The Report of the
Accreditation Visiting Team

Mountain Crest High School

255 South 800 East
Hyrum, Utah 8484319

March 16-17, 2011

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

Mountain Crest High School

255 South 800 East
Hyrum, Utah 84319

March 16-17, 2011

UTAH STATE OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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

DIVISION OF
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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 16-17, 2011, 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 Mountain Crest 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 Robert Henke is also commended.

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

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**UCAT Representative
*** CMAC Representative Appointment
****USBA Advisory Representative Appointment
*****Charter School Representative Appointment

12/28/2010

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MOUNTAIN CREST HIGH SCHOOL

ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF

School Administration

Robert Henke ..... Principal
Sheri Hansen ..... Assistant Principal
Terry Williams ..... Assistant Principal

Counseling

Dave Clark ..... Counselor
Kris Evans ..... Counselor
Kris Hart ..... Counselor
Tara Johnson ..... Counselor

Support Staff

Ernest Abouo ..... Custodian
Brady Allen ..... Special Ed. Aide
Sylvia Anderson ..... Cafeteria
Scott Bischoff ..... Custodian
Connie Bodily ..... Aide
Adam Burborough ..... Special Ed. Aide
Amanda Coombs ..... Custodial Assistant
Rachel Domenici ..... Special Ed. Aide
Rex Egbert ..... Custodian
Debbie Hansen ..... Secretary
Hal Hansen ..... Custodian
Marcy Hansen ..... Career Center Aide
Mike Hansen ..... Custodian
Kaylee Harris ..... Custodial Assistant
Mark Haslam ..... Special Ed. Aide
Lora Hendrickson ..... Aide
Erica Hill ..... Special Ed. Aide
Casey Hillyard ..... Custodian
Tonia Hopkins ..... Special Ed. Aide
Brenda Howard ..... Secretary
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Cindy Lundskog.....Aide
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Terry Maughan..... Custodian
Richard McCann .....Special Ed. Aide
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Matt Morris ..... Custodian
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Kyle Nielsen.....Special Ed. Aide
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Davie Swensen
Victoria Tennis
Amy Thomas
Rob Thomas
Jessica Wahlen
Steve Webb
Stephen Williams
Shauna Winegar
Mark Wooten
Paula Zsiray

MOUNTAIN CREST HIGH SCHOOL

MISSION STATEMENT

Mountain Crest High School is dedicated to excellence in Critical Thinking, Communications, and Character for future success.

BELIEF STATEMENTS

- Student learning is the chief priority of the school.
- Students learn best when they are actively engaged in the learning process.
- Each student is a valued individual with unique physical, social, emotional, and intellectual needs.
- Cultural diversity can increase students' understanding of different people and cultures.
- The commitment to continuous improvement is imperative is our school is going to enable students to become confident, self directed, lifelong learners.

DESIRED RESULTS FOR STUDENT LEARNING (DRSLs)

1. Critical Thinking – Students will have the ability to acquire new knowledge, solve complex problems, and apply learning to new situations with creative and critical thinking.
2. Communication – Students will use a variety of communication skills (reading, writing, speaking, and computing) with clarity, purpose and an understanding of audience.
3. Character – Students will learn how to work with others in a variety of situations, take responsibility for personal decisions, show respect, and understand the importance of our global society.

Date of visit: March 16-17, 2011

MEMBERS OF THE VISITING TEAM

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

Janice Combe, Accreditation Consultant, Northwest Accreditation Commission

Brenda Hart, Bonneville High School, Weber School District

Nancy Peebles, Bonneville High School, Weber School District

VISITING TEAM REPORT

MOUNTAIN CREST HIGH SCHOOL

CHAPTER 1: SCHOOL PROFILE

Mountain Crest High School is located in Cache Valley. The school opened in 1983 and is part of the Cache County School District. The school's original enrollment included students in grades nine through 12. Beginning with the 1991 school year, the ninth grade students were assigned to South Cache Middle School.

Mountain Crest High School enrolls students from various small communities in the south end of Cache Valley. The school's enrollment rate has risen steadily over the past few years, creating challenges with sufficient classroom space. A band room and math wing was added to the school to accommodate the growth in enrollment. In addition, a new Olympic-size pool, locker rooms, and a classroom were added in 1995. Finally, another new facility was added in 2000 which included a cafeteria, gym, weight room, wrestling room, suspended indoor track, locker rooms, and athletic offices. The addition of the new facilities allowed the school to create a Student Center, a Multi-Culture room, a Student Council room, and a conference room.

