

Oquirrh Hills Middle School 12949 South 2700 West Riverton, Utah 84065

March 12-13, 2009



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

Oquirrh Hills Middle School

12949 South 2700 West Riverton, UT 84065

March 12-13, 2009

UTAH STATE OFFICE OF EDUCATION

Patti Harrington, Ed.D. State Superintendent of Public Instruction

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FOREWORD

The major purpose of the accreditation process is to stimulate school growth and improvement so as to increase 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. It is a three-phased 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, March 12-13, 2009, 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 Oquirrh Hills Middle 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 Joanne Mattes is also commended.

The staff and administration are congratulated for their desire for excellence at Oquirrh Hills Middle School, and also for the professional attitude of all members of the group, which made it possible for them to see areas of weakness and strength and to suggest procedures for bringing about 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 even more 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 Oquirrh Hills Middle School.

Patti Harrington, Ed.D. State Superintendent of Public Instruction

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OQUIRRH HILLS MIDDLE SCHOOL

ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF

School Administration

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Douglas F. Graham	Assistant Principal
James P. Marsh	Assistant Principal

Counseling

Cathy Groot	Counselor
Laura Cannon	Counselor
Amy Goff	Psychologist

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OQUIRRH HILLS MIDDLE SCHOOL

MISSION STATEMENT

Oquirrh Hills Middle School is committed to mutual respect, a safe learning environment, and educational excellence as we strive to prepare our students for success and instill a desire for life-long learning.

BELIEF STATEMENTS

We believe . . .

- That all students should have an equal opportunity to learn and succeed.
- That our school provides a well-rounded education for future success and life long learning.
- That education should prepare students with life skills to become responsible citizens with strong work ethics.
- That educational, cultural, economic, and religious differences should be accepted and valued.
- That teachers possess diverse teaching styles and strategies that can influence students' lives in a positive way through their interactions with students.
- That mutual respect among teachers, students, administration, and parents is vital to a caring and nurturing learning environment.
- That classroom climate should contribute to a student's opportunity to learn, a parent's need to be informed, and a teacher's ability to teach.
- That education is the responsibility of parents, teachers, and students. Collaboration increases the likelihood of student success.
- That education continues to evolve, and educators and parents must stay abreast of those changes.
- That community involvement in the educational process strengthens the school.
- That our school and community, working together, should provide a safe learning environment, a positive partnership, and a continued commitment to educational excellence.

DESIRED RESULTS FOR STUDENT LEARNING (DRSLs)

1. Character Development

- **Responsibility to Self:** Students will show responsibility to self by being punctual, attending school, being prepared, passing classes, adhering to dress code, and being drug and alcohol free.
- **Responsibility to Others**: Students show responsibility to others by treating them kindly.
- **Responsibility to School and Community**: Students show respect for the property, feelings and needs of others at school, in the home, and in the community.

2. Critical Thinking

- Students will identify questions, issues, tasks and problems.
- Students will know how to access information.
- Students will effectively evaluate the credibility of sources.
- Students will organize and classify information.
- Students will analyze collected information.
- Students will evaluate information in order to reach a conclusion.
- Students will conduct self evaluations to conclude if issues, tasks, or problems have been solved.

3. Effective Communication

- Students demonstrate effective listening skills.
- Students will present ideas effectively through written methods with clarity, purpose, and understanding of audience.
- Students will present ideas effectively through oral interaction with clarity, purpose, and understanding of audience.
- Students have the ability to read and comprehend the written word.
- Students will value reading for enjoyment.

4. Life Long Learning

- Students will explore opportunities for future career choices.
- Students will make a commitment to understand lesson objectives and complete quality work.
- Students will connect knowledge and experience from different subject areas, and will seek challenging tasks and learning opportunities in school and outside of the school environment.

Date of visit: March 12-13, 2009

MEMBERS OF THE VISITING TEAM

Verneita R. Hunt, Granite District, Visiting Team Chairperson

Jeanne Andersen, Box Elder Middle School, Box Elder School District

Carol Carroll, Kennedy Junior School, Granite School District

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

VISITING TEAM REPORT

OQUIRRH HILLS MIDDLE SCHOOL

CHAPTER 1: SCHOOL PROFILE

Oquirrh Hills Middle School is located in Riverton in the southwestern part of the Salt Lake Valley, servicing the city of Riverton. Once a small, basically agrarian region, Riverton is now a fast-growing community that is rapidly changing into a progressive urban suburb.

