The Report of the
Accreditation Visiting Team

Springville Junior High School

165 South 700 East
Springville, Utah 84663

April 23-24, 2012

Utah State Office of Education
250 East 500 South
P.O. Box 144200
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Springville Junior High School

165 South 700 East
Springville, Utah 84663

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword iii
Utah State Board of Education iv
Nebo School District Board of Education and District Administration 1
Nebo Junior High School Administration and Staff 2
Nebo Junior High School Mission Statement, Belief Statements and DRSLs 4
Members of the Visiting Team 6
Visiting Team Report 7
Chapter 1: School Profile 7
    Suggested Areas for Further Inquiry 8
Chapter 2: Northwest Accreditation Commission (Northwest)
    Teaching and Learning Standards 8
    Mission, Beliefs and Desired Results for Student Learning (DRSLs) 8
    Curriculum 9
    Instruction 11
    Assessment 13
Chapter 3: Northwest Support Standards 14
    Leadership and Organization 14
Chapter 4: Northwest School Improvement Standard 15
Chapter 5: Community Building 17
Chapter 6: Major Commendations and Recommendations of the Visiting Team 18

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, April 23-24, 2012, was conducted because of the school's desire to ensure quality education for all students in the school, and to increase student achievement.

The entire staff of Springville 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 Ken Van Ausdal is also commended.

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

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Steve Maughan.....Operations

SPRINGVILLE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF

School Administration

Ken Van Ausdal ..... Principal
Trent Mikesell ..... Student Services Administrator

Counseling

Monica Distefano ..... Counselor
Courtney Droz ..... Counselor
Monica Linton ..... Counselor
Sue Tarin ..... Counseling Secretary

Support Staff

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Kyrsten Anderson
Brenda Bales
Sue Ann Bell
Robert Bradford
Diane Burnside
Sherrane Kay Busby
Rebecca Byron
Yeimi Chamberlain
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Natalie Luke
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Adrienne Murray
Rachel Neeley
Angel Nilsson
Michael Parker
Ned Perkins
David Rencher
Brian Rice
Kim Rice
Mary Rice
Meredith Sabey
Greg Shields
Ryan Strong
Sam Tsugawa
Leslie Walker
Deborah Wells

SPRINGVILLE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

MISSION STATEMENT

At Springville Junior High, we are: Responsible Citizens, Successful Learners, and Effective Communicators.

BELIEF STATEMENTS

- Shared responsibility for education belongs to students, parents, the school and community.
- Optimal learning takes place in a caring environment characterized by respect, trust and high expectations.
- Active engagement in the learning process leads to student success.
- Instructional improvement is accomplished through disciplined reflection and informed change.
- Student potential is realized through multiple curricular and extra-curricular opportunities.
- Critical thinking and problem solving skills should be taught across the curriculum.

Knight's Code of Conduct

1. I show respect, by my words and actions, to teachers, to staff, to other students and to the school itself.
2. I am in my seat and prepared with needed materials and homework when the tardy bell rings.
3. I am quiet, courteous, and speak only when appropriate.
4. I am responsible for all information presented in class and for following teacher directions immediately.
5. I focus on the educational task at hand and keep myself positively engaged.

DESIRED RESULTS FOR STUDENT LEARNING (DRSLs)

1. Effective communicators know how to listen, resolve conflicts, and share through a variety of appropriate mediums.

   Effective communicators:

   - Clearly convey ideas, feelings, and beliefs through written, spoken, artistic and kinesthetic expression.
   - Communicate with others in a respectful and civil manner.
   - Listen carefully to others.
   - Adapt their communications to suit the needs of their audience.

2. Responsible citizens make a positive contribution to their community by being aware of, sensitive to and respectful of others.

   Successful Learners:

   - Are accountable for their action.
   - Use respectful language.
   - Contribute positively to their communities.
   - Understand that the choices they make affect others as well as themselves.

