The Report of the Accreditation Visiting Team

Fairfield Junior High School 951 North Fairfield Road Kaysville, Utah 84037

April 11-12, 2012



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

Fairfield Junior High School

951 North Fairfield Road Kaysville, Utah 84037

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UTAH STATE OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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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, April 11-12, 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 Fairfield Junior High School is commended for the time and effort devoted to studying and evaluating the various facets of the total program and to preparing the materials used by the Visiting Team. The excellent leadership given by Principal Bryon Nielsen is also commended.

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

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

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FAIRFIELD JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

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Support Staff				
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FAIRFIELD JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

MISSION STATEMENT

S stands for the "skills" students will need to be successful in school and beyond.

- O are the additional "opportunities that we offer for students to learn: a block schedule allows each student one extra class per year to explore and prepare for their future, a homeroom and intervention period which gives students an extra hour and 20 minutes per week providing additional learning help and enrichment opportunities.
- A stands for "achieve." The goal of every teacher is not to simply teach, but it is a student oriented goal to have 80% of all students master 80% of the core curriculum in all subject areas every year as measured by end of term tests in each department. In addition, Fairfield is committed to scoring above the district average on CRTs and having students read and write at grade level.
- **R** is for responsibility. We want students at Fairfield to be responsible citizens now and into the future.

BELIEF STATEMENTS

- Student learning is the main priority for our school.
- We will provide a safe and comfortable environment for learning.
- The school community shares the responsibility for advancing the school's mission.
- Students learn and perform best when they have appropriate opportunities for success, and they have an active role in the learning process.
- Educators will support individual student learning with necessary curriculum, strategies, and technology.

DESIRED RESULTS FOR STUDENT LEARNING (DRSLs)

- 1. Communicate Effectively
- 2. Set, Plan, & Achieve Academic, Personal and Social Goals
- 3. Think Critically to Solve Problems
- 4. Produce a Quality Product

Date of visit: April 11-12, 2012

MEMBERS OF THE VISITING TEAM

Verneita R. Hunt, Crestview School, Granite School District, Visiting Team Chairperson Steve Hogan, Churchill Junior High School, Granite School District Lisa Roberts, Sand Ridge Junior High School, Weber School District Bill Kenley, Kennedy Junior High School, Granite School District Trudy Sportsman, Rocky Mountain Junior High School, Weber School District

VISITING TEAM REPORT

FAIRFIELD JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

CHAPTER 1: SCHOOL PROFILE

Fairfield Junior High was built in 1994 with an enrollment of 1,081. That population has fluctuated up and down for the school's 17-year history. Today, enrollment stands at 1,067. The school was built on the boundary between Kaysville and Layton cities. Roughly 60 percent of the students are from Layton, 25 percent from Kaysville, and 15 percent from Fruit Heights.

The majority of the students at Fairfield could be classified as middle class socioeconomic status. The average household income for families is \$61,596 for Layton and \$73,049 for Kaysville. Around 9.5 percent of individuals live below the poverty level. Parent occupations range from unskilled to highly skilled, with 94 percent of the population with at least a high school diploma and 40 percent with at least a bachelor's degree. The majority of dwellings are single-family homes, with some mobile homes and apartments. The average sales price of homes in Kaysville and Layton is around \$225,000. Some economically disadvantaged and atrisk students reside in government-subsidized apartment complexes and a domestic violence shelter situated near the school.

There have been several significant changes over the last six years. Three years ago, the school community discussed, researched, and then implemented the block schedule Fairfield currently uses. It was the first junior high in Davis District to use the block schedule. In addition, Fairfield saw a need to help struggling students and implemented homeroom and intervention, in which data is used to indicate students who are at risk in math, literacy, science, social studies, and other subjects. This year the teachers created common assessments for each term in every department to improve student learning and achievement. Lastly, a new junior high was opened in 2010, to which Fairfield lost 200 students.

- a) What significant findings were revealed by the school's analysis of its profile?
 - The Visiting Team found through the Fairfield Junior High School profile that there is cohesiveness among the school's teachers and students. This cohesiveness comes in the form of knowing where students' strengths and weaknesses are and forming action steps to support student learning.
- *What modifications to the school profile should the school consider for the future?*
 - The Visiting Team recommends that Fairfield Junior High School include indicators for its desired results for student learning (DRSLs). The indicators will provide a focus for instructional strategies using the DRSLs and for creating assessment tools to gather student learning data.

