

**The Report of the
Accreditation Visiting Team**

**Discovery Academy
105 North 500 West
Provo, Utah 84601**

May 11, 2010



**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**

**Discovery Academy
105 North 500 West
Provo, Utah 84601**

May 11, 2010

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**

**Gerolynn Hargrove, Coordinator
Teaching and Learning**

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

Salt Lake City, Utah

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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, May 11, 2010, 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 Discovery Academy 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 Headmaster Jonathan Jones is also commended.

The staff and administration are congratulated for their desire for excellence at Discovery Academy 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 Discovery Academy.

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

District 1

Tami W. Pyfer
52 Ballard Way
Logan, UT 84321
Phone: (435) 753-7529

District 2

Greg W. Haws
5841 West 4600 South
Hooper, UT 84315
Phone: (801) 985-7980

District 3

Craig E Coleman
621 South Main St.
Genola, UT 84655
Phone: (801) 754-3655

District 4

David L. Thomas
7875 South 2250 East
South Weber, UT 84405
Phone: (801) 479-7479

District 5

Kim R. Burningham
932 Canyon Crest Drive
Bountiful, UT 84010
Phone: (801) 292-9261

Meghan Holbrook*

775 North Hilltop Road
Salt Lake City, UT 84103
Phone: (801) 539-0622

Douglas J. Holmes***

274½ 25th Street
Ogden UT 84401
Phone: (801) 479-8163

District 6

Michael G. Jensen
4139 S Aubrey Ln.
West Valley City, UT 84128
Phone: (801) 968-5960

District 7

Leslie B. Castle
2465 St. Mary's Drive
Salt Lake City, UT 84108
Phone: (801) 581-9752

District 8

Janet A. Cannon
5256 Holladay Blvd.
Salt Lake City, UT 84117
Phone: (801) 272-3516

District 9

Denis R. Morrill
6016 South 2200 West
Taylorsville, UT 84118
Phone: (801) 969-2334

District 10

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

Rosanita Cespedes*

1470 S 400 E
Salt Lake City, UT 84115
Phone: (801) 466-7371

Larry K. Shumway

Executive Officer

District 11

David L. Crandall
13464 Saddle Ridge Drive
Draper, UT 84020
Phone: (801) 501-9095

District 12

Carol 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

Charlene Lui**

766 N 900 W
Orem, UT 84057
Phone: (801)230-5109

Twila B. Affleck

Secretary

*Board of Regents Appointments

** CMAC Representative Appointment

***UCAT Representative

7/22/2009

DISCOVERY ACADEMY

OWNERSHIP

Owner of Record..... Redcliff/Ascent
Brent R. Hall Corporate Officer

ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF

School Administration

Jonathan L. Jones Headmaster
Victoria Fielding Academic Director
Rick Lee Academic Director

Counseling

Mark Edwards Counselor
Momi Tu'ua Counselor

Support Staff

Clarke DeLange Coleen Gibson

Faculty

Dorothy AhQuin	Kenneth Hanson	Shaun Noyce
Greg Beveridge	Tiffany Hansen	Fred Pass
Christy Bird	Dax Higgins	Justin Reeves
Jack Churma	Hank Heriford	Steve Revelli
Chris Cooper	Elaine Layosa	Robert Stoddard
Jed Francis	John Moon	Kent Stone
Jefferson Hall	Steven Page	Kira Young

DISCOVERY ACADEMY

MISSION STATEMENT

Discovery Academy is a clinical boarding school whose mission is to inspire each student to a quest for excellence in all areas of life. Through an intensive program in academics, therapy, and life skills training, students are challenged to excel in their development intellectually, emotionally, socially, spiritually/ethically, and physically.

BELIEF STATEMENTS

General Statements of Belief

It is the aspiration of the program that enrollment in the academy begins a lifelong quest for greater wisdom, integrity, insight, and social consciousness.

Staff and student interactions are governed by mutual respect in an environment that balances individuality with community.

A commitment to “self-discovery” and “service to others” defines the school in our pursuit of excellence.

All members of the school community should consistently exhibit in speech and deportment the attributes of honesty, kindness, gratitude, caring, courtesy, empathy, personal discipline, self-respect, and a commitment to learning.

Students can learn, achieve, and be responsible for their own actions and learning when following a personalized academic program developed and monitored by students, parents, teachers, and therapists. Maximum benefits result when academic achievement is paced to support a student’s overall Academy program.

All activities of the School should have a clear educational purpose that supports and enriches personalized academic programs.

