



NORTH SMITHFIELD JUNIOR/SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

North Smithfield, Rhode Island

SALT Visit Team Report

May 26, 2000



School Accountability for Learning and Teaching (SALT)

The accountability program of the Rhode Island Department of Education

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[1. THIS REPORT'S PURPOSE AND LIMITS](#)

School Accountability for Learning and Teaching (SALT) is Rhode Island's comprehensive school accountability system. SALT is based on using information to improve learning and teaching so that the learning of all students in the state dramatically improves. The SALT Visit and other major SALT components are designed to aid schools in their ongoing development and implementation of effective School Improvement Plans.

The purpose of the visit to North Smithfield Junior/Senior High School from May 23, 2000 through May 26, 2000 was to draw conclusions about the School in the three focus areas of SALT:

- Student Learning
- Teaching
- The School

The design of the SALT visit ensures that accountability supports improvement of schools by directly connecting judgments of quality and recommendations for improvement to the actual life and work of a school.

This report is built upon the observations and conclusions of the visiting team. The visiting team is composed of Rhode Island school practitioners and a parent. Their affiliations are included at the end of the report.

The School Improvement Plan for North Smithfield Junior/Senior High School was the touchstone document for the team. However informative written reports may be, there is simply no substitute for being at the school while it is in session - in the classroom, in the lunchroom, and in the hallways. The specific information generated by a team visit is about how the students, staff and administrators go about their day. Thus, this Visit allowed professional colleagues and stakeholders to build informed judgments about the teaching and learning that actually takes place at North Smithfield Junior/Senior High School.

The Visiting Team collected its evidence from the following:

- *a total of 112 full classroom observations and 72 partial classroom observations which totaled over 118 hours of time spent in direct classroom observation. All classrooms were visited at least once. Most teachers were observed more than once.*
- *many observations of the school (outside of classroom)*
- *following 11 students for a full day*
- *observing the work of teachers, specialty teachers, and staff for a full day*
- *scheduled meetings with the following groups:*
 - *school improvement team*
 - *school and district administrators*
 - *students*
 - *parents*
- *conversations and/or interviews with many students, teachers, staff, and school administrators*
- *examination of student*
- *work, including a selection of work collected by the school*
- *Invited meetings with the 7th and 8th grade teams*
- *analysis of achievement and equity gaps based on InformationWorks! data*
- *review of district and school policies*
- *review of professional development activities*
- *review of classroom assessments.*
- *review of the following documents:*
 - *North Smithfield Junior/Senior High School School Improvement Plan*
 - *North Smithfield District Strategic Plan*
 - *North Smithfield Junior-Senior High School Program of Studies 2000-2001*
 - *1999-2000 SALT Survey Report*
 - *classroom textbooks*
 - *course standards and requirements*
 - *review of student schedules*
 - *North Smithfield Junior-Senior High School SALT Visit Handbook*
 - *1998 Information Works!*
 - *1999 Information Works!*
 - *2000 Information Works!*
 - *1998, 1999 New Standards Reference Exams School Summary Reports*
 - *1999 Rhode Island Writing Assessment results*
 - *New England Association of Schools and Colleges 1991 Report of the Visiting Committee*
 - *2000 Information Works! In\$ite School, District, and State Financial Information*

The full team has built the conclusions, commendations and recommendations presented here through intense and thorough discussions. The visiting team met for a total of 29 hours in six separate meetings spanning the four days of the visit. This time is exclusive of the time spent in classrooms, with teachers and in meetings with students, parents, and school and district administrators. The team sought to develop conclusions, commendations and recommendations in the three focus areas that, in its judgment, would be helpful to the school as it works to improve teaching and learning.

The team reached consensus agreement for each conclusion, each recommendation, and each commendation in this report.

It is important to note that this report reflects a "moment" in the life of the school. The conclusions here are different from those that can be made from statewide assessment data or from information collected and analyzed by members of the school. This report is not intended to be prescriptive. Rather, it is a different lens, one not clouded by the daily life of the school. This new lens is one through which the school can look to help focus on important issues resulting in the development of strategies for overall improvement in the teaching and learning process.

