

**The Report of the  
Accreditation Visiting Team**

**Payson Junior High School  
1025 South Highway 6  
Payson, Utah 84651**

**April 23-24, 2009**



**Utah State Office of Education  
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Salt Lake City, Utah 84114-4200**

**THE REPORT OF THE  
VISITING TEAM REVIEWING**

**Payson Junior High School  
1025 South Highway 6  
Payson, Utah 84651**

**April 23-24, 2009**

**UTAH STATE OFFICE OF EDUCATION**

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State Superintendent of Public Instruction**

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword .....	ii
Utah State Board of Education.....	iii
Nebo School District Board of Education and District Administration.....	1
Payson Junior High School Administration and Staff .....	2
Payson Junior High School Mission Statement, Belief Statements, and DRSLs .....	4
Members of the Visiting Team .....	6
Visiting Team Report.....	7
Chapter 1: School Profile.....	7
Suggested Areas for Further Inquiry.....	8
Chapter 2: Northwest Association of Accredited Schools (NAAS)	
Teaching and Learning Standards.....	8
Mission, Beliefs and Desired Results for Student Learning (DRSLs).....	8
Curriculum .....	9
Instruction .....	10
Assessment.....	11
Chapter 3: NAAS Support Standards.....	13
Leadership and Organization .....	13
Chapter 4: NAAS School Improvement Standard .....	14
Chapter 5: Community Building.....	15
Chapter 6: Major Commendations and Recommendations of the Visiting Team .....	17

## **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, April 23-24, 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 Payson 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 Carl Swenson is also commended.

The staff and administration are congratulated for their desire for excellence at Payson Junior High 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 Payson Junior High School.

Patti Harrington, Ed.D.  
State Superintendent  
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12/30/2008

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J. Lynn Jones.....Director, Special Education & Federal Programs

**PAYSON JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL**  
**ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF**

**School Administration**

Carl Swenson ..... Principal  
Robert Fleming ..... Assistant Principal  
Ryan McGuire..... Assistant Principal (TSA)

**Counseling**

Julie Carlisle..... Counselor  
Blake Mortensen ..... Counselor  
John Plaisted ..... Counselor

**Support Staff**

Larry Bringhurst—Custodian	Janice Lindsey-Music Technician
Amber Butler—Sp. Ed. Technician	Marlena Losser—Lunch Manager
Shirley Campbell—Sp. Ed. Technician	Gail McCloud—Lunch Worker
Donna Cary—Lunch Worker	Deb Morrison—Finance Secretary
Karen Christensen—Lunch Secretary	Angie Paxton—At Risk Technician
Anne Cook—Attendance Secretary	Machelle Peterson—Lunch Worker
Jean Daley—Sp. Ed. Technician	Gisela Redmond—ESL Technician
Katherine Dansie—Attendance Secretary	Pat Spencer—Adult Sweeper
Faye Fuller—Sp. Ed. Technician	Julie Staheli—Sp.Ed. Technician
Ronald Holt—Head Custodian	Penny Tanner—Lunch Worker
Barbara Isaacson—Head Adult Sweeper	Ashley Trujillo—Lunch Worker
Jessica Isaacson—Adult Sweeper	Linda Vellinga—Counselor’s Secretary
Laurie Kay—School Nurse	Kari Welton—Bag Pipes
Judy Lee—Lunch Worker	Pat Wilson—Skill Building Technician
	Penny Wilson—Sp. Ed. Technician

**Faculty**

Golden Adams—Science Teacher	Richard Beagley—P.E./Health Teacher
Eric Archer—P.E. Teacher	Bryce Bird—Science Teacher
Nicholas Baird—Psychologist	Ingrid Bolz—Chorus Teacher
John Ballard—District Sp. Education	Jennifer Braithwaite—P.E. Teacher
Paul Barber—Geography Teacher	Bobette Bridenbaugh—Sp. Ed. Teacher
Sharon Bascom—Sp. Ed. Teacher	Curtis Burton—Language Arts Teacher