Students can successfully participate in varied learning activities that develop interest as well as academic, aesthetic, technical, physical and social skills.

The complete Discovery Academy Program of academics, therapy, and life skills training is an integrated, mutually supportive program in which each entity builds on the other entities in achieving the Mission of the Academy.

DESIRED RESULTS FOR STUDENT LEARNING (DRSLs)

1. Learning to Learn Skills (Including Lifelong Learning Skills)
2. Thinking and Reasoning Skills (Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, Creative Thinking)
3. Communication Skills
4. Expanding and Integrating Knowledge

Date of Visit: May 11, 2010

MEMBERS OF THE VISITING TEAM

Robert Stillwell, Accreditation Consultant, Utah State Office of Education/Northwest Association of Accredited Schools, Visiting Team Chairperson

Lynn Garrett, Principal, Summit High School, Alpine School District

Abraham Kimball, Director, Cairn Academy, Mt. Pleasant, Utah

INTRODUCTION

Purpose

Discovery Academy, Provo, Utah, is seeking continued accreditation by the Northwest Association of Accredited Schools (Northwest). Northwest is one of the premier American education accrediting agencies, accrediting over 1,800 public and private schools throughout the Northwest region of the United States and many other places in the world. The Northwest accreditation process establishes rigorous quality standards and validates the educational quality of schools through on-site reviews conducted by trained volunteer evaluators and consultants, as needed.

This document is the report of the evaluation team. The purpose of the on-site evaluation visit is to (1) validate the completion and accuracy of the school's self-study; (2) verify that the school meets the Northwest standards; (3) facilitate development and implementation of an effective school improvement plan; and (4) provide commendations and recommendations to enhance the school's quality.

Evaluation

A Visiting Team was assembled by the Utah State Office of Education whose members have had extensive expertise in accreditation, school improvement, and American education. The team members have graduate degrees in education and wide range of cumulative experience as educators and administrators.

The one-day evaluation was based on Northwest standards and quality indicators. Evaluation activities and methods used included review of the self-study materials, observations, and facilities. There were individual interviews of teachers, students and administrators. School records and documents were reviewed.

This report is prepared for the school to be used for its continuous improvement. Evaluation decisions were made by consensus; thus, ratings and evaluative commendations and recommendations were developed by the team and do not represent just one person's opinion.

An oral report highlighting the commendations and recommendations was presented to the school administrator. This written report summarizes findings and offers commendations and recommendations. The school is encouraged to share the report with the school community, advisory board, and appropriate authorities.

The report provides a specific judgment on whether each indicator of each standard is met. Although not all quality indicators under each standard must be fully met at the time of the review visit, the school must identify the needs and be working toward fully meeting each indicator.

This report includes ratings and findings, as well as commendations and recommendations. Ratings address the degree to which the school meets the standards and quality indicators. Findings are statements of fact that were observed or reported. Commendations are areas that the team identified as strengths or that exceed expectations. It is important for the school to maintain those strong points because they contribute to overall quality. Recommendations refer to either the areas that need change or next steps for continuous improvement; therefore, all schools receive recommendations. The number of recommendations in no way reflects the quality of the school.

VISITING TEAM REPORT

DISCOVERY ACADEMY

CHAPTER 1: SCHOOL PROFILE

The Discovery Academy program is an integrated, three-facet program designed and operated to meet the therapeutic and academic needs of students enrolled from across the United States and various foreign countries. The program includes individual and group therapy, residential/life skills development, and academics. Students are enrolled in the school whenever the need for the Discovery Academy program is determined by parents and consultants to be in the best interests of the student and his or her family. The three parts of the whole program work together in a relationship model to move a student toward successful family relationships, personal maturity, and academic success.

A student is counseled into the school program based on the school record/transcript coming into Discovery Academy. The student is placed at the grade level and in the appropriate courses at the place where previous experience left off. Thus, within a competency-based tutorial program, the student works on a personalized Student Academic Plan in a one-on-one relationship with the teachers in the classes assigned.

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

The school has identified a general trend toward shorter stays in the program. A student's time in the program has been reduced by an average seven months compared to 2003. Percentile improvement on SAT 9 and grade point average improvement have declined since the last full-team visit.

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

Further analysis of achievement data may add to conclusion that academic declines are solely attributable to the length of students' stay in the program.

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

The school's self-study was an honest appraisal of current practices. The school program is limited in the achievement data it collects and reports.

