

**The Report of the
Accreditation Visiting Team**

**Ben Lomond High School
1080 9th Street
Ogden, Utah 84404**

March 28-29, 2012



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

Ben Lomond High School
1080 9th Street
Ogden, Utah 84404

March 28-29, 2012

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FOREWORD

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

The evaluation, March 28-29, 2012, was conducted because of the school's desire to ensure quality education for all students in the school, and to increase student achievement.

The entire staff of Ben Lomond 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 Ben Smith is also commended.

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

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

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BEN LOMOND HIGH SCHOOL

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Charlotte Parry Assistant Principal

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Liz Critchlow Cook
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Marciela Gibbons..... Cook
Sherrie Larkin Cook
Mary Ann Mueller Manager
Glenda Petersen Cook

Cindy SalazarCook
Nancy YatesCook

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George Tedford

Jepperson Webster
Joel Whitaker
Gabriel White

Chad Zielinski

BEN LOMOND HIGH SCHOOL

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Ben Lomond High School is to empower all students to be life-long learners, to pursue academic, personal and career aspirations, and thrive as responsible citizens in a global community.

BELIEF STATEMENTS

We Believe in:

Student Learning

- Student learning is the top priority of the school.
- Learning can emphasize personal and career aspirations for future success.
- Learning can incorporate global opportunities.
- Learning focuses on problem solving skills.

Community Involvement

- All stakeholders will strive to support the advancement of the school mission.
- Ben Lomond will serve community members by providing information about educational and extracurricular opportunities.

Opportunity for All to Learn

- Curriculum and instructional practices should reflect our belief that each student is a valued individual with unique needs and learning styles.
- Students are responsible for actively engaging in their classes and learning processes.
- Teachers are responsible to structure classes so students can be successful.

Target Excellence

- Rigorous learning opportunities can inspire and engage students.
- Excellence will be modeled and made explicit to students.
- Use innovative and creative approaches to design and perform tasks.
- Actively prepare every student for post-secondary learning opportunities.

Safe Environment

- A focus of respect and responsibility creates a safe environment that is supportive and welcoming to all stakeholders.
- A safe and physically comfortable environment promotes student learning.

DESIRED RESULTS FOR STUDENT LEARNING (DRSLs)

1. Effective Communication
 - Students demonstrate competency in oral, written, artistic, mathematical and technical forms of expression.
 - Students plan, identify, and organize key ideas to communicate appropriately with clarity, purpose, and understanding of audience.

2. Responsible Citizenship
 - Students demonstrate positive citizenship by showing respect for others and assuming responsibility for their actions.
 - Students will interact with others and participate effectively as a member of the team; teamwork and group collaboration are promoted.
 - Students act as responsible citizens and participate in activities that promote the public good.
 - Student identifies personal goals, organizes and maintains information, monitors progress, and engages in self-assessment.
 - Students will acquire, organize and evaluate information to make informed decisions.

3. Lifelong Learning
 - Students will use inquiry and technological skills to research, expand, apply, and connect knowledge.
 - Students integrate new information with existing knowledge and experience.

Date of visit: March 28-29, 2012

MEMBERS OF THE VISITING TEAM

Edy McGee, Indian Hills Middle School, Canyons School District, Visiting Team Co-Chairperson

Deborah Swensen, Hawthorn Academy, Visiting Team Co-Chairperson

Anthony Dick, Roy High School, Weber School District

Jenny Gravier, Sand Ridge Junior High School, Weber School District

Michele Swenson, Syracuse Junior High School, Davis School District

Ashley Violet, Grand County High School, Grand County School District

Jenni Wurm, Open High School of Utah

VISITING TEAM REPORT

BEN LOMOND HIGH SCHOOL

CHAPTER 1: SCHOOL PROFILE

Ben Lomond High School is located in Ogden, Utah, the county seat for Weber County. Currently, enrollment is 1,071 students in tenth through twelfth grades. The school uses an A/B block, quarter/semester schedule. Ben Lomond High School is faced with many challenges. For example, 51 percent of Ben Lomond High School's population consists of minority students, 20 percent are English language learners, and 71 percent qualify for fee waivers and free or reduced-price lunches. The school also has a mobility rate of 29 percent. Furthermore, it has 75 students who are homeless and eight who are classified as migrant students.

In spite of the diverse, challenging population, the school offers a strong academic program that includes distance learning, concurrent enrollment and advance placement opportunities.

Ben Lomond has many challenges. For example, the school is under mandate from the school district and is accustomed to using soft money as the funding source for program implementation. When the money is gone, Ben Lomond High School is left with no means to pay for successful programs. This results in a lack of consistency at the school. In spite of these challenges, Ben Lomond High School has a caring staff of qualified educators who want their students to succeed.

In the 2005 Visiting Team Report, the members of the team recognized that Ben Lomond High School was in a difficult position regarding the requirements for No Child Left Behind. Unfortunately, in spite of the staff's efforts, Ben Lomond High School did not meet Adequate Yearly Progress; however, it passed U-PASS under progress for the 2010-2011 academic year.

