

**The Report of the
Accreditation Visiting Team**

**South Cache 8/9 Center
10 South 480 West
Hyrum, Utah 84319**

March 23-24, 2011



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

**THE REPORT OF THE
VISITING TEAM REVIEWING**

**South Cache 8/9 Center
10 South 480 West
Hyrum, Utah 84319**

March 23-24, 2011

UTAH STATE OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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

**DIVISION OF
STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND SCHOOL SUCCESS**

Brenda Hales, Associate Superintendent

**Sydnee Dickson, Director
Teaching and Learning**

**Linda Alder, Coordinator
Teaching and Learning**

**Georgia Loutensock, Accreditation Specialist
Teaching and Learning**

Salt Lake City, Utah

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword	ii
Utah State Board of Education.....	iii
Cache School District Board of Education and District Administration	1
South Cache 8/9 Center Administration and Staff.....	2
South Cache 8/9 Center Mission Statement, Belief Statements, and DRSLs.....	4
Members of the Visiting Team	5
Visiting Team Report.....	6
Chapter 1: School Profile.....	6
Suggested Areas for Further Inquiry.....	7
Chapter 2: Northwest Accreditation Commission (Northwest)	
Teaching and Learning Standards.....	7
Mission, Beliefs and Desired Results for Student Learning (DRSLs).....	7
Curriculum	8
Instruction	8
Assessment.....	11
Chapter 3: Northwest Support Standards.....	12
Leadership and Organization	12
Chapter 4: Northwest School Improvement Standard	13
Chapter 5: Community Building.....	16
Chapter 6: Major Commendations and Recommendations of the Visiting Team	18

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

The entire staff of South Cache 8/9 Center 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 Lynn Archibald is also commended.

The staff and administration are congratulated for their desire for excellence at South Cache 8/9 Center, 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 South Cache 8/9 Center.

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

UTAH STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

250 East 500 South
P. O. Box 144200
Salt Lake City, UT 84114-4200

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Tami W. Pyfer
52 Ballard Way
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Phone: (435) 753-7529

District 2

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1027 West 3800 North
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Phone: (801) 737-0702

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Phone: (801) 539-0622

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Highland, UT 84003
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Chief Executive Officer

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4139 S Aubrey Ln
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Phone: (801) 955-5550

District 7

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District 8

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District 10

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5311 South Lucky Clover Ln
Murray, UT 84123
Phone: (801) 261-4221

Daniel W. Campbell*

4304 Stone Creek Ln
Provo, UT 84604
Phone: (801) 434-3000

Tamara Lowe****

2466 West 650 North
West Point, UT 84015
Phone: (801) 776-0870

Lorraine Austin

Secretary

District 11

David L. Crandall
13464 Saddle Ridge Drive
Draper, UT 84020
Phone: (801) 232-0795

District 12

Carol A. Murphy
463 West 140 North
Midway, UT 84049
Phone: (435) 729-0941

District 13

C. Mark Openshaw
3329 Piute Drive
Provo, UT 84604
Phone: (801) 377-0790

District 14

Dixie Allen
218 West 5250 North
Vernal, UT 84078
Phone: (435) 789-0534

District 15

Debra G. Roberts
Box 1780
Beaver, UT 84713
Phone: (435) 438-5843

Isaiah "Ike" Spencer***

1029 East 11780 South
Sandy, UT 84094
Phone: (385) 646-5360

Tim Beagley*****

3974 South 3550 West
West Valley City, UT 84119
Phone: (801) 969-6454

*Board of Regents Appointments

*** CMAC Representative Appointment

*****Charter School Representative Appointment

**UCAT Representative

****USBA Advisory Representative Appointment

12/28/2010

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Stacie Stewart.....	Grant Coordinator
Jodi Treat	Grant Coordinator, ART
Becky Wadsworth.....	Coordinator, Title I

SOUTH CACHE 8/9 CENTER SCHOOL

ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF

School Administration

Lynn Archibald..... Principal
Chris Hardy..... Assistant Principal
Shane Zilles..... Resource Officer

