

**The Report of the  
Accreditation Visiting Team**

**InTech Collegiate High School  
1787 North Research Parkway  
North Logan, Utah 84341**

**April 20, 2010**



**Utah State Office of Education  
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Salt Lake City, Utah 84114-4200**

**THE REPORT OF THE  
VISITING TEAM REVIEWING**

**InTech Collegiate High School  
1787 North Research Parkway  
North Logan, Utah 84341**

**April 20, 2010**

**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 20, 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 InTech Collegiate 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 Jason Stanger is also commended.

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

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7/22/2009

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**INTECH COLLEGIATE HIGH SCHOOL**

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**Counseling**

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Mark Brady ..... Assistant Business Administrator  
Connie Morgan ..... Special Education Director  
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Mark Dewey..... Social Studies  
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John Hernandez..... Health, Physical Education, Visual Arts  
Stephanie Kawamura ..... Science  
Chelsea Lawrence ..... Mathematics  
Julie Sismondi ..... Art History/Multimedia

# **INTECH COLLEGIATE HIGH SCHOOL**

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

InTech Collegiate High School's Mission is to encourage and prepare students in grades 9-12 and especially those traditionally under-represented, to pursue and complete college degrees in math, science, and engineering in order to enhance the talent base in these fields.

## **BELIEF STATEMENTS**

1. Student learning should be the chief priority for the school.
2. Students learn best when they are actively engaged in the learning process.
3. Teachers, administrators, parents, students and the community share responsibility for advancing the school's mission.
4. Students need to A) demonstrate their understanding of essential knowledge and skills, B) be actively involved in solving problems, C) produce quality work.
5. Curriculum and instructional practices should incorporate a variety of learning activities to accommodate differences in learning styles.
6. The commitment to continuous improvement is imperative if our school is going to enable students to become confident, self-directed, life-long learners.

## **DESIRED RESULTS FOR STUDENT LEARNING (DRSLs)**

1. Communication
2. Thinking and Reasoning
3. Employability

Date of Visit: April 20, 2010

## **MEMBERS OF THE VISITING TEAM**

Janice Combe, Utah State Office of Education Consultant, Visiting Team  
Chairperson

Stephen Jolley, Itineris Early College High School

Jeannie Rowland, Utah State Office of Education Charter Office

Rob Stillwell, Utah State Office of Education Consultant

**VISITING TEAM REPORT**  
**INTECH COLLEGIATE HIGH SCHOOL**

**CHAPTER 1: SCHOOL PROFILE**

InTech Collegiate High School is located in Logan, Utah a mid-sized rural community in the northern portion of the state. The community is also home to the state's second largest public university, Utah State University. The school serves grades nine through 12, and operates under a public school charter granted by the Cache County School District. Currently the school serves 170 students and is completing its fourth year of operation. InTech Collegiate High School is one of six Early College High Schools located throughout the state, which are associated with over two hundred Early College High Schools nationally. InTech's purpose is to develop skills and provide access to college for first-generation and underrepresented students in the STEM fields.

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

The Visiting Team found the connection between lower socioeconomic students, ELL students, and poor performance data in mathematics to be of concern. The Visiting Team found the "School Profile" analysis to be cursory, with community information and analysis almost absent. All data included should inform the organization; consequently, the organization must acknowledge the information in analysis, resulting in modifying its practices or seeking additional data that is more definitive.

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

The Visiting Team determined that the school profile should include a greater variety of data sources to effectively guide the organization in better serving all stakeholders, both present and future. The "School Profile" analysis should clearly connect to the action plan where warranted, or suggest further investigation. Graduation data and cohort retention should be part of any school analysis as the ultimate goal of public education. The profile should include data around any program used and the impact it made (if any) on student achievement (e.g., tutorial support, reading/math help, academic competition, etc.).

