implemented teaming to the extent that it has had a significant impact on the collaborative work of teachers. Now the school has the opportunity to move forward for the benefit of students. The Visiting Team recommends that the school study how to create smaller learning communities through scheduling to provide a common set of teachers for a common set of students. Teacher teams need to move from planning events for students to considering ways to make the educational experience of students, especially seventh graders, more manageable and connected.

- Finally, all of this rests upon the continuous growth of educators as professionals. The Visiting Team recommends that the leadership team consider the impact of past professional development on teaching and learning as the school moves forward. Future learning should be anchored with the means to evaluate its impact in the classroom, and should be directly linked to the DRSLs and school goals.