



# East Greenwich High School

EAST GREENWICH

## THE SALT VISIT TEAM REPORT

January 13, 2006



School Accountability for Learning and Teaching (SALT)

The school accountability program of the Rhode Island Department of Education

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## The Purpose and Limits of This Report

This is the report of the SALT team that visited East Greenwich High School from January 9 through January 13, 2006.

The SALT visit report makes every effort to provide your school with a valid, specific picture of how well your students are learning. The report also portrays how the teaching in your school affects learning and how the school supports learning and teaching. The purpose of developing this information is to help you make changes in teaching and the school that will improve the learning of your students. The report is valid because the team's inquiry is governed by a protocol that is designed to make it possible for visit team members to make careful judgments using accurate evidence. The exercise of professional judgment makes the findings useful for school improvement because these judgments identify where the visit team thinks the school is doing well and where it is doing less well.

The major questions the team addressed were:

How well do students learn at East Greenwich High School?

How well does the teaching at East Greenwich High School affect learning?

How well does East Greenwich High School support learning and teaching?

The following features of this visit are at the heart of the report:

Members of the visit team are primarily teachers and administrators from Rhode Island public schools. The majority of team members are teachers. The names and affiliations of the team members are listed at the end of the report.

The team sought to capture what makes this school work, or not work, as a public institution of learning. Each school is unique, and the team has tried to capture what makes East Greenwich High School distinct.

The team did not compare this school to any other school.

When writing the report, the team deliberately chose words that it thought would best convey its message to the school, based on careful consideration of what it had learned about the school.

**The team reached consensus on each conclusion, each recommendation and each commendation in this report.**

The team made its judgment explicit.

This report reflects only the week in the life of the school that was observed and considered by this team. The report is not based on what the school plans to do in the future or on what it has done in the past.

This school visit is supported by the Rhode Island Department of Education as a component of School Accountability for Learning and Teaching (SALT). To gain the full advantages of a peer visiting system, RIDE deliberately did not participate in the active editing of this SALT visit report. That was carried out by the team's chair with the support of Catalpa. Ltd.

The team closely followed a rigorous protocol of inquiry that is rooted in Practice-based Inquiry™ (Catalpa Ltd). The detailed *Handbook for Chairs of the SALT School Visit, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition* describes the theoretical constructs behind the SALT visit and stipulates the many details of the visit procedures. The *Handbook* and other relevant documents are available at [www.Catalpa.org](http://www.Catalpa.org). Contact Rick Richards at (401) 222-8401 or [rick.richards@ride.ri.gov](mailto:rick.richards@ride.ri.gov) for further information about the SALT visit protocol.

SALT visits undergo rigorous quality control. Catalpa Ltd. monitors each visit and determines whether the report can be endorsed. Endorsement assures the reader that the team and the school followed the visit protocol. It also ensures that the conclusions and the report meet specified standards.

## Sources of Evidence

The Sources of Evidence that this team used to support its conclusions are listed in the appendix.

The team spent a total of over 142 hours in direct classroom observation. Most of this time was spent observing complete lessons or classes. Almost every classroom was visited at least once, and almost every teacher was observed more than once. In addition, the team spent 48 hours in conversations with teachers, staff, students and administrators.

The full visit team built the conclusions, commendations and recommendations presented here through intense and thorough discussion. The team met for a total of 34 hours in team meetings spanning the five days of the visit. This time does not include the time the team spent in classrooms, with teachers, and in meetings with students, parents, and school and district administrators.

The team did agree by consensus that every conclusion in this report is:

- Important enough to include in the report
- Supported by the evidence the team gathered during the visit
- Set in the present, and
- Contains the judgment of the team

## Using the Report

This report is designed to have value to all audiences concerned with how East Greenwich High School can improve student learning. However, the most important audience is the school itself.

How your school improvement team reads and considers the report is the critical first step. RIDE will provide a SALT Fellow to lead a follow-up session with the school improvement team to help start the process. With support from the East Greenwich School Improvement Coordinator and from SALT fellows, the school improvement team should carefully decide what changes it wants to make in learning, teaching and the school and how it can amend its School Improvement Plan to reflect these decisions.

The East Greenwich School District, RIDE and the public should consider what the report says or implies about how they can best support East Greenwich High School as it works to strengthen its performance.

Any reader of this report should consider the report as a whole. A reader who only looks at recommendations misses important information.

## 2. PROFILE OF EAST GREENWICH HIGH SCHOOL

East Greenwich High School is located in the suburban town of East Greenwich, Rhode Island, which is twenty miles south of Providence. The community of approximately 13,500 residents has the highest per-capita income in the state and comprises people who work predominantly in business, industry, and the various professions.

The school, constructed in 1967, is a two-story building that has undergone one addition and several renovations. The original building surrounds an open courtyard and includes a main office/guidance area, a cafeteria, a gymnasium, an auditorium, and a library in addition to classroom and laboratory space. A second gymnasium was added in 2002. Recent renovations include new tile floors, windows and shades, an air exchange system, and a heating system.

East Greenwich High School currently has a population of 735 students. Six hundred and ninety three students (94%) are white, 27 (4%) are Asian/Pacific Islander, 10 (1.4%) are African American, four (0.5 %) are Hispanic and one (0.1%) is Native American. One hundred and thirty three (18%) students have Individual Education Plans (IEP) and 504 Plans. Four students (0.5%) are limited English proficient (LEP). Thirty one (4%) are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch.

