

South Sevier High School 430 West 100 South Monroe, Utah 84754

March 2-3, 2011





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

THE REPORT OF THE VISITING TEAM REVIEWING

South Sevier High School 430 West 100 South Monroe, Utah 84754

March 2-3, 2011

UTAH STATE OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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

DIVISION OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND SCHOOL SUCCESS

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FOREWORD

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

The evaluation, March 2-3, 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 Sevier 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 Michael Bailey is also commended.

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

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

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SOUTH SEVIER HIGH SCHOOL

ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF

School Administration

Michael Bailey	Principal
•	Assistant Principal
-	-

Counseling

Support Staff

Julie Ainge	Kaelynn Gull	Kimberly Payne
Kathy Anderson	Karen Hill	Lillie Polelonema
Kaylyn Asay	Vickie Hunt	Sabrina Savage
Jessica Cavan	Lori King	Shaina Sharp
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Mary Lois Foreman	Jolene Parker	

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Dustyn Allen	Scott Hunt	Paula Roberts
Barbara Balch	Carla Jacobs	Collin Rose
Scott Brady	Mary Jo Judd	Sarah Schofield
James Cavan	Randy Madsen	Shelly Thayne
Arden DeMille	Michelle Mills	Brad Thornton
Brent Hafen	Tammy Nilsson	Melissa Whatcott
Melissa Harvey	DeDe Ogden	Weston Zabriskie

SOUTH SEVIER HIGH SCHOOL

MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to create a learning environment that encourages high expectations for success through:

- Appropriate instruction that allows for individual differences and learning styles.
- A safe, orderly, caring and supportive environment.
- Parental, teacher, and community involvement in student learning.

BELIEF STATEMENTS

- Student's self-esteem is enhanced by positive relationships and mutual respect.
- Education is the responsibility of the entire community.
- A safe and comfortable environment promotes student learning.
- The school's commitment to continuous improvement is vital.
- Accountability is essential.
- There is a correlation between values and learning.
- Use of a variety of instructional methods and approaches facilitates and enhances student learning.
- Students need opportunities to experience success.

DESIRED RESULTS FOR STUDENT LEARNING (DRSLs)

- 1. Students who possess the tools to be life-long learners.
- 2. Students who are effective communicators.
- 3. Students who demonstrate respect for self, peers and community by practicing safe and appropriate behaviors.
- 4. Students who gain respect for the global community and the natural environment.
- 5. Students who improve critical thinking and problem solving skills.

- 6. Students who are exposed to technology and acquire an understanding of its appropriate use.
- 7. Students who are exposed to and experience the fine arts.

Date of visit: March 2-3, 2011

MEMBERS OF THE VISITING TEAM

Dr. Roy Hoyt, Hurricane Middle School, Washington County School District, Visiting Team Chairperson

Chuck Brandt, Canyon View High School, Iron County School District

Wade Tischner, Westlake High School, Alpine School District

VISITING TEAM REPORT

SOUTH SEVIER HIGH SCHOOL

CHAPTER 1: SCHOOL PROFILE

South Sevier High School is a rural school, serving students in grades 9-12 at the southern end of Sevier County. The school has a student population of 449. Approximately 60 of these are Native American students from the southwestern states who are housed at the Richfield Residential Hall in Richfield; these Native American students make up 76 percent of the school's minority population. The school's close proximity to Snow College—Richfield allows students the opportunity to enroll in courses at the college or in concurrent credit programs at the school.

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

The school presented the Visiting Team with a document containing many types of data. There was neither a clear presentation of profile information nor analysis of the data presented. It was evident that the school spent considerable effort in doing surveys of student, parent and staff perceptions. There was a sincere report of all responses to these surveys. Current and past CRT, NWEA, and AYP scores were presented.

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

The Visiting Team recommends that the school adhere closely to *Collaborating for Student Achievement*, the Utah accreditation/school improvement process.

The vision of the current administration was to compile a report that contained not only information for the Visiting Team, but also information such as the course offerings, class schedule, etc. The wealth of information was not organized in such way that the Visiting Team was able to clearly tell from the report whether the process was followed.

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

The self-study identifies the strengths of the school. The principal, who is a former teacher at the school, has led the school through the self-analysis process for the past two years, and the faculty members have worked hard to include accurate information and an honest evaluation of the school's programs.

Suggested Areas for Further Inquiry:

- The Visiting Team recommends that South Sevier High School identify at least one DRSL to institutionalize for the next visit. A measurement system should be designed and implemented school-wide. Data must be collected, analyzed and shared with all stakeholders on a regular basis to ensure that the improvement efforts are making a difference for the struggling students at South Sevier High School.
- South Sevier High School recognizes the need to collect, disaggregate, and analyze school-level data regarding the success of programs, implementation of the DRSLs, and improvement in individual student learning. Continuing the process will allow the school leadership team to recognize the strengths in school's academic programs, as well as identify and address the gaps in student learning.
- The self-study should include thoughtful, written analysis of student achievement data that demonstrates an awareness of student achievement gaps and articulates plans tied to the action plan to address those gaps.