Penny Bushman—  
C.T.E./Foods/TeenLiving  
Julie Camara—Sp. Ed. Teacher  
John Carlisle—Spanish Teacher  
Jill Christensen—Math Teacher  
Jacob Corbett—Science Teacher  
Charlotte Davis—Sp. Ed. Teacher  
Mark Davis—History Teacher  
Richard Davis—.T.E./Keyboarding  
Teacher  
Brian DeMille—Math Teacher  
Connie Ericksen—Band Teacher  
Lynette Ethridge—German/Science  
Teacher  
Susan Frandsen—Language Arts  
Teacher  
Vanessa Gillie—Language Arts Teacher  
Leanne Hoffmann—Language Arts  
Teacher  
Howard Houston—7<sup>th</sup> Grade Science/Ag  
Science Teacher  
Wanda Jones—Library/Media Specialist

Melanie McKinlay—Drama/English  
Teacher  
David Murphy—Sp. Ed. Teacher  
Juliann Nielsen—English Intern  
Christi Petruka—Orchestra Teacher  
Rebecca Rhodes—Math Teacher  
Leah Sakhitab—English Intern  
Don Smith—Math Teacher  
Jesse Sorenson—Read 180/English  
Teacher  
LuAnn Staheli—Language Arts Teacher  
Anna Taylor—Speech Therapist  
Janean Thomas—C.T.E./Clothing  
Teacher  
Linda Wagner—Math Teacher  
Lyle Ward—Geography/HistoryTeacher  
Larry Webster—C.T.E./Industrial Arts  
Teacher  
Colleen Wilson—Math/Art Teacher  
Chamaine Wollenzien—History Teacher  
Travis Young—C.T.E./Industrial Arts  
Teacher

# **PAYSON JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL**

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

At Payson Junior High School we are dedicated to academic success, social integrity, and responsible citizenship.

## **BELIEF STATEMENTS**

1. A safe and physically comfortable environment promotes student learning.
2. Curriculum and instructional practices should incorporate a variety of learning activities to accommodate differences in learning styles.
3. Each student is a valued individual with unique physical, social, emotional, and intellectual needs.
4. Education is a shared responsibility of the individual, family, school, and community.
5. Student learning is the chief priority of the school.

## **DESIRED RESULTS FOR STUDENT LEARNING (DRSLs)**

### **1. A Successful Learner**

A successful learner understands student responsibility, accesses knowledge through resources and research, and applies that responsibility and knowledge in academic and real life situations.

- A successful learner has grade appropriate understanding of core principles of English, history, science, math, and technology
- Recognizes connections across-the-curriculum and is able to apply the knowledge to real life experiences
- Exhibits confidence and skills necessary for independent discovery

### **2. A Student with Social Integrity**

A student with social integrity develops character traits that promote respect among him/herself, others, and property.

- Treats peers and others with respect and compassion
- Is able to use verbal, written, and technical skills to communicate clearly
- Understands that communication occurs between two or more individuals

### **3. A Responsible Citizen**

A responsible citizen engages in democratic principles that respect diversity and becomes an active participant in both school and community through service to others and involvement in the formation of a positive school culture.

- Recognizes and appreciates the differences in others
- Uses education as a vehicle to understand the diverse world around them

Date of visit: April 23-24, 2009

## **MEMBERS OF THE VISITING TEAM**

Craig Jessop, Rocky Mountain Junior High, Weber School District, Visiting  
Team Chairperson

Paula Evans, Tintic High School, Tintic School District

Annette Harmon, Rocky Mountain Junior High, Weber School District

Tim Lowe, Dixie Middle School, Washington County School District

Kent Mayne, John F. Kennedy Junior High School, Granite School District

**VISITING TEAM REPORT**  
**PAYSON JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL**

**CHAPTER 1: SCHOOL PROFILE**

Payson Junior High was established in 1927. The current school was built at a different location in 1977. Since that time, additional classrooms have been added to accommodate community growth. In addition to building changes, the school underwent schedule changes, at one time moving to an eight-period A, B schedule, then returning to a seven-period day.