The staff consists of one interim principal, one assistant principal, and 74 teachers, including four guidance counselors, one librarian, one school nurse, one school psychologist, and one social worker. East Greenwich High School's leadership team comprises two school administrators and the department chairs in English, mathematics, science, social studies, foreign language, special education, health and physical education, and guidance. In addition, a support staff of 13 paraprofessionals (classroom aides and secretaries) and six custodians service the school.

The school day begins at 7:34 a.m. with homeroom, followed by three fifty-two minute periods. The fourth period of the day is the lunch period, which is divided into three lunches. Some students eat during one lunch and have class during the other two. Lunch is followed by two more fifty-three minute periods. The day ends at 1:53 p.m. Each week repeats the same seven-period cycle that allows for six, fifty-three minute blocks per day. An additional block of 53 minutes occurs twice a week to accommodate science labs, and health and physical education classes. All academic subjects meet four times a week. The school year is divided into two semesters. At the end of the first semester, the order of the class periods reverses: periods that met in the morning during the fall semester meet in the afternoon during the spring semester, and vice versa. This pattern accommodates students who wish to pursue a career or technical program and who attend other schools such as the Warwick Area Career and Technical Center.

For the past four years East Greenwich High School has been designated a high-performing school by the Rhode Island Department of Education, based on its consistently high scores on the state assessments. East Greenwich High school is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC). In 2000, NEASC placed the school on "warning status." The school addressed many of the Commission's recommendations in 2002. In March 2005, NEASC informed the school that it was still on "warning status" and should continue its work to meet the NEASC standards fully by upgrading the school facilities, its curriculum and assessment and to strengthen teaching and learning. NEASC will conduct an additional follow up review in Spring 2006.

East Greenwich High School students receive national and state recognition for their outstanding academic accomplishments. The class of 2005, for example, included one National Merit Finalist, one National Merit Semi-finalist, seven National Merit Commended Scholars, and 41 Rhode Island Scholars. Eighty-six percent of that class took the SATs and earned the highest average score in the state. Typically, more than 80% of East Greenwich High School graduates attend four-year colleges; between 10-15% of the graduates attend two-year colleges. East Greenwich High School students are often finalists or winners of state and national awards in the areas of academics, athletics, and the fine and performing arts.

### 3. PORTRAIT OF EAST GREENWICH HIGH SCHOOL AT THE TIME OF THE VISIT

East Greenwich High School is nestled into a wooded area away from the busy streets and highways nearby. The hallways, classrooms, and offices are alive with the work of teachers educating students. As in many Rhode Island high schools, excellence and indifference coexist. Walk into one classroom, and witness students and teachers involved in the hard work of learning: students take notes, read texts and present projects as a community of learners, who work together to develop critical reading, writing, and thinking skills. Move to a second classroom, and see students who are not engaged in the learning process and who tune out the voice of the teacher as the never-ending lecture continues.

More important than this divergence is the sense of urgency that exists here. After a year of controversy and changes in administrators, as well as in staff, the high school has begun to rebuild itself. Students want to be challenged. Teachers want to improve instruction. Mutual respect among all within the school is quite evident. This school community is poised to make significant changes to improve student learning and teaching.

As they take on new teaching practices and implement the various initiatives required by the State Department of Education and the No Child Left Behind legislation, teachers require professional development. They are just beginning to present a clear and common focus on student learning and to encourage and enforce student behaviors that will support that learning. Student discipline within classrooms varies. Although the student handbook spells out a code of behavior, some teachers do not have clear and consistent expectations for their students' adherence to that code. Students enter classes late without passes, sometimes carry on conversations while the teacher instructs, use electronic devices, or do other work while the class progresses. This is distracting.

The overall condition of the facility is, at best, fair. There is evidence that this school building is past its prime: Examples include mold in several locations, clocks that do not function, limited technology and supplies for instruction, inadequate laboratory facilities in science, worn and outdated textbooks, a minimum amount of heat in many classrooms, poor lighting in the hallways, workrooms, and on the stairs, and some resident rodents. Community support will be necessary to alleviate these shortcomings. Gaining this support is currently a challenge.

## 4. FINDINGS ON STUDENT LEARNING

### Conclusions:

Many students have a good foundation for problem solving. These students seek information, work collaboratively with their classmates, and keep organized notes. They draw on different strategies to achieve a resolution and use evidence to support their answers. While students are capable, some rely too much on the guidance of their teachers to initiate a problem solving activity. In some cases, students problem solve but are unaware that they are doing so, because they do not follow any clearly discernable process. Students state that they are unsure about the process involved. They say that problem solving happens in mathematics and science classes, but they do not recognize how it connects to the other disciplines. At the same time, a few students are not involved in problem-solving activities and are not developing the skills they need to solve problems routinely and critically. The results on mathematics problem-solving subtest of the 2005 New Standards Reference Examination demonstrate that 54% of the students in grade 11 met the standard. However, it is disappointing that only 14% of the students achieved the standard with honors and 32% of the students did not achieve the standard. *(following students, observing classes, observing the school outside the classroom, talking with students and teachers, meeting with the school improvement team, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, 2005 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries, school improvement plan)*