Counseling

Kristin Davis..... Counselor
Melanie Francis..... Counselor
Alex Hansen..... Counselor

Support Staff

Rex Bailey..... Custodian
Trudy Byington..... Manager of Cafeteria
Kim Egbert..... Lunch Secretary
Michelle Erickson..... Principal's Secretary
Jill Hansen..... Attendance Secretary
Susan Juber..... Computer Lab Aide
Gaylene Lange..... Cafeteria
Margie Leishman..... Cafeteria
Debra Lund..... Computer Lab Specialist
JoDee Mauchley..... Cafeteria
Lillian Miller..... Special Education Aide
Maryjo Noble..... Career Center Aide
Evelyn Nyman..... Cafeteria
Candice Nyquist..... Cafeteria
Joanne Peterson..... Special Education Aide
Ila Rowser..... Custodian
Blake Savage..... Custodian
Kolette Thompson..... Special Education Aide
Lonny Zook..... Head Custodian

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Sherry Anderson

Valerie Beck
Burt Black

Duane Behrmann
Bruce Bohm

Aubrey Bracken
Graydon Buchmiller
Tamra Bunnell
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Jennifer Whipple

VISITING TEAM REPORT
SOUTH CACHE 8/9 CENTER

MISSION STATEMENT

Promoting Success, Respect, and Responsibility

BELIEF STATEMENTS

All faculty and staff share the responsibility for teaching effective communication, critical thinking, cooperative learning and life-long skills through:

- **SUCCESS** – Opportunities for personal success and growth are made available to all.
- **RESPECT** – Facilitators model appropriate social responses, manners, integrity and citizenship to promote good character education.
- **RESPONSIBILITY** – Effort, discipline, and dedication are applied to teaching and learning. Teachers use a variety of learning styles, lesson plans, assessment measures, team collaboration and continued professional development

DESIRED RESULTS FOR STUDENT LEARNING (DRSLs)

1. Students will become *Effective Communicators*.
2. Students will become *Critical Thinkers*.
3. Students will work *Cooperatively within a Group*.
4. Students will be *Life-long Learners*.

Date of visit: March 23-24, 2011

MEMBERS OF THE VISITING TEAM

Dan Johnson, Tooele School District, Visiting Team Chairperson

Melani Kirk, Thomas Edison Charter School, South Campus

Jamie Lewis, Thomas Edison Charter School, North Campus

Sydnee Seager, Fairfield Junior High School, Davis School District

Malissa Simonson, Farmington Junior High School, Davis School District

VISITING TEAM REPORT

SOUTH CACHE 8/9 CENTER SCHOOL

CHAPTER 1: SCHOOL PROFILE

South Cache 8/9 Center is located in Hyrum, Utah. The school is responsive to student and community needs through providing a wide range of choices in academics and extra-curricular activities. The facility has undergone changes and upgrades, and effectively houses 1,164 students. Caucasians make up 89 percent of the student body, with most of the remainder being Hispanic. About 30 percent of the students are on free and reduced-price lunch.

Hyrum is situated in the scenic southern part of Cache County. The population is young and generally well educated. Health, education, social services, and manufacturing make up the major areas of employment.

The school prides itself on providing 21st century educational opportunities for students. Technology applications and powerful teaching practices promote active student engagement. South Cache 8/9 Center has created several intervention strategies to meet student needs. The PTA and Community Council are highly involved in advocating for practices and programs that benefit students.

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

The school discovered that there are many students who need help, and that the school must actively intervene or some of these students will fall through the cracks. The dynamics of student population changes and the difficulty created by budgets has placed a burden on the school as it tries to create and implement intervention programs aimed at certain subgroups.

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

South Cache did an incredibly effective job of discovering who they are as a school and in charting a course for the future. The school identified important pieces of data to include in its profile. The Visiting Team does not recommend any changes to the profile. As a matter of fact, this profile should simply be updated and evaluated for any impact that changes might render. The school created an outstanding profile, and is commended for the way in which it used the profile information to conduct the rest of the study.

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

South Cache did a great job of following the guidelines found in *Collaborating for Student Achievement*. The profile is an accurate reflection of the school and community's

current status. It provided the necessary information to create an action plan that was aligned with the results of the self-study effort.