CHAPTER 2: NORTHWEST ACCREDITAION 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 commends the school's efforts to revisit the mission and beliefs since the last review. The missions and belief statements focus on student learning. However, it appears there was not necessarily involvement by all stakeholders in the development of the mission and beliefs statements. The Visiting Team recommends that all stakeholders be involved in any future revision of the mission, beliefs, and DRSLs.

South Sevier High School's DRSLs are clear and provide broad application to many subject areas. Measurable indicators have not been identified for the DRSLs, and there is little evidence that DRSLs have been implemented school-wide. In addition, there has not been a DRSL measurement tool designed that could be used school-wide to gather data relating to student learning.

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

South Sevier High School's mission statement supports the school's commitment to student learning. The faculty and students are aware of the DRSLs, and some faculty members have started to implement DRSLs in their classroom. The beliefs statements align with the school's DRSLs.

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

The school is still in the early stages of the process of clearly defining the indicators of success for the DRSLs. While some indicators of success have been listed for each DRSL, no organized, school-wide implementation has take place. The Visiting Team recommends that the school move forward with the institutionalization of a least one DRSL in the next few years with clearly defined expectations, acceptable levels of performance, assessment system and data collection.

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?

South Sevier High School has a friendly, inviting climate, and students indicated that they are happy and are achieving academic success. Some evidence exists that South Sevier High's mission, beliefs, and DRSLs guide some procedures, policies and decisions of the school.

There is little evidence of school-wide implementation of any individual DRSL by all faculty members in all departments. Nor has an assessment tool been designed or implemented to measure improvement in student learning

Curriculum:

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

The Visiting Team found the standards for student learning to be clearly defined and appropriately challenging. The school, with the support of the district, continues to work on aligning the curriculum with the State Core. The Utah Life Skills document was used in the development of school-wide DRSLs; consequently, the school is working toward incorporating that document into curricula and classrooms.

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

The Visiting Team determined the curriculum to be highly engaging and based on inquiry, problem solving, and critical thinking. The team was impressed with the way students were actively involved in the curriculum; most classrooms visited had

students interacting with the curriculum through small group discussions, cooperative learning, projects, class discussions, oral reports, use of technology, etc. In addition, remediation with teachers and intervention at lunch and after school have been instituted. Wednesday evening tutoring, EDNET classes, and Advanced Placement classes are provided to address the learning needs of a diverse student population.

The Visiting Team recommends that the school communicate and foster a relationship with the Snow College to address the needs of students who are working toward advanced educational opportunities.

c) To what extent does the teaching staff work collaboratively to support the development of a curriculum that focuses on the school's DRSLs?

A strong emphasis on collaboration is new to Sevier High School this year. There is evidence that some teachers are meeting together to address curriculum development, improved instruction, and other issues affecting the school. The district has begun the process of implementing PLCs. This will allow staff members to structure curriculum development as well as improve instruction and assessment tools.

The Visiting Team suggests that the school explore opportunities for collaboration within content areas. These collaborative efforts will help ensure the successful development and implementation of school-wide assessments that will measure student progress on the DRSL indicators.

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

Through interviews with staff members and classroom observations, the Visiting Team found that, to some extent, the school uses the NWEA to review and use as a guide for what needs to be re-taught prior to end-of-year CRTs. For struggling students, the school has implemented the Wednesday tutoring sessions. The AP Environmental Science class uses the Wednesday evening to cover additional material to help students be successful on their AP exam.

Instruction:

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

The Visiting Team, through classroom observations and teacher interviews, found a consistent variety of instructional strategies being utilized within the classrooms. Research-based strategies that promote meaningful student learning were observed. These included direct instruction, laboratory activities, hands-on activities, classroom discussion, cooperative learning groups and the appropriate use of many forms of technology.

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?

While recognize the difficulty in this type of observation, the Visiting Team observed very few situations where DRSLs were explicitly taught. However, in interviews with teachers—and, most importantly, with students—we have concluded that, to some extent, DRSLs are being taught and are considered valuable to the students. The school has placed a poster containing mission, vision, values and DRSLs in a highly visible location in every classroom.

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 saw evidence of the development and improvement of instructional strategies using Marzano's iObservation process. There was also time set aside in monthly faculty meetings for professional development. The Visiting Team encourages South Sevier High School to develop a more comprehensive and data-driven school-wide staff development process utilizing professional learning communities (PLCs).

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?