In 2007, the school district reconfigured the junior high schools to grades seven through nine and moved the sixth grade into the elementary schools. Just this year, the district implemented an early-out Wednesday to allow for teacher collaboration. The school began an advisory program allowing every teacher to mentor a group of students four days per week. The school has also established a variety of programs designed to assist students who are struggling with their grades.

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

The school profile showed that Payson Junior High is making great strides toward raising standardized test scores. The school is routinely above the district and state averages.

Only the Math Department stated in its departmental analysis that they give common assessments and use the data from those common assessments to determine how departmental instruction can improve.

The newly included seventh grade seems to be fitting in well with the rest of the school.

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

The school profile could include more information from the ISQ report and more explanation regarding the data collected. A more careful analysis of the data collected will assist team members in their efforts to strengthen the school's weaknesses.

The school profile could also benefit from an explanation on how the school plans to measure progress with the DRSLs.

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

The school's self-study does accurately reflect the school's current strengths and limitations as far as the data goes (see *b* above). One strength is the effort the school has expended to create programs that support students in achieving their academic goals. These programs include the Step-up Student Advocate Program, SUCCESS Program, recognition of student achievement, and individual department tutoring and enrichment.

**Suggested Areas for Further Inquiry:**

- The biggest suggestion for further inquiry is the disaggregation of academic data in order to discover where strengths and weaknesses lie within the school population.

**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?*

Payson Junior High School used a high degree of collaboration to develop the school's mission statement, beliefs, and DRSLs. The school has incorporated a leadership team and defined a compelling purpose and vision for the school and to support student achievement. The school meets at least once a month to work on collaboration with the beliefs and DRSLs in mind.

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

The school's mission statement—"At Payson Junior High School we are dedicated to academic success, social integrity, and responsible citizenship"—is very much aligned with the school's belief statements and the DRSLs. The DRSLs are the same as the mission statement.

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

Payson Junior High School's first action plan addresses an implementation plan to incorporate the DRSLs into the school's culture. There seems to be a variety of academic indicators, such as common assessments and discussions of failing students. There are not a lot of measureable items related to the DRSLs in the school's self-study. There is evidence that the faculty is working toward implementing the DRSLs in the school, but the standards are not written in a measurable format.

- 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, beliefs, and DRSLs guide the procedures, policies and decisions of the school to a large degree, and they appear evident in the culture of the school. The school has a variety of programs that support the school's mission. Through the GAP (advisory period) and SUCCESS program, the school tries to assist students in character development and other areas of their development.

### **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 at Payson Junior High School collaborates as a school at least once a week and more often as teams or departments. Their collaboration is often based on reasonably clearly defined standards, the Utah Core Curriculum, and the Utah Life Skills document. Discussions with the faculty and administration indicate a reasonably high degree of collaboration in this area.

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

The curriculum engages most students in inquiry and problem-solving activities. Some teachers encourage some students to use higher-order thinking skills. They use a variety of tools to engage students in the learning process, including some technological tools, like mobile computer labs.

- 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 members of the teaching staff at Payson Junior High School work in a collaborative manner to a high degree. Teachers use a reading placement test

called the DRP (Degrees of Reading Placement) to assist students in various departments. The staff meets at least once a month to discuss how the DRSLs relate to the school's goals. The staff meets each Wednesday to collaborate on areas of curriculum development and student success.

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

The staff at Payson Junior High School uses a variety of assessment tools, both formative and summative, to ensure that all students are working toward reaching the intended learning outcomes. Most departments have common assessments. The results are reviewed by departments or teams to assist student learning. The school also uses MyAccess to evaluate writing skills. This tool is used in multiple departments, and the English Department collaborates with and trains others as needed.