Suggested Areas for Further Inquiry:

- The school has plans to more fully implement the framework of professional learning communities. Therefore, the school leaders should determine the impact that implementation of professional learning communities will have on student achievement. Compare current data to that collected over the next few years.

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

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

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

Originally, the school's beliefs contained 14 statements covering various aspects of success, responsibility, communication, learning, problem solving, teamwork, and character. Members of the school community worked to revise and reduce these statements into a more manageable and focused document. The faculty, staff, and Community Council also cooperated in selecting the DRSLs, first through preliminary meetings and then through surveys to provide input. Following the selection, additional meetings were held to promote understanding and implementation. Currently the faculty collaborates regularly through e-mail to share ideas for advancing student achievement through the mission, beliefs, and DRSLs.

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

The Visiting Team observed a direct alignment between the mission and beliefs statement and DRSLs. The mission and beliefs state that the faculty and staff share the responsibility for teaching effective communication, critical thinking, cooperative learning, and life-long learning skills—the four life skills selected as DRSLs. This direct and succinct alignment drives the focus of the school and has worked to define the direction in which the school is moving.

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

The Visiting Team noted that the indicators and rubric for all four selected DRSLs were taken from the NSSE's *Survey of Goals for Student Learning*. The school chose Effective Communicator as the DRSL to institutionalize first. The faculty also developed SMART goals based on specific indicators and methods for incorporating Effective Communicator. To measure this DRSL, teachers school-wide used Eval-U-Write to assess written communication. They discovered that this common assessment tool was not effective across all subject areas. Faculty members continue to develop and share ideas for implementing and assessing this DRSL through student portfolios, writing samples, class discussion, etc. The Visiting Team recommends that the school continue to explore ways to assess this DRSL until a more uniform system of measure is attained.

- 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 felt that the school's mission to promote success, respect, and responsibility appears evident throughout many aspects of school policies and procedures. Co-teaching and teaming have provided additional support to students, resulting in success. The revised bell schedule, which alternates passing time between the eighth and ninth grades, promotes respect and success. Acknowledging student achievement on honor rolls, Student of the Trimester Awards, and end-of-year awards fosters responsibility and success. Additionally, the DRSLs are posted prominently in classrooms and hallways. The Visiting Team found they were explicitly taught in classrooms and at assemblies by school leaders as well as student leaders. The students and faculty feel a sense of ownership for the school mission, beliefs, and 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?*

The Visiting Team has observed substantial evidence that South Cache 8/9 Center is working collaboratively to develop a curriculum that meets the standards of the Utah State Core. Several departments meet weekly to discuss and develop a scope and sequence derived from the state standards and the objectives. Teachers were observed emphasizing an enduring understanding throughout their lesson development, and adjusting their teaching to thoroughly engage their students in curriculum defined by the Utah State Core.

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

It is evident from the myriad of activities observed by the Visiting Team that South Cache delivers a curriculum that engages all students. The research supports that academic engagement time has a direct correlation with student learning; South Cache

understands this principle. In several classes, students were observed actively taking notes, engaging in cooperative learning groups, and debating. Furthermore, students experience opportunities to connect to prior knowledge, predict consequences or outcomes, and reflect on theories, and evaluate. The Visiting Team noted that teachers consistently engaged students in higher-order thinking skills. One such example would be the Ancient World History geography assignment, in which students collaborate with one another and create a documentary history video and present it to the class. Interactive assignments like this were evident in several disciplines.

- 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 recognizes that the faculty at South Cache has worked diligently to collaborate and develop a curriculum that focuses on the school DRSLs. The South Cache faculty is also to be commended for its attention to the 2005 Visiting Team recommendations regarding DRSLs indicators and ensuring sufficient evidence is gathered to support measurable DRSLs goals. There is sufficient evidence that, through several professional development meetings, monthly faculty meetings, and cross-curricular team meetings, South Cache has remained assiduous in its care for supporting a curriculum that focuses on the DRSLs.