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

The Visiting Team found the self-study to be an accurate reflection of the school's status; however, the analysis leading to the determination of strengths and limitations was, in many cases, cursory at best. The analysis was not

necessarily connected to specific data or indicators that would allow the Visiting Team to validate the conclusions reached; it was difficult to follow the line of thinking from the data to the conclusions without some questions as to how those conclusions were reached.

**Suggested Areas for Further Inquiry:**

- Expand and vary data sources. Include brief descriptors for each data set presented, with easy-to-follow analysis connecting to organizational action.
- Include some data about the communities the school serves. Does this data present new and/or different challenges?
- Explore new ways to represent “non-tested” indicators as part of school profile (e.g., attendance rate, club participation numbers, discipline data, local/national competitions, service projects, SEOPs, etc.).

**CHAPTER 2: NORTHWEST ASSOCIATION OF ACCREDITED SCHOOLS  
(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 concluded that the mission, beliefs, and DRSLs were developed and revised collaboratively by the school community. The Visiting Team acknowledges that the beliefs and DRSLs are new within the last year; nonetheless, they do articulate a purpose and vision for the organization to achieve. The school leadership team must refine the language within the mission, beliefs, and DRSLs to ensure semantic consistency and minimal confusion about purpose and vision.

- 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 beliefs aligned to support the school’s DRSLs. However, the Visiting Team suggests that the mission not contain a reference to “complet[ing] college degrees,” as this focuses on a stage of a student’s academic development that is outside the public school’s control—specifically, the two or three years after the student graduates from high school. It

would seem more suitable to focus on exactly how to prepare all students for college success, as this would be a process on which the school organization can definitely have an impact.

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

The Visiting Team found the measures developed for DRSLs to be in their infancy stage. The measures are primarily of one type (i.e., standardized test scores such as CRTs, ACTs, College Index Scores, etc.). There was no measure defined for the "Communication" DRSL, and incongruity between DRSL #2 and Action Plan #3. However, if the measures for DRSLs are different from the action plan measures, then further development of the measures for DRSLs is necessary.

- 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 observed a commitment to the school's mission, beliefs, and DRSLs by all stakeholders in procedures, policies, and decisions. The culture of the school is definitely about students and their success. The school has undergone several significant changes over the last three years, but is definitely moving in the right direction.

### **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?*

Students, parents, and faculty members examined the Utah Life Skills to determine which skills aligned with the school's mission and beliefs; major trends for student learning needs; and school, state, and national goals for student learning. The three chosen were Thinking and Reasoning, Communication, and Employability; these became the school's DRSLs. As the staff members improve their collaboration, these three skills will guide the school's curricular and instructional practices.

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

The Utah State Core Curriculum guides the faculty's curriculum development and implementation. With the breadth of standards and objects to teach, the faculty is able to use a variety of instructional techniques to deliver the curriculum. Due to

the small school and classroom sizes, teachers know each student and can quickly observe a need for refocusing or adapting their instruction to engage all students.

- c) *To what extent does the teaching staff work collaboratively to support the development of a curriculum that focuses on the school's DRSLs?*

Due to the lack of collaboration, time has not been available to inspect the curriculum and its alignment with the DRSLs. Class schedules have been changed to allow for specific collaboration time in which this process can occur.

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

Formative assessments, as well as observations, inform teachers of the students' progress and understanding. Re-teaching is often used for missed concepts, either for the whole class or individuals. The Visiting Team observed that teachers have a repertoire of lessons and strategies from which to draw for students. The objectives are set at the beginning so that students know the end goal and receive assistance where needed along the path to achievement.

### **Instruction:**

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

The classrooms observed clearly displayed various project-type manifestations of learning. Robots were used for engineering, plants were growing in biology classes, mathematics language and terminology was posted in the math classroom both in English and Spanish, timelines were displayed in world history classes, and there were many other presentations of learning. Some students were performing a reader's theater, and others were electronically researching and developing art subjects and observations before physically creating a piece. It was clear that students had a wide variety of projects from which to choose and opportunities to show their understanding.