The school first opened in September of 1980 with 950 sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students. The building was not completed at the time. Students ate lunch in their classrooms, since the cafeteria was not fully functional. New traditions were established, with the students choosing the eagle for their mascot as it represents courage and upward endeavor toward academic excellence.

From 1980 to 1991, the school experienced many changes as the school district moved the sixth graders to the elementary schools and the ninth graders back to the middle schools to ease overcrowding in the high schools. During the 1990s, Oquirrh Hills Middle School continued to experience a significant increase in student population, with 1,760 students in 1994. Expansion of the facility was completed in 1996 in an effort to adequately house the student body. In the fall of 1997, the school went double session because of the 2000 students attending classes. Over the last six years, from 2003 to 2009, the school has experienced a decline in student population until reaching its present enrollment of 1,017 students.

- a) What significant findings were revealed by the school's analysis of its profile?
 - The Visiting Team found that the data charts and information in the profile gave a good understanding of where the student achievement was headed, including the disaggregated information that is so valuable in assessing who is and who is not learning.
- b) What modifications to the school profile should the school consider for the future?
 - The Visiting Team found the school profile to be a bit lengthy. It would be helpful to give a brief synopsis of the various surveys, letting the team visit the information at the school during the visit. Some of the Jordan District Accountability pages were not readable, and would be better viewed at the school during the visit also.
- c) To what extent does the school's self-study accurately reflect the school's current strengths and limitations?
 - The Visiting Team was able to validate the information and data found in the school's profile. In fact, the team found the school to have many programs that address student

achievement in direct and positive ways, making big impacts on student attitudes concerning academics, achievement, and loyalty to each other.

Suggested Areas for Further Inquiry:

• Include a brief synopsis of the professional development monthly and yearly schedule.

CHAPTER 2: NORTHWEST ASSOCIATION OF ACCREDITED SCHOOLS (NAAS) 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?
 - It is the finding of the Visiting Team that Oquirrh Hills Middle School has immersed itself in a collaborative process to develop, revise, and define a mission statement, belief statements, and DRSLs that support student achievement. The mission statement and belief statements were originally written seven years ago, and are revisited by the entire faculty, students, and community in a collaborative process each year. The mission statement and beliefs statements are closely aligned and emphasize student learning and progress.
- b) To what extent do the school's mission and beliefs align to support the school's DRSLs?
 - The Visiting Team found that there was alignment among the mission, beliefs, and DRSLs. The Oquirrh Hills Middle School teachers, staff, community, and administration have been using and refining the mission and beliefs supporting the school's DRSLs for the last seven years.
- c) Describe the indicators (measures) that have been developed to assess the school's progress in assessing the DRSLs.
 - The Visiting Team found that Oquirrh Hills Middle School has developed indicators, in the form of rubrics, to measure progress on each DRSL. The faculty worked collaboratively with students, parents, and the community to establish and adopt these rubrics. The established rubrics were adopted in the fall of 2008. It is recommended that data pertaining to student competence relating to one DRSL be made a priority in the coming school year. A new DRSL should be added each year, until all four DRSLs show student data. Student-friendly rubrics should be created to obtain data directly

from student assessment. These rubrics will allow for the collection of extensive student data, which will help the school determine where it is, where is it is going, and how it will get there.

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 Visiting Team found that the mission, beliefs, and DRSLs are evident in all school policies and decisions, and are embedded in the culture of the school. The belief statements and DRSLs are evident in academic and curricular decisions that foster improved student learning. They are displayed on the teacher advisory, TA, and classroom posters. The students, parents and community are aware of and use the DRSLs.

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?

Departments work together to assure that the material they are teaching aligns with State Core standards. Many departments have developed departmental curriculum maps to assure that each teacher is teaching the Core Curriculum during similar terms. The seventh and eighth grades are teamed, and teachers work collaboratively to align their curricula to the State Core standards. Scheduled team meetings focus on curricular collaboration. Teachers appear to understand their core and then, in turn, to effectively teach the specific core principals to their middle-level students.

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

The Visiting Team observed students involved in developing higher-order thinking skills, along with critical-thinking problem solving. Observations were made of teachers asking thought provoking questions, students taking time to think about their answers, and then students presenting their answers to the class. Self-starters are a requirement for each class, and students were able to identify DRSLs that aligned with the self-starter in their classes. Observation was made of differentiated curricula that engaged all students. In addition, the school supports co-teaching of resource students in the regular classroom.