Suggested Areas for Further Inquiry:

- Discovery Academy needs to find ways to measure and report student progress on the DRSLs.

- Discovery Academy needs to provide its teachers with professional development so that they can learn more and varied assessment strategies.

CHAPTER 2: NORTHWEST ASSOCIATION OF ACCREDITED SCHOOLS (NORTHWEST) TEACHING AND LEARNING STANDARDS

The following represents the Visiting Team’s renderings on the Core Standards for Accreditation and whether, in their collective judgment, each respective indicator is being substantially met.

1. MISSION, BELIEFS, AND DESIRED RESULTS FOR STUDENT LEARNING (DRSLs)

Guiding Principle: The school's mission statement describes the essence of what the school as a community of learners is seeking to achieve. The desired results for student learning are based on and drawn from the school's mission statement. These expectations are the fundamental goals by which the school continually assesses the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process. Every component of the school must focus on enabling all students to achieve the school's desired results for student learning.

- 1.1 The school’s mission statement and desired results for student learning (DRSLs) are developed by the school and are approved and supported by the professional staff and any other school-wide governing organization.
Met

- 1.2 The school's mission statement and beliefs represents the school’s fundamental values and beliefs about student learning.
Met

- 1.3 The school defines school-wide academic, civic, and social learning expectations that are measurable, reflect the school’s mission and beliefs, and are consistent with and reinforce Utah’s *Life Skills: A Guide to Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions for Success* and each core curricula’s intended learning outcomes.
Partially Met

- 1.4 For each academic expectation of the mission, the school has a targeted level of successful achievement identified in an indicator.
Partially Met

- 1.5 The school uses indicators to assess the school’s progress in achieving school-wide civic, where applicable, and social expectations.
Partially Met

- 1.6 The school’s mission statement, beliefs, and DRSLs guide the procedures, policies, and decisions of the school and are evident in the culture of the school.
Sufficiently Met

Comments of the Visiting Team—Mission, Beliefs, and DRSLs Standard

The school’s DRSLs have remained the same over the past six years. For the second full-team visit, there should have been better evidence of student progress toward achieving DRSL goals. There is teacher anecdotal data on student progress, but there is not a school-wide assessment for any DRSL.

2. CURRICULUM

Guiding Principle: The curriculum, including coursework, co-curricular activities, and other school-approved educational experiences, is the school's formal plan to fulfill its mission and desired results for student learning. The curriculum links the school's beliefs, its desired results for student learning, and its instructional practices. The strength of that link is dependent upon the commitment and involvement of the professional staff to a comprehensive, ongoing review of the curriculum.

- 2.1 Each curriculum area identifies those school-wide academic expectations for which it is responsible.
Sufficiently Met
- 2.2 The curriculum is aligned with the school-wide academic expectations and ensures that **all** students have sufficient opportunity to achieve each of those expectations.
Sufficiently Met
- 2.3 The written curriculum:
- a. Prescribes content that aligns with the Utah State Core Curriculum.
Met
 - b. Integrates relevant school-wide learning expectations reflecting the Utah *Life Skills: A Guide to Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions for Success*.
Met
 - c. Identifies course-specific intended learning outcomes.
Sufficiently Met
 - d. Suggests instructional strategies.
Partially Met
 - e. Suggests assessment techniques including the use of school-wide expectations for student learning.
Partially Met
- 2.4 The curriculum engages **all** students in inquiry, problem-solving, and higher-order

thinking, as well as providing opportunities for the authentic application of knowledge and skills.

Sufficiently Met

2.5 The curriculum is appropriately integrated and emphasizes depth of understanding over breadth of coverage.

Sufficiently Met

2.6 The school provides opportunities for **all** students to extend learning beyond the normal course offerings and the school campus.

Met

2.7 There is effective curricular coordination and articulation between and among **all** academic areas within the school and the student's home school/district.

Sufficiently Met

2.8 Academic programs offered outside of the school (on-line, correspondence, early college, dual credit, equivalent credit for music, P.E., travel credit, etc.) are consistent with the school's curriculum.

Met

2.9 A record that documents the results of all students' performance is maintained.

Sufficiently Met

2.10 The school has a written policy statement concerning the selection of educational materials.

Sufficiently Met

2.11 The instructional materials are selected to support the specific objectives of the individual courses as well as the school's overall mission and goals.