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

The profile contains a large section on data analysis. Included in this section are the 2011 CRT results, presented in clear charts and graphs. The profile identifies longitudinal trends in CRTs. Additional pieces of data include the Scholastic Reading Inventory scores by grade level and the academic grades earned by the students. These items helped the Visiting Team get a feel for what was happening at the student level at the school. The Indicators of School Quality (ISQ) survey data for the current year is also displayed, providing a glimpse of what stakeholders think of the school. One important data point is that parents, teachers, students and staff feel that the school is safe and well kept. This was welcome news, as the profile indicated that Ben Lomond High School has had the reputation of being an "unsafe" school. The students see no bullying, and in this diverse school, all groups feel accepted by each other. This has established a welcoming culture.

In the profile, the school included a section entitled “Report of Progress.” As the Visiting Team examined this section, it became clear that little to no work had been done until recently on the recommendations of the 2005 Visiting Team. The information gathered from the self-study should be a living document. It needs to be used yearly as the school strives to reach its goals. Failing to act on the recommendations of the report hinders the school improvement process.

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

Although the displays of data were easy to read and understand, the analysis of what was represented needs to go deeper. Criterion-Referenced Test data indicates that there are wide discrepancies between subgroups; however, the data needs to be further disaggregated so that educators at Ben Lomond High School can identify which students are learning and which students are not learning. For example, there is a wide gap between the ELL students’ scores and those of the rest of the students. Who are these children? How long have they been in the country? Are they male or female? Similar concerns can be raised for each of the other data charts. In addition, all data needs to be disaggregated by subgroup.

In some instances, conversations with administration and faculty filled in some of the informational gaps. It would have been helpful had the information been included in the profile section of the self-study. Additionally, there is a large gap between what the administration knows and what the rest of the staff knows. The information in the profile needs to be shared with all educators at Ben Lomond High School.

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

The Visiting Team commends the leadership team at Ben Lomond High School for recognizing the school’s current strengths and limitations. As the Visiting Team spoke to the administration and the former instructional coach, it was clear that this group knows what the school’s limitations and challenges are. However, the faculty doesn’t share that same knowledge. Without a true understanding of where the school currently stands, it will be more challenging for the administration to steer the school in the direction it must go in order for it to succeed in meeting its improvement goals.

Suggested Areas for Further Inquiry:

- Ben Lomond High School has implemented many innovative, effective programs. The challenge the school faces is retaining these successful programs when the soft money that was used to implement them runs out.
- Ben Lomond High School has a wealth of expertise within its building. Rather than relying on outside sources, including Ogden School District, the Visiting Team

recommends that the school use the strengths it has within its own building to provide professional development in identified areas.

- All programs used at Ben Lomond High School need to be aligned with the school’s vision, mission, belief statements and DRSLs. If the district is mandating programs or plans (e.g., the 90-Plan and the School Improvement Plan), these must be aligned as well.

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

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

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

The 2005 Visiting Team described the process by which the mission statement and belief statements of the time were created as one of “true collaboration.” The school improvement team made the decision to keep the existing mission statement, which was developed in 2005, but chose to revise their belief statements. Alterations were made because the team felt that changes had taken place and were continuing in the community and within Ben Lomond High School. Therefore, the belief statements were expanded to reflect what the school improvement team viewed within Ben Lomond High School.

As explained in the profile and in interviews, the school improvement team determined and described the changed belief statements, presented them to the faculty and Community Council, and did final revisions in order to obtain the new belief statements. The new belief statements were based upon the Life Skills document that Ben Lomond High School uses to detail what skills and habits their students require.

In meeting with the faculty of Ben Lomond High School, the Visiting Team found that the mission statement, DRSLs, and supporting documents were posted throughout the school in teacher’s classrooms, but there was not a clear vision of how these were to be instituted in the daily activities and lessons. Most classrooms had posted objectives for the lessons being taught and language objectives relevant to the current lesson and unit. However, in interviews it became apparent that the multiple programs being run at Ben Lomond High School engendered some confusion as to the focus of the school. Many teachers felt that whatever focus there was changed often, according to each new program.

The Visiting Team commends the efforts that Ben Lomond High School has made regarding its DRSLs, particularly the Responsible Citizenship DRSL, and the way the

school has adapted some programs to fit those goals. The Visiting Team recommends strengthening and clarifying the already detailed vision statement and examining current and future programs, investigating how to fit them within a shared vision. In this way new programs and procedures can be used to add to and strengthen the common vision as opposed to distracting from it.

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

The process used to construct the DRSLs was similar to the process already described to construct the mission statement and the belief statements. The new belief statements more closely reflect the DRSLs and consequent action plan. While the acronym SCOTS was kept as a central theme for the belief statements, the belief statements were expanded to more closely reflect current practices and attitudes at Ben Lomond High School.

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

Ben Lomond High School has developed an action plan for each DRSL. The Visiting Team commends the progress that Ben Lomond High School has made regarding the Responsible Citizenship DRSL—including the PBIS/CLANS program, in which the school is attempting to change the culture of the school—and the data gathered regarding the reduction in student tardies. This program is strongly supported by the faculty, students, and parents of the school. Furthermore, the Visiting Team commends Ben Lomond High School for supporting the data has been gathered and displayed. The Visiting Team recommends that this program continue to be strengthened and expanded to reflect the privileges that accompany it; specifically, this could be done by incorporating citizenship and absences into current requirements—a recommendation voiced by some of the teachers at Ben Lomond High School. The second indicator for this action plan involves students setting goals, monitoring learning, and engaging in personal assessment, and is demonstrated and measured by a reduction in failing grades. The data suggests that this part of the action plan is not being addressed as completely as the behavior component of the Responsible Citizenship DRSL.

