The Report of the
Accreditation Visiting Team

Granger High School

3690 South 3600 West
West Valley City, Utah 84119

March 28-29, 2012

Utah State Office of Education
250 East 500 South
P.O. Box 144200
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Granger High School

3690 South 3600 West
West Valley City, Utah 84119

March 28-29, 2012

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, 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 Granger 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 Jerry Haslam is also commended.

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

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****USBA Advisory Representative Appointment
*****Charter School Representative Appointment

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Paul O. Hansen.....School Director—Senior High

GRANGER HIGH SCHOOL

ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF

School Administration

Jerry D. Haslam ..... Principal
David Gatti ..... Assistant Principal
Ryan Oaks ..... Assistant Principal
Robert E. Wessman ..... Assistant Principal

Counseling

Babcock, James ..... Counselor
Yvonne P. Fortune ..... Counselor
Laney Long ..... Counselor
Brandy Oliver ..... Counselor
Phillip C. Olson ..... Counselor
Erika Sherwood ..... Counselor
Montee VanKeuren ..... CTE Coordinator
Stacy Wood ..... Intern

Support Staff

Cafeteria
- Ana Banuelos
- Jolene Chamblee (Supervisor)
- Theresa Fife
- Veda Hill
- Stephanie Jenkins
- Ethel Kimber
- Laurie Mayfield
- Mona Nielson
- Brandi Price
- Kathy Webster
- June Wogerman

Clerical
- Ruth L. Brown
- Kaydean Judy
- Victoria Lake
- Leisl Leystra
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- Donna Patterson
- Andrea Petty
- Erin L. Winkler

Custodians
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- Harold (Harley) Jensen
- Don G. Johnson,
- Douglas Leonard
- Krystle Munoz
- Todd Nielson (Head)
- Bob A. Pinkerton
- Terry L. Van Otten

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- April Wright (Treas.)
- Stephanie Brown (Sec.)
- Rebekah Bullen (Teacher Rep.)

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- Klay Beck
- Ashlee Blake
- Karen Broadhead
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- Richard Dees
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Sandra S. Woodward
Xiaohu Zhang

GRANGER HIGH SCHOOL

MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to graduate students who are prepared with college and career-ready knowledge and skills to enter and contribute to the global community as responsible citizens.

BELIEF STATEMENTS

- All students can learn and achieve success.
- Developing understanding and tolerance for others creates a safe and meaningful academic environment.
- Mastery of a rigorous curriculum that prepares students for college and careers after high school will also develop a strong sense of self-worth.
- Taking responsibility for one's actions and ownership of one's learning brings success.
- All students can be creative and critical thinkers in academic and real-world settings.

DESIRED RESULTS FOR STUDENT LEARNING (DRSLs)

1. Academic Competency
   Students who are competent in academics…
   - Achieve in all required and elective classes
   - Graduate from high school with plans for future success
   - Pursue opportunities to challenge themselves academically
   - Connect content and skills in practical applications

2. Communication Skills
   Students with communication skills…
   - Demonstrate academic knowledge through effective speech, writing, and numeracy
   - Learn collaboratively and individually through academic activities and through a variety of sources
   - Develop and use appropriate language for social, academic, and real-world situations

3. Responsible Citizenship
   Students who demonstrate responsible citizenship…
   - Acknowledge accountability for mistakes, fix them, and do better in the future
   - Accept responsibility to be in the right place and on time
   - Build community through positive language, interactions and actions

Date of visit: March 28-29, 2012

MEMBERS OF THE VISITING TEAM

Doug Finch, Cascade Elementary, Alpine School District, Visiting Team Chairperson

Lance LeVar, Grand County High, Grand County School District

Amy Wadsworth, Open High School of Utah

John Taggart, Tooele School District

VISITING TEAM REPORT

GRANGER HIGH SCHOOL

CHAPTER 1: SCHOOL PROFILE

Granger High opened in the mostly rural community of West Valley City in 1958. This community has evolved into a dynamic and active city that has become a melting pot of language and cultural diversity. Granger High has recently been awarded a two-million-dollar federal School Improvement Grant to facilitate the school's transformation effort to improve academic achievement. Under the stipulations of this grant, Granger High has recently changed the entire administrative team and has contracted the assistance of external consultants (the USU Center for the School of the Future) to help implement the transformation process.