**Instruction:**

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

The Visiting Team observed that the teachers at Payson Junior High use a wide variety of instructional strategies to enhance student learning. Teachers utilize at least three best practices during each forty-five minute class period. Examples of instructional strategies observed include bell work, labs, directed readings, writing across the curriculum, direct instruction and use of technology.

Teachers indicated that Payson Junior High students earned the smallest number of F's in the second term of this year. Teachers suggest that this improvement was due to the use of a variety of instruction methods and the implementation of the GAP program.

Through teacher interviews, the Visiting Team reports that interns are supervised by mentor teachers who instruct them on the use of best practices, time management and cross-curricular instruction.

- 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?*

Payson Junior High has implemented a GAP (Grizzly Advisory Period) where the DRSLs have been taught and reviewed. Teachers planned specific lessons for each DRSL, and engaged their students by having a door decorating contest. Each GAP class chose a DRSL and made a full-door depiction of how that DRSL applied to the class or school.

- 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 interviewed teachers on the use of professional development as a guide to identifying instructional needs. The teachers explained that the collaboration time implemented in their school schedule each Wednesday afternoon was designed to help teachers discuss student progress, target at-risk students, and collaborate within their departments.

- 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?*

Ninety-six percent of the teachers at Payson Junior High are endorsed in their content area. During collaboration time, teachers review DRP and CRT scores so that each teacher becomes aware of student reading levels and the areas for improvement. The teachers have stated that members of their department are knowledgeable in their content area and participate in staff development programs within the school, district and state. Teachers use common assessments and standardized testing to reflect on their own teaching practices. They then use the information to address the need for re-teaching, adaptation, and remediation.

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

Teachers utilize the overhead projection systems available in each classroom. Immediate Response Systems ("clickers") are available but not widely used. A few teachers use auditory assistance programs to enhance their voice for instruction. Two mobile computer labs and at least five stationary computer labs are accessible and utilized by various teachers, allowing for more online testing, use of UTIPS, and MyAccess. The use of technology has allowed for cross-curricular instruction. Teachers voiced that students turn in more and better assignments when they are allowed to use computers.

**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.*

Each department chair for core subject areas (math, science, history, and English) indicates that his/her department has either developed its own common

departmental assessment or adopted an assessment that is administered at least quarterly. The results of those assessments are reviewed by the departments to assess problem areas in teaching Core Curriculum, pacing, and student mastery.

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

Payson Junior High School has broad assessment strategies for determining school and individual student progress:

- Reading ability is assessed for all students each year using the DPR (Degrees of Reading Power). Students scoring two or more years below grade level are placed in a remedial reading program called Scholastic Read 180. They remain in the remedial program until they reach a score of above two years below grade level. ESL students are regularly tested with the IPT to assess English reading and writing fluency. ESL students are placed according to their IPT scores. Resource students have a Dibels test each quarter and the Briganse thrice per year to assess their reading, math, and language progress and placement.
- Writing skills are taught to students using the Six Traits of Writing, and assessed using the MyAccess program at least quarterly.
- The Science Department assesses their students each quarter using UTIPS and MyAccess.
- Math students are assessed at midterm and end of quarter using a common assessment of the department's own making.
- The history department has used common assessments, but the department chair indicates that use of their assessment has not been consistent and needs to be reinstated.

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 observed that data from standardized tests (i.e., ITBS, CRT, DRP) is referred to departments for collaboration during PLC time. Departments collaborate to address areas of concern by planning strategies to improve instruction and student mastery of curriculum areas. Each core area department has developed or adopted common assessments administered at least quarterly and reviewed by the department.

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 observed that the administration has provided training for teachers during PLC time in the use of assessment tools such as UTIPS and MyAccess, and in the use and interpretation of data from school-wide assessments

(i.e., ITBS, CRT, DRP). Departments are encouraged to review individual teacher data and collaborate on strategies to improve scores.

