

San Juan High School 311 North 100 East Blanding, Utah 84511

February 28-March 1, 2007





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

San Juan High School 311 North 100 East Blanding, Utah 84511

February 28-March 1, 2007

UTAH STATE OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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State Superintendent of Public Instruction

DIVISION OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND SCHOOL SUCCESS

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FOREWORD

The major purpose of the accreditation process is to stimulate school growth and improvement so as to increase 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. It is a three-phased 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, February 28 and March 1, 2007, 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 San Juan 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 Bob Peterson is also commended.

The staff and administration are congratulated for their desire for excellence at San Juan High School, and also for the professional attitude of all members of the group, which made it possible for them to see areas of weakness and strength and to suggest procedures for bringing about 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 even more 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 San Juan High School.

Patti Harrington, Ed.D. State Superintendent of Public Instruction

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SAN JUAN HIGH SCHOOL

ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF

School Administration

Bob Peterson	-		
Counseling			
Jed Lyman	Counselor		
Charles Johnson	Counselor		
Support Staff			
Julie Black, Donna Jones, Gena Nielson	Office Staff		
Robin McDaniel, Dorothy Mitchell	Cafeteria		
Jim Blankenagel	Tech Support		
John Laws	School Resource Officer		
Rosalie Jones	Parent Liaison		
Alsia Alder	School Nurse		
Lorin Tanner, Hidemi Yamagishi	Education Psychologists		

Faculty

Chase Alder Cecile LeeBoy Betsy McPherson Mark Bake Julie Benedict Mike Merket Jared Berrett Cassy Moon Lyle Nielson Janet Bradford Ryan Nielson Brent Flavel Anne Howell Steve Palmer Bret Jacobsen Jeanine Parson Tracy Johnson Bill Sivert Fawn Jorgenson LeAnna Squires David Lacy Craig Swenson Monty Lee

SAN JUAN HIGH SCHOOL

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of San Juan High School is to provide a professional, positive, challenging, and safe learning environment in which students are prepared to be positive contributors to society.

BELIEF STATEMENTS

- We believe family and community expectations establish the foundation support level of education and that students, parents and teachers are partners in the education process.
- We believe students' positive self-esteem is integral to education development.
- We believe in providing a safe, positive, productive and equitable environment for learning.
- We believe quality staff is essential for the improvement of schools.
- We believe in the development of higher-order thinking skills, problem-solving techniques and basic human values.
- We believe all students should take pride in and appreciate their heritage, and acquire knowledge of other cultures.
- We believe everyone should become proficient in the use of the English language and that literacy is the key to knowledge.
- We believe in the appropriate accommodation of special needs students.
- We believe laws and policies must be enforced to develop responsible citizens.

MEMBERS OF THE VISITING TEAM

Andrew Odoardi, Consultant, Utah State Office of Education, Visiting Team Chairperson

Earl Slack, Bryce Valley High School, Garfield School District

Ross Poore, Cottonwood Treatment Center

Sue Anderson, Grand County High School, Grand County School District

Rick Pruitt, Richfield High School, Sevier School District

VISITING TEAM REPORT

SAN JUAN HIGH SCHOOL

CHAPTER 1: SCHOOL PROFILE

San Juan High School is located in San Juan County, in the Four Corners area of Utah. This is a rural area, with a large population being bussed from outlying areas. It is made up of about 40 percent Caucasian/white and 60 percent various minority (55 percent Native American) students. The school serves one of the largest geographical areas in the state.

- a) What significant findings were revealed by the school's analysis of its profile?
 - There has been good participation among the entire school community in developing the profile (students, parents, educators).
 - The school's demographics are diverse; the DRSLs don't seem to fit with the demographics in aligning the demographics, action plan, and curriculum.
 - The challenges of demographics (i.e., single-parent families, diverse racial population, and socioeconomic diversity) have been dealt with admirably.
 - The opinions given in the Needs Assessments were very different among parents, students and teachers.
 - There are thirty-six teachers with advanced degrees!
 - The rate of student attendance is very commendable (96 percent).
- b) What modifications to the school profile should the school consider for the future?
 - Analyze and use the data to coordinate the action plan and DRSLs.
 - Is the data being used in Core Mapping? This needs to be shown in the profile.
 - DRSLs need to be measurable. At the present time, they are too broad and not articulated in such a manner as to be usable for all members of the educational community.