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

The Visiting Team, through its analysis of the school's profile, observations, and interviews with staff, students, and patrons found the following:

- The school has conducted exploration and analysis of a wide range of data.
- There is strong support by all stakeholders of the school and the school improvement plan, including the action plan developed as a result of the accreditation process.
- The school has adequately addressed the recommendations from the previous accreditation visit.

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

The Visiting Team, through its analysis of the school's profile, observations, and interviews with stake holder groups, recommends the following:

- Increased use of a more diverse group of community members and parents in decision-making processes involved with the development of the school profile and action plan. These groups should at least reflect the ethnic and socio-economic make-up of the student population.
- The sharing of individual student outcomes as they relate to school DRSLs with the students and their parents.

- The addition of information to portray a more complete picture of the school's profile. The Visiting Team felt that the school "sold itself short" by not including sufficient information to provide a complete view of the school.

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

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

Suggested Areas for Further Inquiry:

- The collection of specific data as it relates to student performance on the school's DRSLs.
- The development of common rubrics to assess student progress on the school's DRSLs.

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?*

During the 2009-2010 school year Mountain Crest's mission and belief statements were revisited and revised. The process of developing and revising these statements was accomplished through a consensus-building process that included a variety of stakeholders. Students, parents, faculty, staff, and administrators worked together to examine important information that would clearly define the core values of the school.

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

Mountain Crest's mission statement and DRSLs are completely aligned, because they are the same. The mission statement has three components: Critical Thinking, Communication, and Character. These three components have then become the DRSLs. The mission statement and DRSLs are clearly reflected in the instruction. In discussing the school's mission statement and DRSLs with students, the Visiting Team found that they felt the DRSLs were a part of their everyday education. They gave examples of how each was used in daily curriculum and instruction.

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

Each area of the mission statement and DRSLs has some indicators and assessments. For example, Critical Thinking measurable indicators are CRT and ACT scores, CTE Certification, etc. Communication and Character also have assessments. The Visiting Team feels this is an area that can be improved. The Visiting Team believes the indicators and assessments can and should be more specific. This would include data that should focus on growth and student learning outcomes.

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 found it very apparent that Mountain Crest's mission, beliefs, and DRSLs are present in the culture of the school. The faculty is committed to embedding the DRSLs into curriculum and instruction. The Visiting Team found that teachers were enthusiastic about the opportunity to incorporate the DRSLs into instruction. Even though the mission statement and DRSLs are new in the last two years, they are apparent in the culture and climate of this school. Many teachers expressed that these statements were already a natural part of what they taught and how they managed their classes. In visiting with students, the Visiting Team found that students believed that the mission, beliefs, and DRSLs were not openly discussed but were ever present in their education. They were able to relate examples of how each were taught and emphasized in the curriculum without ever being mentioned.

Curriculum:

a) *To what extent does the staff work collaboratively to ensure the curriculum is based on clearly defined standards, the Utah Core Curriculum, reflecting the Utah* Life Skills: A Guide to Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions for Success*?*

The Visiting Team found that Mountain Crest High School uses most of its professional development time and late-start Friday time to collaborate in departmental groups. During this time the teachers meet together to align their curriculum and to begin creating common assessments. An example of this would be the Social Studies Department. The teachers have been able to create a common assessment for U.S. History-A, as well as a test bank for further testing. They also created common daily bell quizzes and aligned their curricula based on core objectives. This type of collaboration needs to be further developed in **all** curricular areas. The Visiting Team commends Mountain Crest on its current work, and recommends the school continue on its course of creating a curriculum that is student driven.

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

One of Mountain Crest's DRSLs is Critical Thinking Skills. It is difficult to evaluate whether students are engaged in critical thinking skills, but in discussing this DRSL the students gave several examples of times when they had been taught to use higher-order thinking skills. In visits to the classrooms, the Visiting Team observed students engaged in group presentations, test-taking, problem-solving and collaborative skills. The Visiting Team believes that teachers are using their PLCs to create opportunities for students to use a variety of skills in the classroom, and that teachers are also working together to share ideas on various ways to present the material to the 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?*

The Visiting Team found evidence to suggest that the members of the teaching staff, in departments and through the PLC process, are currently in the process of developing and modifying the curriculum to focus on the school's DRSLs. The initial focus has been on the school's Critical Thinking DRSL.

