

**The Report of the  
Accreditation Visiting Team**

**Manila High School  
200 West Second North  
Manila, Utah 84046**

**April 27, 2010**



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

**THE REPORT OF THE  
VISITING TEAM REVIEWING**

**Manila High School  
200 West Second North  
Manila, Utah 84046**

**April 27, 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 27, 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 Manila 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 Guy Gonder is also commended.

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

Larry K. Shumway, Ed.D.  
State Superintendent  
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William Schell ..... Assistant Principal

**Counseling**

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# **MANILA HIGH SCHOOL**

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of Manila High School is to empower each student to become a caring, competent, and contributing citizen with values, skills, and knowledge that will create a vision for lifelong success in an integrated, diverse, and changing world.

## **BELIEF STATEMENTS**

1. Each student is a valued individual with unique physical, social, emotional, and intellectual needs.
2. Teachers, administrators, parents, and the community share the responsibility for advancing the school's mission.
3. Students learning in a safe environment is the chief priority of the school.
4. Student achievement is enhanced through positive relationships with caring individuals including peers, staff, family, and community.
5. Teachers committed to continuous improvement incorporate in a variety of learning activities and assessments to accommodate differences in student learning styles.
6. Students demonstrate understanding of essential knowledge and skills by actively solving problems and producing quality work.
7. All education should lead to productive citizenship.
8. The ultimate outcome of secondary education is students who are confident, self-directed, life-long learners.

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

### **#1 Communication**

- Students demonstrate effective listening skills
- Students have the ability to read and comprehend the written word
- Writes effectively
- Presents effectively

### **#2 Acquiring and Utilizing Knowledge**

- Mastery of essential knowledge in core areas
- Use theoretical and practical math knowledge to solve problems
- Use the scientific method to solve problems
- Find information using a variety of research tools.
- Career exploration and preparations

### **#3 Citizenship**

- Respect self, others, property and country
- Collaboration – be able to work in groups
- Understand the values of and participate in service
- Accepts responsibility for his/her learning
- Students participate in the active life of school

Date of Visit: April 27, 2010

**MEMBERS OF THE VISITING TEAM**

Steven K. Hirase, District Office, Murray School District, Visiting Team  
Chairperson

## VISITING TEAM REPORT

### MANILA HIGH SCHOOL

#### CHAPTER 1: SCHOOL PROFILE

Manila High School is located in Manila, Utah, a rural community in the northeast section of the state. The school provides educational services for all the students in Daggett County, as well as for a few students in adjacent geographical areas. Daggett is the smallest county in Utah, and during 1996-2008 experienced a decline in student enrollment. During the past two school years the school has had a slight increase in enrollment that has taken it back to 67 percent of its highest enrollment period. The limited enrollment contributes to a narrow curriculum and limited flexibility in scheduling; however, the school has been able to address some of these challenges through the creative use of technology (e.g., EDNET, online coursework, etc.).

Manila High School is the only secondary school in the school district and the county. As such, it serves as the center for community life, with the majority of students who attend the school participating in extracurricular activities.

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

The school has compiled and analyzed formal and informal assessment data for the purpose of informing classroom instruction.

Due to limited “n” sizes, disaggregated data is often unavailable. However, due to those same small numbers, it is possible for the school to focus on student-level data. The school analyzes each student’s proficiency level and provides interventions specific to the deficit areas.

The school has an outstanding academic history. A high percentage of students score proficient on state CRT assessments, and the school has enjoyed a 100 percent graduation rate for a number of school years.

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

The school should consider including additional data that would provide a broader view of the school. Data could include attendance data, grade point average information, graduation rates, and achievement data disaggregated by subgroups such as socioeconomic status, ethnicity, special education, gender, etc.

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

The Visiting Team is confident that the school's self-study developed for the school accreditation accurately reflects its current strengths and limitations.

**Suggested Areas for Further Inquiry:**

Manila High School has been engaged in a very collaborative effort involving each of its major stakeholders in preparing the school's profile and school improvement plan. However, a couple of critical components were overlooked in the school profile. The Visiting Team recommends the following as areas for further inquiry:

- Include each of the departments' "Essential Questions for Departmental Analysis" in the school profile.
- Include additional demographic and achievement data such as ethnicity data, low-income information, attendance information, 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 school engaged in a collaborative process to develop a shared vision for the school. A consensus-building process was established that involved all stakeholders in defining the school's beliefs, mission, and goals.

Interviews with the students and staff substantiated a high level of participation among the major stakeholders in the development of the school's DRSLs. Although parents were not available for interview by the VT, the VT was confident that the school involved parents in the process.

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

There is clear alignment among the school's mission, beliefs and DRSLs. They reflect the school learning community's commitment to meet the individual needs of every student that attends Manila High School.

