

**The Report of the
Accreditation Visiting Team**

**Snowcrest Junior High School
2755 North Highway 162
Eden, Utah 84310**

March 3-4, 2009



**Utah State Office of Education
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**THE REPORT OF THE
VISITING TEAM REVIEWING**

**Snowcrest Junior High School
2755 North Highway 162
Eden, Utah 84310**

March 3-4, 2009

UTAH STATE OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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Salt Lake City, Utah

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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, March 3-4, 2009, 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 Snowcrest Junior 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 Velden Wardle is also commended.

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

Patti Harrington, Ed.D.
State Superintendent
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SNOWCREST JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF

School Administration

Velden Wardle Principal

Counseling

Susan Perrin Counselor

Support Staff

Heather Barton School Lunch
Rhett Chatelain..... Head Custodian
John Coy Computer Tech
Roxanne Cox..... School Lunch
Angie DeHart Attendance Secretary
Angelene Gooch..... School Lunch
Kyle Hadley Custodian
Lani Johnson Aide
Laura Rhees Aide
Janalee Tidwell Counseling Secretary
Ruby Wall Head Secretary
Chris Wayment Aide

Faculty

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Marci Chapman	Amy Lloyd	Harold Scilley
John Donley	Brenda Martin	Tia Shaw
Theresa Ellis	Kamarie Merrill	Jennifer Sorensen
Lana Hadley	Mike Olsen	Aaron Wolthuis
Roger Howell	Carolyn Robertson	Erik Yoggerst

SNOWCREST JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

MISSION STATEMENT

We provide the tools to build individual student success in a changing global society.

BELIEF STATEMENTS

- We instill in our students a sense of community.
- We instill in our students a sense of self worth.
- We instill in our students a sense of unity.
- We instill in our students the importance of character.
- We instill in our students the value of education.

DESIRED RESULTS FOR STUDENT LEARNING (DRSLs)

1. **Critical Thinking & Problem Solving**—Learn, develop and use multiple strategies to solve a variety of problem, learn to reflect upon successes and failures and to critically analyze and solve problems, learn to organize information and form appropriate and logical conclusions.
2. **Lifelong Learning**—Develop a foundation of lifelong learning through literacy and numeracy, acquire skills to access, gather, classify, organize, evaluate and refine information effectively and appropriately.
3. **Communication**—Discover and communicate in a variety of ways with clarity, purpose, and understanding of audience, develop informed opinions and articulate them in a range of ways, communicate using technology and understand ethical uses of technology.
4. **Responsible Citizen**—Learn to work cooperatively and collaboratively, demonstrate accountability for their actions and behavior, respect and embrace individuality, articulate positive character traits and exhibit an understanding of and awareness for community, state, national and global issues.

Date of visit: March 3-4, 2009

MEMBERS OF THE VISITING TEAM

Spencer D. Hansen, Syracuse Junior High, Davis School District, Visiting Team
Chairperson

Kim Baker, West Hills Middle School, Jordan School District

Katherine Witt, Ogden Preparatory Academy

VISITING TEAM REPORT
SNOWCREST JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

CHAPTER 1: SCHOOL PROFILE

Snowcrest Junior High opened in August 1987. The school was designed by architect John L. Piers, and was modeled after a high school he designed in Lyman, Wyoming. Snowcrest has the luxury of space. It was built with the option of being expanded into a high school. It has a capacity of over 600 students; the school currently has an enrollment of less than 320 students. With the opening of Fremont High School in 1994—which eased overcrowding at Weber High School—there is no need and therefore no plan for Snowcrest to change from a grades 7-9 junior high school.

Snowcrest’s attendance area consists of the upper Ogden Valley, which includes the towns of Huntsville, Eden and Liberty, and Ogden Canyon east of the Ogden City limits. The school has one feeder elementary school, Valley School in Huntsville. Snowcrest feeds into Weber High School.