Suggested Areas for Further Inquiry:

- Rethink DRSLs with the mission and belief statements in mind, using the data to reach the demographic population.
- Include more of what the school does and how it is helping students be successful.
- Broaden the profile to include more of what the school does on behalf of all the students, especially those who need assistance.
- Disaggregate data for school clubs and organizations to show how these are serving the demographic base.
- Prioritize DRSLs to be worked on systematically. Don't try to accomplish everything at once.

CHAPTER 2: THE SELF-STUDY PROCESS

- a) To what extent has the school community engaged in a collaborative self-study process on behalf of students?
 - The community and students have been involved in the self-study, as supported by the documentation.
- b) To what extent does the school's self-study accurately reflect the school's current strengths and limitations?

The school has been very candid in discussing the challenges and successes of the school and students. They have a good sense of where they are and where they wish to be.

CHAPTER 3: INSTRUCTIONAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

San Juan High school's desired results for student learning are as follows:

- 1. Thinking
 - Students value critical thinking and coherent thought processes and the communication of them.
 - Students value creative thought and seek to develop their own creativity.

• Students develop their cognitive skills as life long learners.

2. Global Awareness

- Students will be aware of global issues and prepare themselves for the global society in which we live.
- Students are aware of geographical, political, sociological, and economical issues which affect their world today and in the future.
- 3. Personal and Social Responsibility
 - Students develop character by learning about and demonstrating honesty, integrity, and respect.
 - Students respect and appreciate positive diversity.

Shared Vision, Beliefs, Mission, and Goals:

a) To what extent did the school facilitate a collaborative process to build a shared vision for?

San Juan High School formed a committee to develop a mission statement. The staff, students and parents were involved in the process. The school adopted the mission statement and continually reviews it to ensure it reflects the goals of the students and staff. The mission statement is displayed in the hallways and in every classroom.

b) To what extent has the school defined a set of beliefs that reflect the commitment of the administration and staff to support student achievement and success?

After surveying the students, staff and parents, it is evident to the committee that the school has a defined set of beliefs that reflect the commitment of the administration and staff to supporting student learning and success.

c) To what extent do the school's mission and beliefs align to support the school's desired results for student learning (DRSLs)?

San Juan High School formed a committee to survey the staff, students, and parents to help develop their DRSLs. The DRSLs were reviewed by the staff and adopted as the school's desired student outcomes. When these DRSLs are stated measurably, they will align with their mission and belief statements. The DRSLs were adopted by consensus of all stakeholders.

Curriculum Development:

- a) To what extent does the staff work collaboratively to ensure the curriculum is based on clearly defined standards and the Utah Core Curriculum (with inclusion of the Utah Life Skills)?
 - All staff members have worked collaboratively to ensure the alignment of course content, objectives, and classroom instruction with State Core Curriculum standards and, where possible, national standards.
- b) 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?

This is a project that is in progress. It has not yet been completed. Yet the faculty leadership was firm in its attribution to the accreditation processes of its role in facilitating a collaborative culture.

Quality Instructional Design:

- a) To what extent does the professional staff design and implement a variety of learning experiences that actively engage students?
 - It is apparent that most, if not all, of the departments are using available technology, nearness of the College of Eastern Utah San Juan Campus, and other available means to help students achieve success. The courses that are integrated with CEU are allowing students to exit San Juan High School with usable and marketable skills. This is very evident in the vocational area, but is not limited to that area.
- b) To what extent does the professional staff employ a variety of instructional strategies to ensure the needs of different learners are met?
 - With the available technology (i.e., smartboards, Eiki-type projectors, computer labs, etc.) staff is preparing students in a variety of ways to be successful in today's diverse world. The different methods observed in classrooms were very effective, and as diverse as the staff and students.
- c) To what extent do the professional staff and leadership provide additional opportunities which support student learning?
 - Study sessions and extensions outside the regular classroom are available for students to make up work from the classroom. There are a number of educational clubs and extracurricular activities that enhance the classroom for students. Not all students participate, but all students are given the opportunity to be involved.