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

Granger High is significantly affected by the diversity of its student body. The cultural and language backgrounds of the majority of students are non-Caucasian, with a first language other than English. Historical data show that the most of the "at risk" population at the school are limited English proficient (LEP) students who in most years are twice as likely to drop out of school as graduate. Within this subgroup, Hispanic, American Indian, and African American students are the greatest concern.

In academic areas, Granger High made AYP for the first time in 2011. Granger students are approaching district and state levels of language arts proficiency, but continue to lag significantly behind in math and science.

Student behavior (attendance, punctuality, and discipline) has improved significantly during the past two years. Also, the number of students participating in AP and honors classes has notably increased. In 2011, every student was given the opportunity to take the ACT test.

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

The above inferences were drawn from the tables and graphs provided by the school, but Granger High did not provide significant analysis and interpretation of this information. Improvements in student behavior were emphasized, but consideration of the current student academic performance needs to be developed.

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

The self-study focuses on primarily administrative interventions and quantifiable measures of progress. It is very evident that the recent interventions to improve

student behaviors have yielded results that have provided a safer and more organized learning environment.

Suggested Areas for Further Inquiry:

- Existing academic performance measures (Scholastic Reading Inventory [SRI], district benchmark assessments, etc.) that can measure growth and inform instruction need to be better utilized.

- Develop clear standards for instruction and assessment of the school-wide desired results for student learning.

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?

Granger High determined that the previous mission statement, belief statements, and DRSLs were too broad, vague and immeasurable. In response to this feedback, the faculty asked that the focus groups develop a simpler, more direct, more measurable mission statement and belief statements, and chose DRSLs that best reflected the school goals. After the focus groups developed what they felt to be appropriate and measurable mission and belief statements, they collaborated with the administration, faculty and staff, who voted and agreed on the new mission statement, belief statements, and DRSLs. There needs to be follow-through on the mission and belief statements. The community representatives asked for more teacher accountability regarding the belief statements. This issue needs to be revisited in the future.

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

The school's mission and belief statements directly align and correlate to the schools selected DRSLs. There are various programs in place that support the mission statement, belief statements and DRSLs: the ARRA School Improvement Grant (SIG); Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program; Credit Recovery; GEAR-UP grant; Granger All Achieve Program (GAAP); Indicators of School Quality (ISQ); Ken Garff Keys to Success; Lancer Achievement Binder (LAB); Lancer Action Team (LAT); Lancer Educational Achievement Program (LEAP); Lancer Pride Points (LPP); Latinos in Action (LIA); Student Help, Intervention, Extra Learning, Direction (SHIELD), etc. The student panel expressed

the strong opinion that these programs, especially the Granger All Achieve Program (GAAP) and Latinos in Action (LIA), were making a significant a difference for students with regard to academic performance, communication skills, and responsible citizenship.

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

The measures the school has taken to assess its progress on the DRSLs comes in the form of feedback from focus groups and collaboration, as cited by the focus group and department chairs. There is no real formative assessment for the DRSLs. Long-term measurements focus on two main goals, high achievement in all assessed areas and a high graduation/low dropout rate. The short-term goals include improving attendance; reducing the number of Fs given; improving performance on all end-of-year summative assessments; increasing enrollment in AP, honors, and concurrent enrollment courses; and increasing the percentage of tenth graders on track to graduate. The school is in the process of reconstructing and tracking the data continually. This information is shared with the faculty in professional development meetings, as cited by focus groups and department chairs.

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

The school mission, beliefs and DRSLs are designed to and focus on graduating students. Most resources, attendance policies, etc., are specifically designed to support the mission, beliefs and DRSLs. This is evident in the culture of the school. As observed, the faculty and staff know the mission, beliefs and DRSLs. The mission statement and belief statements are posted throughout the building, in teacher classrooms, in the office, in the hallways, etc. They are visible.

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*?*

Granger High recognizes the need for continual curriculum growth. Several individual teachers felt that their curriculum was based on clearly defined standards and the Utah Core Curriculum. A more focused, collaborative and measureable approach to the curriculum is needed. Also, more data-driven results are needed for curriculum assessment and curriculum building. The DRSLs reflect components of the *Utah Life Skills* document, such as Thinking and Reasoning, Social & Civic Responsibility, and Communication. No real assessments for the DRSLs have been developed.

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

The curriculum covers a wide spectrum of abilities and differentiation. The faculty feels strong in this area and cites higher enrollment in AP classes and concurrent enrollment, along with last year's achievement of AYP. The Visiting Team recommends that there be more cross-curricular collaboration and higher expectations to engage students and implement higher-order thinking skills.