Although past projections predicted rapid growth in housing, the current reality is one of declining enrollment. Zoning laws have changed so that all future subdivisions will have lot size with a minimum of three acres. Based on the numbers enrolled in Valley Elementary, the school’s enrollment will decline for at least two more years. There are no “starter” homes here. The majority of the recent move-ins are families with children older than school age.

Overall, Snowcrest performs very well on standardized tests. The whole-school aggregate scores for the State CRTs outperform district, state and national average scores. Aggregate scores for the ITBS paint a similar picture of the school. Snowcrest is a school lacking in diversity. Currently, there are no minority subpopulations big enough to warrant AYP accountability status.

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

The Visiting Team found that the members of the school community of Snowcrest Junior High have successfully analyzed the school’s profile and have much to show for their efforts. The school has been very honest in its assessment of strengths and weaknesses.

The Visiting Team was particularly impressed with Snowcrest Junior High’s ability to see a weakness in data analysis and devise an action plan that adequately addressed those areas of self-discovered weakness. Data from the profile indicates a homogeneous declining enrollment for Snowcrest Junior High. Analysis of the

standardized test provided further indicates students are performing well on these measures.

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

The Visiting Team suggests that further efforts be directed toward obtaining and analyzing more accurate and detailed sources of data in order to better describe the strengths and weaknesses of the school. It is imperative that written analysis accompany data presented in the school profile. This interpretation of the data will yield a stronger sense of the school's journey—past, present and future. Furthermore, this analysis will assist all individuals who seek an understanding of Snowcrest Junior High's programs and initiatives.

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

The Visiting Team found that the school's self-study accurately depicts the current state of Snowcrest Junior High School. The school survey completed by the school community provided needed areas of improvement that are aligned with school improvement efforts. The faculty and staff of Snowcrest Junior High are commended for their honesty and genuine effort to improve their educational practices through an effective self-study.

Suggested Areas for Further Inquiry:

- The Visiting Team recommends that the school disaggregate and provide written analysis of student achievement data so that it is easier to determine the progress of subgroup populations within the school and more easily delineate the academic strengths and weaknesses of the school.
- The Visiting Team recommends stronger connections between the DRSLs and the action plan indicators. It is important to ensure that the school improvement efforts of the action plan are sufficiently focused in order to institutionalize facets of the school's DRSLs.

CHAPTER 2: NORTHWEST ASSOCIATION OF ACCREDITED SCHOOLS (NAAS) TEACHING AND LEARNING STANDARDS

Mission, Beliefs and Desired Results for Student Learning (DRSLs):

- a) *To what degree were the school's mission statement, beliefs, and DRSLs developed and/or revised collaboratively by the school community to define a compelling purpose and vision for the school and to support student achievement?*

The Visiting Team determined that, to a large extent, the faculty and staff of Snowcrest Junior High worked in a collaborative effort to devise a mission statement that gives the school its purpose and direction. This was accomplished by discussing, analyzing, and redefining the previous mission statement from 2001. The school's current mission statement, beliefs and DRSLs are concise, clear, and reflective of Snowcrest Junior High's commitment to students.

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

The Visiting Team found that, to a large extent, the mission and beliefs were aligned to the schools DRSLs and reflect the commitment of the faculty, staff and administration of Snowcrest Junior High School to its students and their futures. The belief statements are well thought out, insightful, and progressive. These ideals lead directly into the school's desired results for student learning (DRSLs): Lifelong Learning, Complex Thinking, Effective Communication, and Responsible Citizenship. Each of these goals not only affects students' current growth but encourages them to become the next generation of responsible adults.

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

The teachers, administration, and staff have implemented curriculum maps with an accompanying focus on interdisciplinary instruction and cross-curricular connections for each classroom. Due to the small size and configuration of Snowcrest Junior High, collaboration and cross-curricular connections appear to be the norm. The developed curriculum maps will continue to be of benefit to the faculty as they refine their approach to interdisciplinary instruction.