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

The Visiting Team found that Fairfield Junior High School's self-study accurately reflected the school's current strengths and limitations, although the study underestimated the deep conviction of the administration and staff concerning their collegiality and support of each other, the students, and the community.

Suggested Areas for Further Inquiry:

• The Visiting Team recommends that Fairfield Junior High School develop indicators for its desired results for student learning (DRSLs). Developing the indicators will help the school community build a depth of knowledge and lead to ownership of student life skill achievement. Through this process, the staff members will become familiar with their classroom expectations for students as they all delve into the Life Skills curriculum.

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 Visiting Team found that Fairfield Jr. High has immersed itself in a collaborative process to develop, revise and define a mission statement, belief statements, and DRSLs to support student achievement. The wording of the mission statement has been reduced to create a more succinct, easy-to-understand document. Faculty members, parents, and students were all part of the process to redefine their purpose and direction, starting in the 2010-2011 school year. Conversations with each group and individuals confirm this process.
- b) To what extent do the school's mission and beliefs align to support the school's DRSLs?
 - The Visiting Team found that the mission and belief statements have been aligned with the school's DRSLs. Student learning has become the main priority for the school, and that belief has been embedded into the institutionalized DRSL of "Communicate Effectively."
- c) Describe the indicators (measures) that have been developed to assess the school's progress in assessing the DRSLs.

The Visiting Team found there were no formal indicators attached to the DRSLs. However, it is noted that CRTs and the SRI are used to assess the students' progress in learning the DRSLs. The Utah Writes program and the Six Traits of Writing model, including a rubric, are also used as assessment tools. Fairfield's intervention program has been used to provide even more frequent measureable feedback for progress.

It is recommended that Fairfield Junior High School create measurable indicators for each of the DRSLs, for which the staff may be able to more accurately assess student progress toward DRSLs in each class.

d) To what extent do the school's mission, beliefs, and DRSLs guide the procedures, policies and decisions of the school, and appear evident in the culture of the school?

The Visiting Team noted a transitioning into the PLC process, with specific emphasis on student learning rather than teaching. This transitioning has been a direct result of connecting the "policies and decisions of the school" to the school's overall mission and beliefs. The mission statement and DRSLs are posted throughout the building and are known by the students and staff. The aforementioned intervention program is another by-product of connecting beliefs to the school policy and culture.

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 found that the school's curriculum is based on clearly defined standards and objectives. The curriculum used in the classroom is state and district approved. In many of the classrooms, the lesson standards/objectives are written on the board. The Visiting Team found that departments are meeting on a regular basis to discuss curriculum and make sure the curriculum aligns with the Utah Core Standards. Many of the departments also meet and are collaborating more on using common assessments within the school and subject areas. It is recommended that all departments continue to work together to create common, cross-curricular assessments and learning experiences for students. Curriculum maps are being implemented in all subject areas. Using curriculum maps is a way to ensure all students are learning the same information as their peers in other classes. In several of the subject areas, teacher collaboration has provided a way for faculty members to create common assessments so that students are learning and being tested on similar information no matter which teacher they happen to have.

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

Higher-order thinking was observed by the Visiting Team in classrooms strategies, especially through the use of class discussions and student explanations of various

problems. In several classrooms, students were observed working through problems from beginning to completion. The Visiting Team witnessed students being given a problem and then explaining to their peers what the problem was, what it meant, how a solution could be found, and why they chose a particular method to solve the problem. The teacher was there to guide students and ask thought-provoking questions to assist student learning.

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 curriculum development at Fairfield Junior High is clearly aligned with the school's belief statements, mission statement, and DRSLs. Students are continually being taught the skills to be successful in life. When students are struggling with learning an essential skill, they have the opportunity to attend intervention classes on a weekly basis in order to obtain the desired skill for each subject area. Students are held to high expectations in each area. The achievement goal of 80 percent of the student body achieving 80 percent of the curriculum is a common goal for the faculty at Fairfield. It is the responsibility of the student to go to the class in which they are struggling to receive additional help during the intervention period they are provided with twice a week. The Visiting Team found that the students take this responsibility seriously, as students were found to be diligently seeking teachers' help.

