The Report of the
Accreditation Visiting Team

Landmark High School

612 South Main
Spanish Fork, Utah 84660

April 13-14, 2010

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

THE REPORT OF THE
VISITING TEAM REVIEWING

Landmark High School
612 South Main
Spanish Fork, Utah 84660

April 13-14, 2010

UTAH STATE OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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State Superintendent of Public Instruction

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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 13-14, 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 Landmark 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 Joe Kelly is also commended.

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

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Julie Warren.....Director Elementary
John Webb .....District Policy/504 Coordinator
Scott Wilson..... Director Secondary Education

LANDMARK HIGH SCHOOL

ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF

School Administration

Joe Kelly ..... Principal
Scott Carson ..... Assistant Principal
Dave Brooks ..... TSA/Vice Principal, Cornerstone
Cecil Loftin ..... Cornerstone Administrator

Counseling

Ted Davies ..... Guidance Counselor
Brent Coffman ..... District School Psychologist
Monica Hullinger ..... Prevention Specialist

Support Staff

Nikki Argyle
An'Jalee Burningham
Carrie Crowe
Roy Devenish
Austin Diaz, Jr.
Susan Edenfield
Suzzanne Fisher
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Mark Bailey
Jeff Bauman
Howard Bonzo
Scott Buck
Dave Clark
Brian Davenport
Paul Dopp
Vernon Dunn
Bobbie Sue Ferguson
Lucila Gutierrez
Sue Ann Harding
Patrick Hogle
Harlow John
Todd Killian
Kristie Krause
Mong-Hoa LeBras
Alesha LeMmon
Sterling Ludlow
Sunya Osborn
Todd Pyne
Steven Willingham
Dori Woolanrd

LANDMARK HIGH SCHOOL

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Landmark High School is provide quality educational alternatives in a safe, caring, family-like environment of acceptance, understanding, and respect. This environment restores each student's hope to achieve personal, academic, and career goals and leads to responsible citizenship and personal success.

BELIEF STATEMENTS

Environment:

Restoring hope and confidence is the key to breaking the pattern of failure.
Every teacher and student has the right to teach and learn in a safe environment.
Each person is uniquely gifted and has infinite individual worth and potential.
The ultimate learning environment most closely approximates the family environment.

Teaching/Learning:

Optimal learning takes place in a climate of love, caring, mutual respect and trust.
Students learn most effectively when engaged in meaningful work that they perceive to have value and relevance in their lives.
Every person has an inherent ability to learn and progress within their unique and individual abilities and learning styles and the right to be taught accordingly.

Quality of Life:

Feelings of self worth enhance learning and quality of life for self and others.
Performing meaningful work and service contribute to the quality for self and others.
Literacy and numeracy are the foundations and the keys to accessing continued opportunities in life.

Individual Rights and Responsibilities:

Individual rights are always accompanied by individual responsibilities.
Individual integrity contributes to personal growth and a better society.
The concept of family is the foundation of our society with education as a shared responsibility of home, school, and community.
The process of democracy is dependent upon an educated, involved, and responsible citizenry.

DESIRED RESULTS FOR STUDENT LEARNING (DRSLs)

1. Interpersonal Skills
2. Personal and Social Responsibility
3. Numeracy
4. Literacy

Date of Visit: April 13-14, 2010

MEMBERS OF THE VISITING TEAM

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

Kathleen Chronister, Principal, Mountain High School, Davis School District

Stew Shaver, Principal, Cedar Ridge High School, Sevier School District

VISITING TEAM REPORT

LANDMARK HIGH SCHOOL

CHAPTER 1: SCHOOL PROFILE

The Nebo Alternative High School was opened in the fall of 1976. The name was changed to Landmark High School in 1987. In March of 2008, Landmark moved into a new facility designed specifically for the school. The beautiful new building allowed for much larger classrooms, larger student capacity, a much-needed library, better technology, two computer labs, a fully functioning breakfast and lunch area, a stage area, and more space for a better learning environment. The new building is able to provide an alternative education for students who have not been successful in regular school. Since the last full-team accreditation visit in 2004, Adult Education and Youth in Custody programs of Nebo District have been placed under the Landmark umbrella of services.