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

The Visiting Team commends the departments that have begun to create benchmark common assessments as a way to assess what is being taught in the classroom, and provide verification that the students are learning. This is an area that needs to be more developed. Currently there are only a few examples of common assessments being used at Mountain Crest, although, the administration does meet with each department quarterly to look at available data and what can be done as a department to improve the learning outcomes of students. That is to be commended. The administration seems to be proactive about using PLC time to improve the curriculum to ensure that **all** students are learning the core objectives.

Instruction:

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

The Visiting Team observed the faculty and staff of Mountain Crest using a variety of instructional strategies in their classrooms, including collaboration, oral reports, and team presentations. The Visiting Team also observed the use of a wide variety of technology in the presentation of the curriculum. Many teachers encouraged students to be more responsible for their own productivity, which promoted more active learning. Students were encouraged to use critical thinking to apply their learning to meaningful outcomes.

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?*

First, the Visiting Team found that Mountain Crest's faculty, staff, and administration promoted a positive learning environment. The faculty has used the foundation of professional learning communities to take the opportunity to examine how each faculty member can incorporate the DRSLs into his/her curriculum. For many of them, it is a natural characteristic of their curriculum. For example, the Woods I teacher uses the DRSL of Critical Thinking in each of his projects right from the beginning—in designing the project, selecting the wood, making the right cuts, and choosing a stain. Students were very aware of how each class increased their ability to think critically, to communicate, and to develop good character. When the students recognize and appreciate this, it is an important part of a school's culture.

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?*

Mountain Crest is very involved in the professional development model. The administration and several faculty members have attended a national conference on PLCs. The administration plans to send more faculty members to the training. Every Friday, faculty members meet to collaborate in a PCL model. Two are school-wide and two are department-oriented. Faculty members have also been involved in professional development during the summer to work on common assessments, integrating DRSLs, and improving student learning. Mountain Crest's faculty members are to be commended for their dedication to 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?*

According to student feedback, teachers are proficient, dedicated, knowledgeable, and caring. All teachers at Mountain Crest are teaching in their area of endorsement. The Visiting Team found that Mountain Crest has a large number of students taking Advancement Placement and concurrent enrollment classes. The administration, counselors, and faculty should be commended for encouraging students to take advantage of these opportunities. The Visiting Team found that teachers in all areas were dedicated and reflective in their practices. They not only want students to be better learners, but make the students want to be better learners. Teachers provide students with feedback that is constructive, supportive, and specific to improve student learning.

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

The Visiting Team found that Mountain Crest does an excellent job of integrating technology into the curriculum, instruction, and assessments. In the history department, the common assessments they have developed are on the computer. The administration has done an excellent job of providing the faculty members with technology that enhances their instruction. Many classrooms have Smart Boards and documents that allow the teacher to present the curriculum in a variety of modalities. The Special

Education Department uses electronic response systems and Smart Boards, which provides them with an opportunity to use a variety of teaching strategies. Teachers have a mobile lab available to them, as well as several computer labs. Students have a variety of opportunities to use technology during their educational experience.

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?*

Student achievement is based on a clear definition: students are expected to succeed. The school has begun a program called the "Do-Over" program. This allows students to re-take quizzes or tests after they have been re-taught the material they missed.

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

Mountain Crest has identified areas in which students need to be assessed, which led to the design of the school's FLEX period. The school recognized the need for study hall and time for students to make up their assignments, and created a period every day where students can go to different classes to work on assignments or get help from their teachers. In most cases, assessment of student performance is clearly defined and applied on an equitable basis.

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

The Visiting Team found that the assessment of student learning includes a limited sample of student performance, and in some cases does not provide sufficient evidence. Assessments are being made within the classrooms, but no data was shown to demonstrate the expectations.

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?*

Mountain Crest has formed excellent PLCs, allowing collaboration within each department. Professional development comes each Friday morning when departments are in their PLCs. Last summer the teachers in the history department met together to form a common formative assessment for a unit; this is an ongoing process for them. In addition, the English department has started with a common writing prompt and from there will create a common grading rubric.