The Visiting Team found that students are learning strategies to communicate effectively through writing, speaking, and reading assignments. Students are continuously learning to use their words to explain a problem or solution in each classroom. Their involvement in class discussions keeps them engaged throughout the class period. The faculty has developed a vocabulary program that enhances students' communication skills greatly, as the students have ownership in the vocabulary strategies.

The team also found there is an informal dialogue between the school's various departments about current research and various teaching strategies they can apply in their classrooms. However, this is a small group of educators, which implies that there is room for more collaboration and development as a whole faculty. It is recommended that the curriculum development focus group continue to meet on a regular basis and keep open dialogue with the whole faculty.

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

The Visiting Team observed that accommodations were in place for students who were on the "lower" and "higher" ends. These accommodations allowed everyone to receive instruction on an appropriate level. Test and assignment retakes were encouraged by the faculty after an intervention period to encourage student success and achievement. It was also observed that various formal and summative assessments were being used by teachers to more effectively evaluate student learning. Journals, pre- and post-tests, projects, presentations, and other activities were utilized throughout the school.

Instruction:

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

The Visiting Team found, through observation and interview, that the administration and faculty of Fairfield Junior High School have placed a strong emphasis on improving student achievement and have set high goals for teachers and students. In order to attain these goals, the instructional staff at Fairfield Junior High School uses a wide variety of instructional strategies that lead to enhanced student learning.

The Visiting Team observed a wide range of instructional strategies being used. Some of these strategies include selected response assessment, open-ended questioning, formal debate with immediate feedback, performance evaluations, group and individual projects, inquiry-based projects, cooperative learning, collaborative exploration, peer tutoring, discovery, and hands-on activities. These different strategies are used to support clearly defined, daily learning objectives that are posted in most classrooms.

There are also several school-wide strategies that are being used to enhance student achievement. The school has implemented "intervention time" to provide students with the opportunity to receive extra help in subjects where they may be struggling. The school also closely monitors the grades and achievement levels of students to effectively place students into appropriate intervention classes.

The school has also begun developing and using common assessment tools to ensure adequate progress in each department. The foci of these common assessment tools are to inform each teacher of student progress and provide them with the opportunity to collaborate with other teachers within their departments to overcome deficiencies in 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 Fairfield Junior High School staff chose "Communicate Effectively" as its initial DRSL of focus. Staff members have created a school-wide rubric for assessing student communication, and are using this rubric throughout the school. Teachers have frequent "DRSL rehearsals" in conjunction with their morning announcements, allowing students to become more familiar with the DRSLs, leading to greater levels of institutionalization.

The staff has invested a considerable amount of time in developing and fine tuning the DRSLs, leading to greater levels of participation among the faculty. Staff members continue to share ideas for teaching the DRSLs in departmental and faculty meetings.

The staff has worked to integrate the DRSLs across the curriculum and instruction. Each classroom has a poster clearly identifying the DRSLs. Furthermore, the faculty is

focusing on improving communication through literacy. This is evident in the school-wide instruction of vocabulary and root words. These words are introduced periodically and their meaning is reviewed in each class. Teachers then identify and use those root words pertaining to their own content vocabulary. The Visiting Team found that the students really enjoy learning the vocabulary and root words; thus, there is a high motivation for student achievement.

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?

Fairfield Junior High School has focused its professional development around improving student learning. Early-out time is being used by teachers to create common assessments, review student performance data, and compare and share instructional strategies.

The Visiting Team found that the administration has invested in strong professional development opportunities both in and out of the school. Most of the faculty has attended conferences designed to help them implement effective, research-based strategies. The administration has provided the faculty with chances to observe teachers using effective practices at other schools, and has brought experts to help instruct the faculty on-site.

Faculty members state that they take an active part in both planning and participating in professional development. By taking an active role, the staff has a vested interest in seeing that professional development is constructive. The Visiting Team found faculty members to be very supportive of the school's professional development program. Most teachers feel that the professional development is focused, relevant, and positive, and enhances their ability to increase student learning.

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?

