

**The Report of the
Accreditation Visiting Team**

**Rich High School
P.O. Box 278
Randolph, Utah 84064**

May 3, 2012



**Utah State Office of Education
250 East 500 South
P.O. Box 144200
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**Rich High School
P.O. Box 278
Randolph, Utah 84064**

May 3, 2012

UTAH STATE OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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Salt Lake City, Utah

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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, May 3, 2012, was conducted because of the school's desire to ensure quality education for all students in the school, and to increase student achievement.

The entire staff of Rich 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 Rick Larsen is also commended.

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

Larry K. Shumway, Ed.D.
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*****Charter School Representative Appointment

**UCAT Representative

****USBA Advisory Representative Appointment

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RICH HIGH SCHOOL
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Justin Groll Assistant Principal

Counseling

Scott Ferguson Counselor

Support Staff

Tammy Hoffman Office Administrator
Terry Spencer Librarian
Judy Jackson Food Service Manager

Faculty

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Tammy Hoffman	JoDee Muir	Delora Wight
Blair Hurd	Becky Peart	Weston aylor
Lonnie Kay	Jason Petersen	Michael Williamson

RICH HIGH SCHOOL

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Rich High School is to produce responsible citizens through academic achievement and personal growth.

BELIEF STATEMENTS

We Believe:

- Success motivates individuals
- Every student is capable of learning
- In the development of lifelong learners
- Quality education makes a difference

DESIRED RESULTS FOR STUDENT LEARNING (DRSLs)

1. Effective Communicators
2. Responsible Citizens
3. Critical Thinkers/Problem Solvers

Date of visit: May 3, 2012

MEMBERS OF THE VISITING TEAM

Robert Stillwell, Northwest Accreditation Commission and USOE Accreditation
Consultant, Visiting Team chair

Joyce Stillwell, Special Education Teacher, Weber School District (retired)

VISITING TEAM REPORT

RICH HIGH SCHOOL

CHAPTER 1: SCHOOL PROFILE

Rich High School is a small, rural school located in Randolph, Utah. It has significant partnerships with higher education for distance learning and concurrent enrollment and with Bridgerland ATC for vocational training. It serves approximately 135 students in grades 9-12 from all communities within Rich County.

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

The school shows clear evidence of institutionalizing its Responsible Citizen DRSL.

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

The Visiting Team has recommended that the 32 action items in the action plans be prioritized with timelines.

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

The self-study was complete and showed many fine examples of success, as well as indentifying areas for future growth.

Suggested Areas for Further Inquiry:

See the recommendations section below.

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?*

A considerable amount of time went into revisiting the mission, beliefs and DRSLs. The whole school community participated, and the school is very confident that it has the support of stakeholders as it proceeds to implement the DRSLs.

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

The culture of the school is inclusive and caring. There are high expectations for academics as well as character. In the past five years there has been a concerted and successful effort to institutionalize the Responsible Citizen DRSL.

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

Institutionalization of the Responsible Citizen DRSL has been measured by reports of incidents of misconduct ranging from number of tardies to safe school violations. The SHARPS survey also indicates that students are making more responsible choices regarding their out-of-class and out-of-school behaviors. Rich High School has instituted a drug testing policy that applies to all students. The students are responding positively and violations are decreasing.

- 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 culture of inclusion and caring is seen and felt throughout the school. The school has a tremendous amount of parental support to strictly administer the code of conduct. Many examples of caring and courtesy were seen during the visit.

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 teachers have skillfully aligned the curriculum to the new Utah Core Standards and the Utah Life Skills.

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

Critical Thinkers/Problem Solvers is a Rich High School DRSL. The necessary skills are explicitly taught to every student by every teacher.

- 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 teachers are poised to move on to implementing the Effective Communicator DRSL. They need to implement a Six Traits of Writing Rubric and use it for writing across the curriculum.

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

The faculty uses formative assessment data on a regular basis. The school has done a commendable job of analyzing data, and has a good sense of who is learning and who is not learning.

Instruction:

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

The teachers are highly skilled at using multiple instructional strategies to meet learner needs.

- 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?*

Many examples were observed of teachers explicitly teaching DRSL indicators.

- 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?*

Professional development has focused on recommendations from last full team visit. In the future, the whole faculty should engage in a conversation about cross-curricular writing and work out a school-wide writing assessment.

- 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?*

The teachers offer quality instruction. They are committed to bringing the best practices into their classrooms, and are focused on student success.

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

Rich High School's technology plan is second to none. Regular classrooms are well stocked with hardware, and the teachers are trained in its effective use. The Special Education Department uses iPads for students to reinforce matching and sorting skills. The distance learning center is equipped to offer multiple college courses simultaneously. Distance learning classes are offered on two-way television at assigned times every day.