The second action plan that has been developed relates to the Effective Communication DRSL. It is indicated by students' demonstration of competency in various forms of expression and communication. This would be measured by a common writing rubric. The Visiting Team expressed concern that the measurement tool did not match the indicator—in other words, that the indicators described a variety of communication methods including oral, visual, mathematical, and written expression, but the measurement tool is limited to writing. It is recommended that the action plan, and particularly the measurement tool, be revisited and matched to better reflect the goals outlined by the vision and the DRSLs.

The third and final action plan fulfills the Lifelong Learning DRSL. It is demonstrated by two indicators that encompass students' acquisition of knowledge, and use of inquiry, technology, and research skills to expand that knowledge. This is measured by the proportion of classrooms using formative assessments to gather data, specifically

relevant to new Common Core standards. Again, it is a concern of the Visiting Team that the measurement tool does not clearly match the indicator, and it is recommended that this action plan also be revisited and matched to better reflect the goals outlined by the vision and the DRSLs.

- 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?*

Ben Lomond High School's mission, beliefs, and DRSLs reflect the school's priorities for student learning and behavior. It is very apparent, particularly through Ben Lomond High School's PBIS/CLANS program, that these principles guide the implementation of these and other programs in particular that target what the stakeholders view to be primary concerns. Relevant data has been gathered, and shows positive results. Although Effective Communication and Lifelong Learning are not addressed as fully in the report, it is apparent in the classrooms that these principles are prompting action. Language objectives (necessary for ESL and ELL students) and posted lesson objectives show an emphasis on communication by teachers and students throughout the school. Life skills were viewed in classroom visits, and attention is given to the quality of the teaching and reaction of students to that teaching.

The Visiting Team commends Ben Lomond High School on the progress made in using the aforesaid principles to guide decision making, and the evidence of that seen in the classrooms.

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 would like to acknowledge the Math and English Departments for meeting on their own time to work on curriculum and state standards. Independently, teachers may be using the Utah Core Curriculum that reflects the Utah Life Skills, but they are not collaborating to achieve consistency throughout departments. The Visiting Team found that collaboration within departments is sparse, and even less collaboration happens faculty wide. In some departments with multiple teachers who teach the same classes, there is little or no collaboration, resulting in two different curricula for one class.

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

It was noted that lectures and Smart Boards were used for instruction. With the exception of CTE, PE, and ESL, departments were using hands-on activities as well as lectures. The Visiting Team noticed while visiting classes that implicit instruction was common. In many observations there was no evidence of problem-solving or engaging students in higher-order thinking. The most commonly reported form of inquiry was

partnering of students to work on a desired task. In the English Department, however, higher-order thinking was very evident. Students were making personal connections to their own lives, and teachers were prompting students to not only answer questions but to ponder the “whys.”

- 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 found that, because teachers have a hard time collaborating in departments, they don't focus on the school's DRSLs. They are posted in almost every class, but when students and some teachers are asked what their school's DRSLs are, they are unsure. In some cases, when teachers were asked how they implement them into their curriculum, the question went unanswered, its meaning was unclear to them.

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

It was apparent that some departments do not use common assessments in their curriculum to ensure that all the students reach the intended learning outcomes. The Visiting Team concluded that there is a variation in the use of assessments from department to department. When asked to supply a sample rubric for how students are evaluated on research papers school-wide, teachers could not provide it, but said they should all be using the same one.

Instruction:

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

The Visiting Team found various strategies in the classrooms to enhance student learning. Use of technology was witnessed in nearly every classroom. Teachers in social studies, math, and the sciences frequently used Smart Boards to enhance student learning.

The Visiting Team commends Ben Lomond High School on its employment of a wide variety of strategies in classrooms. Direct instruction, group work, simulations, partner shares, student productions of videos, and demonstrations by the teacher were observed by the Visiting Team.

Student work was displayed in a majority of the classrooms. However, on the day the Visiting Team visited, student-led instruction was not evident as a strategy. The Visiting Team recommends that the school look at how to better involve students in driving their 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?*

The Visiting Team found that in most classrooms DRSLs were displayed. In the Math Department, DRSLs were incorporated and infused in the posted objectives. In a few classrooms, classroom objectives were posted and loosely tied to the school-wide DRSLs. In some classrooms, no objectives appeared to be posted visually, but lessons seemed to have focus and objectives.

In conversations with numerous teachers, there appeared to be confusion regarding what the DRSLs actually were. Although the current DRSLs are similar to those of six years ago, indicators have changed, and few teachers seemed to know that they had changed. There does not seem to be a single DRSL that is institutionalized or explicitly taught at this time. The Visiting Team recommends that the school decide which of the three DRSLs will be their focus and fully implement it.

- 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?*

There is a full-time instructional coach who provides some professional development at the school. However, the Visiting Team found little to no professional development program guiding instructional needs. In most departmental analysis reports, teachers reported a greater need for more access to meaningful professional development to help with the transition to the common core and with using technology more effectively.

- 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 in each department are proficient in the content areas. They appear to be knowledgeable about various instructional approaches. However, teachers indicated a need for training in areas such as how to use data and how to collaborate to make common assessments and rubrics. Additionally, due to district protocols, professional development availability during the school year appears minimal, with costs for the substitute reliant on the teachers. The ratio of instructional coach to teachers is 57:1; therefore, meaningful professional development and contact on a regular basis is minimal.