The value of this report is not determined by the hard work of the Team. The value will be determined by how North Smithfield Junior/Senior High School responds to the report. At first, the critical criteria will be the thoughtfulness of that response and later it will be its actual effectiveness in improving teaching and learning. The response of the faculty and staff will be most critical early on but later there is a shared responsibility to support the school in making progress. The School Department, the citizens of North Smithfield, and the Rhode Island Department of Education will share that responsibility.

It is important to read and consider this report as a whole. Recommendations and commendations should be considered in context with the conclusions. That is the way they were written.

2. PROFILE OF NORTH SMITHFIELD JUNIOR/SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

North Smithfield Junior/Senior High School serves grades 7-12 for the town of North Smithfield, Rhode Island. It is part of the North Smithfield School System. North Smithfield is a suburban town with a population of approximately 10,500. The present school first opened its doors to students in 1966 and there have been no additions to the building.

A five-member school committee, whose members are elected to four-year terms, governs the North Smithfield Public School District. A town administrator and a five-member town council governs the town. North Smithfield Junior/Senior High School students are served by a professional staff of three administrators, sixty-eight full and part-time faculty, nine aides and support personnel, three guidance counselors, and seven custodians.

Of the 785 student attending North Smithfield Junior/Senior High School seven hundred fifty-eight (758) or 97 percent are White, five (5) students or .6 percent are Hispanic, four (4) students or .5 percent are Asian / Pacific Islander, six (6) students or .7 percent are Black, and two (2) students or .2 percent are Native American. One hundred and two (102) students totaling 14 percent receive special education services. Fifty-five (55) students or 7 percent are eligible for free or reduced price lunch.

Presently, North Smithfield Junior High School is evolving to a middle school. Curriculum revision is underway to align the "Course Standards and Requirements," mid-term exams, and final exams to national standards. Authentic

and portfolio assessments have been developed. Course offerings have recently been expanded in the academic core and elective areas. Moreover, the school conducts a College Freshman Survey.

3. PORTRAIT OF NORTH SMITHFIELD JUNIOR/SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL AT THE TIME OF THE VISIT

North Smithfield Junior/Senior High School is a clean, safe, comfortable, well disciplined learning community that is proud of its past and looking forward to its future. The educational, social, and emotional well being of its students, especially the college bound, is always at the forefront of its mission. Both students and the professional staff take pride and ownership in this building. In general, the staff is dedicated and hard working.

The majority of students are polite, conscientious, and thoughtful. The school has taken several steps toward becoming a standards-based teaching and learning environment. Standards, performance tasks, and alternative assessments can be found throughout the school. The decentralization of professional development choices, the absence of standards-based K-12 curricula, and conflicting beliefs about standards has hampered the changes in instructional practice necessary to become a standards-based school. Successful standards-based practices are evident, but not school-wide.

Faculty, staff, and administration, both at the school and district level, all work extremely hard and perform a multitude of duties not associated with their primary responsibilities. This limits the effectiveness of services that they are capable of providing.

The school has invested some concentrated energies in trying to become a middle school, but desperately needs to bring an end to the view of middle level students as smaller high school students. Teaming and interdisciplinary teaching are present in some capacity, but the sharing of staff and the present scheduling practices create obstacles in the development of a true middle school that meets the unique academic and social needs of middle level students.

Several areas (curricula programs, scheduling, professional development, and student support services) within the school demand additional attention. Despite limited town funding, students at North Smithfield Junior/Senior High School achieve on many standardized indicators of performance. Although this school is a good school, it could better serve its students if the town and community would embrace the concept of school excellence.

4. FINDINGS ON STUDENT LEARNING

Sources of Evidence

- 2000 Information Works!
- *1999 Rhode Island Writing Assessment results*
- *1999 Rhode Island Health Assessment results*
- *1999 New Standards Reference Exams School Summary Report*
- *observations of the school*
- *conversations and/or interviews with staff, teachers, and administrators*
- *following students*
- *classroom observations*

- *meeting with students*

Conclusions

Students at North Smithfield Junior/Senior High School are polite, well behaved, respectful, and eager to learn. These characteristics are evidenced by their high attendance rate, minimal discipline problems, and pride toward their school. Most students are self-motivated and seek higher levels of challenge and achievement. There is an expressed desire on the part of the students for a greater voice in school decision making. (*following students, classroom observations, observations of the school, meeting with students, conversations and/or interviews with staff, teachers, and administrators*)