Sufficiently Met

2.12 The materials provided to the students are adequate to meet the course objectives.

Sufficiently Met

2.13 The reading level of the materials is appropriate to the reading level competence of the students.

Sufficiently Met

2.14 The materials are up to date.

Sufficiently Met

2.15 Adequate provisions are made for the prompt delivery and return of instructional materials, lessons, and examinations to and from the students.

Sufficiently Met

2.16 Lessons and examinations are graded promptly and the results communicated to the students and their parents/guardians.

Sufficiently Met

- 2.17 Student (or parent/guardian) inquiries are answered promptly and satisfactorily.
Sufficiently Met
- 2.18 The procedures for granting credit and/or for determining progress toward graduation are consistent with the school's stated purposes.
Met
- 2.19 The procedures for granting credit are in writing and are available to enrolled students.
Met
- 2.20 Instructional materials, technology, equipment, supplies, facilities, and staffing levels, and the resources of the library/media center are sufficient to allow for the effective implementation of the curriculum.
Met
- 2.21 The professional staff is actively involved in the ongoing development, evaluation, and revision of the curriculum based on assessments of student performance in achieving the school's academic expectations and course-specific learning goals.
Partially Met
- 2.22 The school commits sufficient time, financial resources, and personnel to the development, evaluation, and revision of the curriculum.
Sufficiently Met
- 2.23 Professional development activities support the development and implementation of the curriculum.
Partially Met
- 2.24 The program of studies meets the requirements of the state, ministry, or parent organization, as applicable.
Sufficiently Met
- 2.25 The curriculum is adapted to meet the individual student learning needs.
Met
- 2.26 The students are aware of the curriculum being taught and are appropriately involved.
Met

Utah-Specific Indicators—Curriculum Standard

- 2.27 The curriculum meets the Utah state graduation and credit requirements, and **all** courses align to, meet or exceed Utah State Core Curricula in accordance with Board Rule R277-705.
Sufficiently Met
- 2.28 Rules and policy that require parent or guardian notification are followed.
Sufficiently Met

- 2.29 The curriculum includes patriotic education as outlined in Board Rule R277-475-3*.
Not Applicable

* Does not necessarily apply to non-public schools.

Comments of the Visiting Team—Curriculum Standard

The school calls its packets “concepts,” and they are arranged to follow chapters in textbooks. Courses are mixed-grade and mixed-level, with different students working on different “concepts.” In the past, as well as during the current full-team visit, students have expressed a desire for more direct instruction. The “concepts” are updated when texts change. The curriculum is expanded on Fridays by a series of experiential education activities.

3. INSTRUCTION

Guiding Principle: The quality of instruction in a school is the single most important factor affecting the quality of student learning, the achievement of desired results for student learning, the delivery of the curriculum, and the assessment of student progress. Instructional practices must be grounded in the school's mission, beliefs, and desired results for student learning, supported by research in best practices and refined and improved based on identified student needs. Teachers are expected to be reflective about their instructional strategies and to collaborate with their colleagues about instruction and student learning.

- 3.1 Instructional strategies and practices are consistent with the school's stated mission, beliefs and DRSLs.

Met

- 3.2 Teachers use a variety of instructional strategies to:

- a. Personalize instruction by providing concrete examples.

Met

- b. Make connections across disciplines by linking examples to other subjects.

Partially Met

- c. Engage students as learners by using a variety of strategies.

Met

- d. Engage students as self-directed learners by providing opportunities for problem solving.

Met

- e. Involve students in higher-order thinking.

Met

- f. Provide opportunities for students to apply knowledge or skills.

Met

- g. Promote student self-assessment and self-reflection of what has been taught.

Met

- h. Recognize diversity, multiculturalism, individual differences, and other prevalent unique characteristics of the student population.

Met

- 3.3 Teachers use feedback from a variety of sources, including other teachers, students, supervisors and parents, as a means of improving instruction.
Sufficiently Met
- 3.4 Teachers are proficient in their content area, knowledgeable about current research on effective instructional approaches, and reflective about their own practices. (See 6.5 for reporting licensing and endorsements.)
Sufficiently Met
- 3.5 Analysis of instructional strategies is a significant part of the professional culture of the school.
Partially Met
- 3.6 Technology is integrated into and supportive of teaching and learning.
Sufficiently Met
- 3.7 Library information services are available to students and faculty and utilized to improve teaching and learning.
Sufficiently Met
- 3.8 The school's professional development program is guided by identified instructional needs and provides opportunities for teachers to develop and improve their instructional strategies.
Partially Met
- 3.9 Teacher supervision and evaluation processes are used to improve instruction in order to meet the needs of **all** students.
Sufficiently Met

Utah-Specific Indicator—Instruction Standard

- 3.10 Instructional time is allocated and protected to support student learning.
Met
- 3.11 The teaching and learning program focuses on and utilizes educationally accepted best practices.
Partially Met

Comments of the Visiting Team—Instruction Standard

The delivery of instruction does help individual students work through the assignments of the “concepts.” However, the lack of direct instruction and classroom discussion of curriculum is limiting. The self-study did not include teacher responses to departmental analyses.