Students routinely write across the curriculum with varying degrees of competence. They compose stories, lab reports, research papers, editorials, and argument/counter argument pieces—to list some examples. Students effectively make use of a writing process that includes brainstorming, drafting, self and peer editing, and revising the final product. Many produce strong reflections and powerful narratives. Most exhibit their knowledge of the conventions of writing in their finished pieces. These qualities help explain the data from 2005 New Standard Reference Examination that show that 43% of the students achieved the standard and an additional 46% achieved the standard with honors. On the other hand, many students produce writing that is simplistic, that merely answers factual questions or summarizes information. When responding to prompts that require in depth analysis, these students struggle to find evidence to support the arguments in their writing. The state assessment results support the SALT team's findings. While the results on the writing effectiveness subtest show that 47% of the students achieved the standard, only 10% exceeded the standard, leaving 39% of them below standard. *(following students, observing classes, reviewing 2005 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, reviewing classroom assessments, reviewing self study, discussing student work with teachers, talking with students and teachers)*

Although many students enjoy reading self-selected fiction and non-fiction materials, they are not enthusiastic about their required reading. Despite that, they are proficient readers who have a strong foundation in basic and critical reading skills. Many students use multiple reading strategies across the curriculum and throughout the day. These students appropriately use context clues to expand their vocabulary. Other students exhibit a good grasp of how to make text-to-text and text-to-world connections. They comfortably use graphic organizers and KWL (what do you Know, what do you Want to know, what did you Learn) charts to support their reading. Most students productively build on their understanding of the reading by working cooperatively with their peers. Some students appropriately discard extraneous information. They successfully evaluate the validity of information by cross-referencing data. They also transfer knowledge obtained in their reading from one subject to another. A few students read less critically. They lack a depth of understanding and scan their reading assignments only to locate the answers. These students are not developing the skills they need to become effective readers. *(following students, observing classes, meeting with students and school improvement team, talking with students and teachers, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, 2005 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries)*

Students at East Greenwich High School exhibit varying degrees of engagement in the learning process. Some students across all levels exhibit the qualities of expert learners. They are curious, persistent in the face of academic challenges, and self-evaluative. They also possess the confidence to make mistakes. Most honors and advanced placement students are proficient learners. Nevertheless, they report that they do not push themselves toward acquiring greater knowledge. Instead, they recognize that they are more motivated to earn good grades. This limits their ability to become expert learners. Many college career preparatory and general studies students are typically unprepared for class, sometimes off task, and need redirection. They do not recognize their mistakes as they rush to complete a task. Some do not take responsibility for their work. Students across all levels rely upon the teacher or a peer to offer the solution, rather than independently to think through a problem themselves. These students are not actively involved in their learning, but are rather product oriented exhibiting a “Let’s just get this done” attitude. *(following students, talking with students and teachers, observing classes, meeting with students, reviewing completed and ongoing student work)*

## Important Thematic Findings in Student Learning

Students:

- ◆ *Have an understanding of basic reading, writing, and problem solving, but they do not apply critical thinking skills consistently in these areas.*
- ◆ *Generally do not push themselves to complete difficult tasks independently.*
- ◆ *Work well collaboratively.*

## 5. FINDINGS ON TEACHING FOR LEARNING

### Conclusions

Most teachers provide their students with problem solving activities across curricular areas. Several examples include composing original music pieces, defending a position in a debate, writing a critical paper, and developing a product. Some teachers probe and encourage students to think about essential questions, as well as alternative solutions. They create collaborative groups and provide students with authentic and challenging tasks. On the other hand, many teachers give the answers to students before they have had the opportunity to complete the problem-solving activities on their own. Some teachers have students working too often in groups and without clear expectations, thus hindering their ability to seek out information independently. Many honors, advanced placement and college career preparatory courses are lecture driven providing students with minimal opportunities to solve problems. Although the steps for solving academic problems, taken from the school improvement plan, are excellent, clearly delineated, and posted in most classrooms, teachers and students do not utilize them. Consistent teaching strategies are not yet in place for instructing problem solving across all curricular areas. *(following students, observing classes, meeting with the school improvement team and students, talking with students, teachers and school administrators, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing classroom assessments, reviewing school improvement plan)*

Teachers do a great job involving their students in a variety of authentic writing experiences across the curriculum. Several examples include on-demand tasks, journals, narratives, scripts, reports, and persuasive writing. The students' impressive command of writing conventions is easily identifiable in these products. Many teachers effectively use exemplars and rubrics that provide students with clear expectations and a framework for how they should organize their writing. They give students numerous opportunities to revise and reflect. However, teachers have inconsistent expectations about what they expect in the quality of student writing. For example, some teachers do not expect students to support their ideas with compelling evidence. Students complete their assignments, but teachers do not always assess the quality of their work. Typically, they just check that the student has finished the assignment. A few parents and students express similar concerns that teachers tend to focus on the quantity, rather than the quality, of students' writing. *(following students, observing classes, meeting with the school improvement team, students, and parents, talking with students and teachers, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing classroom assessments)*

Some teachers are effectively using various teaching strategies and multiple texts to improve reading comprehension. This is evident in classrooms where they admirably implement pre reading, reading, and post reading strategies. They stress analytical or critical thinking skills, requiring students to dig deeper in the reading for analysis, interpretation, and synthesis of ideas. Some teachers do not teach these necessary strategies. This is apparent across academic levels based upon teacher assumptions about their students' needs. Teachers instruct reading more explicitly in general studies classes. In the college career preparatory level, the amount of reading instruction decreases, while in the honors and AP level, this instruction is essentially absent. Test scores corroborate what the team observes in the classroom. Even though 72% of the students achieved the standard in the area of reading analysis and interpretation, a mere 6% achieved the standard with honors. *(following students, observing classes, meeting with school improvement team and the leadership team, talking with students and teachers, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing classroom assessments, reviewing 2005 SALT Survey results, reviewing 2005 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries)*