Senior High School Performance

On the 1999 New Standards Mathematics Reference Exam, the tenth grade students at North Smithfield Junior/Senior High School met or exceeded the standard in the following: *Skills* – 52 percent, *Concepts* – 37 percent, and *Problem Solving* – 27 percent. These scores are comparable to the scores of similar students statewide in skills, and above similar students in concepts and problem solving. (2000 Information Works!, *1999 New Standards Reference Exam School Summary Report*)

On the 1999 New Standards English Language Arts Reference Exam, the tenth grade students at North Smithfield Junior/Senior High School met or exceeded the standard in the following: *Reading Basic Understanding* – 27 percent, *Reading Analysis and Interpretations* – 20 percent, and *Writing Effectiveness* – 21 percent. These scores are below the scores of similar students statewide in Reading: Basic Understanding and comparable to similar students on Reading: Analysis and Interpretation and Writing: Effectiveness. (2000 Information Works!, *1999 New Standards Reference Exam School Summary Report*)

On the 1999 Rhode Island Writing Assessment, 50 percent of the tenth grade students at North Smithfield Junior/Senior High School met or exceeded the standard. These scores are comparable to the scores of similar students statewide. (*1999 Rhode Island Writing Assessment Results*)

On the 1999 Rhode Island Health Education Assessment, 29 percent of the ninth grade students at North Smithfield Junior/Senior High School met or exceeded the standard on this assessment. (*1999 Rhode Island Health Assessment Results*)

Equity gaps (a difference of 15 percentage points or greater) exist between and among tenth grade North Smithfield Junior/Senior High School students on the following 1999 New Standards Reference Exams:

- *Female students scored higher than male students on both the Reading: Analysis and Interpretation subtest and the Writing: Effectiveness subtest of 1999 English Language Arts New Standards Reference Exam. (2000 Information Works!)*
- *General education students scored higher than special education students on the four subtests of the 1999 Mathematics New Standards Reference Exams and the 1999 English Language Arts New Standards Reference Exams detailed in Information Works!. (2000 Information Works!)*
- *White students scored higher than students from other ethnic backgrounds on the Problem Solving subtest of 1999 Mathematics New Standards Reference Exam. (2000 Information Works!)*

The average verbal and math scores on the Scholastic Aptitude Test were 1022 combined, with a 75 percent

participation rate. These scores are above the state average of 996 combined and the participation rate is above the state average of 57 percent. (2000 Information Works!)

Junior High School Performance

On the 1999 New Standards Mathematics Reference Exam, the eighth grade students at North Smithfield Junior/Senior High School met or exceeded the standard in the following: *Skills* – 71 percent, *Concepts* – 27 percent, *Problem Solving* – 34 percent. These scores are comparable to the scores of similar students statewide in skills and concepts, but below similar students in problem solving. (2000 Information Works!, *1999 New Standards Reference Exam School Summary Report*)

On the 1999 New Standards English Language Arts Reference Exam, the eighth grade students at North Smithfield Junior/Senior High School met or exceeded the standard in the following: *Reading Basic Understanding* – 57 percent, *Reading Analysis and Interpretations*– 24 percent, *Writing Effectiveness* – 51 percent, and *Writing Conventions* – 67 percent. These scores are below the scores of similar students statewide on the Reading: Basic Understanding, and Reading: Analysis and Interpretation, and comparable to the scores of similar students statewide on Writing: Effectiveness and Writing: Conventions. (2000 Information Works!, *1999 New Standards Reference Exam School Summary Report*)

On the 1999 Rhode Island Writing Assessment, 42 percent of the seventh grade students at North Smithfield Junior/Senior High School met or exceeded the standard. (*1999 Rhode Island Writing Assessment Results*)

Equity gaps (a difference of 15 percentage points or greater) exist between and among eighth grade North Smithfield Junior/Senior High School students on the following 1999 New Standards Reference Exams:

- *Female students scored higher than male students on the Writing: Effectiveness subtest of 1999 English Language Arts New Standards Reference Exam. (2000 Information Works!)*
- *General education students scored higher than special education students on the four subtests of the 1999 Mathematics New Standards Reference Exams and the 1999 English Language Arts New Standards Reference Exams detailed in Information Works!. (2000 Information Works!)*

Commendations for North Smithfield Junior/Senior High School:

The students are friendly, respectful, and eager to learn.