- 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 indicates that there are some measures in place that can be used to assess the DRSL:

- Successful Learner—GPA, number of F's, standardized test scores
- Social Integrity—Number of disciplinary referrals, citizenship grades, Grizzly Club qualifications
- Responsible Citizen—Citizenship grades, volunteer hours, extracurricular activities

Although these possible measures are available, no specific, measurable indicators have been adopted and written into the action plan to assess progress toward meeting the DRSL.

### **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?*

The leadership of Payson Junior High School is actively engaged in the instruction of students by the teachers. School leaders have created opportunities for students to receive help when they are struggling, and teachers have adequate time for collaboration. Up to this time, the majority of curricular collaboration time has been spent in departments, and some teachers voiced a desire to move to the next step of interdepartmental collaboration. However, there is also a lot of collaboration regarding students who need help and the best ways to intercede on their behalf.

- 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 has collected data from the community as well as student performance scores. This data has been used, to some extent, to form the school's DRSLs. Programs and opportunities that have been created are data driven and research based; they have been created in a collaborative forum. The Visiting

Team observed the use of DRP test scores to place students in the correct science classes. All teachers and some community members have had input into the direction the school is moving.

- 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?*

Based on the Visiting Team's observations and interviews with staff members, the leadership of the school provides all of the resources it is capable of providing to ensure the best learning environment possible. The school leadership has organized the teachers into committees and given responsibility to the committee leaders and the accreditation leadership team. Students and staff alike report that the school has made substantial progress in ensuring the safety of the students. Students now feel that they can associate more freely with those who are not "in their group," whereas that was not previously the case.

The overall feeling in the school and in the community is that the school leadership is doing a good job of leading the school and making positive changes.

- 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 spoke at length with community and staff members about their roles in the accreditation process. All of them said they had a role in decision making, giving input, and sharing in the accreditation process. Even when those we talked to were not directly involved in making the initial decisions, they felt they had been informed, listened to, and given the opportunity to give their approval to the decisions being made.

## **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 believes that Payson Junior High School has completed a successful, comprehensive school improvement plan involving parents, staff, students and the community. Using the collaboration time provided by the district, the school has been able to complete its self-study in an effective and meaningful way. A survey completed by parents, staff, students, and teachers was used to generate focus areas and develop the action plan. The faculty and staff of Payson Junior High feel that they are already working on the action plan and have steps in place to achieve their goals. The staff is in agreement on the direction that they want to go. One of the school's action plans is to increase communication among students, parents and staff. Already the school is working on upgrading and making its website more efficient and effective for parents, as well as on revising and evaluating the GAP classes so that they are more effective and so that teachers can work with the same students throughout their career at Payson Junior High.

- 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 found evidence of a school-wide collaboration effort. The district has provided faculty members with time work together and collaborates with each other. Most of the time this year has been spent working on their self-study and evaluation process. Teachers are divided in to small professional learning teams within their department, and also within grade specific groups. They work together to improve their teaching strategies and also to improve their classroom management skills. The mentoring program that the school provides for interns and first-, second-, and third-year teachers gives teachers multiple strategies that they can use in their classes for classroom management. The school has been using some of this collaboration time to create common assessments within the different curriculum areas. Within the different departments, teachers have all had common professional development; for example, all of the English teachers have been trained in using the Six Traits of Writing in their classes.

- 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 Visiting Team believes that the action plan is sufficient for addressing the areas that Payson Junior High has chosen to focus on. It appears that there is commitment among the staff and leadership to the goals that they have chosen. Many teachers and staff members at Payson Junior High expressed a desire to follow the action plan and meet the timelines that they have developed. They have an effective method of mentoring their interns, which will help with continuity; many of the teachers believe that this is the biggest weakness in their school. Because of the energy spent each year constantly mentoring and training new interns, teachers feel like they have a struggle making progress with some of their

goals and common features of similar classes. For example, each year in seventh grade English, teachers might have to train and mentor a new teacher through the seventh grade curriculum, only to start all over again the next year.