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

The DRSLs were completed, adopted and implemented during the current school year. Although the school has listed specific indicators for each DRSL designed, the school has not begun the process of defining how the indicators will be assessed on an individual student basis.

- 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?*

At Manila High School the mission, beliefs and DRSLs are just beginning to guide the activities, procedures, policies and decisions of the school. The service activities conducted by the school provide evidence of the school's efforts in this area.

### **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 school, due to its small size, does not organize in departments. Typically, each teacher is the only individual teaching that specific content area. The staff reports a high level of collaboration and cooperation, but not specifically related to the standards in the State Core Curriculum.

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

The members of the instructional staff present the Core Curriculum in their respective content areas in a way that is very engaging to all students, and use strategies that encourage inquiry, problem solving, and 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 desired results for student learning?*

The Visiting Team found little evidence of the development of a curriculum related to the school's DRSLs, either individually or collaboratively. This can be explained by the fact that the principal is new and the school completed the self-study and action plan just prior to the visit from the accreditation team.

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

The school instructional staff employs traditional assessment and questioning strategies to determine their students' mastery of core concepts. With smaller class sizes and a small student body, the teachers are very aware of their individual students' strengths and weaknesses, and adjust their instruction to ensure that all of their students reach the intended learning outcomes.

**Instruction:**

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

The professional staff provides students with a variety of learning opportunities during classroom instructional time. The scope and pacing of lessons are appropriate for the students. The design and selection of instructional strategies and activities are generally based on the essential knowledge and skills for student learning within the content areas observed.

- 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 small class sizes, the members of the professional staff have the opportunity to tailor their instructional strategies to meet the needs of their individual students. The majority of the teachers are very accommodating in individualizing instruction for children who were struggling. In addition, students had the opportunity to work in cooperative/collaborative groups, which also benefited the needs of struggling learners.

- 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?*

The school has determined its professional development needs through the analysis of school-level data, including CRT language arts, mathematics, and science data; school climate data; and stakeholder perception data. Due to the size of the school, the professional staff and school administration take advantage of

courses offered through the Utah State Office of Education and surrounding districts to strengthen their instructional strategies that support student learning.

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

All teachers are certified in their content areas, and all teachers are NCLB highly qualified. All teachers appear to be proficient in their content areas, and exhibited effective instructional approaches during the classroom observations of the Visiting Team.

- 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 observed a wide variety of technology being used in the classroom setting. The school administration reports that Daggett County School District has provided them with good technology support. The school also provides students with additional learning opportunities through EDNET, Electronic High School, and the use of Education 2020 (online instruction) course offerings.

### **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 found evidence related to staff developed classroom assessments, but no evidence of school-wide assessments. In situations where student assessment was observed (formal or informal), the expectations for student learning were typically defined clearly in terms of explicit performance indicators related to classroom curriculum standards.

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

A review of Manila High School's assessment data at both the school and classroom levels provides evidence that the criteria and performance standards used to determine the level of student performance are consistently applied on an equitable basis. The assessments are designed to allow all students to demonstrate their knowledge in the areas assessed, and appear to be free of items that favor students of one background or gender over another.

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

There is evidence to indicate that the school staff understands the importance of using multiple assessments in evaluating student performance. The school administrator has directed the staff members to use a wide variety of formal and informal assessments of student learning, based on the state standards, to guide their classroom instruction. The school's purpose for assessing student learning appears to include monitoring student progress and improving student learning, not simply measuring the presence or absence of students' achievement of essential knowledge and skills.

### **CHAPTER 3: NORTHWEST SUPPORT STANDARDS**

#### **Leadership and Organization:**

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

During his short tenure, the administrator of Manila High School has focused professional development efforts on best practices related to student achievement. The administration has made a concerted effort to recognize and celebrate student and staff accomplishments in order to make them feel valued and important.

- 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 is very aware of the importance of the analysis of data in making sound decisions related to student achievement. The administration has encouraged the staff to use a wide variety of assessments to get an accurate picture of student achievement. The school staff has also been encouraged to analyze the data on both the classroom and the individual student level when looking at changes in classroom instruction and individual student interventions.