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

The school's self-study was an inclusive process that involved students, faculty, staff and parents. The school was boldly setting out to lead the three programs—Alternative Education, Adult Education and Youth in Custody—under common DRSLs. The Adult Education and Youth in Custody programs conducted departmental analyses as departments under Landmark.

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

The future school profile should report data on student progress separately for each program.

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

The self-study embraced the collaborative process for accreditation. It represents all stakeholders. It clearly shows a deep understanding of the time and resources required for school improvement.

<u>Suggested Areas for Further Inquiry:</u>

- Identify, gather and report out data separately for the Alternative Education, Adult Education and Youth in Custody programs.
- Indentify specific indicators that will be measured to show student progress toward achieving the DRSLs that are appropriate for each program.

CHAPTER 2: NORTHWEST ASSOCIATION OF ACCREDITED SCHOOLS (NAAS) 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?*

Landmark students are mostly at risk students, for a variety of reasons. The school has developed a sense of purpose and a mission that addresses these types of students and their issues. The mission statement says, "This environment restores each student's hope to achieve personal, academic, and career goals and leads to responsible citizenship and personal success." The school's belief statements also align with this.

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

The first two DRSLs are the mission and belief statements. The DRSLs appear to be there to show the success of the school's attempts to help students in those areas. The school just needs to come up with some data that will illustrate this success.

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

This is addressed by the Visiting Team in the Recommendations section. Landmark still needs to identify indicators.

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 DRSLs appear to be a product of the many sessions when the focus groups met. There is collaboration among the administration, the staff, and the parents. The policies, procedures, and decisions created at the school are in alignment with the mission and belief statements and DRSLs.

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 curriculum is aligned with the Utah Core, including CRT testing in core areas. Students are encouraged to use Life Skills in their advisory class.

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

The school encourages whole-school math and language goals by using daily math and language assignments in each class. Math and language problems are on PowerPoint and are displayed for students. Teachers provide detailed explanations for the answers, and encourage students to discuss the problems and their solutions.

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 entire faculty is involved in the development and implementation of the DRSLs. This is evident from the commitment to school-wide goals in the DRSL areas.

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

Assessment is used in each content area to determine individual student progress. Students who are behind in credit or skills are provided with additional opportunities for learning, including tutoring and individualized instruction.

Instruction:

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

Teachers use a wide variety of instructional strategies to meet the needs of individual learning styles. Most evident were strategies including hands-on, activity based, and work-based learning, as well as service learning, use of technology in instruction, creative expression, direct instruction, and project-based learning.

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?*

Explicit strategies for teaching the identified literacy and numeracy DRSLs in every classroom included the daily math and language problems and solutions. The communication DRSLs were less evident in daily instruction.

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?*

Teachers meet in professional learning communities on a weekly basis to discuss individual student needs and instructional strategies to meet those needs.

d) *To what extent are teachers proficient in their content area, knowledgeable about current research on effective instructional approaches, and reflective on their own practices?*

Teachers are highly qualified in their content areas and use best practices approach to working with students.

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

Technology is integrated throughout the school in instruction. The data collection for student achievement demonstrates a commitment to ongoing improvement using data-driven decision making.

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?*

Daily math and language problems are used in the classroom. The assessment of student learning primarily uses CRT and UBSCT data. It may be helpful to develop an assessment tool and display a trend of the ongoing daily math and language goals.

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 school uses the district system to assess individual progress. Due to the nature of the alternative setting, a weekly progress measurement may be more valuable to determine student success rather than end-of-term, end-of-semester, or end-of-course measures.

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

CRT and UBSCT data is used to assess success in numeracy and literacy goals. Data collection and assessment of data needs to be addressed for the Interpersonal and Communication DRSLs.

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

The weekly professional development meetings using professional learning communities are used to collaborate. Students are given multiple learning opportunities, offered a variety of program options, provided with ample credit options, encouraged to participate in individual tutoring, and given access to teachers both before and after school.

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

The daily lessons for numeracy and literacy have school-wide scoring tools. The Visiting Team was unable to determine a school-wide tool for measuring growth and success in communication and interpersonal goals.

CHAPTER 3: NAAS 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?*

It is clearly evident that the school administration leads by example in fostering a school climate that promotes student success.