4. ASSESSMENT

Guiding Principle: Assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning process. Its purpose is to inform students regarding their learning progress and teachers regarding ways to adjust the curriculum and instruction to respond effectively to the learning needs of students. Further, it communicates to the parents the progress of students in achieving the school's desired results for student learning as well as course-specific learning goals. Assessment results must be continually analyzed to improve curriculum and instruction.

- 4.1 The school has a process to assess both school-wide and individual student progress in achieving the academic expectations of the mission.

Partially Met

- 4.2 The school's professional staff uses data (climate survey, empirical, etc.) to assess the school success in achieving its civic and social expectations.

Partially Met

- 4.3 The school regularly reviews its mission statement, beliefs, and DRSLs using a variety of data to ensure that they reflect student needs, community expectations, the district/governing body mission, and state and national standards, as applicable.

Partially Met

- 4.4 Teachers clarify for students the relevant school-wide academic expectations and course-specific learning goals that will be assessed.

Sufficiently Met

- 4.5 Teachers base classroom assessment of student learning on school-wide and course-specific indicators for intended learning outcomes.

Partially Met

- 4.6 Teachers use varied assessment strategies to determine student knowledge, skills, and competencies and to assess student growth over time.

Partially Met

- 4.7 Teachers meet collaboratively to discuss and share student work and the results of student assessments for the purposes of revising the curriculum and improving instructional strategies.

Sufficiently Met

- 4.8 The school's professional development program provides opportunities for teachers to collaborate in developing a broad range of assessment strategies.

Not Met

- 4.9 The school's professional staff communicates individual student progress in achieving school-wide academic expectations to students and their families.

Sufficiently Met

4.10 Results and analysis of academic assessment are used to drive curriculum and instruction.

Partially Met

4.11 A record that documents the results of all student performance is maintained.

Partially Met

4.12 Technology in the classroom is available and increases student performance.

Sufficiently Met

Utah-Specific Indicators—Assessment Standard

4.13 Teachers receive and use the results of standardized assessments in a timely manner to facilitate and improve instruction. (For public school this would include the CRT, Iowa Test and UBSCCT results.)*

Not Applicable

4.14 Proficiency criteria are explicitly described in course descriptions as per Board Rule R277-700-3.

Sufficiently Met

4.15 The school assesses English acquisition using annual measurable achievement objectives.*

Not Applicable

* Do not necessarily apply to non-public schools.

Comments of the Visiting Team—Assessment Standard

As a private school, Discovery Academy may choose its own assessments. The school needs to integrate the behavioral aspects of the DRSLs with the overall treatment plans of the students. There is a need for professional development to help teachers learn effective assessment strategies for student progress on DRSLs. The “concepts” are at 80 percent mastery of assigned work, but they are also chapters in textbooks that were not designed to measure the DRSLs the school has chosen to implement.

CHAPTER 3: NORTHWEST SCHOOL SUPPORT STANDARDS

5. LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZATION

Guiding Principle: The way that a school organizes learning for students, fosters leadership, and engages its members has a profound effect on teaching and learning. The professional culture of the school must be characterized by thoughtful, reflective, and constructive discourse about decision making and practices that support student learning and well-being.

- 5.1 The academic administrator has sufficient autonomy and decision-making authority to lead the school in achieving the mission, beliefs, and DRSLs.
Met
- 5.2 The academic administrator provides leadership in the school community by creating and maintaining a shared vision, direction, and focus for student learning.
Met
- 5.3 The student-to-academic administrator ratio does not exceed 450 students to each qualified administrator or a prorated fraction thereof.
Met
- 5.4 Staff members, as well as administrators, other than the academic administrator, provide leadership essential to the improvement of the school.
Sufficiently Met
- 5.5 Excessive staff turnover does not affect school effectiveness. The school evaluates staff turnover and addresses any concerns about staff retention.
Sufficiently Met
- 5.6 The organization of the school and its educational programs promotes the achievement of the school's mission, beliefs, and DRSLs.
Sufficiently Met
- 5.7 Student grouping patterns reflect the ethnic diversity of the student body, foster heterogeneity, reflect current research and best practices, and support the achievement of the school's mission, beliefs, and DRSLs.
Sufficiently Met
- 5.8 The schedule is driven by the school's mission, beliefs, and DRSLs and supports the effective implementation of the curriculum, instruction, and assessment.
Sufficiently Met
- 5.9 Meaningful roles in the decision-making process are accorded to students, parents, and **all** members of the school staff to promote an atmosphere of participation, responsibility, and ownership.
Sufficiently Met
- 5.10 There is 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.
Met
- 5.11 The professional staff members collaborate within and across departments or grade levels in support of learning for **all** students.
Sufficiently Met