The Visiting Team found the faculty and staff at Fairfield Junior High School to be very proficient in their content areas. Staff members are collaborative and reflective and are willing to work together to improve their practice. The staff is deeply cohesive and supportive of each other and committed to increasing student learning. Its members work well together, to set and achieve educational goals.

The Visiting Team sensed a strong emphasis on content mastery in the classrooms. The teachers not only have a good grasp on their curricula, they also work hard to instill that same knowledge in their students. End-of-level testing is used to ensure that the content is being delivered effectively.

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

The Visiting Team found that most members of the instructional staff at Fairfield Junior High School use some form of technology on a frequent basis. Most of the classrooms are fitted with LCD projectors, and many of the teachers use them. The Visiting Team also noticed some teachers using iPads and wireless keyboards to enhance their instruction. Faculty members are learning to create and utilize their own web pages to further assist in the educational process.

The school is also using technology to simplify assessment. Programs like Utah Writes and Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) are being used for their simplicity and their ability to provide the teachers with usable data.

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 commends teachers who have created common assessments for their departments. The Visiting Team found that class, department, school, and district rubrics are being used to assess student learning. Some departments work together to create common assessments. The Math Department has common assessments for the various math courses offered at Fairfield Junior High School. The Visiting Team found that other departments were creating, or in the beginning stages of creating, common assessments.

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 assessments at Fairfield Junior High School are specifically intended to serve instructional purposes determined by the users of the results of the assessments. Supporting evidence showed teachers' assessments aligned with the State Core standards. Class objectives are written on the board, and students receive verbal and written instructions. The Visiting Team observed teachers using lectures, journals, portfolios, and practice drills, as well as other strategies, to assess students' learning.

The Visiting Team highly commends Fairfield Junior High School teachers as they make every effort to identify at-risk students and then find a way to help them succeed. Some teachers mentioned that there is still work to do with regards to understanding the purpose of common assessments for the ELL and IEP students. Teachers mentioned that they need more time to figure out what the expectations should be for special groups without making it too easy or difficult for them to succeed. The homeroom and intervention period used at Fairfield Junior High School demonstrates one way in which the faculty and staff measure and remediate individual deficiencies of the students.

The Visiting Team commends the faculty at Fairfield Junior High School for recognizing the need to work collaboratively to ensure the curriculum is based on the clearly defined standards of the State Core Curriculum. Teachers within departments and various focus groups meet regularly to work on common assessments and ideas for student achievement. The Visiting Team recognizes that there is some frustration about the intervention period, and recommends that the faculty continue to refine the process.

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

The staff at Fairfield Junior High School uses data to determine what intervention strategies need to be addressed for each student. The administration and core department teams review end-of-year testing data and generate recommendations for coming years based upon the data. The faculty and staff also use IEP accommodations to ensure the success of the special education students. An NSSE rubric is also used by teachers to evaluate themselves regarding assessments in their classrooms and departments.

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?

Fairfield Junior High School and the Davis School District are committed to a strong professional development program for the improvement of instruction and assessment strategies. Many teachers have been trained in professional learning communities (PLC) strategies to improve the use of common assessments and appropriate data collaboration within various departments. The Visiting Team was impressed with the school's PLC meetings, which are held on Friday afternoons.

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, through observation and interview, that the faculty and staff at Fairfield use a school-wide scoring tool to assess the communication DRSL. The three tiers of the communication rubric used by Fairfield Junior High School are (1) Content and Ideas, (2) Organization, and (3) Conventions. There are also three levels to which students are assigned for the communication DRSL rubric: (1) Mastery, (2) Pretty Good, and (3) Needs Work.

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 highly commends the school leadership for promoting quality instruction by empowering the staff and fostering a climate of collegial safety. Professional development opportunities have been afforded to the staff on a regular basis. Fairfield Junior High School is implementing professional learning communities in stages. Collaboration and interdisciplinary groups meet often.

b) To what extent does the school leadership employ effective decision making that is datadriven, research-based, and collaborative to monitor progress in student achievement and instructional effectiveness?

The Visiting Team observed evidence of decision making that is data-driven and collaborative. Individual teachers and some departments have developed common assessments to monitor the student achievement and progress of all students. Fairfield's intervention program offers opportunities for daily progress monitoring and data collection.

c) To what extent does the leadership provide skillful stewardship by ensuring management of the organization, operations, and allocation and use of resources at the school for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment which aligns with the school goals, DRSLs, and school improvement?