3. Successful learners are curious and display an enthusiastic understanding of the importance of continuous learning.

   Effective Communicators:

   - Actively seek out new information.
   - Use critical and logical thinking skills to solve problems.
   - Recognize connections between prior knowledge and newly acquired information.
   - Apply and integrate knowledge into diverse situations.

Date of visit: April 23-24, 2012

MEMBERS OF THE VISITING TEAM

Jeanne Andersen, Box Elder Middle School, Box Elder School District, Visiting Team Co-Chairperson

Mary Rhodes, Bennion Junior High School, Granite School District, Visiting Team Co-Chairperson

Audrey Fish, Elk Ridge Middle School, Jordan School District

Pamela Hunter, Bennion Junior High School, Granite School District

Wade Tischner, Lakeridge Junior High School, Alpine School District

VISITING TEAM REPORT

SPRINGVILLE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

CHAPTER 1: SCHOOL PROFILE

Springville Junior High School was originally built in 1912 next to a high school building. The current building is located on 165 South 700 East. The building originally housed students in grades seven through nine. Since its opening, the school has been added to, its mascots changed, and its building outgrown. Population growth over the years created the need for a larger junior high, and the district built Springville Middle School and moved grade seven there for a time. Over the years, major remodeling has added classrooms, a larger cafeteria, more gymnasium space, computer labs, and staff offices. Because of larger enrollment, a couple of portable classroom units have become a necessity.

The school has adopted the Knight as its mascot, emphasizing nobility of character, chivalry, and concern for the downtrodden, as well as the need to be armed warriors prepared to battle for freedom and country.

A new junior high school, Mapleton Junior High, opened in 2006-2007, decreasing the student population, and the seventh grade returned to the junior high. Recently a bond was passed, and a new building, opening in 2014-2015, will be built to replace the current Springville Junior High. “Springville has a strong history of support for all facets of education; students excel academically, artistically, physically, ethically and emotionally, with well-rounded and extracurricular activities that cater to every level of ability.”

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

Springville Junior High student’s performance is different at each grade level and in each core area. The administration attributes this to the lower achievement levels of the school’s varied demographics. Disaggregated data shows low scores from ELL students and students with disabilities. Springville has the highest percentage of Hispanics in the district, at 13.7 percent, and also the highest percentage of households with low socioeconomic status in the district. The demographics show an increase in the Hispanic population over the past few years. The administration feels that this is an adjustment that the staff is still trying to make.

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

The Visiting Team appreciates the school’s data collection and analysis. Since demographics seem to be stable, with small increases in lower socioeconomics and ethnicity, we would like to see a more aggressive interpretation. We found that the demographics did not include the current year, and recommend adding 2011-2012 to the demographic data.

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 self-study was well prepared and showed disaggregated charts to help the staff analyze student achievement and demographics. The profile was thorough in providing community information, demographics, and student performance data.

Suggested Areas for Further Inquiry:

- The Visiting Team suggests interpreting, analyzing, and using data to drive future instruction for student achievement.

- The Visiting Team can see the collaboration done for the accreditation process, and advises continuing collaboration between departments to enhance student learning.

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 found that the school's mission beliefs and DRSLs were developed collaboratively by the school's faculty, administration, staff, students, and community members. We commend Springville Junior High School for working collaboratively with all stakeholders to define a compelling purpose and vision for the school that supports student achievement.

Springville Junior High School reviewed documents on the previous mission statement and decided on retention of the mission statement and desired results of student learning (DRSLs). Part of the process included revising belief statements and the Code of Knights. All teachers were asked to review and rewrite beliefs, and a compiled document was redistributed; a whole-group faculty meeting discussed and further refined the belief statements. The consensus of the staff on retaining the mission and DRSLs and on achieving new belief statements is commendable.

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

Springville Junior High School's mission, beliefs and DRSLs align, and departments goals support the DRSLs. Examples can be seen in departments throughout the school

(i.e., English—responsibility, expectations, peer editing, group work, and the "doing-due" display for assignments; counseling—anti-bullying lessons, decision-making, and stress relief; PE—sportsmanship; science—character education, children's books and discussions; Quest—Monday morning lessons; social studies—elections; and the school-wide diversity assembly and monthly Knighthood ceremonies).