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 Visiting Team observed DRSLs posted in each class and DRSLs being taught in classes, including the teacher advisory class. One of the focuses of the teacher

advisory class is to highlight a specific DRSL. The school devotes the Tuesday advisory activity to teaching a DRSL ("DRSL Tuesday"). A script concerning the specific DRSL is read over the Channel One system, following which teachers and students engage in dialogue regarding the specific DRSL. Students were able to identify which DRSL was presented the last Tuesday, along all the school DRSLs. The DRSLs are integrated into the school culture as a whole.

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

The Visiting Team observed formal assessment such as quizzes and tests, as well as informal assessment such as journals, projects, technology presentations, and lab activities. Teachers modify and/or re-teach the curriculum based on assessment results. Some departments have developed benchmark testing, with other departments exploring the idea. In addition, the school supports student-led parent-teacher conferences, where the student prepares a portfolio that he/she is required to present to the parent.

Instruction:

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

The Visiting Team observed a wide variety of instructional strategies in all curriculum areas. The number of collaborative project-based activities teachers use to engage students in the learning process is impressive. Many teachers use effective combinations of direct instruction, scaffold-type practice, and "show-you-know" activities in each class period.

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 DRSLs are clearly embedded into the academic fabric of the school. The Visiting Team spoke with students who had a clear understanding of the DRSLs and gave specific examples of explicit instruction and practice of the DRSLs in the classroom. The DRSLs address issues the faculty believes will enable students to be successful life learners, resulting in a genuine commitment by the faculty to consistently teach, re-teach, and practice these concepts.

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 Visiting Team commends the faculty and administration for their dedication to ongoing professional development and collaboration. Teachers are using the available

data to analyze instructional methods and create interventions to help students learn. Teachers assist other teachers in using new technologies to enhance instruction. An excited energy exists among faculty members about the opportunity to continue learning techniques and strategies that enable them to do what is best for students.

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?

Teachers are knowledgeable in content areas and insightful about the age group they are teaching. Students learn core concepts through engagement in appropriate activities. The Visiting Team recommends an infusion of backward design and essential questions to enhance the reflective practice of individual teachers and teams.

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

The Visiting Team found the that administration, teachers and parents are committed to increasing the availability of computer centers in the classroom, and to meeting other technology needs, by participating in grant programs and dedicating budget monies to this area. Many departments already use computers for instruction, projects, and assessments. Teachers have seen an improvement in student engagement as computers become more available.

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 observed the staff members effectively using a variety of assessments in their classroom instruction. Oral assessments, project-based assessments, presentation assessments, and quizzes were all observed. Teachers were clear and explicit in their expectations for student performance.

Both state and district testing materials have been implemented in assessing student achievement. The Visiting Team recommends that the staff develop departmental benchmark assessments at meaningful intervals to allow teachers to more frequently assess the effectiveness of teaching strategies and the need for student interventions.

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 is tracking data on CRT and U-PASS testing. Subgroups at risk in 2006 that did not pass U-PASS have made improvement, but still lack proficiency. The

school has made AYP each year. The staff disaggregates all data into student subgroups to monitor progress and determine needed interventions. It is clear that staff members know who is learning and who is not.

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

All students have an academic advisor in the TA class. Time is available for students to review grades and expectations on a daily basis. Students may go to other teachers for missing assignments and use this time to complete them. The academic advisor also hosts the student-led parent-teacher conferences and facilitates students' personal reflection on their academic success.

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?

Teachers explained to the Visiting Team the variety and frequency of cross-curricular assessments made possible by the ongoing collaboration of teaching teams. Evidence was observed in many classrooms where students show their acquired knowledge in a variety of creative ways.

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 commends the school for involving the SOAR team and other stakeholders in creating the DRSL rubrics. It is recommended that, in addition to these rubrics, a student-friendly version be created. These new rubrics would assess the same information, but in student-friendly language, allowing students to evaluate their progress without the need for adult interpretation. Research shows that such data is valuable for student growth and academic progress.

CHAPTER 3: NAAS 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?