- 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 observed evidence of the mission, beliefs, and DRSLs in the culture of the school in several areas. The administration is commended for

providing guidance and vision in developing a love of learning. The administration's emphasis on relevancy and posted daily classroom objectives support this aim. The faculty of Snowcrest is committed to collaborating to provide rich cross-curricular experiences for students that enhance their critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Staff members model social behaviors that reinforce the idea of students becoming responsible citizens.

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?*

It is the consensus of the Visiting Team that the faculty of Snowcrest Junior High is a collaborative group of dedicated professionals who perform at high levels. In discussions with teachers, the Visiting Team saw evidence that the staff is cognizant and actively teaches to the State Core and standards. The Visiting Team commends the faculty and staff for their efforts in this endeavor. Those who understand the necessity of curriculum mapping and the need for alignment of curriculum within the State Core are commended for their efforts. The team recommends continued efforts to align all curricula in the school.

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

The Visiting Team witnessed a wide variety of teaching styles being incorporated in the implementation of the curriculum. The utilization of technology to promote inquiry-based learning appears to be an area of strength for Snowcrest Junior High. However, additional emphasis on professional development to further advance all teachers' ability to utilize inquiry-based learning and higher-order thinking skills is encouraged.

- 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 determined that, to a large extent, teachers work collaboratively to promote cross-curricular units that are aligned with the school's DRSLs. There is evidence to support strong connections between daily classroom lessons and the school's DRSLs. The faculty and staff are commended for their cohesiveness and collegiality.

The school climate is very positive and conducive to learning. The Visiting Team commends the building principal for facilitating this atmosphere at Snowcrest Junior High, and hopes that it will continue.

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

The Visiting Team determined that the faculty has access to disaggregated data, and that it is used in unstructured and informal ways. Staff members review data at the beginning of the year and periodically thereafter. Interestingly, the school self-study outlined assessments as an area of weakness. The Visiting Team concurs with this conclusion of the school's self-study, and recommends that a primary emphasis of school improvement efforts should focus on data analysis among all stakeholders in the Snowcrest Junior High school community. Intervention efforts need to be enhanced and refined to meet the needs of struggling students so that all students can reach individual learning outcomes.

Instruction:

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

It is apparent to the Visiting Team that the Snowcrest faculty is well versed in instructional strategies that enhance student learning. The Visiting Team observed performance tasks, independent student exploration, research papers, role playing, modeling, open-ended questioning, authentic assessment, and inquiry-based learning. The Visiting Team recognizes and acknowledges the additional time and effort necessary to produce quality instructional plans, and recommends that each teacher continue to increase his/her ability to implement effective instructional strategies in his/her classroom.

- 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?*

The Visiting Team determined that the school has established patterns for the development of instructional strategies that align with teaching the DRSLs in every classroom. To a large extent, teachers actively promote and teach concepts in connection with the school's DRSLs. The faculty and staff are commended for providing clear and strong connections for students in their classrooms.

- 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 Visiting Team found evidence that the leadership team within the school has been progressive in designing staff development that supports teachers' growth and development. The building principal has developed a classroom observation

program that allows for teachers to leave their building and view other teachers in other schools. This is an excellent way for teachers to learn new ways of approaching the instructional process. The reciprocal nature of the teaching observation schedule makes it possible for each teacher to both observe and be observed.

- 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?*

To a large extent, the Visiting Team noted that the teachers at Snowcrest Junior High are extremely knowledgeable in their content areas and well qualified to teach the prescribed curriculum. Almost all faculty members have advanced degrees in their teaching content areas. This deep understanding of their content allows the teachers to better explain concepts and help students who struggle. It is obvious to the Visiting Team this is an area of strength for the Snowcrest school community.

- 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 discovered, through classroom observations and discussions with teachers, an understanding of and desire to utilize technology in the classroom. The building principal, in conjunction with PTO and Community Council, have a progressive plan to integrate a varied and increased level of technological advances. Teachers articulate willingness and a desire to incorporate technology in their classrooms. The school has done a good job promoting a staff development plan that will allow teachers the tools to realize this goal.