- 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?*

Due to the lack of structured collaboration, time has not been available to study the DRSLs and the appropriate teaching strategies. Articulation within various departments (science, math) makes it critical that the faculty work together to develop strategies to explicitly teach the identified DRSLs. As mentioned above, class schedules have been changed to allow for specific collaboration time in which this process can occur.

- 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?*

Budgetary limits have hindered significant professional development. InTech is recovering from former expenditures not researched for the school's focus, needs, and impact on the betterment of the school. The school leadership has worked hard to turn this around, and plans to offer more professional development opportunities. The Visiting Team has full confidence that InTech Collegiate High School's leadership will place priority on teacher growth, as shown by its willingness to adjust schedules to allow for collaboration.

- 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?*

It is clear within minutes of observing teachers that their content knowledge is above par. Not only are they extensively educated in their areas of instruction, but they are self-reflective, as shown by their use of knowledge about their students to differentiate their curriculum and instructional approaches to meet individual needs. Many teachers have more than one content endorsement that requires college courses and that includes research-based instructional practices.

- 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 conscientiously include balanced methods of presentation for curriculum and assessments, including technology. Both teachers and students commented on the extensive availability of computers at their disposal.

**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?*

InTech has identified its DRSLs and is in the process of developing school-wide assessments for measuring progress on student achievement. The Thinking and Reasoning DRSL is currently being assessed for College Prep and Early College students. A baseline is provided from which improvement can be targeted. Key college preparatory measures include ACT scores, scholarship awards, Advanced Placement test scores, and college credits earned by InTech Collegiate High School 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?*

School-wide and individual progress is measured by rates of participation in internships, outreach to underrepresented students, anecdotal awards, and participation gap achievement. Over the last several years, InTech has measured its scores in relationship to surrounding districts and schools. InTech Collegiate High School is aware of this relationship, and is working on disaggregating some of the data that is linked to these areas. Such disaggregation would allow InTech Collegiate High School to ensure that all of its students are having project and extracurricular experiences.

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

The Math Department leads in this area, having developed its own assessment for placing students in math courses and identifying achievement gaps. The school identified another strength in the review of student data in the area of the Thinking and Reasoning DRSL.

- 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?*

Teacher collaboration is an overarching goal of the school's self-study. The Special Education Department's staffing of classified students for the staff is a potential model of collaboration for the whole school. The Math Department is also leading in this area. The Visiting Team recommends that InTech Collegiate High School continue to improve its overall system of providing collaboration opportunities for its entire faculty. InTech Collegiate High School has an action plan for implementing more opportunities for collaboration in the 2010-11 school year.

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

The DRSLs are well founded in the Utah Life Skills Curriculum. The DRSLs were ranked by the focus groups. The Thinking and Reasoning and Employment DRSLs will require gathering of data outside the classroom, while the Communication DRSL will lend itself to more standardized measures of assessment.

## **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 principal protects academic time. There is an emphasis on reformatting the curriculum based on data. The positive learning climate was clearly evident to the Visiting Team.

- 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?*

Effective decision making that is data driven, researched based, and collaborative was the basis of the recently completed self-study. In these areas, the principal identified “best practices” as a strength of the school and “research-based” as a weakness.

- 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 principal has brought a great measure of stability to the school. Questions of the sustainability of the school have been addressed to the satisfaction of stakeholders. Under the leadership of Jason Stanger, the learning environment aligns with the mission and beliefs of the school.

- 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 high level of participation and shared responsibility is clearly evident in the school. Through the focus groups, the Board, and the PTO, parents have ample opportunity for involvement. Building in more collaboration time for teachers was a recurring goal throughout the self-study.

- 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?*

Students reflected satisfaction with knowing an adult staff member to turn to when needed. The addition of a school-wide advisory period next school year will further formalize this process.