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

The Visiting Team has found evidence that South Cache is using the results from CRTs, standardized test, and state skill certification tests to adjust the curriculum to help students reach intended learning outcomes. Evidence of this was observed in several departments, one being the CTE Department, in which ninth grade students take the state certification tests in Foundations of Technology 1, Manufacturing, Foods and Nutrition 1, and Clothing 1. Additionally, the Math Department utilizes common pre and post assessments developed on the State Core objectives, and the English Departments utilizes a common rubric based of the Six Traits of Effective Writing as well as the State Office of Education Writing Assessment and Criterion-Referenced Tests.

Instruction:

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

The Visiting Team was able to see a variety of instructional strategies during the classroom visits. Teaching styles ranged from lecture to Q&A, creation of posters, exploratory (experimentation), cooperative learning, debates, guided notes and project-based learning. Bloom's Taxonomy was evident. Critical thinking is emphasized in lecture and in the construction of assignments.

- 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 Visiting Team feels that the South Cache 8/9 Center has fully institutionalized the DRSL Effective Communication. The school has also begun implementation of all other DRSLs. Every classroom school-wide has the mission statement and beliefs and four DRSLs clearly posted in their room. Teachers use a common DRSL language in their teaching and incorporate effective communication and critical thinking in much of their verbiage and assignments. Teachers specifically add group work to reinforce effective communication. Students have memorized the DRSLs and can explain what each DRSL means to them and how they can incorporate the learning outcomes into their daily lives. Assemblies and announcements include DRSL language and practices.

- 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?*

As a school, the faculty has had in-service training on how to improve instructional strategies through student involvement. Training has also been provided on how to use UTIPS. Explicit instruction has been done on ISQ results to best help teachers to focus on identifying areas of student need.

- 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 fully certified in the areas in which they teach. Through staff goal planning, monthly meetings, best practices and evaluation of testing results, teachers continuously share instructional approaches and reflect on practices used in the classroom. Teacher in-services focus on effective instructional approaches. One example of such training consisted of watching the video *Good Morning Miss Toliver* with specific focus on how to encourage more student involvement.

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

All teachers school-wide have projectors, TVs, and DVD players. There are three full-time computer labs available for teachers and students to use. The Visiting Team was able to observe teachers using a number of technology teaching tools, such as projectors, interactive white boards, document cameras, PowerPoint presentations, grade cams and mobile devices in quality lessons. Through the use of Power School, grade reports are sent home monthly, and students and parents have the opportunity to view grades daily. Students use the computer labs for UTIPS tests as well as CRT tests. Two traveling labs for teacher/student use are also 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 a commitment to achievement among the staff at South Cache 8/9 Center. Common assessments were institutionalized within the Math Department, with other departments implementing common assessments in some courses. Some departments share units along with the assessments. Each department has adopted SMART goals related to the Effective Communicator DRSL, with some departments using department-wide rubrics to evaluate progress.

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

South Cache 8/9 Center has implemented a school-wide emphasis on work completion and submission. Efforts are being focused on interventions to decrease missing assignments and thereby increase student achievement. All students are expected to turn in assignments. This is accomplished through a combination of fifth period Study Hall and Homework Lunch. Fifth period Study Hall provides time for all students to complete current and previous assignments and remain cognizant of the connection between work completion and academic success. Students enrolled in Homework Lunch are directly taught study skills and techniques, such as organization and communication skills, that enable academic success. Data is kept relative to student grade progress and improvement.

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

Each department at South Cache 8/9 Center meets to analyze standardized test data. The Math Department has developed common assessments for each unit in conjunction with an alignment with the State Core Curriculum. Data is kept and analyzed in an effort to increase mastery among students. Data is kept relative to Homework Lunch and the students who have missing assignments in an effort to monitor student progress. Each department has set SMART goals that are measured by CRT scores, the DWA, pre- and post-tests, and formative assessments. Teachers use staff development time on Fridays to meet as PLC departments to analyze data.

- 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?*

South Cache 8/9 Center has a professional development schedule that provides for PLC department meetings at least monthly. Additionally, faculty members meet before and after school outside of contract time. Faculty members remain cognizant of and employ

the use of a wide variety of assessment methods, including projects, experiments, cross-curricular assignments, and collaborative products.