The Visiting Team recommends that the school consider ways to provide for meaningful professional development at the school level to assist teachers in their professional development needs.

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

With grant money, a large investment was made in technology two years ago. Each classroom now has a Smart Board, and most classrooms have document cameras and Mobis as well. Teachers have working computers, and labs are equipped with technology. One lab in the school has Windows 7. The CTE Department has a plan for updating its computers every three years. The library has two computer labs. One is

specifically for media programs, such as video productions, and some departments have already been trained in using this technology.

There is not a comprehensive plan at the District or School level for funding and updating technology or for further training. The Visiting Team encourages the school to look at the Trust Lands money or other areas of the budget in order to make a three-to-five-year plan for technology needs, maintenance and training.

The Visiting Team recommends that a written plan be put in place to continually upgrade and keep up with changing technologies.

Assessment:

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

The Visiting Team found that a large amount of data was reported in the self-study. The majority of the data was summative, and while it does provide an insight into where students are academically, it is only a snapshot. The school recognizes the need for formative data on student achievement, and has articulated to the staff a three-pronged set of goals: reading and writing across the curriculum, development of common formative assessments, and explicit teaching. The Visiting Team found that the majority of the developed classroom or school-wide assessments over the last five years have been at the district level, and had been pushed down to the schools. The district developed Block tests with representatives from each building. The problem with implementation of these formative assessments was a clear understanding of how to implement and effectively use the data. The administration articulated that training was provided by the district for elementary teachers but not for secondary teachers. Even without the training, some teachers have implemented the formative tests, but there is a marked lack of understanding of how to collect and use the data.

The current goal of the school is to create school-wide assessments with performance standards. The development of assessments is in its beginning stages, and there are pockets of development of classroom assessments that have begun this year. The Math Department does have a set of common assessments, and its teachers collaborate every Monday. The Math Department is collecting data, but could use additional guidance in articulating expectations for student achievement and identifying what data needs to be collected and what data needs to be disaggregated. The school has also developed a writing rubric; however, this is not consistently being used to assess student achievement. Barriers include a lack of understanding of how to implement the rubric to gather useful data and teacher refusal in some departments. The school began this year to use the SRI to provide reading data. Although the teachers are given this data, they lack an understanding of how to read the data, and thus how to change their instruction to achieve student achievement. The goal of school-wide assessments with performance standards based on clearly articulated expectations for student achievement needs to be developed school-wide.

The Visiting Team found that the district is bringing together a representative from each content area in April to begin a discussion on what is to be assessed and how. Four assessments are to be developed, and one assessment is to be given each quarter. There is confidence that these assessments will provide the needed school-wide assessment. The Visiting Team found that there is a lack of agreement within departments as to what learning must be achieved for each benchmark. Before the teachers attend this district-level meeting, it would be advantageous for the school as a whole to articulate clear expectations for student achievement.

As the school has found that the district has not provided support for training in the past, the Visiting Team recommends that internal discussions occur on what is benchmark work on each content area concepts. In addition, the school needs to establish training internally to support staff members.

The Visiting Team applauds the school's goal to move toward vertical and horizontal articulation within the high school and between the middle school and high school. The team also applauds the collection of reading data (SRI) from the lower grades through high school. Further vertical teaming and disaggregation of the data by subgroups would help the school identify why there is a significant drop at certain grade levels.

As the new Utah Core requires writing across the curriculum, and one of the focuses of the school is also writing and reading across the curriculum, the school might consider beginning an immediate dialogue on how teachers can incorporate writing into their curricula, and then start the process of implementing their developed rubric.

One barrier to implementing common assessments articulated by the school was the lack of sufficient materials for teaching the same concept at the same time in multiple content areas. The Visiting Team recommends that the school look at rotating resources (books) and then compare assessment results as each class is able to take each assessment.

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 Visiting Team found that the primary vehicle to assess school-wide and individual student progress in achieving academic expectations is the yearly spring CRT data. An administrator disaggregated and provided to the teachers student performance data on the CRTs by standard and objective. One limitation of the CRTs is that they are designed more to help teachers evaluate instruction, and are not as strong an indicator on identifying student academic progress. They are also just one data point. The Visiting Team recommends that teachers receive training on how to analyze the data themselves to help them identify who is learning and not learning.

The Visiting Team also found some evidence of the beginning use of data to assess school-wide and individual progress in achieving academic expectations. The evidence found included a writing rubric and common assessments in math. The rubric has been developed, but it is not consistently being applied to evaluate student writing.

The school staff has gathered data and looked at a three-year-trend, with some disaggregation of data by grade and subgroups. However, the staff does not understand how to use the data, and acknowledges the need for professional development in this area. As there is some resistance to the implementation of a school-wide assessment, professional development needs to be held to help teachers understand how common assessments can help provide have a process to fairly and equitably assess school-wide and individual progress in achieving academic expectations.

The Visiting Team found that much of the data collection is just beginning. The school just implemented the use of SRI three times a year. The results are shared at the PLCs. The Visiting Team recommends that the teachers receive professional development on how to read this data, and that the school continue to share the data and discuss it in PLCs.

The Visiting Team found that the school is using class grades to assess school-wide and individual progress in achieving academic expectations. The school has tied information to its PBIS program. Each day students have the opportunity to access support from teachers in every content area during an extended lunch/tutoring hour. Students attend tutoring during the first half-hour and lunch during the second half-hour. The administration has incentivized students to want to attend the tutoring sessions. Students who have no Ds or Fs can take an hour-long lunch and also leave campus.