### **School Services:**

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

### **Facilities and Finances:**

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

## **CHAPTER 4: NORTHWEST SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT STANDARD**

### **Culture of Continual Improvement:**

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

The Visiting Team found that InTech Collegiate High School has worked very hard over the last two years to refine, develop, and implement its comprehensive school improvement plan. The school's stakeholders have met regularly to establish a school-wide improvement plan based on the *Collaborating for Student Achievement* model. They have expressed the intent to continue to revise their improvement goals each year to meet the educational needs of a changing population.

- 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?*

InTech Collegiate High School continues to work on its professional development programs. At present, the school is dedicating a portion of its faculty meeting to professional development topics. The school has two days of professional development at the beginning of each school year, which is supported by more professional development during the school year. Each teacher has the opportunity to attend at least one, and most often two, off-campus professional

development activities. InTech Collegiate High School needs to continue to find opportunities for its faculty members to align their curriculum with professional development activities.

- c) *To what extent is the new/revised school-wide action plan adequate in addressing the critical areas for follow-up, and is there sufficient commitment to the action plan, school-wide and system-wide?*

It is evident that InTech Collegiate High School has spent a significant amount of time and insight on developing its school-wide action plan. The school has taken a serious approach to understanding students' needs and how best to address those needs. The action plan appears to be manageable and well defined.

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

InTech Collegiate High School has had many changes in the last several years. The school now seems to have a stable and consistent administration and faculty support system. The overall academic and administrative environment is very conducive to student achievement and continuous improvement.

## **CHAPTER 5: COMMUNITY BUILDING**

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

The Visiting Team found that InTech Collegiate High School does an excellent job of working with the community and its partners. InTech is actively involved with Utah State University, as well as several local businesses. InTech has a good working relationship with businesses that have similar interests with the students attending InTech. This gives the students opportunities for internships and other educationally relevant experiences.

The Visiting Team also found relationships within the school to be strong—built on a sense of purpose and direction for the school and its students.

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

InTech Collegiate High School has an excellent system through which it collaborates with community partners. The school is actively involved with the nearby university and its business partners, and students work regularly with

businesses and the university in several programs. University personnel are used to enhance student learning and opportunities.

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

InTech involved its Board of Directors, parents, and community partners in collaboratively examining the school and developing its self-study. The Visiting Team met with parents and board members and found that they are actively involved in collaboration with InTech administration and faculty. There is a strong sense of ownership and community with the parents.

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

The Visiting Team found that the results of school improvement are well documented and identified to all stakeholders. InTech has gone through many changes over the last several years, so the administration and faculty have found it not only beneficial but quite necessary to keep everyone informed and knowledgeable concerning changes and goals.

## **CHAPTER 6: MAJOR COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VISITING TEAM**

### **Commendations:**

- The Visiting Team commends InTech Collegiate High School for the efforts shown by the Special Education Department in communicating to the classroom teachers information pertinent to the students being served under IEPs and 504s. This is a model of collaboration that could be used systemically.
- The Visiting Team commends the InTech Collegiate High School faculty, staff, and community for their efforts to create a culture of caring and personalize the education experience for all students.
- The Visiting Team commends the InTech Collegiate High School administration and Board for completing the difficult task of balancing the budget and refocusing the organization to clarify its vision and purpose.
- The Visiting Team commends the InTech Collegiate High School faculty and staff for the efficiency and professionalism that is displayed in the daily operation of the school organization.

- The Visiting Team commends the InTech Collegiate High School faculty for the content knowledge and classroom organization that yield higher levels of student engagement and achievement.
- The Visiting Team commends InTech Collegiate High School for the innovations and changes being planned for next year: Student Advisory, Collaboration Time, Comprehensive Guidance, etc.

**Recommendations:**

- The Visiting Team recommends that InTech Collegiate High School articulate in summary fashion the value of the data presented in the school profile.
- The Visiting Team recommends that InTech Collegiate High School develop specific measurements for each DRSL including, a working rubric. This work should begin with the data inventory.
- The Visiting Team recommends that InTech Collegiate High School modify its action plan to match its DRSLs (i.e., Thinking and Reasoning, Communication, and Employability).