5.12 All school staff members are involved in promoting the well-being and learning of students.

Met

5.13 Student success is regularly acknowledged, celebrated, and displayed.

Met

5.14 The climate of the school is safe, positive, respectful, and supportive, resulting in a sense of pride and ownership.

Met

5.15 The school engages in practices that promotes safety and has established a plan that includes preventions, interventions, crisis management, and post-crisis recovery.

Met

5.16 The school has a written code of student conduct.

Met

5.17 Teacher supervision and evaluation processes are used to improve instruction.

Met

5.18 The academic administrator is significantly involved in the selection, assignment, and retention of instructional personnel.

Met

5.19 The school employs an adequate staff, both professional and non-certified, to support student enrollment and to realize its stated purposes.

Met

5.20 The school meets all applicable state requirements and regulations for licensure, organization, academic administrators, and control, unless state authorities have granted official exemption.

Met

Utah-Specific Indicators—Leadership and Organization Standard

5.20 The school has a written policy prohibiting discrimination, and regular training is provided to ensure compliance in accordance with Board Rule R277-112-3-C.

Met

5.21 The school has a written policy explaining the process and standards for acceptance and reciprocity of credits earned by students, in accordance with Board Rule R277-705-3.

Met

- 5.22 Teachers have reviewed and are familiar with the *Life Skills: A Guide to Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions for Success* document and implemented them into the curricula they are teaching.

Met

Comments of the Visiting Team—Leadership and Organization Standard

Mr. Jonathan Jones returned to Discovery Academy as Headmaster for the 2009-2010 school year, and is providing ample leadership to the school staff. He picked up a stalled accreditation process and took responsibility for preparing the school for the second team visit. He possesses the leadership capacity to lead the school to better collection and reporting of evidence of implementation of DRSLs in the future.

6. SCHOOL SERVICES

Guiding Principle: Student learning and well-being are dependent upon adequate and appropriate support programs and services. The school is responsible for providing an effective range of integrated resources to enhance and improve student learning and well-being and to support the school's mission and expectations.

Student Support Services

- 6.1 The school's student support services are consistent with the school's mission, beliefs, and DRSLs.
Met
- 6.2 The school allocates resources, programs, and services so that all students have a reasonable opportunity to achieve the school's expectations for student learning.
Met
- 6.3 Student support personnel enhance student learning by interacting and working cooperatively with professional and other staff, and by utilizing community resources to address the academic, social, emotional, and physical needs of students.
Met
- 6.4 All student support services are regularly evaluated and revised as needed to support improved student learning.
Met
- 6.5 All professional personnel are in compliance with the Utah Educator Licensing requirements and are appropriately endorsed for all assignments in accordance with Board Rule R277-501.
Sufficiently Met

6.6 The total number of students instructed by any one teacher **does not exceed 160.**

Met

6.7 There is a system for effective and ongoing communication with students, parents/guardians, and school personnel, designed to keep them informed about the types of available student support services and identified student needs.

Met

6.8 Student records, including health and immunization records, are maintained in a confidential and secure manner consistent with federal (FERPA) law.

Met

6.9 All teachers are given appropriate orientation training.

Met

6.10 Teachers are carefully supervised by the academic administrative staff.

Met

6.11 The non-professional clerical and paraprofessional staff members are carefully selected and have appropriate training and background for their position.

Met

6.12 Policies for the selection and assignment of personnel are non-discriminatory in reference to race, ethnic origin, and sex.

Met

Utah-Specific Indicators—Student Support Services

6.13 All school employees have been instructed regarding their responsibilities and follow required procedures in cases of suspected child neglect and physical or sexual abuse in accordance with Board Rule R277-401-3.