In addition, the school has begun a Hot List. In PLCs teachers identify students at greatest risk for failure and non-graduation. A team of teachers is assigned to each student. The school has a goal to raise every student's scores to 70 percent or higher. The school has developed clear behavioral expectations in the areas of Respect and Responsibility. Administrator-led assemblies have been held to help the students understand the expectations. The Visiting Team found when visiting with students that they have a clear understanding of what the staff expects of them on this second DRSL. There is some inconsistency at the beginning of a new quarter as to which grades will be used to determine the privilege card. The Visiting Team applauds Ben Lomond for its recognition that it could do better in collecting and disseminating the data. In order to determine when the school reaches this goal, the Visiting Team recommends that it track grades as data and disaggregate by subgroup to better understand who is currently at risk, and to be proactive with those subgroups at greatest risk.

The school also provides support with an extra math class for students at the high end and the low end. There is only one class for each group. It was not clear how these students were identified.

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

The Visiting Team found four uses of data by the staff to assess the success of the school in achieving its academic expectations: CRTs, PBIS data, some formative assessments for isolated departments/teachers, and course grades. The staff has access

to the students' CRT results. The administration has further helped the teachers by disaggregating student achievement on these summative tests by each standard and objective. A three-year trend has also been plotted, according to the whole school and by subgroups, and provided to teachers. Teachers could note areas and concepts in which kids are not performing.

The staff has also been given data on its PBIS program. The data is primarily tardiness data and some grade data. The Visiting Team applauds the school-wide consistent implementation of this program, which is not dependent on grant funds. The perception is that if attendance is improved, grades will improve. The Visiting Team recommends that the data be collected, disaggregated, and provided to teachers to support this hypothesis.

Isolated departments and teachers use data. The Math Department appears to have implemented the only department-wide use of data. Isolated teachers use writing, but not all teachers use the school-developed rubric to assess writing.

Predominantly, the professional staff uses course grades to assess the success of the school in achieving its academic expectations. The school has implemented a school-wide grading scale for consistency in this area of assessment. The Visiting Team recommends that the school disaggregate the course grade data to better inform teachers which subgroups that are learning and not learning. The team further recommends that the school expand training for teachers on how to interpret and utilize the CRT data for what it can provide, and follow through on its goal to implement common assessments.

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

The Visiting Team found that the staff has formed and meets in PLCs. All teachers are expected to meet and discuss student achievement and strategies, which have focused on instruction. The school has emphasized the Rigor and Relevance model. Further professional development is needed on what "rigor" means. Also, teachers are encouraged to bring lesson plans to PLC meetings, where the group evaluates and helps refine the lesson. The administration sees explicit instruction as the first step. There is little professional development on assessment strategies in these meetings.

The teachers also meet monthly as departments, and are to be developing common assessments. The teachers are at the beginning stages of developing common assessments, with many needing professional development on where to start. The Math Department has embraced the goal and is farther ahead in the process than the other departments. The school administration recognizes the need to provide professional development in this area.

The district has also planned district-wide meetings at the secondary level to develop common assessments. The school administration supports these meetings and is hopeful that district-wide common assessments will result.

A team of teachers meet regarding the Hot List kids, or students who are most at risk for not graduating. This program was begun in February 2012. Teachers report on what they do, and share it with the staff. The administration realizes the importance of having an adult in a student's life who knows and cares about that student, so that they can help the student address academics. To further establish for the students that one adult knows them, students are assigned an advisor who stays with their group of students through all three years. The advisor checks grades and attendance, and is the key person for determining where each student gets his/her privilege card in the PBIS program.

Teachers collaborate at faculty meeting and collaboration meetings. Data is also shared with the students to get their buy-in to the programs at the school. This year, an assembly with kids showed them the number of tardies and the number of minutes missed in instruction. The school then implemented the PBIS program. There has been a marked difference in student attendance since then.

The Visiting Team found, though, that collaboration is minimal on assessment strategies. The administration was candid in indicating that professional development on assessment strategies is part of their future plans. They are also relying heavily on the district plans to develop common assessments and train their staff. The Visiting Team recommends that the school utilize the strengths within their own staff to begin professional development in this area.

The Visiting Team also found that not all departments have embraced the school goals and the concept of common assessments. The departments with extensive federal and state regulations and some of the elective course teachers as yet do not see how they tie in with the school plan. The Visiting Team recommends professional development to help teachers see the value of common assessments.

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 found that the school does have rubrics for the DRSLs. The school administration and faculty did identify that the school is in the beginning phase of developing rubrics as a scoring tool to assess the effectiveness of their action plan in implementing their DRSLs. The rubrics need to be reviewed with the staff, and professional development held to help teachers know how to implement them. The school needs to determine what data will be collected to support effective implementation of the school DRSLs. The school also needs to quantify as a staff what the levels mean. Currently, some of the terms are vague (e.g., "consistently," "demonstrate").

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 commends the leadership team at Ben Lomond High School for recognizing that in the past the school has not been an academic learning climate where learning and teaching has been consistently fostered. This situation was created in part because soft monies have been used for program implementation, and the school did not know how to maintain the program when the monies were gone. Through conversation with the administration, the Visiting Team learned that the school is going to concentrate on three areas, none of which will be dependent on soft money for implementation and continuation.