Most teachers focus on their students and support them both inside and outside the classroom. Teachers show genuine concern for the needs and well being of all students. However, there is a true dichotomy in how successfully students are engaged in the classrooms. Teachers, who have clear expectations and firm disciplinary procedures in their classrooms, create positive and productive learning environments in which students flourish. These teachers have established a firm foundation for students to build upon their prior knowledge, think critically, and make real world connections. These teachers effectively use multiple forms of questioning techniques to elicit responses and actively engage the students in their learning. Conversely, other teachers overlook the distracting behavior of some students to the detriment of the whole class. Some students arrive late to class, use prohibited electronic devices, and have side conversations during instruction. This off-task behavior limits students' progression toward becoming expert learners. *(following students, observing classes, observing the school outside the classroom, meeting with students, talking with students and teachers, reviewing school policies and practices)*

### Commendations for East Greenwich High School

- Creative and authentic learning experiences
- Commitment to a student-centered learning environment
- Effective collaborative learning
- Strong teacher-student relationships

### Recommendations for East Greenwich High School

- Develop and implement a consistent instructional strategy for problem solving.
- Challenge all students in reading, writing, and problem solving. Stress the development of critical thinking skills at all levels.
- Adhere consistently to the disciplinary policies in the student handbook.
- Continue to provide a supportive environment for all students.

## 6. FINDINGS ON SCHOOL SUPPORT FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING

### Conclusions

Today, an effective team of administrators leads the district and the school. They successfully fill the void that was created by the departure of both the district superintendent and the high school principal at the end of the last school year. They state, and the SALT team concurs, that the school is primed to provide a quality education for all students. The interim principal empowers the school's highly effective leadership team to move the school toward improving student learning and forwarding the high school reform initiatives. He strives to foster a positive environment within the high school, and teachers state that they are confident in his leadership ability. The principal and assistant principal agree that the role of the assistant principal has been severely stretched. The assistant principal currently is in charge of all scheduling, discipline, state mandated initiatives, and the Practical Arts department. These responsibilities, as well as others, go beyond the effective use of an administrator. Nevertheless, the school is poised to take the next step in improving student learning and teaching. As it does this important work, some within the school community are not sure whether they will have the support of the school committee or the community to make the needed changes. They state that they are not always included in making decisions concerning needed changes at the high school. The substantive changes that are essential and others that have begun will require all stakeholders to work together and support one another to get the job done. *(meeting with school improvement team, leadership team, school and district administrators, and parents, talking with teachers and school and district administrators, reviewing 2005 SALT Survey report)*

Extended contract negotiations during the past year stalled the teachers' efforts to incorporate best practices in teaching and to implement state reform initiatives. Today the school leadership works diligently to begin the implementation of needed changes. The East Greenwich School District has recently committed itself to using portfolios and senior projects to meet the Proficiency Based Graduation Requirements for 2008. However, personalization, where each student is well known by an adult in the school, is not apparent. Some members of the staff have started professional development in secondary content literacy in order to facilitate the incorporation of higher level thinking skills and effective problem solving across all levels. Although school-wide rubrics in reading, writing, and problem solving were developed previously, they are not currently in use. The faculty has not reached consensus on their content and use. Differentiated instruction is not evident in many classes. Teachers do not challenge all students to reach their highest academic potential. Teachers are eager to learn and grow as professionals and share their professional development experiences with the staff, but they do not have the scheduled time to do so. Common planning time, oftentimes a catalyst for making the needed changes, has yet to be addressed contractually. *(following students, observing classes, meeting with the school improvement team, leadership team, and school and district administrators, talking with teachers and school and district administrators, reviewing 2005 SALT Survey report, reviewing the NEASC Five Year Progress Report, 2005)*

Special education creates an equitable learning environment for many students. Teachers do an excellent job servicing those students with unique learning needs. They implement three service models, which include a “pull-out” resource (study skills), full inclusion (collaboration), and small group settings (independent study) to ensure academic achievement. Teachers effectively assist student learning by providing note taking support, organizational strategies, and other skills necessary for these students to become expert learners. Strong collaborative relationships exist among the content area teachers, special educators, and paraprofessionals that result in a dynamic classroom climate. Small group settings cultivate fundamental skills in reading, writing, and problem solving. *(meeting with school improvement team, leadership team, students, school administrators, and parents, talking with students, teachers, and school administrators, observing classes)*

The school has an informal relaxed atmosphere in which teachers enforce published school policies as they see fit. This is demonstrated in two areas. First, the behavior policies for the classroom, as they are outlined in the student handbook, are inconsistently enforced. This permits more than a few students to engage in distracting behavior that teachers ignore. Their efforts to teach for learning are much less effective as students tune out and become distracted. This affects their ability to become expert learners because they do not give their full attention to instruction. Second, the policies for school wide behavior are not clear. Students acknowledge that, “either it’s not allowed or they’re really, really lenient.” Students are significantly uncertain about what behaviors are accepted and what school policies are followed. The SALT team thinks that this is very perplexing to students who want to follow the school’s rules but are not sure what they are. *(meeting with students and school administrators, following students, observing classes, observing the school outside the classroom, talking with students and school administrators, reviewing school policies and practices)*

