The Report of the
Accreditation Visiting Team

South Davis Junior High School

298 West 2600 South
Bountiful, Utah 84010

November 16-17, 2011

Utah State Office of Education
250 East 500 South
P.O. Box 144200
Salt Lake City, Utah 84114-4200

South Davis Junior High School

298 West 2600 South
Bountiful, Utah 84010

November 16-17, 2011

UTAH STATE OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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FOREWORD

The purpose of the accreditation process is to stimulate school growth and improvement so as to increase the quality of instruction and student achievement. In these efforts, the school staff makes a comprehensive evaluation of the school's programs, operations, and results. The school determines how actual practices align to stated objectives and resulting outcomes in a three-step evaluation: (1) self-evaluation, (2) on-site evaluation by an external team of educators, and (3) implementation using units of the evaluation to improve the school by effecting thoughtful change.

The evaluation, November 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 South Davis 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 Jeff Jorgensen is also commended.

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

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

12/28/2010

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Jodi Lunt .....Science, Secondary Supervisor
Chris Hall..... Social Studies Supervisor
Bonnie Flint .....World Languages, Secondary Supervisor
Jill Snyder ..... Professional Development, Secondary

SOUTH DAVIS JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF

School Administration

Jeff Jorgensen..... Principal
Wendy Marland ..... Assistant Principal
Shelly Wright..... Assistant Principal

Counseling

Polly McQuarrie..... Counselor/Department Chair
Tina Ackerman..... Counselor
Christi Blankman ..... Counselor

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Emily Anderson
Justin Barber
David Benson
Jeanne Birrell
Shelley Blundell
Harriet Bouliouris
Lina Cammack
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Karen Vialpando
Linda Wallace
Katy Wilson
Darcie Winegar
Andrew Zaugg
Amy Zazo

SOUTH DAVIS JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of South Davis Junior High School is to provide all students with knowledge and skills.

BELIEF STATEMENTS

- All students can learn.
- The fundamental purpose of our school is student learning.
- Learning for all students is most likely when the entire faculty takes collective responsibility for student learning.
- The entire faculty must work interdependently to achieve common learning goals and to build shared knowledge of best practice.
- We must commit to continuous improvement by acting on what we know and learning from what we do.
- Our efforts must be assessed on the basis of student learning results.
- A safe, supportive and positive environment enhances student learning.
- Student achievement is cultivated by a variety of teaching methods, relevant curriculum, and assessments and resources to accommodate diverse learning styles and needs.
- Failure is not an option; students must be required to learn.
- We are the most important factor in whether or not students learn.

DESIRED RESULTS FOR STUDENT LEARNING (DRSLs)

1. **Students will demonstrate competency in all curriculum areas.**
    - Eighty percent of students will master eighty percent of the curriculum.
    - The number of students scoring proficient on CRT tests will increase by 2% per year.

2. **Students will read and write at or above grade level by the end of 9th grade.**

    - Students will increase content specific reading and writing skills.
    - Students will use content specific vocubualry to express knowledge learned.
    - Students will recognize, evaluate, and respond to various forms of communication across all content areas.

3. **Students will demonstrate being responsible citizens.**

    - Students will be on time to class.
    - Students will attend school at a minimum rate of 93%.
    - Students will pass all classes.

Date of visit: November 16-17, 2011

MEMBERS OF THE VISITING TEAM

Glo Merrill, USOE Accreditation Consultant, Visiting Team Chairperson

Jim Bouwman, Riverview Junior High School, Murray School District

David Holt, Valley Junior High School, Granite School District

Willa Jamieson, Eisenhower Junior High School, Granite School District

Jill Jenkins, South Jordan Middle School, Jordan School District

VISITING TEAM REPORT

SOUTH DAVIS JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

CHAPTER 1: SCHOOL PROFILE

South Davis Junior High School is located in Bountiful and has an enrollment of 911 students in grades seven through nine. The school is a high-performing school and provides honors courses in English and history and an AP Human Geography course. Parents are very involved in the PTSA and School Community Council, as well as being boosters for extracurricular activities. The students demonstrate school pride and expressed that learning is important at the school. The administration, counselors, faculty, and staff go out of their way to make every student feel important and cared for.

South Davis Junior High School is predominately Caucasian, with eight percent of the student body being Hispanic and other ethnic minority students combined accounting for seven percent of the student body. There are 41 ELL students, 210 economically disadvantaged students, and 74 special education students enrolled. The school's scores are above the state average in state high-stakes testing. Struggling readers in the seventh and eighth grade are placed in a reading class. The school adopted a new tardy policy three years ago, and the number of students being tardy to class has been cut in half.