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 determined that individual teachers have developed or used their own individual classroom performance standards and rubrics to assess student achievement. The school has not yet implemented school-wide assessments, but is planning to work on a school-wide rubric in the area of written communication as part of the school action plan.

- 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 Visiting Team observed the faculty utilizing multiple individual assessment tools, including teacher-made tests, projects, oral reports, PowerPoint presentations, quizzes, research papers, etc. These measures appear to be broad in scope and effective in determining individual students' strengths and weaknesses in their respective classrooms. Currently, Snowcrest Junior High does not have a school-wide assessment system to monitor students in achieving academic expectations. This issue is addressed in the school's current action plan.

- 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 determined that the professional staff does use data to help drive instructional decisions within the school. The types of data used typically consist of student grades and teacher recommendations of ability. The use of standardized data is unstructured, and occurs loosely among teachers within the same department. The staff is encouraged to become more familiar with student test data and share that information across all departments to target areas of weakness for school improvement efforts.

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

The Visiting Team learned that, while opportunities for collaboration are present and provided for faculty members to develop assessment strategies in connection with the school's DRSLs, the school is still in the early stages of developing common and varied assessments. This area is addressed in the current action plan. The Visiting Team recommends that the school community continue to provide an emphasis on creating and refining assessments that can serve to start important dialogue about the school improvement process.

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

The Visiting Team found that the school has recently developed its DRSLs and has begun implementing them into the curriculum, but they has not yet developed a school-wide scoring tool. The action plan addresses this area for growth by planning to gather information this school year, and use that information to create a school-wide rubric for writing by the end of the 2009-2010 school year.

CHAPTER 3: NAAS SUPPORT STANDARDS

Leadership and Organization:

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

The Visiting Team commends the school leadership team for its efforts in supporting such a positive learning climate. All of the stakeholders interviewed were pleased and proud of the administrative leadership of Snowcrest Junior High School. Students, parents, and faculty members continually complimented the leadership team for its dedication and commitment to student success. The leadership at Snowcrest extends beyond the administrative team. Many teachers, parents, and students have assumed the responsibility of leadership in departments, student government, and parent groups. It is evident to the Visiting Team that, in all respects, the academic learning climate at Snowcrest is ideal for teaching and learning.

- 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 determined that the leadership team at Snowcrest Junior High allows research-based practices and collaboration to permeate the school. The leadership team is commended for its willingness to seek collaborative dialogue and promote practices that will positively affect student learning. The leadership team needs to invest more time and effort into data analysis and ensure that the results of the analysis are shared with all stakeholders in the Snowcrest school community. Continued emphasis is needed to reinforce data analysis as the driving force behind school improvement efforts.

- c) *To what extent does the leadership provide skillful stewardship by ensuring management of the organization, operations, and allocation and use of resources at the school for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment which aligns with the school goals, DRSLs, and school improvement?*

The Visiting Team noted that students and staff members credit the administration with providing ongoing vision and support for students. The school climate and culture of Snowcrest Junior High is very positive and student-centered. School-wide policies and operational procedures are consistent with the school's beliefs and mission, and designed to support student learning. Promoting high standards and student achievement is at the core of the work of the school's administrative team. As with all schools, the leadership team is undergoing a continual process of evolution; it is the team's stated intention that the school will continue with disaggregation of data as it becomes available.

- 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 commends the administrative team at Snowcrest Junior High for doing an outstanding job of recognizing and empowering the school community. The administration continually invites participation and commitment from parents, students, and staff, and is to be commended for this continual commitment to the school's vision, and for the leadership for learning that is evident throughout the school.

- 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?*

It is evident to the Visiting Team that, while no formal system exists that provides for an identified staff mentor, students feel connected and cared for at school. Many students have mentioned, not one, but several staff members to whom they could turn in times of need. It is obvious to the Visiting Team that the faculty and staff of Snowcrest Junior High do an excellent job of getting to know their students, and are responsive to their needs and concerns.