According to teacher interviews, the past school administration strongly supported middle-level philosophy, which incorporates teaming and collaboration. The new administration had continued this role, and the teachers have expressed their enthusiasm for the administrative support of the middle-level philosophy. Teachers

suggest that middle-level philosophy has increased their instructional ability and improved the learning climate throughout the school. Collaboration among all departments is evident, incorporating all areas of student learning. The current administration is very complimentary to members of the staff, which in turn makes for high teacher morale and contributes to active learning.

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 Visiting Team feels that departments and teams effectively collaborate. Teachers have identified collaboration as their hallmark quality. This collaboration includes decisions that are research and data based. School-wide CRT and Iowa tests are reviewed by the entire faculty during scheduled faculty meetings. Low-scoring students are identified, and an improvement plan is generated for these identified students. In addition, the school has started using the SRI to identify low-level readers. Students participate in the SRI three times a year, and if the data suggests it would be helpful, students are put in a reading class.

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?

The Visiting Team feels that school resources have contributed to an effective learning environment, and that they also align with the school goals and school improvement plans. Classrooms appear to have adequate supplies. Teachers reported that when they request supplies, the supplies are provided in a timely manner. There is a well-supported media center; all classrooms have a teacher computer, most classrooms have a ceiling-mounted LCD, and there are several computer labs. The counseling center is well maintained and appears to have adequate supplies.

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?

The Visiting Team met with members of the Community Council, who felt they were active participants at Oquirrh Hills Middle School. In addition, there is an active PTSA that supports the goals as outlined by the school. The PTSA provides a monthly newsletter to all school stakeholders. There is an active school website that is continually updated, providing the community with general information. Many teachers have their own webpage, which also encourages community participation. The school holds evening activities such as dance performances, musical presentations, art festivals, and science fairs that encourage community participation.

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?

Oquirrh Hills Middle School participates in a daily advisory period. One of the purposes of the advisory period is for each student to connect with an adult in the school. Several students were asked if there was an adult in the school to whom they could go to with concerns, and all these students answered yes. Many said it would be their advisory teacher, while others said it would be a current/past teacher, or a counselor, or a school administrator. When students were asked the best thing about their school, most students said it was their teachers. In addition, many teachers reported that they considered the students to be the best thing about this school. It was apparent there was mutual respect between the students and teachers.

CHAPTER 4: NAAS 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 has found that Oquirrh Hills Middle School stresses the commitment to continuous improvement and provides strong support for school improvement and professional development. The teachers and staff members have taken ownership of the continual improvement process by directing their knowledge and skills toward fulfilling performance expectations and contributing to the achievement of the school's goals for improvement.

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?

Oquirrh Hills Middle School's system of ongoing, well-organized professional development provides extensive training and support for the stakeholders. This training and support also provides a forum for comprehensive implementation of the school's action plan. The teachers and administrators sustain the commitment to continuous improvement and renewal by "staying the course," knowing that there is a continuum of abilities within the teaching staff. Professional development programs are designed to facilitate the acquisition of new knowledge and skills by all staff members.

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 plan is extensive, yet not overwhelming. It addresses the needs of the students, teachers, and administrators; is data driven; and provides a strong foundation for continued work in the future. Through teacher interviews, focus group discussions, and student and parent information, the Visiting Team learned that the administration and staff are committed to following through with the plan and continuing into the next phase.

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

The Visiting Team learned through teacher discussions that the faculty owns the self-study process of continuous improvement. There is a strong sense of focus and goal-setting among the staff, including the administration and support staff. As new staff members come to the school, they are trained and enlightened as to the philosophy of the Oquirrh Hills "family," which includes RESPECT (Respect, Effort, Spirit, Pride, Enthusiasm, Courtesy, and Teamwork).

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

The Visiting Team found that Oquirrh Hills Middle School has moved forward in all areas of its previous action plan, and as a result has built a culture of continuous improvement. The school reviews the action plan yearly and makes necessary adjustments as the school's student population changes. Student achievement is on an upward trend regarding the NCLB standards.

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

Oquirrh Hills Middle School was previously advised to revisit its profile, giving more in-depth information regarding student success and failure. This was accomplished; the school profile was extensive and gives a broad view of the school's strengths and weaknesses.

The second recommendation was to fully encompass the middle-level practice (by providing smaller learning communities), integrate curricula, and use effective instructional strategies. The staff has worked extensively in these areas, succeeding and building a positive learning climate within the school. This effort has created higher achievement scores on their AYP reports, which is the goal for all students to achieve.