- 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 observed that, while South Cache 8/9 Center has not established a school-wide scoring tool, each department has adopted a method to assess the identified Effective Communicator DRSL. This method developed in response to the inadequacies found in the previously tried school-wide scoring tool. Additionally, the South Cache developed an Effective Communicator Rubric each department will use to assess the Communication DRSL.

CHAPTER 3: NORTHWEST SUPPORT STANDARDS

Leadership and Organization:

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

The Visiting Team found that the school leadership has done an impressive job of involving members of the school community, such as the school's faculty, staff, and parents, in the education process and school decisions. The administration is open to ideas from faculty and staff members. One such idea is that all teachers begin each period with a "bell ringer" or an early-start assignment. This is done school-wide so that students have consistency in their expectations. Time is protected by administration. Announcements are brief, and assemblies are done during study hall. Members of Assets, SWAT, Yearbook and other clubs and teams are not pulled out of class; these activities are also done during study hall. The school leadership values the staff and the important contribution that each person makes to the overall success of the school.

- 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?*

Members of the Visiting Team observed that faculty and staff are an integral part of the school leadership. The administrative team at South Cache has been in place only during the current school year; therefore, the teachers and administrators collaborate to implement the vision of school vision of student achievement. The administrative team supports the efforts of the teachers through the allocation of resources and staff development time. All stakeholders are updated regularly relative to available data.

- 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?*

Administration and teachers are constantly having discussions on how to improve programs via e-mail. Discussions on how to improve study hall and make it more effective were carried out through this process. End-of-year discussions by teachers brought about changes to study hall taking place at the end of fifth period vs. the beginning of sixth period. Whole-staff faculty meetings are held once a month to give feedback and ideas. The Nice Matters program was originally brought up by the Counseling Secretary and voted into implementation by the entire staff.

- 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 observed that South Cache has a fully functioning and strongly developed Community Council that encourages parents and other stakeholders to participate and collaborate in the allocation of funds and the development of school programs, including the Homework Lunch program. Additionally, parents and community members participated fully in the accreditation process.

- 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?*

The implementation of Firth Period Study Hall has enabled faculty and staff to mentor students in an effort to decrease the number of missing assignments. Each Study Hall teacher has access to student progress reports for each class, which allows the teacher to assist the student in meeting the school-wide expectation for students to have no missing assignments. Additionally, the teacher of the Homework Lunch mentors students in need of further intervention. Counselors work with students needing further or more intense intervention.

CHAPTER 4: NORTHWEST SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT STANDARD

Culture of Continual Improvement:

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

The Visiting Team learned that faculty and staff were unsatisfied with the improvement plan developed for the first accreditation visit and recognized a need to extensively revise it. To do this, a team of 14 members meet regularly and worked to chart out every problem with the former plan, narrow its focus, and align it with the school's belief statement. Tasks were clearly defined and assigned to either administrators or teachers, and resources were identified.

The revised plan has been in place since September 2010, and is intended to go through a full review every three years. It has been presented several times to the faculty and once to the Community Council, and has gained whole-hearted acceptance.

South Cache 8/9 Center is committed to school improvement. By following the state-approved accreditation process, the school has established a pattern to be followed for future work. The strength of the effort to build a collaborative culture is evident from the widespread support of the faculty and staff. They study and implement best practices in student management, curriculum development, instruction, and assessment. Many teachers indicated that they have frequent opportunities to share and learn from one another.

- 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?*

South Cache has recently revised how it conducts professional development. Due to budget cuts, teacher in-service days were eliminated. Currently the faculty meets early on Fridays, sometimes as an entire staff and other times in departmental PLCs or as team members. Prep periods have also been aligned to allow for additional collaboration. Teachers attend conferences and report back to fellow teachers what they have learned and how it can better instruction and learning. The Visiting Team commends South Cache for developing an effective use of PLCs and aligned team preps, but notes that teachers miss the benefits of more formalized in-service training.