- 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 Visiting Team observed a safe and positive learning environment that meets the individual learning needs of each student. The school administration is

commended for giving the school focus and a sense of direction for addressing 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?*

Due to the small size of the school and the community, the school is an integral part of the community in general. The school administration provides many opportunities for community involvement in the school. In meetings with parent groups, the Visiting Team notes a high level of commitment from patrons to the school. Due to the geographical layout of the school district, some students live significant distances from the school. In an effort to be more responsive to the community, the school staff boards a school bus and travels to different locations when the school conducts its parent-teacher conferences. The Visiting Team commends the school and its administration on their efforts to involve the community in the education 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 school administration has established school-wide structures to encourage commitment, participation, collaboration, and shared responsibility for student learning. Most individuals indicated that the school was the focal point of community activities. The school leadership has taken advantage of this and has successfully engaged the community in a shared responsibility 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 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 school is clearly committed to the accreditation and school improvement process, and most importantly, to student achievement. The school's improvement and action plan provides a foundation for meeting students' needs. However, the plan lacks specificity that may provide an obstacle for the school in moving forward in a strategic, focused manner. The Visiting Team recommends the school revise the plan and provide specific details that will assist in reaching the school's desired goals.

- 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 strong evidence that the school administration supports and implements professional development activities that address school improvement and the accomplishment of school goals. However, due to the size of the school and its geographical location, the school relies heavily on professional development offered by the Utah State Office of Education and surrounding school districts in addressing its professional development needs.

- 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?*

The Visiting Team believes the revised school-wide action plan lacks specific detail to address the critical areas for follow-up. However, the school administration and staff are committed to the students who attend Manila High School, and the Visiting Team is confident that they will make the changes necessary to make positive progress toward increased student achievement.

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

Manila High School exhibits a climate centered around productive change and continuous improvement. The school is dedicated and focused on what is best for students, and works diligently to meet the changing needs of the students.

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

The Visiting Team found evidence that the school has made some efforts in the implementation of the original action plan, with revisions made to that plan that better address the school's mission, vision, beliefs, and DRSLs. In addition, the Visiting Team found the school has been somewhat successful in institutionalizing the majority of its "Citizenship" DRSL.

- 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 found evidence that the school has addressed the major recommendations from the previous visiting and review teams.

## **CHAPTER 5: COMMUNITY BUILDING**

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

As previously mentioned, the school and the community share a strong relationship. Students, teachers and administrators have good working relationships that are positive, productive, and professional. The school offers students a wide variety of extracurricular activities, in which the majority of students take part. These activities provide an opportunity for community building and strengthening community support for the school.

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

As previously mentioned, the school is an extension of the community and community life. Conversely, the community is an extension of school life. The Visiting Team found evidence that students are provided with a wide variety of opportunities that support and enhance their learning.

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

Teachers, parents and students were involved with the focus groups process, with parents taking a more limited role. All parents and students had the opportunity to respond to the school perception survey.

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

The self-study and school improvement plan were published and made available to all stakeholder groups. However, after speaking with staff and students, the Visiting Team believes that this information was not shared in a formal manner. The Visiting Team recommends that the school employ strategies to communicate all major components of the self-study, including the mission, beliefs, DRSLs and school improvement/action plan to staff, students and patrons.

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

### **Commendations:**

- The Visiting Team commends the staff and administration of Manila High School. The staff is committed to the students and their individual learning. The school faces many unique challenges due to its size, but the faculty and staff are able to meet the learning needs of the students. Many students commented about the accessibility of the teachers in providing them with additional assistance when needed. They set high expectations for students, and are committed to academic excellence and make themselves available when students are struggling or have questions. This is evidenced by the high graduation rate of the school. The school administration has the school moving in a positive direction, and has the support of the staff. Staff members have appreciated the principal's efforts in recognizing them for their efforts.
- The Visiting Team commends the school for its focus on student learning and addressing the needs of struggling students. The teachers and principal have analyzed student mastery of the curriculum down to the individual student level, and have addressed interventions for those students who have not achieved mastery. The data indicates an extremely high student proficiency rate on state end-of-level tests.
- The Visiting Team commends the school on its efforts regarding the desired results for student learning (DRSLs). The school has been successful in creating a rubric for assessing student progress on each of the school DRSLs down to the indicator level. The school is currently focusing its efforts on the "Citizenship" DRSL—specifically, the area of service—and has been successful in institutionalizing it at the school level.

### **Recommendations:**

- The Visiting Team recommends that the school focus on institutionalizing at least one of the DRSLs down to the classroom level. The instructional staff should analyze how the DRSL relates to classroom instruction and the outcomes expected of each individual student.
- The Visiting Team recommends that the school develop assessments for the desired results for student learning (DRSLs) that are observable and measurable to the individual student level. The individual results from the assessment tools should be shared with students on a regular basis so they can assess their individual progress toward the school's DRSLs. The data should also be aggregated to the school level so that the school can determine its progress in achieving the desired results for student learning.
- The Visiting Team recommends that the school provide greater detail in its school improvement plan. The plan should include specific action steps, the individuals responsible for completing each action step, how the action will be evaluated, and a timeline showing when each action step will be completed.