The resources the school needs for effective teaching and learning are not adequately provided. Classroom materials, such as paper, are in short supply or unavailable leaving teachers to purchase their own instructional materials. Textbooks in some areas are outdated; others are in poor condition. Library books are lost, as there is no way to secure this area. Technology is both limited and outdated. The science labs require technology upgrading and structural repair. The administrators, teachers, and staff share two copiers, but only one works consistently. While the library has 14 computer stations and one printer for class and student access, demand exceeds availability. Teachers are frustrated because they must sign up way in advance to secure computer time in the library. A limited number of televisions, VCRs, and DVD players are available for checkout through the library. Two computer labs, one that utilizes outdated computers, are available for individual teachers and students to use, when they are not scheduled for use by the business or computer classes. This makes it difficult for teachers to develop lesson plans that incorporate the use of these labs. All classrooms have at least one computer, which the teacher uses primarily to record class attendance. A few classrooms have multiple computers, LCD projectors, and video equipment that students may use to complete multimedia assignments. The foreign language computer lab is consistently integrated into foreign language instruction. A video conferencing setup is also available. While various technologies are present, the availability, quality, and quantity are insufficient. The staff reports that the recent efforts to implement SchoolMax for record keeping and scheduling has been both confusing and frustrating for all. Because there is no current technology plan, the implementation of curriculum-based technology is extremely difficult. Access to technology is the product of chance, rather than a systemic plan. *(following students, observing classes, observing the school outside the classroom, meeting with the school improvement team, students, school and district administrators, and parents, talking with students, teachers, parents, and school and district administrators, reviewing classroom textbooks, district strategic plan, NEASC Five Year Progress Report, 2005)*

While the setting, entrance, and new gymnasium of the high school are aesthetically pleasing, the classrooms and remaining core facilities are in a state of deterioration. The overall consensus among the faculty, students, and parents is that there are no major safety issues related to violence. However, everyone within the school expressed various health and safety concerns. Some of these concerns were noted in the NEASC Reports of 2000 and 2005. These include the need to refurbish the facility and the presence of rodents and rodent traps with rat poison. Although the SALT team did not see any rodents during the visit week, we did see the traps and poison in some classrooms. Further examples that the SALT team noted include the presence of mold on some walls, poor ventilation, inconsistent heat throughout the school—which is provided by the new heating system—and exposed heating pipes. Safety concerns include poorly illuminated stairwells and hallways, windows that open inward, unlit parking lots with no surveillance cameras, and unsecured doors. The security system that protects the occupants of the physical plant and surrounding campus is inadequate. The new phone system is not accessible to some teachers because they have yet to be logged on to the new system. This contributes to an unsafe environment. These conditions compromise the overall health and safety of faculty, staff, and students. *(observing the school outside the classroom, observing classes, meeting with the students, school administrators, and parents, talking with students, teachers, and school administrators, NEASC Report, 2000, NEASC Five Year Progress Report, 2005)*

During the fall of this school year, the newly constituted school improvement team led the school in several self-study protocols. Based on this evidence gathering, the school developed conclusions about the quality of student learning in the areas of reading, writing, and problem solving. Subsequently, the school has written one action plan, which addresses student problem solving and focuses on what students and teachers need to do to improve in this area. The supporting documents to this plan show the connection between what problem solving steps the students will follow (understand the problem, devise a plan, execute the plan, and reflect) and how they will develop critical thinking skills in reading and writing, as well as in problem solving. This plan is an excellent beginning. With its successful implementation, which is the next step, students will have opportunities to further develop their critical thinking skills through intentional teaching and modeling by the entire faculty. *(meeting with the school improvement team and school administrators, talking with students, teachers, and school administrators, reviewing school improvement plan, reviewing self study)*

## Commendations for East Greenwich High School

School poised to take the next step

Dedicated and enthusiastic staff

Special Education Programs

Aesthetically pleasing school setting

## Recommendations for East Greenwich High School

Clarify or revise the student teacher handbook to establish a consistent set of rules. Consistently enforce these written policies.

Create and utilize school wide rubrics so that students have clear expectations for their work.

Develop and implement a school technology plan. Make curricular connections that show why additional technology is needed for all levels of learners.

Develop a schedule to include common planning time to facilitate collaboration of teachers and staff so that instruction adjusts to student learning needs.

Participate in professional development in differentiation, literacy, problem solving, and Proficiency Based Graduation Requirements.

Advocate that the health and safety issues present here be alleviated.

## Recommendations for East Greenwich School Department

Advocate for the expansion of the administrative team, and support its work.

Assist in the development of a technology plan for the high school, and insist that it be funded.

Provide professional development in differentiation, literacy, problem solving, and Proficiency Based Graduation Requirements.

Improve the health and safety issues present here.

## Recommendations for East Greenwich School Committee

Provide support for the school in its reform efforts.

Expand support for the administrative team, and support the team in its work.

Provide funding for technology at the high school.

Support the faculty as it focuses on professional development in differentiation, literacy, problem solving, and Proficiency Based Graduation Requirements.

Resolve the health and safety issues present here. Refurbish the present facility.

## 7. FINAL ADVICE TO EAST GREENWICH HIGH SCHOOL

This is a year of great change at East Greenwich High School. With new school and district leadership, the faculty, staff, and students are poised to take the next step toward excellence. The faculty and staff possess a positive outlook about what they can accomplish for this school. You must cultivate and use your enthusiasm to improve teaching and learning. Build unity among all stakeholders so everyone will focus on change and share in the work.

Start the work of improving the teaching and learning of problem solving using the problem solving steps posted in each classroom. Challenge the students to focus on the process of problem solving, not on the final product. Attend professional development sessions on differentiated instruction and reading, writing, and math literacy. Share your ideas, successes, and challenges with one another in critical friends groups so that you support one another in this work. The special education program provides excellent support for the learning community. Expand this model of positive collaborative teaching practices to include all content areas.