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

The Visiting Team found evidence of conditions that support productive change and continuous improvement. The mentoring program for new teachers and interns encourages teachers to collaborate and share ideas. The district offers multiple opportunities for in-service and encourages and invites teachers to participate, providing different types of workshops for all areas of the curriculum. The school believes that the GAP (Grizzly Advisory Period) provides an opportunity for the teachers to help each other meet the needs of students. The administration at Payson Junior High is supportive of the efforts of teachers to improve their instruction and implement new strategies in their teaching methods.

## **CHAPTER 5: COMMUNITY BUILDING**

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

Payson Junior High demonstrates efforts to build community relationships within the school by using the collaboration time to also develop lasting relationships among the members of the staff. One time they were divided up into small groups and instructed to just get to know each other. The teachers reported that they enjoyed this opportunity to learn about each other. The staff also meets together monthly for a luncheon where everyone brings potluck to share. They also are able to interact with each other during passing time, when they stand in the hall to supervise students. Many teachers reported that they share ideas during this time. They believe that the collaboration they do within their departments and across curriculum helps to develop relationships and also motivates them to be better teachers through example.

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

The Visiting Team found evidence that Payson Junior High works toward building collaborative networks that support student learning. PHJS has a very active and productive School Community Council, which provides a current calendar on its web page that parents appreciate. The school's Fine Arts Department provides frequent performances to which parents are invited. Parents also have access to SIS, although some parents seemed to be frustrated that it is

not regularly updated and kept current. Parents are grateful for the way teachers use e-mail in order to communicate. Payson Junior High has a new marquee that allows the school to provide announcements and messages for the community, and parents mentioned how grateful they were for this information.

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

Payson Junior High School has engaged the school community in a collaborative self-study on the behalf of students. The Community Council was involved in the self-study process. Students were invited and included in discussion of the school's DRSLs and action plan. The school included parents in their surveys for the focus groups. Technicians and other staff members at Payson Junior High were also included in the development of the plan.

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

The school improvement plan and self-study have been documented in the accreditation report, which has been provided to all faculty members, administrators, counselors, and other support staff at the school. Payson Junior High intends to post the report on its web page so that parents and others can have access to it. The school will also use its monthly newsletter to communicate with parents the discoveries made from the self-study. The classrooms at Payson Junior High have posters displaying the mission statement and the DRSLs. Most of the students were aware of the mission statement and the DRSLs. When the Visiting Team met with the student leadership groups, the students were able to discuss all of the DRSLs and the mission statement. The school has also published its mission statement on report cards and progress reports.

## **CHAPTER 6: MAJOR COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VISITING TEAM**

### **Commendations:**

- The Visiting Team commends Payson Junior High School for its excellent efforts in collaboration as a school, grade level teams, and departments, especially the efforts to align curricula and help at-risk students.
- The Visiting Team commends Payson Junior High for its GAP program (which helps students across grade levels and assists students in self-evaluation of their progress), and for the process for referral and remediation for struggling students, including the SUCCESS program.

- The Visiting Team commends the school's efforts to positively reward and recognize students with programs such as the Grizzly Wheel and Grizzly Club.
- The Visiting Team commends the efforts the Payson Junior High administrative team has made over the past two years to unify staff and students. This also reflects well on the faculty and staff members who have obviously assisted in these efforts. There is a positive atmosphere in the school that is felt by parents, students, teachers, administration and visitors.

**Recommendations:**

- The Visiting Team recommends that Payson Junior High stakeholders review the DRSLs and action plans to create measurable indicators, and expand the action plan to provide measurable indicators for the upcoming accreditation period.
- The Visiting Team recommends that the staff consult with students as to what rewards would be valuable and meaningful for the Grizzly Wheel and Grizzly Club programs.
- The Visiting Team recommends that the school create an action plan that specifically addresses the three indicators for the DRSL relating to becoming a successful learner.
- The Visiting Team recommends that Payson Junior High collect and disaggregate data to identify which students are successful and which are at risk.