The success of these organizations is a tribute to the dedication of the staff and leadership.

Quality Assessment Systems:

a) To what extent has the staff developed classroom or school-wide assessments based on clearly articulated expectations for student achievement?

San Juan High School provided extensive student assessment data in the school profile. Varied quality assessment systems are currently in place, ranging from student portfolios in English to History Fair and Science Fair projects.

Higher-level, open-ended questions are utilized. Performance tasks are evident, particularly in the technical programs (e.g., automotive technology preparation for ASE certification). Profile data provided included norm-referenced testing (SAT – 9, ITED), Six Traits of Writing Assessment, UPASS, AP data, ACT data, AYP status, and safe school violations. Oral student presentations were observed, with immediate teacher feedback and discussion provided.

Standard assessment tools are in place, including essay response, tests, quizzes, inquiry-based research projects, and standard teacher assignments. As part of the school improvement process, some assessments have been identified specifically to assess the school's desired results for student learning. The future work of the school will be to develop indicators and performance benchmarks to assess the students' achievement of the school DRSLs.

b) To what extent are assessments of student learning developed using methods that reflect the intended purpose and performance standards?

The school has started the process of establishing specific learner benchmarks to assess the DRSLs. It is recommended that subtle language in the DRSLs be reviewed or changed to make it possible to provide authentic assessment of the DRSL benchmarks. (For example, under the DRSL "Thinking," the language "Students value critical thinking" is used. Using such language as "The students demonstrate critical thinking" might make it possible to more effectively assess this DRSL. Under the DRSL "Global Awareness," the language used is "Students will be aware of global issues..." Assessing awareness is a significant challenge. How will students demonstrate the awareness, and how will it be assessed?)

The process and analysis have started to identify benchmarks and indicators of student success in demonstrating achievement of the school DRSLs. As reflected in section *a*), San Juan High School has substantial and varied assessment tools in place.

c) To what extent are assessments designed, developed, and used in a fair and equitable manner?

Varied student assessment opportunities are in place to provide for cultural and individual student learning styles and differences. Assessments represent best educational practice and are utilized in a way to provide fairness and equity to all.

Leadership for School Improvement:

- a) To what extent does the school leadership promote quality instruction by fostering an academic learning climate and actively supporting teaching and learning?
 - The leadership appears to be supportive of the professional staff. They are involved in working with students and educational staff in making the climate very relaxed and positive.
- b) To what extent does the school leadership employ effective decision making that is data-driven, research-based, and collaborative?
 - It is not apparent how the data has been used or disseminated, but the professional staff is using information from testing and research to change the way they teach and reach students on the level or levels at which they will be most successful.
- c) To what extent does the school leadership monitor progress in student achievement and instructional effectiveness through a comprehensive assessment system and continuous reflection?
 - The leadership is very aware of student success on UBSCT and CRTs. They are very involved in working toward raising those scores and assisting students in being successful. Upon developing assessments of the DRSLs, they will make the data available to the staff for monitoring student progress more authentically.
- d) To what extent does the school leadership provide skillful stewardship by ensuring management of the organization, operations, and resources of the school for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment?
 - The leadership works with staff members, allowing them to teach with the confidence that the leadership is supportive of them. The leadership also becomes a big part of what is going on in the school by being involved visibly in working with students.
- e) To what extent does the school leadership make decisions related to the allocation and use of resources which align with the school goals, the achievement of the DRSLs, and school improvement efforts?

The leadership is definitely on top of decision making at the school. However, it is apparent that the professional staff, students, and parents are involved in gathering the data for decisions to be made. The community becomes more involved in decision making because all community members are valued.

f) To what extent does the school leadership empower the school community and encourage commitment, participation, collaboration, and shared responsibility for student learning?

The leadership is very involved with all concerned parties in improving the educational process. It is also evident that some members of the educational community, by their own choice, are not part of the process. The demographics of the school are such that some never bother to get involved.

Community Building:

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

To better meet the needs of struggling students, some departments have collaborated to align curricula.