There was a recent change in administration. However, the new principal was previously the vice-principal of the school, so implementation of the school improvement plan has been uninterrupted over the past six years. Since the last accreditation visit, the school has modified the schedule to include a flex or Plus period each day. The principal consults with the School Community Council and PTSA before changing school programs or policies.

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

South Davis Junior High School's focus is on improving academic achievement and citizenship characteristics for all students. The school has institutionalized the no tardy indicator of the Citizenship DRSL, and is also institutionalizing the DRSL regarding eighty percent of the students achieving 80 percent on CRT and end-of-term testing. Collecting, disaggregating, and analyzing data has been a regular part of faculty, departmental and grade-level team meetings. The Visiting Team commends the faculty for institutionalizing end-of-term common assessments. The school is collecting data on each course to see whether eighty percent of students master 80 percent of the curriculum.

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

Since the school has small numbers of students in some of the NCLB subgroups, the Visiting Team recommends that the school disaggregate data by ethnicity, gender,

grade, socioeconomic status, and ELL, as well as students living with a single parent. In addition, the school could identify students by name who are not proficient in one or more areas of the high-stakes tests. This information should be shared with the student, his/her parents, counselors, and he student's teachers. The students' testing scores may see significant process as the student and parent(s) gain a better understanding of the score required to be proficient.

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

The faculty and administration worked together to identify the school's current strengths and limitations. The school is commended for creating end-of-term course tests and collecting data each term to compare with CRT results. Some departments are in the process of developing common formative assessments. However, data is not currently used to recognize the need for change in curriculum or instructional strategies. The school did not include all stakeholders in the school improvement process, but plans to do so in the future.

Suggested Areas for Further Inquiry:

- In an effort to identify specific student achievement gaps, both the CRT and end-of-term tests should be disaggregated by mastery, near mastery, partial mastery and minimal for each grade level and course. If possible, data could be disaggregated by gender and ethnicity.

- To ensure that common assessments created by the faculty are valid, relevant to the Core Curriculum, and rigorous, the School Leadership Team should develop pertinent professional development in writing formative and end-of-term assessment items that address all levels of Bloom's Taxonomy.

- South Davis Junior High School is strongly encouraged to include a short written analysis of pertinent student achievement data that demonstrates the school's awareness of student achievement gaps as well as an articulated plan to close the gaps in the action plan.

- As the school continues to collect and analyze high-stakes, end-of-term, and formative assessment data, the strengths and weaknesses should be communicated to all stakeholders (i.e., students, parents, business community, staff, and faculty).

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?

The Visiting Team notes that administration, counselors and faculty members worked collaboratively to revise the school's mission statement to reflect the culture of the school. The school belief statements were also revisited; however, staff, students, parents and business community members were not included in the process. The Visiting Team recommends that all stakeholders revisit the mission, beliefs and DRSLs before the next team visit.

During the accreditation visit, the administration and School Leadership Team realized that the action plan focused on the 80-80 indicator and aligned with the 80-80 data in the school profile. The school amended the DRSL page of the self-study, restated the DRSL as "Students will demonstrate competency in all curriculum areas," and identified a new indicator, "Eighty percent of students will master eighty percent of the curriculum." The self-study now reflects a profile, mission, beliefs, DRSLs, and action plan that are completely aligned. The 80-80 DRSL has been the main focus of the school for several years and is fully institutionalized.

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

The mission and beliefs of South Davis Junior High strongly support the school's core values. The faculty and staff are highly committed to the idea that all students can learn, and they work collaboratively together to ensure that learning and student success are taking place. The last-minute change in the DRSLs created a better alignment of the mission and beliefs with what was actually happening throughout the school.

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

South Davis Junior High is using a variety of progress indicators. The newly recognized but highly institutionalized 80-80, which utilizes data from end-of-term (EOT) tests and CRTs, is the main focus of the school. The Math and English Departments are leading the way in collaborating to create common formative assessments.

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?*

It is clear that the school has developed a laser-like focus on improving student achievement for **all** students. There is evidence that the mission, beliefs, and DRSLs guide the procedures, policies, and decisions of the school and are ingrained the school's culture.

The Visiting Team recommends that the School Leadership Team makes a concerted effort to include staff, parents, students, and community members in each step of the school improvement process.

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*?*

Each department worked collaboratively to designed curriculum maps for each course. The maps are updated regularly and align with Utah Core Curriculum. The school will study the Common Core this year and begin implementation next year. Teachers that teach the same course are working to improve curriculum design to help students achieve proficiency on end of term and CRT tests.