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

The Visiting Team could see that the faculty, staff, parents, and students understand what is meant by the Responsible Citizen DRSL, but could find few measurable indicators. We encourage the school to elaborate and develop specific indicators and measurements (i.e., rubrics, surveys, portfolios, etc.) to help gather evidence. Springville Junior High has implemented lessons, to be taught on Mondays during Quest time, that emphasize the three DRSLs and promote positive behavior. The faculty implemented a Monday lesson book to coordinate these lessons. Several teachers shared these notebook lessons with the delivered lessons marked in their notebooks. Overall, institutionalization of the Responsible Citizen DRSL is judged to be accomplished.

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 commends the staff members of Springville Junior High for the collaborative process they used to define the school's mission, beliefs, and DRSLs, and encourages the staff to follow the five-year action plans in the areas of Common Core implementation, PLCs, 21st Century Skills, school culture, ownership and responsibility, and student needs.

The educational agenda permeates the school culture. Students are aware of desired results, enjoy having planners stamped to reward behavior aligned with expectations, and participate in weekly lessons on responsible citizenry. Of great importance is the emphasis focused on effective communication and successful learning. This emphasis is observed because of the school's holistic approach. Much evidence in the areas of curriculum, instruction, and assessment illustrates a culture aligned with the school agenda.

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 sufficient evidence that the faculty members are teaching to the Utah Core Curriculum. All teachers in the Math and Language Arts Departments have been trained in the new Common Core this past year and will continue to be trained this summer. The ninth grade has already implemented the new core; with the

seventh and eighth grades, implementation will take place next year. The English Core will be implemented school-wide next year as well. The Counseling Center is following the curriculum for the Comprehensive Counseling Guidance (CCG) program in the classrooms. The Visiting Team suggests that the administration continue to provide professional development opportunities for the faculty, including additional professional development on PLCs. Faculty members should continue to update the curriculum to include the various core components (e.g., problem solving, critical thinking, and increased rigor).

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

The Visiting Team found students engaged in the learning process at Springville Junior High and saw evidence of a variety of teaching methods and strategies. The manufacturing class creates treasure boxes to stretch learning in their content area. Language arts students spend quality time refining and editing drafts to enhance an educational experience that encourages effective communication.

Seven of the teachers on staff are ELL/ESL endorsed, and two additional teachers are working toward their endorsements. An ALS (language specialist) is working with students planning topical studies that hopefully will lead to disciplinary literacy as well as generalized literacy at the school. The counselors are teaching decision-making skills courses in multiple classrooms each year.

Parents and teachers reported a concern that the accelerated students are not being challenged in some curricular areas. The Visiting Team recommends including these students when discussing struggling learners in PLCs and modifying lessons appropriately.

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

Springville Junior High School has an early-out day every Wednesday that allows faculty members to collaborate in PLCs and attend school-wide professional development and faculty meetings. The Visiting Team did not find a school-wide accountability measure to ensure that each department is working on updating and aligning curricula, creating common summative and formative assessments, and discussing researched-based instructional strategies. We recommend that an element of accountability be implemented.

The school has three small learning communities in place which, known as pods. Some of these are grouped according to ability. Pod teachers have a common prep and common students. Prep time is used to discuss students, cross-curricular ideas, and common assessments. Monday’s Qwest time is used to present character education uniformly to all students. This instruction is in direct support of the DRSLs. Teachers routinely incorporate the DRSLs in their instruction and post them in classrooms and in public areas as a constant reminder of expectations for students.

Along with instruction in character education, Quest time (Springville Junior High's student intervention program) is used to provide intervention for students with deficient grades and enrichment for students with non-deficient grades.

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

The Visiting Team found evidence that some departments are using common assessments in conjunction with the standardized test scores to drive their revisions of curriculum and teaching strategies. Currently this remains a departmental activity; the Visitng Team encourages the faculty to create and review common assessments as well as use standardized test scores to increase student achievement.