Clarify policies and practices for school wide and classroom discipline. Provide students with clear expectations of appropriate behavior, and consistently follow through as a unified team of professionals. In this way you will transform all classroom environments so that all students work to their highest potential to become expert learners.

Create a checklist of health and safety issues present in the school building, and address them with your district leaders, the school committee, and the town. Review the overall school security levels with regard to proper lighting inside and outside the school, a security system in the library, surveillance cameras, and secured entranceways.

This SALT Report, the 2000 NEASC Report and the NEASC Progress Report of 2005 agree in many areas about what changes this school must make. Yet the various needs of this school are still present and wait to be addressed. The new leadership and a rejuvenated staff bring this school to a pivotal moment. All policy makers and stakeholders involved in the future of East Greenwich High School must invest the time, energy, and funding this school requires to improve, both academically and structurally. In this way, the community can be truly proud of East Greenwich High School and the accomplishments of all of its students. Good luck to you, as you take on this difficult, but rewarding, work.

## ENDORSEMENT OF SALT VISIT TEAM REPORT

### East Greenwich High School

January 13, 2006

Catalpa Ltd. monitors all SALT visits and examines each SALT visit team report to determine whether it should be endorsed as a legitimate SALT report. The endorsement decision is based on procedures and criteria specified in *Endorsing SALT Visit Team Reports*. (available on Catalpa website). Catalpa Ltd. bases its judgment about the legitimacy of a report on these three questions:

Did the SALT visit team and the host school conduct the visit in a manner that is reasonably consistent with the protocol for the visit?

Do the conclusions of the report meet the tests for conclusions specified in the visit protocol (important, accurate, set in present, shows the team's judgment)?

Does the report meet the tests for a report as specified in the visit protocol (fair, useful, and persuasive of productive action)?

Using the answers to these questions, the final decision to endorse the report answers the overall endorsement question: Is this a legitimate SALT team visit report? In order to make this determination, Catalpa weighs all the questions and issues that have been raised to decide whether a report is legitimate or not. While it is possible that a challenge related to one of the three questions listed above would be serious enough to withhold or condition the endorsement, it is more likely that issues serious enough to challenge a report's legitimacy will cut across the three questions.

While the SALT visit protocol requires that all SALT visits are conducted to an exceptionally high standard of rigor, visits are "real-life" events; it is impossible to control for all unexpected circumstances that might arise. The protocol for the conduct of the visit is spelled out in the *Handbook for SALT Visit Chairs, 1<sup>st</sup> edition*.

Since unexpected circumstances might result in either the team or the school straying too far from the protocol for a visit, Catalpa monitors both the school and the team during a visit regarding the conduct of the visit.

Most often actual visit events or issues do not challenge a report's legitimacy and Catalpa's monitoring and endorsement is routine. A district administrator, principal, faculty member or parent may not like a report, or think it is too negative, or think the visit should have been conducted in a manner that is not consistent with the protocol. None of these represent a challenge to a report's legitimacy; concerns that might challenge an endorsement are based on events that stray too far from the protocol.

The Catalpa review of this visit and this report was routine.

The steps Catalpa completed for this review were:

- discussion with the chair about any issues related to the visit before it began
- daily discussion of any issues with the visit chair during the visit
- observation of two portions of the visit
- discussion with the principal regarding any concerns about the visit at the time of the visit
- thorough review of the report in both its pre-release and final version form

The findings from the review are:

1. This team was certified to meet team membership requirements by RIDE staff.
2. This report was produced by a legitimate SALT Visit that was led by a trained SALT Visit Chair and conducted in a manner that is consistent with SALT Visit procedures.
3. The conclusions are legitimate SALT visit conclusions.
4. The report is a legitimate SALT visit report.

Accordingly, Catalpa Ltd. endorses this report.



**CATALPA LTD.**

Thomas A. Wilson, EdD

Catalpa Ltd.

January 30, 2006

## REPORT APPENDIX

### Sources of Evidence for This Report

In order to write this report the team examined test scores, student work, and other documents related to this school. The school improvement plan for East Greenwich High School was the touchstone document for the team. No matter how informative documents may be, however, there is no substitute for being at the school while it is in session—in the classrooms, in the lunchroom and in the hallways. The team built its conclusions primarily from information about what the students, staff, and administrators think and do during their day. Thus, this visit allowed the team to build informed judgments about the teaching, learning and support that actually takes place at East Greenwich High School.

The visit team collected its evidence from the following sources of evidence:

- ◆ *observing classes directly*
- ◆ *observing the school outside of the classroom*
- ◆ *following 12 students for a full day*
- ◆ *observing the work of teachers and staff for a full day*
- ◆ *meeting at scheduled times with the following groups:*
  - teachers*
  - school improvement team*
  - school and district administrators*
  - students*
  - parents*
- ◆ *talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administrators*
- ◆ *reviewing completed and ongoing student work*
- ◆ *interviewing teachers about the work of their students*
- ◆ *analyzing state assessment results as reported in Information Works!*
- ◆ *reviewing the following documents:*
  - district and school policies and practices
  - records of professional development activities
  - classroom assessments
  - school improvement plan for East Greenwich High School
  - district strategic plan
  - 2005 SALT Survey report
  - classroom textbooks
  - 2005 Information Works!
  - 2005 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries
  - School and District Report Cards

East Greenwich Public Schools curriculum guides

New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) Report  
and Progress Reports 2000-2005

Professional Development Day documents, November 10, 2005

Communications RE: SALT to  
Parents/District/Administration/Faculty/School  
Committee/Leadership Team, Fall 2005

East Greenwich School Improvement Team Agenda and Minutes  
folder

East Greenwich High School Parent Newsletters

East Greenwich High School SALT Visit binder

Student Mentoring Program folder

2005-2006 Student/Parent/Teacher Handbook and Student Daily  
Planner

Contract Between East Greenwich Education Association  
NEARI/NEA and the East Greenwich School Committee, September,  
1996-August, 1999 with Amendments and Updates

## State Assessment Results for East Greenwich Senior High School

Assessment results create sources of evidence that the visit team uses as it conducts its inquiry. The team uses this evidence to shape its efforts to locate critical issues about the school. It also uses this evidence, along with other evidence, to draw conclusions about those issues.