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

The Visiting Team commends South Davis Junior High School for implementing the Latinos in Action class. This program is an excellent example of reaching out to **all** students and offers the students enrolled the opportunity to help students at a nearby elementary school with their reading skills. To this end, the Latinos in Action course teaches the enrolled students reading strategies.

The Special Education Department is commended for meeting the needs of their students. The ninth grade science and English teachers are commended for developing a research assignment that will allow students to receive a grade and credit in both courses.

The PLCs are focusing on revising the curriculum based on core standards and updating end-of-term tests, and are beginning to develop formative assessments. The faculty is commended for providing immediate feedback to students. It appeared that most instruction and student assignments are at the knowledge level, with a focus on teaching the minimum core standards.

The Visiting Team recommends that future professional development focus Bloom's Taxonomy and on moving students to the stages of inquiry, critical thinking, synthesis, and application. This would be a great way to complete the road that the school is on. In addition, the ELL students should have the opportunity to excel in honors courses.

South Davis Junior High School is a high-performing school and provides both honors and AP classes in English and history. Plus period allows students to have more time to access teachers for additional study and clarification. Students who have not demonstrating mastering a concept or have failed to do an assignment or test are required to go to the appropriate teacher for extra help.

As the school explores Bloom's Taxonomy, the curriculum can be expanded to meet the needs of **all** students. As students use inquiry, problem-solving, and higher-order thinking skills in all of its courses, student engagement and proficiency scores will improve.

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 school is commended for creating the Spartan Academy, Plus period, and reading program to improve engagement of the struggling learners. The School Leadership Team is commended for working together to institutionalize the 80-80 program. The school has an early out every Friday, and the faculty members are able to work collaboratively in their PLCs three times a month and in grade level teams once per month. In addition, English and history classes have posters that reflect expectations for writing in their classrooms.

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

The department PLCs have developed end-of-term tests and, in some instances, weekly quizzes that are matched to the Utah Core Curriculum. The Visiting Team recommends that the school identify by name the students who are not proficient on the CRTs. Faculty members will then be able to offer extra support to the identified struggling learners. Faculty members should also use individual student CRT data to diagnose the gaps in student achievement and provide struggling learners with the time and curriculum to review the critical concepts.

The Visiting Team commends the school for mapping the curriculum for each course, and would suggest that the next step be to include vertical mapping so that curriculum material will not be repeated unnecessarily. Faculty members could meet annually with feeder elementary sixth grade teachers and with Woods Cross tenth grade teachers.

Instruction:

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

It is evident that some of the faculty members use a wide variety of learning experiences to actively engage **all** students in the learning process. The majority of teaching activities were of a traditional nature—lecture followed by independent or small group student work. The Visiting Team observed some teachers using the following instructional strategies: writing, research, interactive lessons, group projects, peer tutoring, graphic organizers, hands-on projects, and cooperative learning. It was noted that many of the classrooms have overhead projectors, but it appeared that they were not regularly used.

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 commends the faculty on the use of end-of-term assessments, the Spartan Academy, and other programs recently introduced that show the school's commitment to improving student learning for ***all*** students. The Plus period has increased focus of students and faculty members on the importance of improving student learning for **all** students. The Visiting Team was impressed that Plus period implementation was driven by the School Leadership Team rather than the administration.

c) *To what extent is the school's professional development program guided by identified instructional needs, and how does it provide opportunities for teachers to develop and improve their instructional strategies that support student learning?*

The school is commended for their commitment to the PLC model. All members of the faculty have attended a DuFour conference within the past five years. There is abundant evidence that the faculty has complete buy-in to the PLC process to improve students learning. However, the Visiting Team would suggest that the school provide a systematic approach to future professional development that would improve instructional strategies for all faculty members. The school could use *Classroom Instruction That Works* or *The Art and Science of Teaching* by Robert Marzano.

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 Visiting Team noted that the faculty members of South Davis Junior High is highly qualified and teaching within their content areas. All stakeholders are highly committed to student learning and achievement, and the faculty is beginning to collaborate to meet the varying needs of **all** students.

The Visiting Team would suggest that the School Leadership Team design both short-term and long-range goals for professional development for the faculty. As mentioned above, it may be helpful for the school to unite and study research-based instructional strategies, practice implementation, and provide feedback to other faculty members within their department.

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

Although the school stated that its institutionalized DRSL involved use of technology to enhance learning, very few classrooms were observed using technology. The Visiting Team recommends that South Davis explore increasing the use of additional technology for students and faculty (student response systems, document camera, Smart Board or tablets, cell phones, etc.).

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 school collects and analyzes data from high-stakes CRTs and school level end-of-term tests. The data specialist compares South Davis Junior High School course proficiency results with the proficiency rates on CRTs. Both tests are based on USOE core standards. These results are used to help modify instruction when needed. The Visiting Team was very impressed with the use of these assessments by every faculty member.