The Visiting Team commends South Cache for the professional development and collaboration that exist among the staff members. This cooperative effort contributes to the overall climate of the school and is recognized by all stakeholders. The administration is commended for the efforts put forth to develop schedules that allow for school-wide collaboration. Opportunities for growth are provided at the school and district levels. Teachers also attend state, regional, and national training. Professional development priorities are driven by a desire to ensure that teachers have the skills they need to provide high levels of research-based practices. The school's action plan reflects this commitment.

- 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?*

It was evident to the Visiting Team that South Cache has spent a significant amount of time and effort to develop the current school-wide action plan. The mission, belief statements, DRSLs, goals, and Trust Lands plan are interwoven throughout the action plan. Action steps are clearly defined. The responsibility and timeline for each action step is assigned to either teachers or administration/counseling. Resources and evidence are identified. Due to the dedicated and collaborative efforts of the Action Plan Team, teachers school-wide believe in it. The Visiting Team believes the action plan is a masterfully crafted document that will drive continuous improvement within the South Cache school community, and commends the school on a job well done.

The school's action plan is a reflection of the growth the school has made since the last site visit. Areas of concern were identified using a variety of measures, and these were developed into short- and long-range goals. The administration and staff at South Cache are committed to continuous improvement, and have devised ways for their goals to be implemented and monitored over time. The Visiting Team was fully convinced that the will exists at the school and with the various stakeholders to fulfill the components of the action plan.

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

As part of the action plan, the school has developed "evidence sheets" that are submitted by administration/counseling, individual teachers, departments, focus groups, School Community Council, and supporting organizations near the end of each school year. These evidence sheets report progress toward SMART goals, assessment measures, various school data, implementation of efforts to teach to a variety of learning styles, and accommodations for ELLs, special education, and gifted students. These evidence sheets will be used for review and reflection on school goals and corresponding action steps.

There was significant data to support the work of individuals and groups at the school. The administration and site leadership create new ideas and directions that target the steps that the school needs to take for positive change to occur. The Visiting Team identified that the change process is well understood and embraced at South Cache. The school used the previous site visit recommendations as anchor points for discussion and in the development of their improvement plans.

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

The original action plan focused on generating and gathering data to improve student learning, involving stakeholders to establish school direction, and improving integration of the curriculum. The popular Latino Parent Night evolved from this plan. The school has an active PTA that sponsors student activities and produces a newsletter to keep stakeholders involved and informed. The school has also integrated the curriculum through interdisciplinary units and expansion of the teaming model. For example, the

History, English, and Science Departments developed a successful unit on space that culminated in a trip to the Clarke Planetarium.

The previous action plan components were fully addressed, and some changes were initiated several years ago so that progress could be continually made. The new action plan builds on the work of the past, but is more data driven and will rely heavily on school-wide collaboration and stakeholder involvement.

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

It was the recommendation of the previous Visiting Team to explore alternative scheduling options to provide additional time for teachers to implement and expand the teaming model within the school. Aligning team prep hours has worked to make teachers' planning time more productive and efficient. It has allowed teachers to focus more on student needs and improve student learning. It is also evident to the Visiting Team that the school has reworked the former belief statements that related to student achievement to adult beliefs that support student expectations. The beliefs are concise and directly related to student success, respect, and responsibility.

South Cache did an outstanding job of addressing each concern identified in the previous set of recommendations. As a matter of fact, the site leadership team provided the Visiting Team with an explanation of the action taken on each recommendation over the six-year period since the last review. It was this kind of work that convinced the Visiting Team that the accreditation process was taken very seriously by South Cache, and that the school views accreditation as a framework for improving the school.

CHAPTER 5: COMMUNITY BUILDING

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

The intentionality of the setup and design at South Cache creates ways for teacher-to-student, teacher-to-teacher, and parent-to-faculty interaction to occur. The Visiting Team felt a strong sense of community from the students, parents, faculty/staff and administration during the visit. It is evident that South Cache fosters congenial working relationships with the community, parents, staff, and students all express confidence in the faculty and school resources.