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

This is an area that the Visiting Team suggests the school address, because there was no common scoring tool to assess the DRSLs.

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 current school administration was appointed at Mountain Crest High School for the 2009 school year. In spite of the challenge created by the change in administration, the Visiting Team found strong, compelling evidence that the school leadership fosters an extremely positive academic learning climate and provides excellent support for teaching and learning. The school administration has been successful in the accreditation process, establishing a collaborative process that actively involved all stakeholder groups. Interviews with parents, students, and faculty members indicate a high degree of respect and support for the efforts led by the school administration.

The Visiting Team commends the school on the strength of the its leadership, and has confidence that the school will be successful in its implementation of the school action plan and that these efforts will have a positive impact on student achievement.

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 Visiting Team has observed evidence that the decisions made by the school leadership are data-driven and research-based. The goals that have been identified in the school's action plan are a direct result of the school profile and the data contained in that profile.

The Visiting Team recommends that the school focus its attention on developing more specific indicators of student proficiency on school-wide DRSLs and collect consistent, school-wide data that reports student progress toward mastery of those indicators.

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 was able to identify a strong connection between the school's use of resources, both fiscal and human, that are directly aligned with school goals, DRSLs, and general school improvement efforts. The school administration provides resources for staff members to engage in professional learning activities that directly affect student learning in the areas of need identified in the school profile.

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 Visiting Team found strong evidence to support the school leadership's successful efforts in empowering the school learning community in the collaborative process that was used in the school's accreditation process and in the development of the self-study. Interviews with members of the school leadership team, student leaders, focus group leaders, teachers, etc., suggest that the contributions made and the feedback received were acknowledged and valued and were incorporated in the school profile and action plan. Additionally, student members of the focus groups were tasked with collection of general information from the student body that was used in the decision-making process.

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

The Visiting Team found no evidence of a formal system under which each student has an adult staff member to assist the student in achieving the school-wide expectations for student learning. The Visiting Team recommends that the school explore way to accomplish this goal.

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?*

There is evidence that Mountain Crest High School used *Collaborating for Student Achievement* in its self-study process to develop its comprehensive school plan. The focus groups used the NSSE rubrics, and the departmental analyses were completed by using the essential questions. The Visiting Team felt that Mountain Crest used the previous evaluations as a means of trying to improve the school, as well as evaluating the school for this self-study. A PLC leadership team has been created, and it is believed that this team will review and revise on an ongoing basis.

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?*

Mountain Crest High School has implemented late-start Fridays to provide time for teacher training and collaboration. The administration is supportive of the PLC model, and has sent teams to workshops to learn about it. The teachers are enthusiastic about the time spent with their colleagues to align curricula and begin the process of common assessments. The Visiting Team commends the school for its work on the PLC model. It is recommended that the school focus its efforts on the three essential questions: (1) What do we expect the students to learn? (2) How will we know what the students have learned? (3) How will we respond to the students who are not learning?

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 feels that the school-wide action plan addresses the areas that were identified by the school as needing more attention and effort, but the assessment component of the action plan is missing and needs to be addressed. It is important that the action plan is more student-driven, with specific proficiency levels for student learning outlined. Goals should be more specific, measurable, and focused on student outcomes.

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

The Visiting Team believes that Mountain Crest is capable of continuing to improve and implement its professional learning communities. The teachers and administration appear

to support a plan for collaboration and teaming. The school provides time daily during FLEX time for students to receive remediation and tutoring. It also allows students the opportunity to take additional classes for credit. The "Do-over" policy is also a positive step in improving academic outcomes. Morale is high among the school's teachers, staff and students. The Visiting Team commends the school for providing a positive environment for all stakeholders. As one teacher said, "The administration and students at Mountain Crest make me want to come to work and do a good job."

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

Since the 2005 visit, Mountain Crest has gotten a new administration, and many veteran teachers have retired. Because of this, the DRSLs and the action plan have undergone some major changes. The DRSLs have been changed to the "3 C's": Communication, Critical Thinking and Character. These DRSLs are much the same, but have been simplified for instruction. PLCs have been created for departments to align curriculum and look at common assessments. The Visiting Team commends Mountain Crest for making these positive changes. The Visiting Team recommends that more opportunities to gather data be created. The need for data will help identify achievement gaps and specific students who are not learning. The PLCs must validate instructional practices, and the data will validate who is learning and what they are learning. The Visiting Team understands that PLCs have been accreditation-driven this year, but they can now be more fine-tuned and become more "needs-driven."