This school's results are from the latest available state assessment information. It is presented here in three different ways:

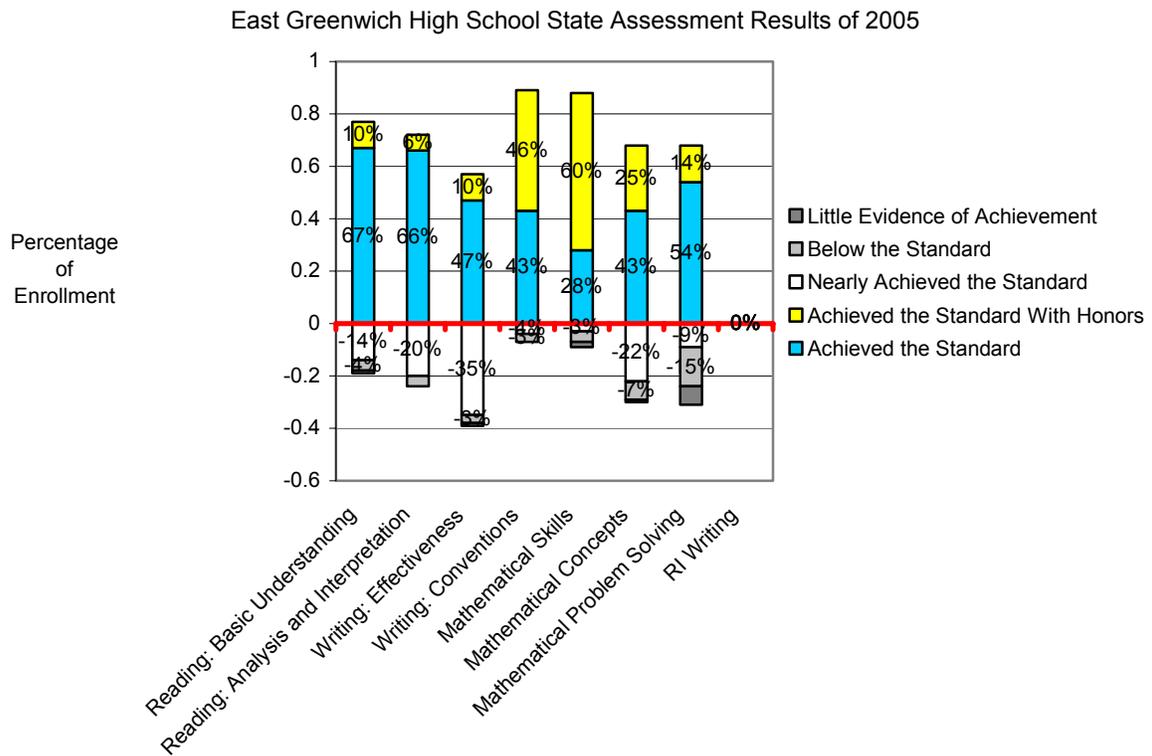
- ◆ *against performance standards,*
- ◆ *across student groups within the school, and*
- ◆ *over time.*

Information Works! data for East Greenwich Senior High School is available at [/www.infoworks.ride.uri.edu/2005/default.asp](http://www.infoworks.ride.uri.edu/2005/default.asp).

**RESULTS IN RELATION TO PERFORMANCE STANDARDS**

The first display shows how well the students do in relation to standards in English/Language Arts and mathematics. Student results are shown as the percentage of students taking the test whose score places them in the various categories at, above, or below the performance standard. Endorsed by the Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education in 1998, the tested standards can be found in the publication *New Standards Performance Standards*.