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 administration has proved itself so successful with fulfilling the mission for Alternative Education in the Nebo District that it has been given additional responsibilities for Adult Education and Youth in Custody. This success would not have been possible without effective decision making that is data-driven, researched-based, and collaborative.

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?*

With the support of the Nebo School District, the Landmark administration has a new school in which to teach its students. The school continually supports small class sizes in their teacher-pupil ratio. It is clearly evident that the school environment is safe, efficient, and effective.

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?*

This standard is evident in the belief statements of the school. The huge commitment of time and resources is evident in the school's recently completed self-study. Parents and students have ample opportunities for involvement 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?*

By the very nature of the small school environment, the Landmark community is an extended family. Landmark students are known to the teachers and staff. The advisory class is a means of formalizing the commitment to assist the students in achieving the school-wide expectations for student learning.

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 NAAS, which requires specific responses regarding the physical plant, finances, audit of school records, advertising, etc.

CHAPTER 4: NAAS 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?*

Landmark High School has taken its last self-study and improved upon it. The school has added and developed DRSLs that reflect the direction that the school, community, and students want to pursue. The faculty and staff have used the team approach, and it appears that everyone has bought into the process.

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?*

Landmark High School has developed a plan that included all of the entities. However, it appears that the Adult Education and Cornerstone departments are large enough that they need to identify indicators and measurements for the DRSLs that represent their unique clienteles.

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?*

While the DRSLs are admirable and doable, the school needs to look for ways to quantify results so they reflect a measureable means of showing their growth.

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

At Landmark High School, there exists an aura of satisfaction. The teachers feel as though they are getting through to the students, and the students know they are getting back on track for graduation. The cooperation between them, the administration, and the community has created a well-oiled machine. The Student Council, chosen by the faculty, is representative of the happy atmosphere that prevails.

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

The action plans from the past six years have largely been accomplished and integrated into subsequent plans.

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

All four of the Visiting Team recommendations from the November 2004 visit have been implemented by the school. It is noted that the recommendation to expand the facilities has resulted in a beautiful and efficient new school building.

CHAPTER 5: COMMUNITY BUILDING

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

The faculty meets once a month to review and adjust policies, procedures, activities, student growth, and new ideas. Quarterly, faculty members meet with the Community Council to do the same and get public input.

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

The school communicates with parents, students, and the public through the school newsletter, e-mail, telephone, and the school web page. There is nearly constant communication from the school/teachers to the homes of students. By the school's own admission, this contact would improve if it could occur more often.

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

The school held a one-day workshop for the parents and the public to explain the self-study process. Parents were rotated through the focus groups so that they could gain an understanding of the process.

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

The process has been openly discussed with students, parents, and the public. It is clearly evident that all faculty members have taken part in the process.

CHAPTER 6: MAJOR COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VISITING TEAM

Commendations:

- The Visiting Team commends the Nebo School District and its Board of Education for building the new school for Landmark High School. The attractive and efficient building goes a long way to promote the success of the school.

- The Visiting Team commends the Landmark High School staff for building a culture of caring for the students.

- The Visiting Team commends Joe Kelly, Landmark's principal, for his leadership, and for embracing the collaborative accreditation process and for promoting a culture of continuous improvement.

- The Visiting Team commends the teachers in Landmark High School, the Cornerstone Program, and the Adult Education Program for the high quality of their instruction.

- The Visiting Team commends the Landmark team for the high degree of collaboration between programs and departments. The mutual benefits are evident in the organizing of alternative, adult, and youth in custody programs.

Recommendations:

- The Visiting Team recommends that the alternative high school, Adult Education, and Youth in Custody programs each collect data and report their own data showing progress on DRSLs.

- The Visiting Team recommends that the indicators for student achievement on DRSLs be specific and individualized to each program.

- The Visiting Team recommends that Landmark High School identify assessments (i.e., data) demonstrating mastery of numeracy decision-making skills. Classroom assessments must add to the means of data collection beyond CRTs.

- The Visiting Team recommends that the Landmark High School action plans be broken down by program. Cornerstone and Adult Education need their own action plans, which can all be aligned under the same mission or DRSLs. The action steps will need to be different for each program.

- The Visiting Team recommends that the Landmark faculty standardize the advisory curriculum.

- The Visiting Team recommends that Landmark High School increase its library/ media specialist to full-time position.