

**The Report of the
Accreditation Visiting Team**

**Great Basin High School
20 West 1700 South
P.O. Box 160070
Clearfield, Utah 84016-0070**

September 12, 2012



**Utah State Office of Education
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P.O. Box 144200
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Great Basin High School
20 West 1700 South
P.O. Box 160070
Clearfield, Utah 8484016-0070

September 12, 2012

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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, September 12, 2012, 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 Great Basin 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 Joshua Bell is also commended.

The staff and administration are congratulated for their desire for excellence at Great Basin 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 Great Basin High School.

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*Board of Regents Appointments

*** CMAC Representative Appointment

*****Charter School Representative Appointment

**UCAT Representative

****USBA Advisory Representative Appointment

GREAT BASIN HIGH SCHOOL
(Clearfield Job Corps)

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GREAT BASIN HIGH SCHOOL

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Great Basin High School is to maintain a learning environment in which students will acquire the reading, math, writing, social/life skills, and vocational competencies necessary to compete successfully in the workforce.

BELIEF STATEMENTS

- Students have the right to learn and instructors have the right to teach in a safe, healthy, respectful, and non-threatening environment where diversity is recognized and appreciated.
- Students can acquire the skills, knowledge, and attitudes that will make them employable.
- Students are best prepared for the workplace through a system that uses integrated classroom instruction of academic and vocational skills, worked-based learning opportunities, and connective activities.
- The use of drugs and alcohol, threats, sexual harassment or discrimination, violence and gang related activities are detrimental to learning and should not be tolerated.
- Alternative approaches and methods for teaching and assessing students with different learning styles and abilities are necessary.
- Students are responsible for their learning, behavior, and the consequences of their decisions and actions.
- Students can learn through participation in service projects and worked based learning sites that contribute to the community and environment.
- The development of educational employability skills is critical to students' future success. All staff have a responsibility to promote the career success standards.
- We believe in a positive normative culture where students create the learning environment by mentoring, modeling, and monitoring behaviors.

DESIRED RESULTS FOR STUDENT LEARNING (DRSLs)

1. Students will demonstrate adult level skills in reading, mathematics and writing.
2. Students will demonstrate improved employability skills.

Date of visit: September 12, 2012

MEMBERS OF THE VISITING TEAM

Robert Stillwell, Accreditation Consultant, Northwest Accreditation Commission

Jonathan Jones, Educator

Greg Wuthrich, Assistant Principal, Mountain High School, Davis School District

Katherine Johnson, Counselor, Mountain High School, Davis School District

VISITING TEAM REPORT

GREAT BASIN HIGH SCHOOL

CHAPTER 1: SCHOOL PROFILE

Great Basin High School is a special purpose school located on site at Clearfield Job Corps Center. The school has been accredited since 1970. It is a residential program for over one thousand disadvantaged youth. The students range in age from 16 to 24 years old, and 161 students attend the high school.

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

The high school ranks very well when compared to other Job Corps Center schools. The school is required to use TABE test scores as the primary basis for measuring student achievement gains in reading and math. The TABE is less effective as a measurement tool for English language learners.

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

The Visiting Team asked for more data on what happens to the students after leaving the program. It was explained that the data exists and is required in other reports, but was not included in school's self-study.

c) *To what extent does the school's self-study accurately reflect the school's current strengths and limitations?*

The 2012 self-study was complete and clearly identified areas of strength and areas for improvement within the school. Many items from focus groups were placed into action plans.

Suggested Areas for Further Inquiry:

See recommendations.

CHAPTER 2: NORTHWEST ASSOCIATION OF ACCREDITED SCHOOLS (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?*

Great Basin High School's mission statement, beliefs, and DRSLs have been developed and reviewed by the school community on a regular basis so as to clarify and apply to the combined purposes of academic and vocational training of the school and Job Corps. The faculty and support staff members collaborate to ensure incorporation of the mission, beliefs, and DRSLs into all appropriate aspects of the total program.

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

The school's DRSLs have been developed and revised as necessary in order to support and fulfill the school's mission and beliefs.

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

The series of tests that are given to all students upon entrance, throughout the program, and at the time of completion measure adult-level skills in reading, mathematics, and writing, as well as employability skills. The test results are directly in line with the stated DSRLs, and affect student progress and outcomes.

- 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?*

The school's mission and beliefs are posted in each classroom, and the DRSLs are clearly at the heart of all procedures, policies, and decisions of the school. The culture of the school is built around these statements. All procedures, policies and decisions that affect the students in the school program are focused on the students' achievement of the mission and goals of the school, thus determining the overall culture of the school.

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 staff members work collaboratively within their departments to meet the standards of the school, the Utah Core Curriculum, and the Utah Life Skills. There is an expressed desire to promote more cross-curricular collaboration, although some is currently being done (i.e., with journalism and photography). The curriculum is limited in scope in order to meet the goals of obtaining a high school diploma or a GED. Utah Life Skills are integrated in various courses, including mathematics.