The Visiting Team recommends that the school begin to develop formative assessments and use the data not only to identify students that are struggling, but to modify curriculum and implement new instructional strategies. The formative assessments can be as simple as a bell-ringer question, short quiz, exit ticket, or students creating questions to be used by the teacher.

The school is commended for using a common grading scale. The next step would be to ensure that students who are taught the same subject by different teachers but achieve the same scores on a common assessments and the end-of-term test would receive the same grade at the end of the term. In other words, the grade should be based on student learning, not the name of the teacher.

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 faculty of South Davis Junior High School is committed to identifying students who are struggling and are providing additional help in the Plus period. Each faculty

member regularly tracks student knowledge and understanding of core standards and objectives. Students are required to report to intervention classes if they are missing assignments or did poorly on a quiz or a test.

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

The school goal is eighty percent of the students mastering 80 percent of the Core Curriculum. Classroom teachers compare end-of-term tests to CRT scores to make sure that classroom instruction and assessments are directly tied to the USOE Core Standards.

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 school has committed considerable resources to allowing all faculty members to attend DuFour's training on professional learning communities. In addition, the early out on Friday allows time for faculty members to meet in PLCs to create common assessments, share results of the assessments, and compare best practices. The Visiting Team recommends that the future work of the PLCs could include creating formative assessments to check for understanding throughout the term. In addition, it will allow the teachers to know immediately which students are in need of re-teaching of a concept.

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

The mastery of core standards and the improvement in student citizenship are the two DRSLs the school has institutionalized during the past six years. The school has an excellent data person who collects end-of-term data from each department and then designs charts and graphs to compare end-of-term tests to the CRT results. In the future, end-of-term and CRT comparison data should be disaggregated so the school will have a better understanding of who is not learning.

The Visiting Team recommends that each faculty member keep record of his or her own formative assessment data by class period and by course. This can be used personally and collaboratively with faculty members that teach the same course. By using the data immediately after completing a unit, faculty members can update the curriculum and collaborate on instructional strategies that would be most efficient in teaching for mastery. If several faculty members teach the same course, student work should be shared and compared to ensure that a student grades are fair and equitable for the same course.

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 principal is commended for setting the educational tone of South Davis Junior High School. The culture and climate is one of learning and achievement. Students are given time on a daily basis to finish or improve grades and assignments. The program supporting student identification and allowing for successful students to pursue enrichment activities runs smoothly. This is a testament to the positive learning climate of the school.

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 administrative team meets regularly and works well together. Every decision made is based on data and what is best for students. The leadership is very supportive of the School Leadership Team, department PLCs, and grade-level teams.

The principal reported that the School Leadership Team "row" very hard, and the administration simply applies some "rudder" here and there. The team is extremely united, and determines the goals of professional development as well as guiding the implementation of new strategies to improve student learning.

There are classrooms in the school with bulletin boards that not only list students who have achieved 80-80, but congratulate students that have mastered ninety percent of the Core Curriculum with a proficiency rate of 90 percent. In the foyer there are pictures of the students who have achieved a 4.0 GPA.

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?*

There are a number of programs in operation based on individual student needs at South Davis. The daily distribution of grades to each student designates whether the student must attend a certain Plus class or choose an elective educational activity. The counselors and administration know students by name and go to great lengths to inspire students to achieve.

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 administrative team empowers faculty members, PTSA, and the School Community Council to determine what changes could be made to improve student learning. Faculty members and students take responsibility for their own success and their respect for each other was demonstrated many times during the accreditation visit.

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 counselors identify students that are struggling academically or socially, and assign an adult who knows the student well to be a mentor. Not all students have a formal mentor; however, it was obvious that informal mentoring was happening on a daily basis during the Plus period. Many students not assigned to a Plus period gravitate to a favorite teacher each day to study or chat with friends.

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 was abundant evidence that the faculty and administration have developed and implemented an effective school-wide improvement plan and are constantly looking for the next step in the process. However, all stakeholders were not involved in the process, and the Visiting Team recommends that the school begin immediately including all stakeholders in the school goals and the data that is used to track success.

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?*

Over the past five years, the administration has used financial resources and provided time for faculty members to develop effective PLCs. Teachers are engaged in meaningful work to improve student learning. However, the Visiting Team would

encourage the administration to work with the School Leadership Team to study and implement research-based instructional strategies.