Recommendations for North Smithfield Junior/Senior High School:

Examine the "What Students Need" section of the New Standards Reference Exam School Summary and use that to inform your curricula scope and sequence.

Devise strategies to close the equity gaps that exist between and among groups.

Develop strategies to improve student achievement with a particular focus in areas where North Smithfield students score lower than similar students state-wide.

Provide additional opportunities for student participation in decision-making at the school level.

Recommendations for the North Smithfield School District:

Provide additional resources to assist the school in implementing its strategies to improve student performance.

5. FINDINGS ON TEACHING

Sources of Evidence

- *classroom observations*
- *observations of the school*
- *conversations and/or interviews with many students, teachers, staff and administrators*
- *following students*
- *examination of student work*
- *review of classroom assessments*
- *scheduled meetings with school improvement team, school and district administrators, students, and parents*
- *2000 Information Works!*
- *review of student schedules*
- *1999-2000 SALT Survey Report*

School Improvement Plan for North Smithfield Junior/Senior High School

Conclusions

Most teachers have taken steps to incorporate performance-based assessments into their classrooms, displaying a wide range of implementation. Insufficient professional development to help teachers understand the purpose and use of performance-based assessments limits their ability to fully utilize the strengths of these evaluation tools. Presently, performance-based assessments are retrofitted to traditional numeric grades. Many teachers are using these assessments to provide clear criteria to the students regarding the expectations for performance. A few teachers are using the information gained from these assessments to determine what material needs to be re-taught. Some teachers' comments do provide sufficient feedback on how to improve student performance. However, comments on student work often do not relate back to the criteria stated in the assessment tool. (*examination of student work, review of classroom assessments, classroom observations, following students, meetings with students, conversations and/or interviews with teachers*)

The school has made the adoption of standards a focus of the school improvement plan. Many teachers have augmented sound traditional practices with standards-based instruction—project-based learning, performance tasks, rubrics, etc. Many classroom assignments and activities are directly related to standards, but this is not occurring on a school-wide basis. This is partially due to the lack of standards-based professional development focusing on the organizational and instructional practices necessary to implement standards in the classroom. (*classroom observations, following students, conversations and/or interviews with students, teachers, and administrators, meeting with students, parents, and district administrators, 2000 Information Works!, School Improvement Plan for North Smithfield Junior/Senior High School, 1999-2000 SALT Survey Report*)

Some classwork allows students to be "quality producers" of knowledge as described in the School Improvement Plan, yet many teachers still rely on a mode of presentation that limits students' opportunities for critical thinking and problem solving. Many homework and classroom assignments reinforce skills-based knowledge, rather than develop higher-order thinking skills. (*classroom observations, following students, conversations and/or interviews with students, teachers, and administrators, meeting with students, School Improvement Plan for North Smithfield Junior/Senior High School*)

There is a strong commitment on the part of the administration and faculty to set high expectations for student achievement. A commendable effort has been made to prepare students for college. However, the level of challenge, expectation, and engagement varies within classes and among leveled courses. Some of the present courses, scheduling structures, and instructional practices do not "challenge ALL students to meet high academic and ethical standards" as referenced in the school's mission statement. (*review of student schedules, conversations and/or interviews with students and teachers, meetings with school improvement team, students and parents, classroom observations, following students, School Improvement Plan for North Smithfield Junior/Senior High School*)

Efforts have been made to incorporate educational technology (computers, video, multimedia, graphing calculators, scientific probes, etc.) into the teaching methodology. Many teachers have taken the opportunity to use technology as a tool to collect, organize, analyze, and present information. However, a broader use of educational technology is being hampered by a lack of access, availability, technical support, and training. (*following students, classroom observations, meeting with school administrators, School Improvement Plan for North Smithfield Junior/Senior High School, 1999-2000 SALT Survey Report*)

Commendations for North Smithfield Junior/Senior High School:

The professional and dedicated faculty

The emergent use of performance-based instruction and assessment

The willingness to change professional practice

Recommendations for North Smithfield Junior/Senior High School:

Provide professional development to help teachers understand the purpose and use of performance-based assessments, with an emphasis on strategies for aligning the feedback teachers provide directly to these assessments.