The Visiting Team observed the allocation of resources and proper management and stewardship in abundance at Fairfield Junior High School. One example is a literacy coach who was funded by the allocation of LAND Trust money. Another pertinent example is the training provided for teachers to attend a PLC conference.

The physical plant is well maintained and clean, and the entire facility is a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment.

d) To what extent does the school leadership empower the entire school community and encourage commitment, participation, collaboration, and shared responsibility for student learning through meaningful roles in the decision-making process?

The administration of Fairfield Junior High School has established a culture that empowers the entire school community. The Community Council, PTA, and other patrons report a high degree of participation and ownership in the decision-making processes of the school. The staff also reports a high degree of ownership in the decision-making process.

e) To what extent has the school established a formal system through which each student has an adult staff member who knows the student well and assists the student in achieving the school-wide expectations for student learning?

The Visiting Team observed consistent contact and tracking of individual students through the intervention program twice a week and the homeroom advisory twice a

week. The counseling center also reported an SEOP process that is very active and engaging for individual students and parents.

CHAPTER 4: NORTHWEST SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT STANDARD

Culture of Continual Improvement:

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

The Visiting Team observed that Fairfield Junior High School has implemented a comprehensive school improvement plan based on the analysis of its comprehensive self-study. The administration and faculty have created the action plan from student data and assessment of that data. The departmental and focus group analyses were both thorough and candid with regard to strengths and recommendations for growth. The faculty has been united and strongly committed to working on the Communication DRSL, as well as focusing on student literacy in both reading and writing.

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 observed that Fairfield Junior High has well-organized and ongoing professional development with the goal of literacy across the curriculum and communication among the school community stakeholders. Examples of professional development topics include, but are not limited to, faculty training on Schoolwires, the Davis School District webpage program; student grading and behavior tracker programs; professional learning communities; and best teaching practices to improve scores. Teachers at Fairfield Junior High School frequently teach one another and are willing to share their ideas and opinions to promote student learning through school improvement.

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?

Fairfield Junior High's school-wide action plan addresses the needs of the school community and is structured to support student learning and achievement. The action plan is data-driven, providing a strong framework for continued development and implementation. Through teacher interviews and discussions with focus group leaders, students, parents, and faculty members, the Visiting Team notes evidence of a high level of commitment by the staff of Fairfield Junior High to the school action plan.

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

Fairfield Junior High School exhibits strong support for productive change and continuous improvement. Not only do staff members maintain an open dialogue in department teams, they also evaluate their performance school-wide, make adjustments where necessary, and implement innovative ideas to promote student success.

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

Since the last full visit, Fairfield Junior High School has made several commendable adjustments to the original action plan. Due to a number of changes in the school community since the development of the plan in 2004, the revision of the goals and steps in the plan was imperative in order to accommodate the vision of new leadership and a changing student body.

Two notable changes Fairfield Junior High School made to the original action plan are the addition of block scheduling and the homeroom/intervention period. Both of these additions accommodate the needs of students in different ways. The block schedule provides an extra class period for students to either explore an additional elective class or (for those who struggle) add academic support. Whereas, the homeroom/intervention period's purpose is to provide struggling students with the opportunity to learn for success, those who are succeeding in school are rewarded with time to explore optional curricula.

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

The Visiting Team notes that Fairfield Junior High School has made significant progress in addressing the recommendations proposed by the previous Visiting Team. The school adhered to the previous Visiting Team's recommendations in full by realigning the action plan to institutionalize the Communication DRSL, administering and offering feedback on ISQ surveys and student intervention surveys annually, continuing to involve all stakeholders in the school community, and unitedly working toward the school-wide implementation of the DRSLs.

CHAPTER 5: COMMUNITY BUILDING

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

The Visiting Team noted the exemplary sense of community that exists among administrators, staff, parents, and students at Fairfield Junior High School. The school

community creates and sustains a learning environment that nurtures a sense of comfort and belonging. Students and parents are comfortable with approaching both teachers and administrators regarding student achievement, school policy, and individual issues. Staff members hold one another in high regard.