Met

6.14 The school communicates to parents/guardians all assessment practices used by teachers in the preferred language of the parents and facilitates direct involvement in their children's education, i.e., English as a second language programs, English literacy programs, homework programs, and home assessment tools.

Sufficiently Met

Guidance Services

6.15 The school provides a full range of comprehensive guidance services, including:

a. Individual and group meetings with guidance personnel.

Met

b. Personal, career, and college counseling.

Met

c. Student course selection assistance.

Met

d. Appropriate support in the delivery of special education services for students, as applicable.

Met

6.16 The ratio of students to those who provide guidance and counseling services does not exceed 400 students to each of those respective individuals.

Met

6.17 The guidance service facilities are large enough to house program personnel, equipment, and material. (Counseling spaces should be easily accessible to all students, equipped with offices for each professional school counselor, installed telephones, computer connections, etc.)

Met

Utah-Specific Indicators—Guidance Services

6.18 The Comprehensive Guidance Program (Board Rule R277-462) reflects the school's mission, beliefs and DRSLs.*

Not Applicable

6.19 School counselors can provide evidence that the Comprehensive Guidance Program is contributing to student achievement.*

Not Applicable

* Do not necessarily apply to non-public schools.

Health Services

6.21 The school has a current health service plan providing resources to meet the needs of all the students.

Met

6.22 The school has a crisis response plan that is tested and updated annually as outlined in Board Rule R277-400.

Met

Library Information Services

6.23 The library media program is directed by a certified library media specialist.

a. Library staff in schools of **fewer than 250 students** need not be certified, but are under the direction of a qualified library media specialist.

b. Schools with an **enrollment between 250 and 500 students** have a full-time qualified library media specialist.

c. Schools with more than **500 students** have a full-time library media specialist and have additional library media personnel.

- d. Personnel are under the direction of a qualified library media specialist.
Sufficiently Met

6.24 Students, faculty, and support staff have regular and frequent access to library/information services, facilities, and programs as an integral part of their educational experience before, during, and after the school day.
Sufficiently Met

6.25 The library/information services program fosters independent inquiry by enabling students and faculty to use various school and community information resources and technologies.
Sufficiently Met

6.26 The school has a written policy concerning the selection and removal of information resources and the use of technologies and the Internet.
Sufficiently Met

Utah-Specific Indicator—Library Information Services

6.27 The library collection and information resources are relevant, up-to-date and of sufficient size (10 volumes per student) to meet the program of curricular and literacy needs of the students and faculty.
Sufficiently Met

Special Education Services

6.28 The school provides special education services related to the identification, monitoring, and referral of students in accordance with local, state, and federal laws, as applicable.
Met

Family and Community Services

6.29 The school engages parents and families as partners in each student's education as appropriate to the school's program.
Met

6.30 The school fosters productive business/community/higher education partnerships that support student learning appropriate to the school's program.
Not Applicable

Comments of the Visiting Team—Student Support Services Standard

The school counseling and special education departments are meeting the needs of students. Many Discovery students are receiving special education services. The counseling program works with families and provides after-care follow through.

7. FACILITIES AND FINANCES

Guiding Principle: The school plant (consisting of site, buildings, equipment, and services) is an important factor in the functioning of the educational program. The school plant serves as a vehicle for the implementation of the school mission. The school plant should provide for a variety of instructional activities and programs and for the health and safety of **all** persons. The school plant should incorporate aesthetic features that contribute to a positive educational atmosphere while providing for needed flexibility. In addition to an appropriate facility, sufficient fiscal resources must be available, accounted for and effectively used in order for any school to accomplish its mission and expectations for student learning.

7.1 The school site and plant support and enhance all aspects of the educational program and the support services for student learning.

Met

7.2 The physical plant and facilities meet all applicable federal and state laws and are in compliance with local fire, health, and safety regulations.

Met

7.3 Equipment is adequate, properly maintained, catalogued, and replaced when appropriate.

Met

7.4 A planned and adequately funded program of building and site management ensures the appropriate maintenance, repair, and cleanliness of the school plant.

Met

7.5 There is ongoing planning to address future programs, enrollment changes, staffing, facility, and technology needs as well as capital improvements.

Met

7.6 Faculty and building administrators have active involvement in the budgetary process, including its development and implementation, where applicable.

Met

7.7 The school has sustainable financial resources to provide services to students to meet the stated purposes of the school and to provide the educational program to the student.