The Visiting Team observed that the PTA and Community Council are meaningfully involved in the school. Community Council members reported to the team that they are included in the decision-making process and feel that their ideas and recommendations are of value.

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

South Cache has built a community of learners, and extends the school within the community through many community outreach programs. These include, but are not limited to, Back to School Night, Trimester Latino Parent Night, Red Ribbon Week, Thanksgiving for the Community, SEOP meetings, and formal Parent-Teacher Conferences. In addition, the school collaborates with the community through formal organizations such as Stoke's Nature Center, Campbell Scientific, Bridgerland Applied Technology College, multiple Utah State University departments and organizations, and CAPSA.

The school also utilizes its web site to communicate with families and community members as well as monthly PTA newsletters, automated telephone service, letters mailed home, surveys, and Power School (a web-based grading program).

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

South Cache has sufficiently engaged the community in its self-study process. Professional learning communities, interdisciplinary teams, and focus groups were utilized to continue to engage the community in the self-study process. The school heard the voice of students and parents as it revised its mission and beliefs, DRSLs, and action plan for school improvement and developed SMART goals for improving student learning. Further parental input came through the ISQ and NSSE surveys.

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

South Cache has developed a system of data-driven goal setting, reflection, and revision. School-wide goals are developed by the School Community Council and are a part of the school action plan. Departments develop curriculum-related SMART goals for the institutionalized DRSL, and focus groups write annual SMART goals for improvement based on a selected principle of the NSSE *Survey of Instructional and Organizational Effectiveness*.

There is a powerful culture of school learning at South Cache. This allows South Cache to exemplify teacher sharing, common formative assessments (which are created together, improved together, and accessed together), and the foundation of a unified strength to improve student learning. South Cache school improvement is communicated to all stakeholders through department sharing, cross-curricular team sharing, monthly newsletters, Community Council, and the school website.

CHAPTER 6: MAJOR COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VISITING TEAM

Commendations:

- South Cache 8/9 Center did an outstanding job of following the Collaborating for Student Achievement Program. Their work was complete and precise. The Visiting Team commends them for accomplishing this work, and it was done at the highest level. The Visiting Team felt that each component of the self-study was addressed.
- The Visiting Team commends the positive atmosphere that exists at South Cache. The school is safe and has an atmosphere that is conducive to learning. All of the groups, classified and certified, demonstrate pride in their work and are advocates for students.
- The Visiting Team commends the impressive administrative leadership and staff leadership at the school. The Visiting Team noted the collegiality that exists as the school's teams worked on school-wide improvement initiatives. South Cache 8/9 Center uses collaboration as a means to develop a positive culture.
- The Visiting Team commends that South Cache's move to professional learning communities, and its use of this framework to drive curriculum, assessment, and instruction.
- The Visiting Team commends the school's work on its action plan. The action plan is a reflection of a comprehensive realignment of DRSLs, mission and beliefs, Trust Lands, and school programs. This effort, when followed through upon with fidelity, will have a powerful impact on student achievement.
- The Visiting Team commends that the school has institutionalized the DRSLs and demonstrates an understanding that working on these school-wide goals will promote the concept that the school is a community of learners.
- The Visit Team commends that student engagement was the most frequently noticed student behavior by the Visiting Team. The faculty members are to be complimented for their ability to design and implement powerful research-based learning activities for students.

Recommendations:

- The action plan as presented is a well-written, focused document. The Visiting Team encourages the school to follow this plan over the next several years, as it will serve as an excellent roadmap for the work to be accomplished.

- The Visiting Team recommends that South Cache formalize the Professional Learning Communities Plan so that all teams understand the elements of a PLC. Ensure that accountability is evident in all phases of the implementation.
- The Visiting Team recommends that South Cache continue to devise ways in which data-driven interventions can be provided for every student during the school day. The creation and use of common formative assessments within a PLC framework will necessarily cause the faculty to recognize that certain students need interventions and others need extensions.
- The Visiting Team recommends the continued use of longitudinal opinion data from the ISQ in determining the direction the school needs to go over the next few years. This information, coupled with assessment data on student work, will ensure that the leadership is keeping the school focused on steps for school improvement.