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

Again the Visiting Team commends Mountain Crest for its PLCs, but now they need to be used for the alignment of curriculum and the creation of common benchmark assessments for **all** classes, not just core classes. The Visiting Team understands that Mountain Crest is in the beginning phases due to the change in administration, but much work is still needed. Some departments have begun creating common assessments and aligning their curricula. The Visiting Team commends the administration for creating paid time in the summer for departments to have retreats where they address these issues and create curriculum and assessments that are student driven. It is noted that FLEX time has helped with remediation. Data has shown a decline in the number of "F" grades given. It is recommended that a greater degree of accountability for learning be addressed during FLEX time. The school has revisited its action plan and addressed the 2005 Visiting Team report by revising the DRSLs and creating improvement strategies. The missing component is assessment/data.

CHAPTER 5: COMMUNITY BUILDING

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

The Visiting Team found evidence to indicate that positive and productive working relationships have been established among the faculty, support staff, and administrators. Over the past five years there have been three different administrations. The current administration has been proactive in dealing with the faculty. Respect among students, teachers, and administrators is clear. All individuals are treated with fairness, dignity, and respect. The staff members feel as though their place of work is their home.

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

Mountain Crest does an excellent job of engaging the community with the learning process happening at the school. The school uses PowerSchool and school newsletters as the primary sources of communication with the community. The school offers many clubs for students to join so that they can actively interact with the community. The school encourages members of the community, in their role as citizens, to voice opinions that will aid to the student growth and school improvement.

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

The Visiting Team found that the community support and ownership of Mountain Crest was clearly evident. Communication of student progress is a clear focus. The PTA and Community Council are included and involved in the school's decision-making process. All stakeholder groups were intimately involved in the focus group process; however, the Visiting Team recommends that the school actively recruit and involve parents representing different ethic minority groups and those of low socioeconomic status.

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

The school shares information with the stakeholders through school newsletters, parent-teacher conferences, SEOPs, and Community Council. School improvement results are clearly communicated to the faculty. Students and parents use the online program PowerSchool for checking grades.

CHAPTER 6: MAJOR COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VISITING TEAM

Commendations:

- The Visiting Team commends the school on the establishment of a positive school climate and culture. Stakeholder groups made many comments on the strong sense of community that exists in the school, where the DRSL of Character is exemplified by student and staff members who are kind and respectful and genuinely care for each other.

- The Visiting Team commends the staff on its level of commitment and dedication to the students that attend Mountain Crest High School. The staff employs effective instructional strategies that keep students engaged in the learning process. Students comment about the accessibility and willingness of all staff members to address individual student needs. All of these things contribute to a positive school climate in which students enjoy their learning experience and want to be at school.

- The Visiting Team commends the school administrators for the leadership and direction they have given to the school. Providing a school with direction and making the changes necessary to increase student achievement is difficult at best. Under the direction of Principal Henke, the school is moving in a positive direction, with student achievement being the focus for changes. The Visiting Team commends the administration for providing a positive climate and culture that are supportive of collaboration and school change.

- The Visiting Team commends the school staff for their efforts to embed the school's DRSLs into their daily instruction.

Recommendations:

- The Visiting Team recommends the involvement of a more diverse, representative group of stakeholders in the focus group process. Every effort should be made to include parents and students from different ethnic backgrounds, different socioeconomic situations, etc.

- The Visiting Team recommends that the school and staff begin making efforts toward the development and implementation of tools to measure progress on the school's DRSLs through the emerging PLC structure. These efforts should be stated in specific terms, including clear indicators that are observable and measurable. The school should investigate means of reporting progress, on both school-wide and individual student levels, related to the indicators for each DRSL.

- The Visiting Team recognizes the school's efforts to provide a wide variety of data in the school profile. The data help provide a fairly accurate profile of the school and its

strengths and weaknesses. However, the Visiting Team recommends that the school consider providing additional information that would give a more accurate picture of the school. Additional data sources might include assessment data as related to low-income students, student achievement data related to efforts during the FLEX period, etc.