Minority students are encouraged and recruited to participate in school government and extracurricular activities. Because busing is an issue for some students, a late activity bus is provided.

Mentors are assigned to every new teacher.

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

The school makes a real effort to keep parents informed, including letters home, a monthly event calendar, and grade notification every two weeks.

Because of the travel distance to the school and the lack of home computers on the reservation, a school liaison has been hired to contact homes whenever there is an important issue.

Culture of Continuous Improvement and Learning:

a) To what extent does the school build skills and the capacity for improvement through comprehensive and ongoing professional development programs focused on the school's goals for improvement?

The culture within the school provides a feeling of openness and inquiry. This results in part from the leadership team, faculty, school staff, community support, and positive student efforts. The school improvement plan provides significant evidence and examples of professional development opportunities. The training gives all faculty members opportunities for improvement. The staff development ranges from math, language arts, special education, reading, science, school safety issues, REACH training, accreditation, driver's education to student leadership and faculty advisor training opportunities.

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

Key to this is the commitment of the leadership team and faculty. The community expects and supports productive improvement that enhances the learning opportunities for students. The leadership of the school creates an atmosphere of ongoing support for total staff development. The school improvement plan specifies: "Professional development attended and instruction utilized in classrooms is directly related to our students needs as based on our assessment data. Other professional development is related to other needs of the school, e.g., school safety, mentor training. We attempt to maintain a 'data-driven and research-based' attitude." This attitude is evident in classroom observation, discussions with faculty and the leadership team, and students and community members.

CHAPTER 4: NORTHWEST ASSOCIATION OF ACCREDITED SCHOOLS (NAAS) STANDARDS I-XI

Standard I – Educational Program

This standard is met. San Juan High School's instructional and organizational practices, as well as its policies and procedures, support the desired results for student learning and prepare students to succeed in a culturally diverse, democratic society.

Standard II - Student Personnel Services

This standard is met. Student personnel services are designed to give systematic assistance to students. The assigned personnel for guidance includes a minimum of one full-time person for each 400 students enrolled.

Standard III – School Plant and Equipment

This standard is met. The school plant provides for a variety of instructional activities and programs and incorporates aesthetic features that contribute to a positive educational atmosphere.

Standard IV – Library Media Program

This standard is met. The school library media program is a primary resource for literacy, information, and curriculum support. A certified library media teacher provides instruction, resources, and activities to promote independent use of ideas and information

Standard V - Records

This standard is met. Student records are maintained, handled, and protected in the best interests of students and parents. Students and parents have the right to access personal student records and are ensured the privacy of such, as guaranteed by federal legislation.

Standard VI – School Improvement (This is addressed in the self-study.)

This standard is met. The school improvement plan focuses on the total school rather than each of the separate components within the school.

Standard VII – Preparation of Personnel

This standard is met. All professional personnel are in compliance with the licensing requirements of the state of Utah and are properly endorsed for the subjects they are assigned.

Standard VIII - Administration

This standard is met. The administration of San Juan High School provides educational leadership, supervises and coordinates programs, and carries out the necessary administrative procedures.

Standard IX - Teacher Load

This standard is met. The total number of students instructed by any one teacher in any one grading period does not exceed numbers set by the Utah State Office of Education and/or Northwest.

Standard X – Activities

This standard is met. San Juan High School supports a range of activities that supplement the basic instructional program by providing additional experiences and opportunities for learning to take place.

Standard XI – Business Practices

This standard is met. The school is financially responsible. Proper budgetary procedures and generally accepted accounting principles are followed for all school funds. The school's advertising and promotional literature are completely truthful and ethical.

CHAPTER 5: SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT EFFORTS – ACTION PLAN

a) To what extent is the school-wide action plan adequate in addressing the critical areas for follow-up?

The action plans clearly address the critical areas for follow up. The action plans address the major concerns identified by the staff and reflected in the profile data. They effectively identify critical areas for improvement. The entire staff is encouraged to focus its efforts on those areas articulated in the action plans that will directly affect student learning and student achievement.

b) To what extent is there sufficient commitment to the action plan, school-wide and system-wide?