Fairfield Junior High School is making significant efforts to improve communication with the community stakeholders through a variety of methods: e-mails, phone calls reminding parents of parent-teacher conferences, teacher web pages, school website updates, Community Council meetings, and online accessibility to student grades. Also, all teachers' rooms have been equipped with telephones and voice mailboxes for easier communication between teachers and the school community.

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

The Visiting Team identified a climate of collaboration at Fairfield Junior High School that extends into the local community. In interviews with teachers, a high level of commitment to both informal and formal collaboration was noted. Sharing of ideas, resources, and instructional practices is common and demonstrates the great respect teachers have for their students and for one another.

Collaborative networks at Fairfield include businesses as well as individual members of the community. Each day parents volunteer time coaching students for Science Olympiad, making copies for teachers, and helping in other parts of the building. Parents and other community members assist in choreography, make sets and costumes for productions, and dedicate time to coaching intramural sports after school. Businesses in the community have donated money and goods for programs and student incentives.

c) To what extent has the school engaged the school community in a collaborative selfstudy process on behalf of students?

The Visiting Team observed that Fairfield Junior High School has made exemplary efforts to involve all school community stakeholders in the self-study process through its Community Council, PTA, frequent focus group discussions, and staff development meetings. Parents, students, teachers, and administrators have all been part of the self-study process.

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

The Visiting Team found that Fairfield Junior High School uses a wide variety of methods to gather data regarding various items of information associated with school improvement. Data is collected based on administered surveys, formative and summative assessments, attendance and discipline reports, state and district testing, and the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI). With this information, the staff is able to identify specific learning needs of students and establish a baseline for student improvement.

Pertinent data is posted on the school website, and test scores are provided for teachers on the Data Board in the main office and faculty room. Because teachers see the data regularly, they are reminded regularly of the importance of using data-driven results in creating curriculum and common assessments for student achievement.

CHAPTER 6: MAJOR COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VISITING TEAM

Commendations:

- The Visiting Team highly commends the Fairfield Junior High School administration, teachers, and staff are for their determined, aggressive immersion into student learning, creating an innovative educational environment that is conducive to progressive student achievement. The teachers are fully immersed in the education of Fairfield students. They listen, instruct, care about, intervene, and help all students. The Intervention period is especially noteworthy. There is a deep, positive underlying foundation that moves this school constantly forward.
- The Visiting Team commends the Fairfield Junior High School students for their tremendous desire to learn, submersing themselves in constructive educational activities. Additionally, Fairfield students trust and respect their teachers, administrators, and staff.
- The Visiting Team commends the Fairfield Junior High School administrators and teachers for their collaborative work with each other for the benefit of student learning. Many of them dedicate extended hours collaborating, supporting each other with common assessments, curriculum mapping, analyzing data, and increasing their instructional skills base. This is a highly professional staff; yet, a staff always striving for new ways to help students learn.
- The Visiting Team commends the Fairfield Junior High School administrators and teachers for their extensive literacy focus, with communications skills taught in every class. Teachers use the Six Traits writing process, Utah Writes, writing notebooks, vocabulary/root words study, and assessment rubrics to create an in-depth communications program. Research shows meaningful experience in a wide variety of elements helps create a deep understanding of literacy skills. Administrators and teachers are highly commended, and are encouraged to continue, changing their focus from "teaching students" to "student learning."

Recommendations:

• The Visiting Team recommends that Fairfield Junior High School administrators and teachers define their desired results for student learning (DRSLs) with a set of indicators which outlines student mastery of those life skills. The indicators become the basis for

- rubrics or other assessment tools with which data is gathered. The DRSL data is collected and analyzed to show areas where students are thriving or need support.
- The Visiting Team recommends that Fairfield Junior High School administrators and teachers continue with their vocab/root word and writing curriculum. Expanding students' vocabulary and writing abilities are equal to expanding their world knowledge, which in turn increases student learning; and it's all about student learning.
- The Visiting Team recommends that Fairfield Junior High School administrators and teachers analyze student achievement data concerning at-risk students. There is a growing achievement gap in the at-risk student population, including ESL and socioeconomic groups, which needs to be addressed. A diverse student population can enhance and enrich the education of all students.