The three areas of focus that the administrators say they will focus on are reading and writing across the curriculum, establishing common formative assessments, and using explicit teaching strategies. Ben Lomond High School has early release on Fridays, allowing teachers to collaborate for 75 minutes. Administrators recently attended a Dr. Anita Archer workshop, and the school plans to use her strategies for explicit teaching. The Visiting Team recommends that the school also look at the ideas presented by Dr. Kevin Feldman to gain help with their reading and writing goals. To support the school, Ogden School District has provided an instruction coach.

- 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?*

Although this is the second full accreditation for Ben Lomond High School, the current year is the first year that the school has started to learn to use data to make decisions regarding student achievement and instructional effectiveness. Some of the ways that Ben Lomond High School is using data include looking at a three-year trend with CRT data to identify areas of strengths and weaknesses. The CRTs were broken down by standard and objective to further help teachers narrow down where students are not learning. This information is given to the teachers who use it to improve their own teaching. Also, students take the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) three times a year. This data is shared with departments. However, teachers reported not knowing what the data means or how to use it. The Visiting Team recommends that the meaning and use of the SRI data and all other data be communicated to all those to whom it is given. Additionally, information about students who are failing go to the Smaller Learning Communities so that those students can receive support. Finally, the counselors and administrators work with a group of students who are performing poorly at school. Currently, the administrators and counselors are working with those seniors who are most in danger of not graduating. They are also planning to establish an advisory class for students who have ongoing issues.

- 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?*

Ben Lomond High School has relied on soft money for many of the programs it has implemented. Unfortunately, when the monies end, the school is not able to continue the program. This results in frustration for all members of the school community. The Visiting Team recommends that the high school use programs that do not require expensive funding for implementation, so that when the funds are gone effective programs will not be lost.

Although the administration indicated that it works with the Steering Committee to allocate resources, parents said that they are frustrated that some classes do not have enough books for students to take home. Furthermore, teachers expressed concern that although they have lovely workrooms, they do not have access to copy machines and other resources they need. Also, they have limited building access once school is over.

One program that Ben Lomond High School uses is Colors of Success. Although it began as an anti-gang initiative, it includes credit recovery and relationship building. The administration stated that this program has taken care of the safety concerns Ben Lomond High School had. The advisor said that in the six years she has been at the school, only five of the students she has worked with failed to graduate. The school is using Trust Lands money to pay for this position.

Overall, the staff and administration have created an effective, welcoming learning environment that aligns strongly with their second DRSL, Responsible Citizenship.

- 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?*

Ben Lomond High School uses collaboration time, the School Community Council, and the GEAR-UP program to empower the school community and provide shared responsibility for student learning. According to discussions with the school administration, collaboration time has been restructured to allow teachers to have more involvement with decisions that affect student learning. As professional learning communities (PLCs) become more effective, the PLC will be the avenue for teachers to have their voices heard, thus allowing the administration to give the faculty members the support they need. The Community Council meets regularly, and minutes of the meetings indicate that the council is kept up-to-date on concerns and issues. The Community Council plays a vital role in the decision-making process of the school. Finally, the 10th grade cohort is involved with the GEAR-UP program. With this program, the school administration indicated that more parents are involved. Furthermore, because of the program, the parent stakeholder base has been encouraged and trained to be more active participants at school.

- 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 Visiting Team commends Ben Lomond High School for its work in changing the culture of the school. While the new facility has helped in this regard, much effort has been expended to make the school inviting and safe. Both teachers and students said that they feel safe in the school. Developing strong relationships with every student has played a pivotal role in changing the culture. The administration mentioned several activities that promote good relationships at the school. Among those activities are the GEAR-UP program for sophomores and the Colors of Success program. Additionally, each student is a member of an advisory group. The advisor stays with the group of students for the entire three years they are at Ben Lomond High School. In addition to checking student's grades, the advisor checks on attendance and issues privilege cards. As part of the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) that Ben Lomond High School implemented this year, students can earn Brave Heart Bucks that are entered into a weekly drawing. Finally, Ben Lomond High School looks upon the diversity of its students as a great strength, not a liability. The staff works hard to foster a unified feeling among the diverse population of students it serves.

School Services:

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

Facilities and Finances:

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

CHAPTER 4: NORTHWEST SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT STANDARD

Culture of Continual Improvement:

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

After Ben Lomond High's last accreditation visit in 2005, the school made important modifications, specifically in its belief statements. In doing this, the school made a

commitment to have the belief statements drive practice, to fine-tune what was meant by “student learning,” and to adjust the school culture, so that there was an opportunity for *all* to learn.

The Visiting Team commends Ben Lomond High School for its refinement and many improvements. From structural changes to the building to instructional changes in the classroom, the improvements have led to greater pride among the faculty, staff, parents, and students.

Interwrite boards and projectors are installed in every room, programs (such as AVID, PBIS and GEAR-UP) have been implemented to improve student achievement, and small learning communities meet biweekly to discuss student progress. Likewise, an instructional coach is specifically assigned to do walkthroughs and daily visits, and to provide resources for teachers.

Ben Lomond teachers have ample opportunities for conferences, trainings, and professional development. However, more trainings are needed, especially in the area of technology and data interpretation and acquisition. Teachers made note, for example, that technological trainings on Interwrite boards were given before those boards were installed. Thus, once trained, teachers could not immediately practice their new knowledge.