CHAPTER 4: NAAS SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT STANDARD

Culture of Continual Improvement:

- a) *To what extent has the school developed and implemented a comprehensive school improvement plan using Collaborating for Student Achievement, the Utah accreditation/school improvement process, which is reviewed and revised on an ongoing basis?*

The Visiting Team has observed that Snowcrest Junior High has implemented a comprehensive school improvement plan based on the analysis of the self-study of its stakeholders. The administration and faculty have clearly connected the action plan to areas of student need, and are working to respond with strategies that reflect promising research-based practices. The departmental and focus group analyses were well thought out and honest about both strengths and weaknesses. The faculty is strongly committed to both the literacy and learning community aspects of the school's action plan.

- 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 determined that the leadership team within the school has a strong commitment and positive history of providing professional development tailored to the immediate and future needs of the school. The current plan for professional development is sufficient in scope and design. A thoughtful, consistent approach to professional development will be necessary to bring about the ambitious goals addressed in the schools current action plan.

- 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 noted that the Snowcrest Junior High school community has outlined an ambitious plan to institutionalize its DRSLs. The action plan addresses the needs of the school community, is progressive and research based, and is structured to meet the needs of the students that attend Snowcrest. While evidence of current action plan steps are lacking, there is a definite timetable and deadlines for implementation in the near future. The Visiting Team has observed a high level of commitment by the faculty and staff to the current action plan.

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

Snowcrest Junior High's positive school climate and commitment to students seem to provide sufficient motivation for continued school improvement efforts. Teachers demonstrate a passion for students and a willingness to help them succeed. Students and parents have mentioned how appreciative they are of the faculty at Snowcrest.

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

Through discussion with the leadership team, the Visiting Team determined that the Snowcrest Junior High did not have an action plan for the previous accreditation report in 2001. The school community has since gone through an effective accreditation process clearly delineating the mission, vision, DRSLs and action plan for the school; however, progress on the current action plan and accompanying assessment data are limited at best. The school has clearly identified benchmarks and deadlines for the current action plan.

- 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 determined through multiple sources of data that the school had satisfactorily addressed both of the recommendations from the previous accreditations visit in 2001. The Visiting Team is confident that the recommendations given in this report will be heeded by the school community and will aid in more effective educational programming for the students of Snowcrest Junior High.

CHAPTER 5: COMMUNITY BUILDING

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

The Visiting Team saw evidence of a school community being fostered by Snowcrest Junior High students, staff, parents, and administration. The school creates and sustains a learning environment for students that nurtures a sense of caring and belonging. The Visiting Team noted that both parents and students desire to build a greater sense of belonging by promoting student activities. It was also observed that the school is willing to address the concerns of all the stakeholders and build positive relationships to enhance school improvement.

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

The Visiting Team found evidence that the school engages parents and families as partners in the learning process. Communication between the students' homes and the school is regular, two-way, and meaningful. It was noted that work done in the community building focus group had a positive impact on student learning. Efforts have been made to reach out to the feeder elementary and high schools; such efforts are an ongoing process being completed at different levels throughout the school. There is willingness on the part of staff members and administrators to collaborate, and time has been set aside to assure that a collaborative effort is ongoing. It should also be noted that students desire teachers to make connections between subject areas that could be fostered through collaborative efforts. Snowcrest is working constantly to improve communication with the community. The staff reaches out to parents and families to engage them as partners in the learning process through a variety of programs: PTO, meetings, music performances, community service, fundraisers, the Portal, the school newsletter, and other events.

A survey was given to parents, students, and faculty and staff members in 2008. Data was compiled in the following areas: Parent Support, Teacher Excellence, Student Commitment, School Leadership, Instructional Quality, Resource Management, and School Safety. The main concerns found in the survey were

the issues of accessibility of the school administration and instructional quality. This information was published in the school newsletter.

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

The Visiting Team noted partial involvement of the school community in the self-study process. Parent representatives appreciated being involved for one or several meetings of the required focus groups for accreditation, although they also expressed concerns about not understanding their role in the accreditation process and being confused by some of the technical educational jargon used in meetings. The Visiting Team recommends a stronger effort to involve parents as consistent members of the focus group for future accreditation visits. Additionally, some training may be necessary to help parents feel more at ease with the requirements of the accreditation process.