Parents of high-achieving students stressed that their students are not challenged in some courses. As the school explores researched-based strategies, it is likely that **all** students will be challenged and engaged in their 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 action plan aligns with the school's mission, beliefs and DRSLs. Appropriate data has been tracked for the past six years. However, some of the data was not disaggregated for all subgroups. The school's plan addresses student learning and interventions for those that do not comprehend the concepts completely. The school uses the Plus period and Spartan Academy to help struggling learners. The school may consider collecting data on Spartan Academy by comparing entering and exiting GPA or attendance. In addition, the school may consider collecting data on the Plus period. All stakeholders perceive that the Plus period is very effective. However, the school profile did not include data regarding the Plus period. Are there teachers who rarely have students in their classroom? Which teachers always have a large crowd, and why?

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

The School Leadership Team and administration work extremely well together and have brought many positive changes to the school. During the meeting with the School Leadership Team, the Visiting Team was very impressed that the school has already started making plans for the next steps to improve student learning for **all** students.

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

South Davis Junior High School has developed and implemented a comprehensive school improvement plan. The school's plan is reviewed and updated annually. The administration and School Leadership Team work well together and have accomplished many of their annual goals since the last visit.

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

The school has made tremendous progress since the last Visiting Team accreditation visit.

CHAPTER 5: COMMUNITY BUILDING

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

South Davis Junior High has worked tirelessly to establish a strong sense of community and school pride. The administration, counselors, faculty, secretaries, and other staff members provide a positive interface for the school. There is a feeling that everyone is welcome at the school, and parents report that the administration and counselors are open to hearing about concerns and act quickly to resolve problems.

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

Formal organizations such as PTSA and School Community Council report a strong working relationship with the school and administration. It is reported that there are a number of support groups in various departments and cultural organizations that operate more informally, but with great effectiveness. Parents, students, and teachers alike report satisfaction with the network of student success found in the school's Plus program. Parents are involved in the design and production of the talent show, as well as participating in support of sports and intramural groups.

The school reported that it currently has a couple of business partners. The Visiting Team would suggest inviting more business partners into the school so that students will have the opportunity to meet successful businesspeople and begin thinking about their own future.

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

The School Community Council was involved in the self-study and was given an opportunity to read through the school report and give feedback on the rough draft. The focus group chairs reported that parents and students were assigned to the focus group, but many only attended the first meeting. A few students were involved in a survey to gather information for a focus group.

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

It is clear that South Davis Junior High School does an excellent job of communicating individual student progress to the students' parents. This is especially true in the areas of grades and attendance. However, there was little evidence that there is a plan to communicate academic achievement data with all stakeholders.

The school does celebrate at the end of each term to recognize students that achieve academic success or have zero tardies during the term. The school posts a monthly newsletter online and uses the school's phone system, e-mail, or texting to alert parents of special events.

CHAPTER 6: MAJOR COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VISITING TEAM

Commendations:

- The Visiting Team commends the administration and faculty for creating a positive school climate and a culture that promotes academic success for students. Students feel safe and know that their teachers care about them. All stakeholders are proud of their school and appreciate the wide variety of course offerings and the extra-curricular activities offered to the students.

- The Visiting Team commends the faculty for their commitment to the professional learning community model and their eagerness to collaborate to improve student learning. The faculty members are also commended for implementing end-of-term tests. The English and Math Departments are commended for leading the way in creating common formative assessments.

- The Visiting Team commends the students, parents, and faculty for the effective use of the Plus period. The support staff is commended for preparing and delivering a daily grade printout for each student. The PTSA is commended for providing elective activities for the Plus period.

- The Visiting Team commends the secretarial staff for greeting parents and students by name and their dedication to helping resolve problems for students and parents. The Visiting Team commends the custodial staff for maintaining an extremely clean, safe building and responding quickly to the needs of the school.

Recommendations:

- The Visiting Team recommends that South Davis Junior High School continue to gather pertinent data to determine who is learning and who is not learning. Data should be disaggregated by ethnicity, gender, grade, socioeconomic status, ELL, special education, and students living with a single parent.

- The Visiting Team recommends that the school identify students by name and grade that are not proficient on the math, science, or Language Arts CRTs. Once the

students are identified, counselors and teachers will be able to assist the students in closing the achievement gap.

- The Visiting Team recommends that faculty members continue collaborating in PLCs to improve student learning for **all** students. Each PLC should develop standards-based formative assessments and collect and analyze data. Faculty members will then have the opportunity to revise curriculum and investigate research-based instructional strategies to improve student scores in specific, targeted areas of the core.

- The Visiting Team recommends that the school include all stakeholders (i.e., students, parents, business partners, faculty and staff) in the school improvement process. All stakeholders should revisit the mission, belief statements, and DRSLs before the next accreditation visit.