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

The curriculum is designed to meet the needs of students in relation to the goals and purpose of the combined academic and Job Corps programs. Thus, the expectations and requirements are the same for all students, with attention given to individual learning skills and problems, special needs accommodations, and ELL needs. The classes are small (up to 15 students per class), and individual/personalized help is provided as needed. Inquiry, higher-order thinking skills, and problem-solving skills are incorporated especially in relation to job skills and occupational needs.

- 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 curriculum has been developed, reviewed and revised as needed in order to accomplish the DRSLs, which in turn are established to meet the needs of the students in accordance with the mission and goals of the program.

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

The school relies heavily on the TABE (Test of Adult Basic Education) for an initial baseline of student ability and placement in reading and math. The TABE is also used as the basis for movement from the career preparation period (orientation to the total program) into the career development period. In the initial period the students take the TABE, and explore and choose a trade. Commencement of and progress through the academic program is based upon ultimately reaching a twelfth grade competency level, or improvement of four grade level equivalencies. TABE classes are provided to ensure ultimate success. The ASVAB is also administered to all students as a key in the process of helping determining direction in vocational training. A student's academic achievement is also measured through the normal classroom assignments, quizzes, and tests administered as a part of the curriculum.

Instruction:

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

Teachers use both direct teaching strategies and individualized approaches in enhancing student learning. Textbooks, written assignments, PowerPoint and DVD presentations, and other types of computer technology are all used. Hands-on activities are common in classes where appropriate and/or where needed.

- 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?*

The school considers its DRSLs to be ongoing goals requiring continual attention in planning and teaching. This is included in the school's action plan, as well as being a part of the faculty focus groups. Strategies developed include cross-curricular emphasis on the basic skills of reading, writing, and math and the application of these skills in all areas of the curriculum. It is recognized that there is a need for further incorporation of professional development time and opportunities, both within the school and through outside resources, in order motivate continual improvement.

- 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 program is driven primarily by the requirements of the Job Corps program and the academic requirements of the State Core. Faculty members receive annual orientation and review of the Job Corps program and requirements through 30 hours per year of MTC training. In addition, the faculty strives to take advantage of workshops and online trainings that count toward re-licensure. New staff members receive recognition of more professional development in relation to curriculum and mentoring in order to meet EYE requirements. As indicated (see *b*, above) there is also emphasis placed on instructional issues and strategies.

- 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?*

All teachers are properly licensed and endorsed in their teaching areas and have maintained the requirements for re-licensure. Through focus groups and individual and departmental evaluations, they are aware of and strive for effective instructional approaches.

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

Technology is a key component in the academic and job training programs of the school. Students in the initial period (Career Orientation) are required to take a 20-hour information technology course. These skills are then used throughout the total program for particular curricular requirements, research, and eventually in the various job training programs, many of which include computer-driven machinery. Proficiency and progress in the applied technological skills are an essential part of the assessment of a student's progress and achievement.

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 staff is required by the Job Corps program and MTC (the corporation that operates the Clearfield Job Corps program) to rely primarily on the TABE in order to determine student abilities in the basic reading and math skills. This assessment is used to determine processing from the career preparation period, as well as the need for taking TABE classes, or focused help in the development of these skills. The program requires that students achieve an adult level of reading and math proficiency in order to qualify for and be able to progress in the jobs training programs.

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

The school works with each student individually and both monitors and allows progress based on the school-wide and individual assessments. Though working within a classroom structure, each student is monitored and assessed individually, with individual needs being addressed as appropriate. There is recognition of the need for more attention to and provision for students with special needs and/or ELL needs.

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

Testing results are used by the staff to determine student progress through the academic program and ascertain specific needs of students, as well as to provide guidance in relation to career choice and pursuit. Also, the school has compiled data from year to year to ascertain trends that can reveal both strengths and weaknesses of the program. For instance, of the 126 Job Corps Centers nationwide, the Clearfield Job Corps is the third largest and is ranked number one in the High School/GED program and thirteenth in the nation as a whole. Each student's progress is charted

throughout the program so as to reveal individual progress and needs, as well as over-all school trends.

- 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 school's professional development program is primarily focused on meeting the goals of the academic portion of the Job Corps program. Less time is currently used to provide internal/school-wide collaboration for developing student assessment strategies. However, the strategies in place are used collaboratively in working toward school-wide effectiveness. As previously stated, there is the desire to develop and provide greater time and opportunity for professional development in this area.

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

The school is in general agreement regarding the use of the TABE in assessing the stated DRSL that "Students will demonstrate adult level skills in reading, mathematics, and writing." The TABE assessment is a requirement for moving forward in the academic program and provides a clearly stated and understood goal to be achieved by each student in relation to coursework and program progress.