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

The Visiting Team had difficulty determining the extent to which results of school improvement efforts were identified and communicated to all stakeholders. Individual student assessment data is shared between counselors and parents through the SEOP process. The school principal sends a quarterly school newsletter to parents in which he reports on school progress. The Visiting Team recommends that an increased number of communication methods be utilized to ensure adequate accountability to all stakeholders in the school community for school improvement efforts.

CHAPTER 6: MAJOR COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VISITING TEAM

Commendations:

- The Visiting Team commends the administration, faculty, staff and school community of Snowcrest Junior High for their dedication to the accreditation process at their school. It is obvious to the Visiting Team that the school has taken this process seriously and has much to show for its efforts with regard to a cohesive mission, vision and desired results for student learning.
- The Visiting Team specifically commends the principal, Mr. Velden Wardle, for his vision and leadership throughout the accreditation process. It is apparent to the Visiting Team that Mr. Wardle has demonstrated an understanding of and commitment to ensuring that the school's action plan is implemented correctly.

- The Visiting Team commends the faculty and staff for heeding the previous accreditation report recommendations for growth and fulfilling their obligation to school improvement.
- The Visiting Team commends the school community for providing a safe, connected and positive learning environment that students and parents really appreciate. Each student at Snowcrest has a personal adult advocate who understands each student's academic and behavioral strengths and weaknesses.
- The Visiting Team commends Snowcrest Junior High for the school's commitment to ongoing, progressive professional development through attending conferences and workshops as well as providing opportunities for teachers to observe each other in order to glean instructional concepts.
- The Visiting Team commends Snowcrest Junior High for implementing the Math Options program, which provides supplementary math instruction for struggling students. This program has obvious benefits for the school, as is manifested by strong standardized test results. The Visiting Team encourages the school community to continue to refine this program and provide similar models for English and science.
- The Visiting Team commends the Snowcrest Junior High Math Department for continued improvement of math scores for the past three years, resulting in 100 percent proficiency in several math courses and near 100 percent proficiency in the remaining math courses for the previous school year. These scores are a testament to the hard work of teachers, students and parents.

Recommendations:

- The Visiting Team recommends that the discussion and disaggregation of student achievement data permeate the school community and involve all stakeholders, including teachers, parents, students, staff members, business partners, and PTO and Community Counsel representatives. Every school community member should know the strengths and weaknesses of the school as determined by student achievement data. The Visiting Team further recommends the creation of an intervention team that will meet on a consistent basis to review and counsel students who struggle academically and behaviorally. This intervention team will also be charged with refining and increasing academic interventions for struggling students. The Visiting Team is encouraged by the prominent emphasis on student achievement data analysis in the school's current action plan.
- The Visiting Team recommends that stronger attempts be made to include all stakeholders (parents, students and business partners) in the focus group process of accreditation. The process of accreditation is designed to galvanize a school

community into a focused, common vision for school improvement. It is crucial that all stakeholders be included on a consistent basis in this very important work.

- The Visiting Team recommends that the current action plan be refined to provide stronger, direct connections to the desired results for student learning, with the understanding that institutionalization of the DRSL, not the action step, is the goal. It is important to clearly articulate the connection between DRSLs and action steps so that the vision of the school can be actualized. Furthermore, it is crucial that, as action steps are completed, assessment data is recorded and retained for future accreditation visits.
- The Visiting Team recommends that the school community continue its pursuit of learning and applying effective instructional strategies including, but not limited to, interdisciplinary instruction, utilizing technological advances, setting objectives in the classroom and providing feedback, inquiry-based learning, and authentic assessment. It is important that every individual in the school community dedicate himself or herself to utilizing these research-based strategies under the direction of the building principal. It is equally important that the principal be intimately involved in assisting teachers in the classroom by refining their utilization of effective practices.