Instruction:

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

The Visiting Team observed many students engaged and participating in a variety of instructional activities. Examples of strategies observed include service learning, hands-on activities, individual work, projects, presentations, performances, questioning and analysis, and direct instruction. Springville Junior High is commended for the strong foundation of cooperative learning that is evident in many classrooms.

The Visiting Team recommends that teachers continue efforts and give attention to additional teaching strategies that involve more diverse learners, including the ELL/ESL students.

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 observed that Springville Junior High has adopted an advisory period, with scheduled lesson plans to focus on the DRSLs. The school adopted this plan from a BYU study, and the lessons are given to the students during advisory once a week, on Mondays. Those lessons include topics such as bullying, following instructions, taking responsibility, showing appreciation and respect, and resolving conflicts.

The Visiting Team observed that the DRSLs are being taught during regular class instruction in alignment with the varied core for each class.

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 interviewed teachers on the use of professional development as a guide to identifying instructional needs. One of the ways in which Springville Junior High has provided this opportunity is through the pod system. Some students are divided into pods, with common teachers in their core classes. These teachers share the same prep time to allow them the opportunity to target at-risk students and develop cross-curricular lesson plans.

Each Wednesday afternoon is early-out time to use for professional development. The staff members read and discuss a professional development book entitled *This We Believe*. Most of this time is spent in departments aligning common assessments and instruction. The Visiting Team commends the departments for their collaborative efforts.

The administration supports individual professional development studies at the national and state levels by providing Trust Land Funds to those teachers who wish to participate.

It is recommended that the time used in Wednesday afternoon meetings and other professional development opportunities be focused on continued creation of common assessments and interpretations of the data provided to drive future instruction for student achievement.

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 observed that teachers are knowledgeable about their subject areas and are focused on the State Core. We also note the willingness of the staff to work together for improvement, particularly within their departments, and commend Springville Junior High for the quality of involvement by the teachers, many of whom give of their free time to implement before- and after-school activities to keep the students involved and engaged. The community, parents, and staff members have positive comments about the entire faculty and staff at Springville Junior High.

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 commends the school for a well-developed web page with announcements, student-created news articles, and important links. The principal provides weekly e-mails to parents with attachments showing their students' grades, attendance record, and tardies.

Technology is being used for student-created PowerPoint presentations, three computer labs for writing, and the UTIPS Science Core curriculum. The orchestra uses Smart Music, with online support and assessment available for students to access at home, as well as in the practice rooms. DWA is used for English curriculum and assessment.

The Visiting Team recommends that, as the new building is developed, technology for instructional use will be a part of the school's focus.

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 observed evidence of staff-developed classroom assessments that were clearly based on performance standards. Some evidence of collaborative formative assessments was found. The only evidence of school-wide assessment based on clearly defined standards is the use of data from the state CRT assessments. The nature of this data is summative; there is a need for common formative assessments to guide the teachers' daily instruction and student intervention needs in a timely manner.

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 that the school receives CRT data from the State Office of Education, and this data is viewed by the teachers and their departments. There is a need to collect and analyze the data from formative assessments, with a recommendation to include more assessments that are common among common classes.

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 observed the school using CRT data to identify student learning and achievement trends. This data was disaggregated and put into graphic form, making it easier to access the information contained within. There is a need to use more formative assessments to better understand students' learning in a timely manner, in order to effectively intervene and help the students learn.

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 saw some evidence of professional development, but giving more attention to assessment strategies such as writing test items, creating scoring rubrics and analyzing assessment data is suggested. There was evidence of teachers using a variety of authentic assessments, and the Visiting Team commends the faculty for such.

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 saw some evidence of using a school-wide formal scoring tool or process for assessing student learning of DRSLs, but the Visiting Team recommends the creation of a scoring tool to assess the identified DRSLs.

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 Visiting Team found an emphasis on academic climate to support teaching and learning on multiple levels. Professional development involves book studies; broad participation in local, state, and national conferences; and insistence on research-based frameworks. One demonstration of focus on priority of academic learning for students comes through the Quest program. Students receive printouts of grades daily and report for remediation in areas of deficiency.