The Visiting Team recommends that teachers get the training they need as they continue to review and revise their school plan. Furthermore, teachers expressed frustration that requirements for multiple signatures and several weeks’ notice often preclude their ability to attend helpful professional development.

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

The Visiting Team commends Ben Lomond’s faculty members for the ways they learn, build skills, and attend ongoing professional development in order to achieve the school’s goals. Teachers have ample opportunities to attend workshops and inservices, and they have access to an instructional coach assigned to their school.

Small learning communities meet biweekly, the faculty meets together once a month, and departments formally meet every other week. The meetings frame school goals and the achievement (or lack thereof) of students, and discuss ways to improve instructional strategies. Many departments are meeting more frequently. The English and Math Departments, for example, often hold discussions daily as they share ideas and curriculum. Other departments, on the other hand, admit to lacking a shared vision and, in fact, do not necessarily view themselves as cohesive departments. The Visiting Team recommends that all departments make a commitment to meeting together regularly to discuss the vision and goals of the school.

On months where there is a fifth Friday, time is allocated for accreditation, PBIS/CLANS, or SLC (small learning communities) Celebrations.

- 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?*

When asked, students and teachers seemed both committed to and supportive of the PBIS/CLANS program. Parents appreciated that their children could receive specific-content tutoring, and students enjoyed being rewarded for getting to class on time and for succeeding academically. While all admitted that this program was new and in its infancy, they all felt like it was being successful. One secretary, for example, said that in twenty years of working in schools, this was the best program she'd seen. The dramatic decrease in tardies (a reduction of 3,000) is remarkable.

While seemingly successful, the PBIS/CLANS program does not address or alleviate other critical areas—e.g., the increase in absences, the number of Fs, the drop in CRT scores (particularly mathematics), and preparation for career and college.

The plan itself, though in “construction mode,” seems headed in an effective direction. By juxtaposing the PBIS/CLANS program with a focus on common core standards and instructional strategies, Ben Lomond’s action plan has great potential. The Visiting Team witnessed rigor, relevance, and explicit teaching, which show sufficient commitment. However, in instituting writing across the curriculum, the Visiting Team recommends that *all* content areas (not just language arts) commit to this plan and use a consistent rubric in assessment.

The Visiting Team also recommends refining the action plan, so that it is powered by the identified DRSLs.

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

Because the school has undergone so many multifaceted programs and changes in a relatively short period of time, some teachers seem skeptical of real productive change. That being said, it is obvious that this is a community of caring, intelligent, devoted people who want the best for Ben Lomond. Teachers care deeply about their students, and students care deeply about their teachers. It is also apparent that the counselors have created a very welcoming and caring atmosphere within the school.

The Visiting Team spoke with several students who said they’d “do anything for my teachers.” In this diverse population of adults and teenagers, the warmth and kindness is very apparent. Ben Lomond certainly creates conditions that support productive change and continuous improvement. However, the Visiting Team recommends (as did the previous Visiting Team) that this school take a deep look at existing programs and then concentrate on those few programs that have the potential for real, meaningful, sustainable change.

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

In the original action plan, Ben Lomond High hoped to decrease the number of students not meeting Utah Elementary Algebra end-of-level assessment by 10 percent. While this has not been accomplished (scores dropped from 56 percent proficient in 2006 to 37 percent proficient in 2009), the Math Department has continued to implement some of its original strategies. Two math labs are open after school for 45 minutes three times weekly to help students who are not attaining mastery. One lab is a calculus lab, and the other is used specifically for remediation. Additionally, the Math Department encourages students to attend a summer remedial program. This program, funded by USTAR, continues to be promoted and encouraged.

One of Ben Lomond's goals was to increase mastery levels in reading comprehension strategies by 10 percent on the Utah Criterion-Referenced Tests. Since much of the data was lost, there is no measure to determine whether this goal was met. Twice a year the Scholastic Reading Inventory is administered, and students are able to receive feedback. The Visiting Team commends Ben Lomond for working toward this goal, and recommends that better data be kept to track progress.

Ben Lomond is to be celebrated for making sure all tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grade students are identified and enrolled in a learning community. This goal has been accomplished, and all incoming sophomores are required to choose a small learning community when they enroll. This model appears to be a success, and the Visiting Team encourages the continuation of this program.

In reaching toward the ultimate goal of student success, Ben Lomond has recognized that certain stumbling blocks needed to be removed in order to ultimately raise test scores. These stumbling blocks include problems with attendance, behavior, and tardiness. The implementation of the PBIS program has not only increased accountability, but it has decreased tardiness. This program motivates most students; however, some students expressed discouragement at never receiving a privilege card, and said they felt like they should give up completely. Perhaps this program could be adjusted slightly to celebrate small steps of progress for those students who routinely go without a privilege card.

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

A major recommendation was for Ben Lomond High School to clearly articulate its goals as well as the intermediate steps that will lead there. In creating college- and career-ready students, Ben Lomond has taken dramatic measures to curtail tardiness. By getting to class on time, students can begin taking better steps toward engagement, learning, and hence toward becoming more college and career ready.

Furthermore, teachers are making a concerted effort to infuse rigor and relevance into the classroom. The Visiting Team observed teachers making real-world connections to the lives of students, and teachers encouraged and prompted students to find connections as well. The library is a prime example of urging students to make personal connections. Exhibits change periodically in the library, and the current one is of Native

Americans. The exhibit not only spotlights Native American history, but also includes the names of Ben Lomond students who are Native American, incorporates art from Ben Lomond art students, and displays books and visuals for further investigating, researching, and reading. Additionally, the library houses two computer labs (one equipped for moviemaking), resources for researching, and a blog that links classroom content to reliable resources.