A representative number of groups from the school community participated in the process of developing the action plan. The community was involved in this process, and a general feeling of commitment exists. The administration is very positive as well as realistic in its evaluation of how committed the faculty is to the process and the completion of the action plans. It was evident to the Visiting Team that the leadership team and administration, as well as many members of the teaching staff, share a strong commitment to the action plans. The administrators acknowledge that total buy-in to the process will take time and commitment on their part.

c) How sound does the follow-up process that the school intends to use for monitoring the accomplishments of the school-wide action plan appear to be?

The follow-up processes are generally sound. More attention needs to be given to indicators of improvement or movement toward the desired results for student learning. The school has set dates for accomplishing the action plans. The plans

need to be more specific in indicating responsibility and how progress will be communicated to the school community. In order to monitor school improvement efforts and evaluate their effectiveness, the leadership needs to identify what data/evidence should be collected and periodically/incrementally analyzed by the team. The Visiting Team suggests incremental benchmarks and analyses of how the data from the findings affects instructional strategies, instructional delivery, and curriculum content

CHAPTER 6: MAJOR COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VISITING TEAM

Commendations:

- The Visiting Team commends the scheduling options for students, which include the vocational center and the San Juan Campus of College of Eastern Utah (CEU) and enhance the cultural and socioeconomic diversity of the school and community.
- The Visiting Team commends the availability and use of technology, which is evident in virtually every area and is positively affecting student success.
- The Visiting Team commends the leadership the school for providing distance learning that is benefiting all the district's students.
- The Visiting Team commends that the demographic data is disaggregated in such a way to give a very clear and authentic picture of the school and community.
- The Visiting Team commends the school for its testing data, which demonstrates a positive trend in student achievement even with changing demographics, especially in Core Academic areas.
- The Visiting Team commends the school's high retention and attendance rates.
- The Visiting Team commends the positive climate of the school. It is amazing! This is a direct result of the leadership and professionalism of the staff. It is evident in the test data and in the pride of the students.
- The Visiting Team commends the high expectations of the staff for themselves and the students, and commends the staff for knowing who is and is not learning.

Recommendations:

The Visiting Team is in substantial agreement with the quality and number of recommendations that come out of the departmental and focus group analyses and with the goals stated in the action plans. These are indicative of the high quality of the self-study effort and the integrity of the processes of developing the school improvement plans. The Visiting Team wishes to provide some focus and a pathway for the school's improvement processes, and to link them to attainable results by virtue of the following recommendations.

- The Visiting Team recommends that the faculty continue to utilize the time/opportunities provided by the professional development days for teachers to collaborate, sharing best practices and emphasis on implementing the school's action plan and recommendations from the Visiting Team.
- The Visiting Team recommends that the action plan include a professional development component on how to establish benchmarks by incorporating the recommendations from the focus groups, and that the action plan include a timeline of long- and short-term goals with realistic benchmarks leading to the dates for implementation and completion. Responsibility for goal achievement might be more specifically noted. The plan ought to be reviewed and revised to reflect the results of continuous data collection and analysis by the departments and continuing focus groups. The plan needs to incorporate the survey/profile data in building the rationale for its elements to see why the school is doing what it is doing. Additionally, the plan needs to specifically address how the data from the surveys led to the development of the DRSLs.
- The Visiting Team recommends that the faculty collectively study best practices and research in the teaching and assessment of the school's DRSLs, and identify indicators and establish the standards for students' demonstration of mastery of the DRSLs. Each department should develop a means of evaluating student work tied to the DRSLs in order to determine whether or not students become more effective communicators and better critical thinkers, writers, citizens, and so on. The faculty should pursue an effort to prioritize the work on the DRSLs in order to facilitate the development of indicators for the design of the assessments.
- The Visiting Team encourages building on the collaborative possibilities that come from the use of the Six Traits of Writing program and the descriptions of indicators and assessments for the DRSLs to conduct horizontal and vertical curriculum mapping and teaming.
- The Visiting Team recommends the continuation of the existing accreditation committees and leadership teams to oversee the implementation of the recommendations of the team and the action plan as it relates to the refinement of the DRSLs and the development of the assessments for the DRSLs.