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?*

Data, research, and current theory are fundamental pieces of decision making at Springville Junior High. The model of professional learning communities (PLCs) is in place; PLCs meet weekly to develop common assessments, evaluate data, and adjust instruction. Additionally, data from standardized tests and administrative observations is provided to PLCs to better inform decision-making. Teachers report that reading *This We Believe* was pertinent to their practice as middle-level professionals. All these practices inform decision-making and contribute to development of the school improvement plan and action plan.

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?*

Springville Junior High is well-managed; teachers are provided with the resources they need. One departmental analysis, written last year, indicated sparse technology and expressed wishes for projectors; by the time of the visit, the majority of teachers had projectors. The demonstration of resource allocation in alignment with teacher needs and school goals contributes to an effective learning environment. Provision of lesson plans and binders for Quest time aligns directly with DRSL of Respectful Citizenship. Finally, funding is transparent and involves collaboration with the School Community Council regarding the School Land Trust plan. Overall, resource

allocation is fair and efficient, and in an era of state and district restraint, skillfully managed.

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 found the extent of collaboration impressive. The entire staff is enthusiastic about new emphases, trends, and changed direction in general. Staff members' participation in the self-analysis is one example of structured collaboration, and continued configurations of PLCs is another. Also, the recently implemented teaming structure has been well-received. In the interest of input, the option was provided, and during the first year, over half of staff members took the risk to team.

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 advisory period and Quest time provide students with the opportunity to meet with teachers daily and weekly. Teachers pass out grades and confer with students regarding their schedule for flex time. This intense contact is appreciated by parents, students, and teachers.

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 commends the Springville Junior High faculty and staff for the degree to which they have kept continuous improvement as a focus, given the administrative changes over the last six years. The school created an improvement plan that relates directly to the school's mission statement, belief statements, and DRSLs. The plan focuses on moving the school forward and helps create a clear vision for all stakeholders.

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 found that Springville Junior High has a five-year action plan for implementing more professional development for its teachers. Some areas of focus

include literacy and math. Springville Junior High plans on creating a common writing rubric to use across the school.

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 staff commitment apparent in most facets of the continuous improvement efforts of the school. The staff is determined and focused on providing what is needed for student growth and academic success. The Visiting Team recognizes the thoroughness of the five-year action plan, and recommends altering the actions according to the school and student needs if necessary.

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

The school and administration are very supportive of positive change for school-wide improvement. Staff members have input and decision-making power that helps contribute a sense of ownership to overall improvement. Students and parents feel and appreciate the efforts toward improvement made by staff members that helped guide them in a relevant and meaningful manner.

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

Given the administrative changes, it is commendable that Springville Junior High has moved ahead with the action plan. The school has made significant progress in implementing the original plan from the 2006 visit. Specifically, the Visiting Team commends the school and its leadership for their efforts to institutionalize the Responsible Citizen DRSL and the focus on student learning. The implementation of character education in a systemic way, through the incorporation of an advisory program, has been effective in teaching students this key component. The Visiting Team recommends adjusting the timeline of the current action plan as professional development needs, student needs, and demographics changes present themselves.

The faculty and administration, through the course of self-study, have realized that they need a means to measure the Responsible Citizen DRSL. They also need to review all of the DRSLs regularly through the leadership team and continuation of focus groups. Springville Junior High clearly understands what is needed to make the action plan something that drives the school.

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

Significant progress has occurred in addressing the major recommendations of the previous Visiting Team. The previous mission statement was revisited and revised to reflect the current focus of the school. The process of gathering and disaggregating data has begun. Focus groups and departments met as part of the accreditation

process. The DRSLs were brought to the forefront, both in analysis and in application. The Visiting Team recommends that the faculty and staff of Springville Junior High continue to engage in quality professional development and effective collaboration, and that they remain focused on student learning and achievement. The Visiting Team also recommends keeping all stakeholders involved during this evolutionary growth period.