It was evident to the Visiting Team from classroom observations that the teachers at South Sevier High school are highly qualified and proficient; they are not only extremely knowledgeable in their content areas, but are committed to using effective instructional practices. It is also evident that South Sevier High teachers are dedicated to their profession, care about each student as an individual, and work diligently toward providing them with a positive school experience.

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 observed technology being utilized throughout the building. Every classroom was equipped with at least one computer, and many had several computers. There are multiple computer labs available for classroom use throughout the building. Ceiling-mounted projectors were available in most of the classrooms, Smart Boards were available in some of the classrooms, and specialized technology equipment was present in specific classrooms. The administration focuses a lot of its Trust Lands money on the school's technology needs.

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 some common assessments have been developed district-wide but are not being utilized by teachers in the areas where available. The school's use of the NWEA is based on a clear definition of the type of achievement to be assessed and the performance standards for evaluating the quality of the students' achievement.

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 noted that there were many examples of individual progress assessments within teachers' classrooms: tests, quizzes, projects, oral reports, research papers, etc. Staff members indicated that assessments are driven by Core Curriculum standards/guidelines.

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, to a large extent, the school is still in the early stages of developing its understanding and utilization of student achievement data. Some teachers are using data to fill instructional gaps and to make instructional decisions. However, the Visiting Team did not see this being made a school-wide practice.

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 was able to see evidence of limited time designed to meet teacher professional development needs. The district provides training during the summer in specific areas. Currently, the staff meets once a month for the purpose of staff training. The Visiting Team recommends that the school make an effort to set aside additional time for focused, school-wide professional development. The teachers of the school expressed appreciation for the time that they spend together in these efforts, and that they would like to see more dedicated time for professional development. Areas for these development activities should be determined by use of available data, mission and beliefs statements, and the school DRSLs.

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

South Sevier High School continues to focus on the DRSLs identified for the school's last accreditation visit. The process of development and refinement of the DRSLs involved a limited number of stakeholders. The Visiting Team noted that several teachers indicated that they are making an effort to implement the DRSLs, but there is not a school-wide effort to institutionalize any one of the DRSLs.

The school has not developed indicators or scoring tools for the DRSLs. The Visiting Team encourages the school to identify at least one DRSL to institutionalize for the next visit. A measurement system should be designed and implemented school-wide. Data must be collected, analyzed and shared with all stakeholders on a regular basis to ensure that the improvement efforts are making a difference for the struggling students at South Sevier High School.

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?

South Sevier High School has had three different principals since the initial Visiting Team visit. The current principal was a math teacher at the school prior to being appointed principal. All stakeholders respect and support the current principal. The administrative team is very supportive of the needs of the students.

The administration and staff promote quality instruction by fostering an academic learning climate that actively supports teaching and learning. Individual teachers and departments focus on teaching the State Core Curriculum.

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?

South Sevier High School has a leadership team that collaborates for improving student learning. However, decisions regarding student learning have not always been based on learning. The school should engage in a sustained effort to collect and analyze data that would identify who is learning and who is not learning. This would help the school make informed decisions regarding professional development, course offerings, and the type of data that should be collected in the future.

c) To what extent does the school leadership provide skillful stewardship by ensuring management of the organization, operations, and allocation and use of resources at

the school for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment which aligns with the school goals, DRSLs, and school improvement?

The administration provides skillful stewardship of the school's organization, operations, and resources. School-wide policies and operational procedures are consistent with the school's beliefs and mission, and are designed to maximize opportunities for successful learning. The administration should be commended for maintaining a safe, efficient, effective learning environment.

- 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 current principal is to be commended for creating an environment of trust and supportive relationships with students, parents, faculty and staff. The pride that students feel for their school was obvious to the Visiting Team. Students enjoy each other, and are generally very accepting.
- 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 community of South Sevier has a strong sense of belonging. Staff members know most of the students well. They are neighbors and friends with families of the school, and participate in the community and religious activities together. The next step for the school is to translate this into a system of having specific adults to assist individual students to achieve the school-wide expectations for student learning through some type of consistent mentoring/advisory program.

School Services:

This standard is dealt with in the school's NAAS Annual Report, which requires specific responses and information regarding student support services, guidance services, health services, library information services, special education services, and family and community services.

Facilities and Finances:

This standard is addressed in the school's annual report to Northwest and USOE, which requires specific responses regarding the physical plant, finances, audit of school records, advertising, etc.

CHAPTER 4: NORTHWEST SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT STANDARD

Culture of Continual Improvement:

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

The Visiting Team recognizes that South Sevier High School is in the process of defining and implementing a comprehensive school improvement plan. The Visiting Team would suggest that administrators, the school leadership team, and faculty members volunteer to become members of an accreditation team to learn how other schools are implementing comprehensive professional development plans. In addition, visits to other high schools would bring a new insight into the *Collaborating for Student Achievement* process.