Met

7.8 Proper budgetary procedures and generally accepted accounting principles are followed for all school funds.

Met

7.9 The school's accounts are independently audited annually.

Met

- 7.10 The total cost for a course of instruction, including all textbooks, materials, and instructional services, is made known to students/parents at the time of their application and/or registration, where applicable.
Met
- 7.11 Terms of tuition and/or fees payment are clearly defined in the application, where applicable.
Met
- 7.12 Any advertising and promotional literature is completely truthful and ethical.
Met
- 7.13 Any advertising and promotional literature clearly states the purpose of the school's program of instruction.
Met
- 7.14 None of the school's advertising and promotional literature is offensive or negative toward other schools or educational agencies.
Met
- 7.15 Tuition/fees collection procedures are in keeping with sound and ethical business practices and protect the financial interest of the school, where applicable.
Met
- 7.16 The administration has the authority to administer its discretionary budget, where applicable.
Met

Comments of the Visiting Team—Facilities and Finances Standard

Discovery Academy built a new building in 2007 to supplement the historic building it occupies on the same property. The physical plant of the school is clean, well kept and supports a safe school environment.

CHAPTER 4: NORTHWEST SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT STANDARD

8. CULTURE OF CONTINUAL IMPROVEMENT

Guiding Principle: A quality school develops and maintains an externally validated process and plan for school improvement. Goals resulting from the evaluation process should include targeted levels of achievement and be measurable.

- 8.1 The school has 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.
Sufficiently Met
- 8.2 Results of school improvement are identified, documented, used, and communicated to **all** stakeholders.
Sufficiently Met
- 8.3 The school improvement effort is externally validated on a periodic basis by an onsite accreditation visiting team.
Met
- 8.4 The school improvement plan is consistent with external accountability requirements such as those of the state in which the school is located. These could also be ministry or federal accountability requirements.
Met
- 8.5 The school improvement process provides an orderly process for:
- a. Selecting the most appropriate areas upon which to focus improvement efforts.
Sufficiently Met
 - b. Developing strategies that are designed to improve student performance.
Partially Met
 - c. Implementing those strategies.
Partially Met
 - d. Monitoring the process.
Partially Met
 - e. Evaluating the process to ensure that success has been attained.
Partially Met
- 8.6 The school improvement process is the result of a school self-evaluation that addresses the major recommendations for improvement as identified in the self-study.
Sufficiently Met
- 8.7 Goal statements for the school improvement process are properly aligned with the implementation plan and clearly identify measures of success.
Sufficiently Met
- 8.8 A reasonable, specific timeline for the implementation of each area within the school improvement process is identified.
Sufficiently Met
- 8.9 The school improvement process involves a site-based council or advisory committee.
Met

Utah-Specific Indicator—Culture of Continuous Improvement Standard

8.10 The school incorporates the recommendations from the external evaluation (i.e., the Report of the Visiting Team) into the school improvement plan.

Sufficiently Met

Comments of the Visiting Team—Continuous Improvement Standard

The school cares deeply for its students. It has provided an expanded and improved campus, and is committed to the instructional model of students working independently on “concepts” or packets. There is room to improve in using varied strategies to assess student progress beyond the 80 percent mastery required for receiving credits.

CHAPTER 5: MAJOR COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VISITING TEAM

As result of the onsite visit, the Visiting Team determined that there were commendations regarding the school and program, as well as some recommendations for the school staff and administration to consider during the next years of accreditation. These follow, and represent both general impressions and recommendations that are specifically related to the Core Standards for Accreditation. The school should make every effort to review each commendation and recommendation and put into place plans for celebration and/or prioritization for school improvement. The school is expected, as part of its annual report, to account for its progress toward achieving those recommendations as prioritized in the school’s improvement plan.

Commendations:

- The Visiting Team commends Discovery Academy for its clean, efficient, and safe facility.
- The Visiting Team commends Discovery Academy for its student-teacher ratio, which is small enough to reinforce personalized instruction.
- The Visiting Team commends Discovery Academy for the access students have to teachers to receive help with their coursework.
- The Visiting Team commends Discovery Academy for the caring environment the staff offers students to improve their lives.

Recommendations:

- The Visiting Team recommends that Discovery Academy find ways to measure and report student progress on the DRSLs.
- The Visiting Team recommends that Discovery Academy provide its teachers with professional development to learn more and varied assessment strategies.
- The Visiting Team recommends that Discovery Academy require its teachers to complete departmental analyses, as outlined in *Collaborating for Student Achievement*, and ask every teacher to reflect on the “essential questions” provided by the USOE.