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 faculty felt that improvements were needed in this area, as there was limited cross-curricular and collaborative support. The faculty feels as though there is a lack of time and training in this area.

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

The faculty mainly focuses on the CRT and ACT assessments to drive curriculum, as cited by department chairs and focus groups. Granger uses the Granger All Achieve Program (GAAP) for students who are failing classes at midterm. The school also offers Credit Recovery for student to remediate lost credits.

Instruction:

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

Teachers at Granger High use a variety of teaching strategies, including cooperative learning groups with assigned student roles, highly engaging games and assignments tied to current and relevant events for students, and student presentations, as well as traditional lecture-and-worksheet-driven instruction. Granger staff should be commended for their willingness to seek out and try new instructional strategies. A possible next step to increase the academic expectations and rigor could be an intentional focus on the strategies selected to meet specific student needs, as indicated by formative and summative assessment data.

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?*

Granger's staff primarily utilizes the key strategies of "I can" statements to focus on making what they are teaching relevant to students, and writing every day across content areas using "the binder." Some students reported the "I can" statements as helping them know what they will be able to accomplish on a given day. Other students reported the organizational benefits of "the binder" and growth in the quality of their writing as they engage in the writing process every day, in almost every class. Teacher reports and observations of classrooms suggest that the "I can" statement strategy receives varied levels of implementation and fidelity in its use. A next step

might be to broaden and deepen the use of such a strategy to make it more purposeful and relevant to the DRSLs, lesson planning, instruction, and student learning by moving beyond a list of activities to be done that day.

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?*

Currently, teachers at Granger High attend various professional development conferences and workshops to improve their instructional practice. School-wide trainings have also been provided on the importance of vocabulary for English language learners, brain-compatible learning, daily student writing, reading skills across the curriculum, and LAB standards, to name a few. Teachers report that such trainings have had a positive impact on their teaching practices. This approach could be enhanced through a more frequent use of student achievement data, peer observations, and self-reflection.

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?*

Granger's staff members are receiving regular and continued professional development in many areas relevant to their needs. Students feel that teachers are knowledgeable of their content areas and very supportive of their learning. According to conversations with teachers, many students have demonstrated a learner mindset as they have sought to better themselves to various degrees. Evidence suggests that a significant number of teachers spend their energy focusing on factors outside of their control to explain away struggling student achievement. While such factors are a reality of the Granger High student population, teachers' energy might be better spent focusing on factors they can control and strategies to accommodate "what is."

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

Teachers use a variety of types of technology in all departments. The school has numerous mobile computer labs, projectors, and other class-specific tools. Teachers and students demonstrate excitement toward using the technology, as well as frustration with the limited supply of permanent computer labs and an unreliable wireless network. The school could benefit from additional support to correct the issues with their wireless network.

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 expectations for student achievement and performance school-wide are not fully developed. Individual departments have created common “I can” statements to more clearly communicate daily learning expectations. Being early in the implementation of this effort, teachers are still developing in the most effective ways to communicate learning expectations to their students.

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

Granger High consistently assesses at least 95 percent of students in course-specific academic expectations. This last year, all of the junior students were give the opportunity to take the ACT. In addition, all sophomore and junior students take the Scholastic Reading Index (SRI) in English classes to ensure proper placement and provide additional learning support. In individual departments and classrooms, teachers administer a wide range of assessments and strive to accommodate learners at different levels.

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

With the school participating in restructuring through the School Improvement grant, assessment data is tied to the school’s evaluation of success. While the administration in emphasizing this on a school level, department teams and teachers are still emerging in their utilization of assessment data to take ownership of and evaluate the success of their instruction.

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?*

Many teachers of core courses develop assessments as a team and make adjustments to better reflect student learning. The school has identified the need for more improvement school-wide to develop assessments as an integral part of the professional development program. The Visiting Team advises the school to work in collaborative learning teams in order to create more consistency within all disciplines.

e) *To what extent is there organizational agreement on the use of a school-wide scoring tool to assess the identified DRSL?*

Granger High has significantly revised its DRSLs since the last review visit, but has made limited progress in developing an assessment system to assess an identified DRSL. The leadership understands that this is an eventual goal and plans to begin the conversation on explicit measurement with the Communication Skills DRSL.