CHAPTER 5: COMMUNITY BUILDING

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

The Visiting Team found evidence that there is a positive and productive relationship among the students at Ben Lomond High School. The rich diversity of the school fosters an environment of acceptance and tolerance. However, some students reported that in student-led assemblies there is a feeling amongst the ethnic students of not being involved or represented. This could be an opportunity to highlight the various cultures that feed into the school. Ben Lomond High has created small learning communities for students within the school. This allows the students to be grouped together into a smaller unit, with an advisor and counselor, and supports a sense of belonging.

The newly implemented PBIS program appears to have made a positive change in the atmosphere at Ben Lomond. There is evidence that the students, teachers, and administration support and are all working together in order to implement this program. All stakeholders have agreed that the program needs some adjustments, and some students have expressed discouragement when they are unable to earn a privilege card for several weeks in a row.

The Visiting Team commends the ROTC program for the service projects they do inside and outside of school, and for the organized lunchtime activities that unify the student body.

The Visiting Team acknowledges that the faculty and staff at Ben Lomond are working hard to implement the programs and goals of both the school and district. However, many faculty members reported fatigue with the constant change of programs and directions, resulting in a declining morale. Many, though not all, of the individual departments report having regular meetings. The departments that do meet together are able to discuss concerns and strategies that they will use as a department to address those concerns. The Visiting Team recommends that all departments have regular meetings in order to better collaborate.

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

The Visiting Team found evidence that Ben Lomond High uses multiple ways to involve and communicate with parents. Parents are able to use the SIS system to access current grades and citizenship information for each student, and are invited to attend parent-teacher conferences, SEOP conferences, and IEP/504 meetings. The Counseling Department sends a monthly newsletter to parents, and the school messaging system and marquee are often used to notify parents of upcoming events. Materials are relayed to parents in both English and Spanish.

Ben Lomond has a partnership with Weber State University, and the ETS coordinator is a valuable component within the school in reaching out to all students to support a college-going culture. The Counseling Department offers courses taught for students to make up low citizenship marks. Members of various community organizations come to present those courses—such as Weber State University, the YCC, etc. They have also sponsored Zumba nights and various other activities to encourage parents and community members to come to Ben Lomond. This helps some parents to come to the school for nonacademic reasons and to feel more comfortable being there, and as a part of the school community.

In order to complete credit recovery or rectify unsatisfactory citizenship marks, students are required to complete community service hours. This is one way in which the school hopes to teach students about contributing to their community. Students are given the opportunity to showcase their talents in various formats in the community, through choir and band performances, bagpipe gigs, art shows, etc.

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

Many of the focus groups consisted of faculty members, students, and parents. Students reported being involved in the focus group meetings. However, parents involved in the Visiting Team interview were not the same parents that had been involved in focus groups, and did not feel informed about the goals and direction of the school. The Visiting Team would recommend more involvement of parents within the actual focus groups.

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

Mr. Smith sends a principal's letter home every quarter, and information is sent home in a monthly counseling newsletter. Self-study information will be posted on the school website, and information will be included in the principal's letter as well. Materials are sent home in both English and Spanish and are available electronically on the website as well. The Visiting Team recommends that Ben Lomond take a more active role in getting data and information into the hands of parents. Steps should be taken to further communicate the goals, direction of the school, and data results with all stakeholders. Many faculty members reported not having access to the self-study, and the Visiting Team recommends that this book be made available to all faculty members.

Because parental involvement has been a concern at Ben Lomond, faculty members should continue to include and encourage support from stakeholders in all ethnic and socioeconomic groups. The report that states that parent attendance at parent-teacher conferences and SEOP meetings is increasing shows that progress is being made in that area, and that it should continue to be an area of focus.

CHAPTER 6: MAJOR COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VISITING TEAM

Commendations:

- The Visiting Team commends the administration and the staff for engaging the students in learning responsibility for their behavior and grades, and for establishing with the students the knowledge that their teachers and administration care about them and want them to succeed.
- The Visiting Team commends Ben Lomond High School for the culture shift that has occurred at the school. Whereas the school has had a reputation for being an unsafe, gang-infested place, it is now a warm, inviting environment where everyone feels accepted, safe, and cared for by all stakeholders.
- The Visiting Team commends the administration for recognizing areas of concern for which the staff is requesting additional support, and for formulating a plan to address these needs.
- The Visiting Team commends the administration, faculty and staff for making learning relevant to the lives of the students.

Recommendations:

- The Visiting Team recommends that all stakeholders gain a greater understanding of the school's mission statement, belief statements, and DRSLs so that all programs, mandates, etc. can be assimilated into the unique identity of Ben Lomond High School.
- The Visiting Team recommends that the following be done to help with data-driven decision making:
 - Decide what data needs to be collected in order to know who is learning and who is not.
 - Provide professional development to teachers to know how to collect, disaggregate, and analyze the data.
 - Decide how to use the data to drive critical decision making involving student learning.

- Continue developing CFAs and rubrics that can be used within and between departments.
- The Visiting Team recommends that Ben Lomond High School continue using focus groups and departmental collaboration throughout each year, so that the school improvement process will continue between accreditation visits. As changes in staff occur, membership in these groups needs to be maintained.