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 school is just beginning to use these professional development experiences to frame the conversations on addressing the school's needs as outlined in the action plan. Funding for professional development has been drastically cut, thus limiting the school's ability to attend trainings. The school administration has been using faculty members to train other faculty members during the monthly faculty meetings. Peer observations are being utilized to identify faculty members to present in the faculty meetings.

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 found the action plan to be adequate in addressing the critical areas suggested for follow-up. The school staff and members of the School Community Council indicated a high level of support and commitment to the implementation of the action plan. The Visiting Team is confident that South Sevier High School will be successful in its school improvement efforts.

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

South Sevier High has developed a culture of open communication among faculty, staff and community members, and all stakeholders support productive change and continuous improvement.

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

The Visiting Team recognizes that there has been significant change in the school's administration since the last visit. It appears that the school leadership team had not met regularly during the first four years to check on the progress being made on long-range and short-term goals, nor did they regularly update the action plan. The new principal has made significant progress in the past two years in implementing and revising the action plan.

The Visiting Team strongly urges the school to focus on institutionalizing one DRSL and begin collecting data to see if the targeted achievement gap is being addressed.

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

The South Sevier High administration created a school leadership team that attended the *Collaborating for Student Achievement* training offered by the Utah State Office of Education. The school has gathered the data and begun to recognize areas that need improvement. The school has implemented focus groups but should include more stakeholders in those groups. In addition, the stakeholders reviewed and simplified the DRSLs. However, a comprehensive assessment system for gathering, analyzing and using pertinent data has not been implemented.

CHAPTER 5: COMMUNITY BUILDING

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

The Visiting Team witnessed the positive and productive working relationships that have been established among the students, teachers, support staff members and administrators. The learning environment created at South Sevier High School nurtures a sense of caring and belonging. This is particularly true for the approximately 40 Native American students being bused in from a different city.

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

The Visiting Team feels the school engages parents and families as partners in the learning process, this is accomplished primarily through the school's active Community Council. The school supports collegial working relationships across K-16 levels of education through concurrent enrollment courses and classes taught at the

Snow College—Richfield campus. The school builds collaborative networks of support with the community members and groups, youth-serving agencies, clergy and government leaders, and leaders of higher education and business.

c) To what extent has the school engaged the school community in a collaborative selfstudy process on behalf of students?

The Visiting Team found evidence that every population of the school community was involved in the self-study process. Administrators and faculty members were able to explain their specific roles in that process. Little evidence was provided involving the inclusion of a sufficient number of students and parents in the self-study process.

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

The Visiting Team is aware that South Sevier High School sends out a monthly newsletter to inform all stakeholders of what is happening within the school. Text messages and phone calls home informing parents of upcoming events are also well received and appreciated by the community. Parents and students of South Sevier High School have access to current student grades through the district web site. The Visiting Team encourages the school to develop its own web site to more effectively communicate information such as mission, vision, values, events, data and teacher web sites.

CHAPTER 6: MAJOR COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VISITING TEAM

Commendations:

- The Visiting Team commends the school's faculty, staff, students, parents, and administration for a thoughtful, honest, and complete accreditation process.
- The Visiting Team commends the administration for its focus on professionalism and instructional quality. The principal spends a considerable amount of time in classrooms observing and providing input to teachers on instructional strategies.
- The Visiting Team commends the school for its culture of camaraderie, acceptance, and unity. Staff members genuinely care about their students, get along with other staff members, and have a great deal of pride in the school.
- The Visiting Team commends the school for creating a positive and nurturing school climate in which students feel safe, cared for, challenged and focused on learning. Parents are supportive and appreciative of the school's efforts.

• The Visiting Team commends the school for having the latest technology available for students and faculty members to use.

Recommendations:

- The Visiting recommends that South Sevier High School identify at least one DRSL to institutionalize for the next visit. A measurement system should be designed and implemented school-wide. Data must be collected, analyzed and shared with all stakeholders on a regular basis to ensure that the improvement efforts are making a difference for the struggling students at South Sevier High School.
- The Visiting Team recommends that the school continue to collect, disaggregate, and analyze school-level data regarding the success of programs, implementation of the DRSLs, and improvement in individual student learning. Continuing the process will allow the school leadership team to recognize the strengths in the school's academic programs, as well as identify and address the gaps in student learning.
- The Visiting Team recommends that the school find more time to collaborate as a staff. The school staff does meet once a month, and there is a great deal of informal collaboration taking place. However, more time needs to be set aside for focused, school-wide professional development that meets the needs of all students.
- The Visiting Team recommends that South Sevier High School develop a more effective website where stakeholders can access the school calendar, assessment reports, links to individual teacher websites, mission/beliefs statements, principal messages, etc. Both parents and students indicated that, if it were available, they would utilize this site often.