CHAPTER 3: NORTHWEST SUPPORT STANDARDS

Leadership and Organization:

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

The Granger High leadership has created a learning climate by implementing programs, policies, and practices that focus on student achievement. Instructional goals are explicitly identified and provided before each teacher's lesson. Programs such as the Granger All Achieve Program (GAAP) and Student Help, Intervention, Extra Learning, and Direction (SHIELD) identify students who are struggling academically and need support to earn missing credits.

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

The school utilizes a variety of sources of both qualitative and quantitative data to monitor progress. ACT, PSAT, SRI, AP and CRT data are regularly reviewed as summative measures to guide program development. The school is working to develop positive recognition programs associated with student achievement.

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?*

The Granger High leadership is working to support student learning by improving on-time attendance, reducing failing grades, improving test performance, helping students progress toward graduation, and increasing participation in advanced placement and honors courses. One area of stewardship the school is implementing is the use of grant funds to significantly lower class sizes and provide more individualized support for student learning.

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?*

Granger High administrators use a variety of methods to communicate and engage with the community. These methods include newsletters, e-mail, conferences, the Parent Center, and committees. While the administrators report that they feel communication is adequate and appropriate, the accreditation self-study process demonstrated limited meaningful engagement in decision-making by the school community beyond causal consultation and disseminating information.

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?*

Granger High staff members informally work to develop relationships with students. There is an expectation for teachers to greet students as they enter class. According to recent ISQ survey results, students are feeling more valued and important now than in previous years. While improvement is being made, a more formal system of student and adult mentoring could further benefit students.

School Services:

This standard is dealt with in the school's NWAC 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?*

Granger High has developed a strong culture of focusing on continuous improvement. In response to being in School Improvement due to AYP performance, the staff members are working to find productive and strategic approaches to improving student performance. These plans are regularly reviewed and revised in an energized turnaround effort.

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?*

As part of the School Improvement work, Granger has an ongoing contract with USU to conduct staff development that is aligned with the school's goals. The school uses late-start and additional contract days to provide unified staff in-service.

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?*

As evidenced by the school's making AYP last year, school improvement appears to be addressing the critical areas for follow-up. Last year's success has significantly increased teacher morale and buy-in to the work of the current administration.

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

The conditions at the school are very supportive of productive change. The administration is clear about eliminating excuses for student failure and supporting teacher initiatives and innovation.

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

Student intervention work is developing quickly. Professional development opportunities are becoming more meaningful and applicable. The school still needs to make gains in community engagement.

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

Granger High has made significant gains in terms of collaboration for improved student achievement through instructional and curricular decisions. The school is developing a greater capacity to work with achievement data. The school still has improvement to make in engaging the community and institutionalizing the school-wide DRSLs.

CHAPTER 5: COMMUNITY BUILDING

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

While the school has made significant strides toward developing positive and productive working relationships, there is room for growth in creating a more focused learning community. Granger High is working to create a nurturing environment that encourages students to feel that they belong and that every voice is valued and appreciated.

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

Granger High has a strong relationship with many parents and families. The school continues to look for a deeper, more meaningful connection with every family. However, some families do not participate in the student learning discussion due to language or other barriers.

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

Granger High was moderately successful in engaging the school community in the self-study process. Attempts were made to invite parent and student representatives to the focus group and steering committee discussions, but scheduling changes and conflicts did not permit significant participation.

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

The school community was kept informed of the products and progress of the self-study process through newsletters and information shared with the School Community Council.

CHAPTER 6: MAJOR COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VISITING TEAM

Commendations:

- The Visiting Team commends Granger High for establishing a strong sense of community, even a "beacon of light" in West Valley City. Structures of safety and security have been strengthened through assertive teacher and administrative policies and interventions. Students trust and count on their teachers and enjoy school.

- The Visiting Team commends Granger High staff members for their commitment to work together in an effort for continuous improvement. Consistent routines of daily writing, organization folders, and student-accessible "can do" objectives are examples of simple but effective innovations teachers work collaboratively to employ.

Recommendations:

- The Visiting Team recommends that Granger High further implement a focus on the refined DRSLs of Academic Competency and Communication Skills as a tool to emphasize raising the quality and rigor of academic instruction. Help the students of

Granger High to be truly prepared for life after high school by becoming college and career ready.

- The Visiting Team recommends the teachers use formative assessments to refine their instruction and identify students who have specific knowledge and skill deficits to address. They can then work collaboratively to implement additional academic interventions.