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?*

All departments reinforce the National Job Corps Career Success Standards. Educational skills of specific focus at Great Basin High School are reading, math, and writing. The Career Technical Training focuses on specific job-related experiences and employability skills. As noted in the self-study, however, cooperation and collaboration between the academic and training programs can be improved.

- 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?*

Great Basin High School has put into place a "Student Evaluation Panel" (SEP) for the purpose of using data to evaluate student progress formally and informally. Furthermore, the schools uses "study teams" to seek out and examine the latest

research findings and future trends, and make recommendations that have implications for student learning.

- c) *To what extent does the 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?*

Great Basin High School reports to and is held accountable by three distinct governing entities: the U.S. Department of Labor, Management Training Corporation (a private contractor that “runs” the facility), and the Utah State Office of Education. As a result, the school’s mission, beliefs, DRSLs, policies, practices, and procedures are closely integrated one with another.

- 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?*

Great Basin empowers its stakeholders in the decision-making process by establishing strong and meaningful ties with various community entities; by creating study teams to seek, identify, and make recommendations to improve student learning and instruction; by establishing committees to address student needs and intervention effectiveness; and by implementing student support programs and procedures in order to improve student achievement.

- 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?*

Great Basin High School uses the “Believe It Or Not I Care” (BIONIC) program to assign each student a mentor, identify and address student needs, monitor student progress, and implement interventions.

School Services:

This standard is dealt with in the school’s NWAC Annual Report, which requires specific responses and information regarding student support services, guidance services, health services, library information services, special education services, and family and community services.

Facilities and Finances:

This standard is addressed in the school’s annual report to Northwest, which requires specific responses regarding the physical plant, finances, audit of school records, advertising, etc.

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 school has undergone a change of principals during the past year. The leadership team did a commendable job of preparing the self-study and revisiting the school improvement process.

- 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?*

Professional development activities are provided to teachers. It has been recommended by the Visiting Team that additional training be provided teachers to learn strategies to meet the needs of all learners, especially special education students and English language learners.

- 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?*

The school's action plans address adult academic levels, as determined by TABE, and increasing employability skills of students, which are in alignment with the Job Corps Mission.

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

The school hired a new principal in March 2012. With the new leadership team, the school is in a good position to make some positive changes to work more efficiently for student achievement.

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

The action plans are not rushed. The mission, beliefs and goals have been revisited and are appropriate for moving forward. There has been a continuing commitment to keep class sizes small in academic courses.

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

The Visiting Team found that an effort was made to implement recommendations from the previous team. However, one area that came back as a continuing recommendation is the area of programming for students qualifying for special education or English language learner services. The school created a disabilities coordinator position to address this recommendation. Other measures besides the TABE should be used to identify and show progress for the lowest performing students.

CHAPTER 5: COMMUNITY BUILDING

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

Many staff members are involved in supporting and instructing students. Students have both academic and career development counselors and teachers in both the academic and trade areas, as well as residential, recreation, and other staff members who are dedicated to their progress. The continual influx of new students adds to the challenge of community building. Staff meetings are held every other week, and departments meet bi-weekly as well. Communication between the trades and the academic program continues to be a challenge.

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

One of the great strengths of Great Basin High School is the school's many partnerships with business and other community members. For example, students participate in work-based learning off campus, and instructors from various trades come on campus to work with students. Students participate in fairs and competitions in the community. In addition, students log an average of 5,000 hours of community service annually.

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

During the accreditation process, representatives from the trades, work-based learning and the business community were included in the focus groups.

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

School improvement goals are identified through the accreditation process, as well as other planning sessions held twice monthly. TABE testing is a concrete measure of progress, not only for the individual student, but for the school as a whole—this assessment is used frequently during each student’s career at Great Basin High School. Students also have the opportunity of responding to surveys administered throughout the year. Student progress and the results of these surveys are communicated to the staff as well as center-wide committees.

CHAPTER 6: MAJOR COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VISITING TEAM

Commendations:

- The Visiting Team commends Great Basin High School for the positive, safe structure provided to its students.
- The Visiting Team commends Great Basin High School for the physical facilities and equipment made available to the students.
- The Visiting Team commends Great Basin High School for the commitment of the faculty to accommodating the progress and well-being of students.
- The Visiting Team commends Great Basin High School for the extensive and productive community partnerships developed and operating for the benefit of students.
- The Visiting Team commends Great Basin High School for the educational leadership team led by Principal Joshua Bell.

Recommendations:

- The Visiting Team recommends that Great Basin High School provide professional development for all teachers to learn strategies to meet the individual needs of students.
- The Visiting Team recommends that Great Basin High School provide additional programming for special education and English language learners. This is a continuing recommendation. It is noted that the disability coordinator position is a response to the 2007 recommendation.
- The Visiting Team recommends that Great Basin High School obtain a software platform to facilitate student transcripts and graduation requirements.