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 teachers have their formative assessments and are keenly aware of how students are progressing through their courses. By all standardized measures, the school is successful. The majority of Rich High School students receive some college credit while in high school. Many earn their associate's degree upon graduation from high school.

- 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 reaches out to students to help in any way it can so that each student can find success.

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

Rich High School not only collects and reports data, but analyzes it as well. The school has great confidence in knowing where their students stand with regard to 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?*

There has been progress made toward learning the Six Traits of Writing method. Rubrics should be developed for the Six Traits that can be used school-wide.

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

The agreement is there; however, time must be allocated for the teachers to work out the who, how, and when of writing across the curriculum and the means of assessing writing school-wide.

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 academic learning climate is strong at Rich High School. The school has received a waiver to have a four-day school week. The school has demonstrated time and again that, with its athletic region travel requirements, students receive more instructional time in four extended school days than in five regular days with almost constant interruptions for travel. The principal is very aware that time on task Monday through Thursday is critically important. By all measures observed, this schedule is working to the benefit of Rich High School students.

- 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?*

By institutionalizing the Responsible Citizen DRSL, the school leadership demonstrated how behavior can be measured. The stage has been set for successful implementation of the other DRSLs.

- 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 district and the school are commended for the partnerships they have established to expand the educational opportunities for their students. The environment at Rich High School is safe, orderly, and student centered.

- 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?*

Students, parents and community members joined with the administration and faculty in focus groups to identify areas for school improvement. The degree of buy-in among stakeholders is remarkable.

- 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 small, rural setting is conducive to each student being well known. The students are proud of the fact that there are no small cliques among them, and that they consider the whole student body to be one big family. The teachers know their students well, and the principal knows each student by name.

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 has done a commendable job of making accreditation a process rather than a product. The school improvement plan includes 32 action items.

- 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?*

In response to the 2005 Visiting Team recommendations the school provided professional development on three-tiered Response to Intervention (RTI), explicit instruction, CHAMPS, and peer coaching. There is also district-facilitated training on the Common Core.

- 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 new action plan contains 32 action items for school improvement. The Visiting Team recommended that the school prioritize the list into a five-year school improvement plan with annual reviews.

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

Rich High is committed to continuous improvement. By involving parents in the focus groups, the school has achieved high stakeholder ownership of the school's improvement plan.

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

The DRSLs have been revamped from eight to three, and specific indicators have been added. The school set a priority of institutionalizing the Responsible Citizen DRSL, and was successful not only in measuring student progress but in helping students make healthier decisions.

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

There were five recommendations from 2005. *Collaborating for Student Achievement* is the basis for the 2012 self-study. Utah Life Skills were incorporated into the school's DRSLs. A school-wide assessment for Responsible Citizen was implemented. Professional development was planned and instituted. The educational horizons of all Rich High School students have been broadened.

CHAPTER 5: COMMUNITY BUILDING

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

There is great teamwork among the faculty and staff at Rich High. They all want success for students.

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

The school has extensive relationships with high education institutions for concurrent and distance learning courses. The district partners with Bridgerland ATC in order for Rich High School students to take classes at a district-owned facility staffed by Bridgerland teachers. Students are bussed back and forth the short distance from the high school to the ATC each period of the day.

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

The inclusion of the school community, including parents, students, the sheriff, and the superintendent, has made the self-study process work on many levels for the benefit of students.

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

The school has much to be proud of, and will gladly share the results of its school improvement throughout the school, district and county.

CHAPTER 6: MAJOR COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VISITING TEAM

Commendations:

- The Visiting Team commends Rich High School for its commitment to smaller class sizes. Students benefit from the personalized attention they receive from their teachers as a result.
- The Visiting Team commends Rich High School for the use of technology in the classrooms. The quality of the hardware and its effective use by teachers is outstanding.
- The Visiting Team commends Rich High School for explicitly teaching the attributes of Responsible Citizenship. Rules for proper conduct are clear, and teachers follow through with consequences and collect and report data that gives evidence of student progress on this DRSL.
- The Visiting Team commends Rich High School for including parents and students in focus groups. The level of stakeholder buy-in to the school's mission and beliefs is exemplary.
- The Visiting Team Commends Rich High School for the partnerships it has established with Bridgerland ATC and other colleges and universities. The partnerships expand educational opportunities for students far beyond expectations for a small, rural school.
- The Visiting Team commends Rich High School for the positive, inclusive culture of the school. There is mutual respect among and between students and staff members.

Recommendations:

- The Visiting Team recommends that Rich High School prioritize the bulleted items in the action plans. There is an ample number of items identified by focus groups and departmental analysis to constitute a five-year plan. It is recommended that the action plans in the 2012 self-study be restructured with timelines stretching from summer 2012 and to spring 2017.
- The Visiting Team recommends that Rich High School implement a Six Traits of Writing rubric that each teacher and student can understand and use. A school-wide

common assessment will be a logical next step in implementing the Effective Communicator DRSL.