*Table1. 2003-04 Student Results on Rhode Island State Assessments*

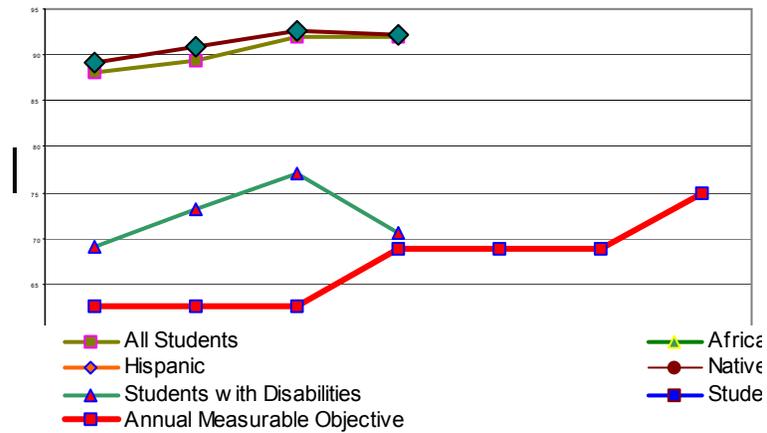


**RESULTS ACROSS STUDENT GROUPS WITHIN THE SCHOOL**

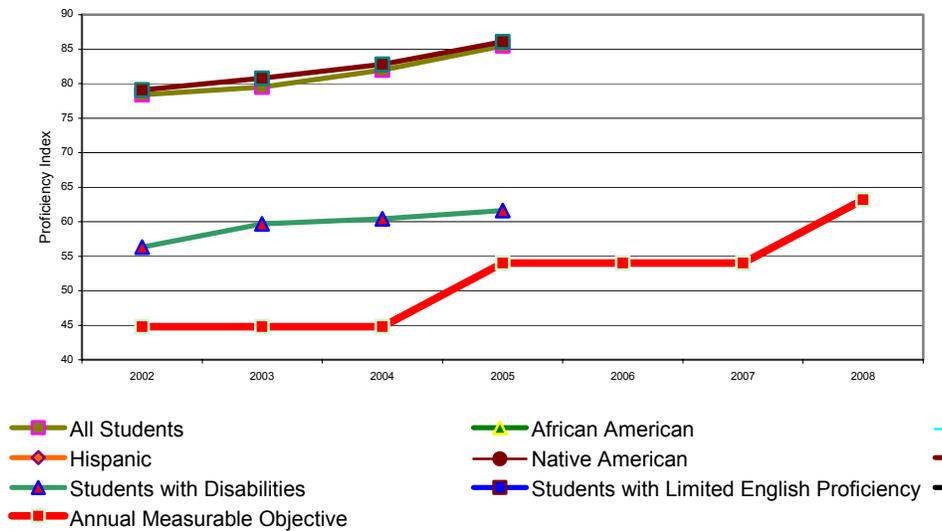
An important way to display student results is across different groups of students in this school who have different characteristics. This display creates information about how well the school meets the learning needs of its various students, in accord with the federal *No Child Left Behind* legislation. To ensure that these smaller groups of students contain enough data to make results accurate, results are based on three years of testing. Any student group whose index scores do not meet targets set by RIDE, require additional attention to close its performance gap.

*Table 2 2002-2005 Student Results across Subgroups*

Annual Proficiency, East Greenwich High School, Grade 10-11Ea



Annual Proficiency, East Greenwich High School, Grade 10-11 Math



**REPORT CARD FOR EAST GREENWICH SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL**

This Report Card shows the performance of East Greenwich Senior High School compared to the school’s annual measurable objectives (AMO).

grade: 11

[Overview](#) | [English Language Arts achievement](#) | [MATHEMATICS achievement](#)

go to printer-friendly page read quick guide

Index Proficiency Score, 2003-05	English Language Arts Target score: 68.8				MATHEMATICS Target score: 54			
	this School	Target Met?	this District	thE State	this School	Target Met?	this District	S
<b>All Students</b>	<b>91.9</b>	YES	91.9	81.5	<b>85.5</b>	YES	85.5	
African Americans	*	YES	*	71.3	*	YES	*	
Asian	*	YES	*	78.9	*	YES	*	
Hispanic	*	YES	*	69.4	*	YES	*	
Native Americans	*	YES	*	73	*	YES	*	
White	<b>92.2</b>	YES	92	84.6	<b>86.1</b>	YES	86.1	
Students with Disabilities	<b>70.5</b>	YES	70.5	63.2	<b>61.6</b>	YES	61.6	
Students with Limited English Proficiency	*	YES	*	56.2	*	YES	*	
Students who are Economically Disadvantaged	*	YES	*	71.1	*	YES	*	

PERCENT of students tested, 2003-05	Target: 95%			
	this school	target met?	THIS DISTRICT	the state
English Language Arts	<b>98.7</b>	YES	98.7	97.1
Mathematics	<b>98.7</b>	YES	98.7	97.3

Graduation Rate	Target: 75.3%			
	this school	target met?	THIS DISTRICT	the state
	<b>98.4</b>	YES	98.4	85

TARGETS MET/MISSED, THIS SCHOOL		
	TARGETS MET	TARGETS MISSED
English Language Arts Index Score	9	0
Mathematics Index Score	9	0
Percent Tested	2	0
Graduation Rate	1	0

this school is classified as:

High Performing and Sustaining

KEY: \* Student group has too few students to calculate results.  
 † “Safe Harbor” - Student group has fallen short of the target but has made sufficient improvement over last year’s score.  
 †† Student group has met the target based only on the most recent year of test results.  
 Δ Graduation rate based on fewer than four years of data. NOTE: For information on targets and classifications, please see [Quick Guide](#) .

**THE EAST GREENWICH HIGH SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT TEAM**

Laura Bowerman  
Parent

Barbara Cullen  
Assistant Principal

Paula Dillon  
Special Education Teacher

Patricia Dulac, SIT Chair  
Mathematics Department Chair

Amanda Eller  
Student, Senior

Barbara Horan  
Parent

Lyn Hostetler, SIT Chair  
Guidance Department Chair

Mike Levine  
Principal

Jerry Meyer, Community Member  
Director of the EG Chamber of Commerce

Pam Noble  
Parent

Christina O'Day  
Spanish Teacher

Monica Rosenberg  
Senior Student

Eliza Stopa  
Junior Student

Christine Shaw  
Social Studies Teacher

Ellise Wolff  
Family and Consumer Science Teacher

**MEMBERS OF THE SALT VISIT TEAM**

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South Kingstown High School  
Rhode Island Department of Education  
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Literacy and Reading Coach  
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English Department Chairperson  
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Narragansett High School  
Narragansett, RI

## CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEMBERS OF VISIT TEAM