CHAPTER 5: COMMUNITY BUILDING

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

The Visiting Team observed that the school has a positive working community among its faculty members. The departments work well together to plan common curricula, monitor student performance, and improve the school climate. Members of the faculty work together to celebrate student achievement at an assembly once a month, where they perform talents and present the Student Knights of the Month awards.

The school makes considerable efforts to acclimate new students to the school, including sixth grade building visits in the spring, a seventh grade orientation in the fall, and a welcoming committee of student leaders that has pizza parties and activities at lunch for students who are new to the school. The school also has a diversity assembly to celebrate each student's unique talents and culture.

A strong mentoring program for both the students and the teachers was observed. The flex time, Quest, is utilized as a time for teachers to develop positive relationships and mentor students. They also have a mentoring program among colleagues for new teacher support. The school provides many opportunities for students to become involved. These include after-school intramurals, competitive athletics, journalism, the school musical, student leadership class, Arts Festival, Hope Squad, and a strong 4H program.

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

The Visiting Team commends Springville Junior High for strong community involvement from both parents and student outreach programs. Many parents are actively involved in decisions within the school, with some even participating in the selection of land for the new school site. Students from the school service learning class engage with the elementary school by doing peer tutoring with the third grade class once a week. Both the service learning class and the Knightengales Choral Group do volunteer work within the community, outside the school at senior citizen homes, and at the homeless shelter.

The Math and English Departments are working with the high schools to implement the new Common Core. The CTE and elective classes meet twice a month with Spanish Fork Middle School to plan and implement curriculum.

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

The Visiting Team observed a strong positive involvement with the Community Council and commends Springville Junior High for giving the students the opportunity to take ownership of their educational experience. The school demonstrated this with its student-led conference program. During observations, students were encouraged to take ownership of their educational accomplishments and evaluations for improvement by selecting materials and work they would like to share with their parents from each class. They were encouraged to share with their parents their own positive assessment, as well as ways they could improve their work. This was also observed with the school's Quest flex program, where students receive daily progress reports on their grades and are given time for improvement.

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

DRSLs are posted in classrooms, stated during announcements, and taught in extensive lessons during flex class time. The principal provides weekly e-mails to parents with attachments showing their student's grades, attendance and tardies. The school also has a well-developed web page with announcements, student-created news articles, and important links.

CHAPTER 6: MAJOR COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VISITING TEAM

Commendations:

- The Visiting Team commends the Springville Junior High leadership for fostering school-wide improvement plans with an emphasis on academic learning. Plans are based on data collection and on recommendations from focus groups and departmental analyses. Beyond committee input into the process, a broader collaborative involvement of the entire staff in the self-study and the resulting action plan is evident. Staff commitment is extensive and pervasive. The Visiting Team recognizes both the effort and the polished document that communicates this so well.

- The Visiting Team commends the school's community, students, and staff for maintaining a friendly and congenial learning environment. The teachers demonstrate a caring attitude toward students and their learning. The school culture encourages mentoring on multiple levels. Mentoring is a strong foundation at Springville Junior High. Teachers mentor other teachers, teachers mentor students, and students mentor

other students, fostering positive role models and creating a supportive school climate. The leadership supports and builds teacher capacity.

- The Visiting Team observed strong instructional practices, with many students engaged and participating in a variety of instructional activities. Examples of strategies observed by the Visiting Team include service learning, hands-on activities, individual work, projects, presentations, performances, questioning and analysis, and direct instruction. The Visiting Team commends Springville Junior High for the strong foundation of cooperative learning that is evident in many classrooms.

Recommendations:

- The Visiting Team commends the professional learning community (PLC) process in the action plan, and recommends using that process to ensure the achievement of student learning among subgroups. We recommend using the four guiding questions to support teacher instruction and student achievement among all student groups (including Hispanics, ELLs, students with disabilities, and the economically disadvantaged).

- The Visiting Team recognizes the collaborative efforts of the school's stakeholders in developing the mission, beliefs, and DRSLs. Springville Junior High is encouraged to continue working toward measurable evidence (e.g., rubrics, surveys, portfolios, etc.).