The third recommendation stressed communication and the engagement of more parents in school activities, including informing parents of the school's mission and goals. The school administration continues to encourage parents to attend various activities and volunteer in the classrooms. Knowing that this is a difficult thing to accomplish, the teachers and administration reach out to parents in a variety of ways—through phone calls, e-mails, student-directed parent conferences, school newsletters, and notes home.

The fourth and final recommendation centered on continuing DRSLs development, action plan, and reform efforts. The school community has come a long way with the DRSLs in that students know them; charts are posted in each classroom; teachers use the DRSL vocabulary in their lessons; students echo the DRSL language; the action plan is compelling, concise, and clear; and grade level teams in the eighth grade are strong, with the seventh grade team evolving.

CHAPTER 5: COMMUNITY BUILDING

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

It is the finding of the Visiting Team that Oquirrh Hills Middle School began school reform seven years ago and is continually making great progress in establishing, building, and maintaining positive working relationships among the faculty and staff of the school. The school has established interdisciplinary seventh- and eighth-grade-level teams, as well as departmental teams to help facilitate student learning, and has also adopted the Results Cycle to help document and facilitate the process of collaboration. Teachers are using common preparation time, as well as bi-monthly after-school meetings, to hold conversations about cross-curricular lesson plans, timely interventions, and content literacy.

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

It is evident to the Visiting Team that a climate of collaboration exists in the school. During interviews with teachers, a high level of commitment to both informal and formal collaboration was noted. It is common for teachers to share ideas, lesson plans, resources, instructional practices, and classroom management tactics. To assist the teachers with collaboration, the administration has created common preparation times and after-school meetings. It is evident that departments are working closely together and should continue this process.

c) To what extent has the school engaged the school community in a collaborative selfstudy process on behalf of students? The Visiting Team found that departmental analyses and the work of the focus groups have been ongoing processes of self-study. Both departments and focus groups have identified and addressed their areas of strength and weakness to further promote student learning. The Visiting Team observed that the school community is involved in the process. In staff interviews, teachers repeatedly mentioned their involvement in the process, as well as in departmental analyses. Parents and students are extensively involved in all aspects of this analysis.

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

The Visiting Team found that the school has analyzed its data and identified areas of concern that need to be addressed. Parents are encouraged to look at individual student progress using the Skyward program. In addition, the Community Council is provided with school-wide data, which is also available on the district web site. The school's progress is reviewed annually by the stakeholders, and school improvement needs are again addressed and identified.

CHAPTER 6: MAJOR COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VISITING TEAM

Commendations:

- The Visiting Team highly commends the Oquirrh Hills Middle School community for its hard work over the last seven-plus years concerning the accreditation self-study process. It is evident that teachers understand the importance of lifelong learning, as they have shown their resolve by using data, collaboration, professional development, and effective instructional practices to support positive student achievement.
- The administration, teachers, support staff, students, and parents are highly commended for creating an encouraging, safe, educational environment. Not only do students feel safe to explore and learn academic and social skills, but teachers also feel safe to consider, study, and expand their own professional knowledge and abilities. The educational culture and climate are very positive at Oquirrh Hills Middle School.
- It is evident the teachers and support staff own the self-study process. They are highly commended for grasping the self study concept, forging onward to greater a understanding of effective pedagogy, and integrating incoming teachers into the process. The teachers, support staff and administrators are highly commended for spending huge amounts of time and energy in supporting and educating their middle school students.

• The Visiting Team commends the administration, teachers, support staff, and students for integrating the desired results for student learning (DRSLs) skills into the academic fabric of school life. Research shows that learning increases as life skills are embedded in lessons and discussions. It is apparent that Oquirrh Hills Middle School teachers and students use the life skills terminology on a daily basis.

Recommendations:

- The Visiting Team recommends that the administrators, teachers, and students formulate an assessment protocol for DRSL data that will support student achievement. Students can synthesize this data and use it to set useful personal and academic goals, and teachers can analyze this data and use it to set instructional goals supporting student achievement.
- The Visiting Team recommends that Oquirrh Hills Middle School personnel continue their exploration of effective technology use in the classroom. Research shows that current students are technology natives and respond well to this type of instruction. Knowing that many teachers already use technology, it is recommended that all classrooms incorporate effective technology practices.