Ensure that all middle and high school teachers have individual copies of the New Standards Performance Standards.

Provide professional development focusing on underlying principles of standards-based education, which include setting the same high expectation for all students and using performance tasks.

Continue to expand the courses and programs available to all students, with emphasis on career bound services.

Increase the personnel available to provide training, maintenance, and technical support for educational

technology.

Recommendations for the North Smithfield School District:

Support the school's requests for an alternate learning program, a special education department head, and educational technology coordinator.

Expand the courses and programs available to all students, with emphasis on career bound services.

Ensure the school provides its teachers with the appropriate training and resources to implement standards-based instruction and assessment.

6. FINDINGS ON THE SCHOOL

Sources of Evidence

- *classroom observations*
- *observations of the school*
- *conversations and/or interviews with many students, teachers, staff and school administrators*
- *scheduled meetings with school improvement team, school and district administrators, students, and parents*
- *following students*
- *review of student schedules*
- *course standards and requirements*
- *1999-2000 SALT Survey Staff Chart G.2*
- *2000 Information Works!*
- *School Improvement Plan for North Smithfield Junior/Senior High School*
- *New England Association of Schools and Colleges 1991 Report of the Visiting Committee*
- *North Smithfield Junior-Senior High School Program of Studies 2000-2001*
- *North Smithfield Junior-Senior High School SALT Visit Handbook*

2000 Information Works! In\$ite School, District, and State Financial Information

Conclusions

The safe, clean, friendly, and orderly environment has contributed to a school climate conducive to teaching and learning. Faculty and administration are dedicated, courteous, and professional in their manner and attire. The teachers and administration have assumed numerous and varied duties in an attempt to deliver the educational goals and expectations of the North Smithfield community. (*meetings with parents, students, school improvement team, school and district administrators, classroom observations, observations of the school, conversations and/or interviews with students, staff, teachers and administrators, following students*)

Although there is a strong desire and sincere commitment on the part of most 7th and 8th grade teachers to implement a middle school design with unique academic and social experiences, their efforts haven't been realized. Faculty efforts to move in this direction have not been fully supported by all stakeholders. The scheduling process, the building, and the lack of a distinct middle school administrator hinders full

implementation of a middle school model (common planning time, distinct teams of students and teachers, interdisciplinary units, and heterogeneous and/or homogeneous grouping, etc.). Most 7th and 8th grade teachers are attempting to meet the needs of their students within the present system. *(conversations and/or interviews with teachers, meetings with students, parents, and district administrators, School Improvement Plan for North Smithfield Junior/Senior High School)*

The present focus of the guidance department supersedes its role as a counseling and post-secondary resource for both college and non-college bound students. Furthermore, a reluctance to change existing practices, procedures, course selection, course offerings, and the master schedule is hindering the ability of this school to provide a curricula program and infrastructure that meets the needs of all students. As a result, there are negative perceptions about the guidance department by students, teachers, and parents. *(conversations and/or interviews with teachers, staff, and students, meetings with students and parents)*

Fiscal constraints have resulted in inadequate programs, supplies, equipment, technology, and the shouldering of an unmanageable number of duties and responsibilities by the administration and professional staff. As a result, North Smithfield Junior/Senior High School does not have the capacity to help all students—both college and career bound—realize their full potential. This is consistent with the findings of the 1991 New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) Report of the Visiting Committee, which found, "the desire and expectations of the professional staff appear to be greater than the willingness of the community to fund them." Furthermore, "budgetary considerations are fiscally motivated and not program driven." *(Meetings with parents, school improvement team, school and district administrators, conversations and/or interviews with staff, teachers, and administrators, New England Association of Schools and Colleges 1991 Report of the Visiting Committee, p. 32, 2000 Information Works! In\$ite School, District, and State Financial Information)*

The primary concentration of this school is on preparing students for four-year colleges. There are numerous programs and services that effectively address this goal. However, services and programs are insufficient to meet the equally important needs of the non-college bound and at-risk students. This approach neglects a sizeable portion of the student body and is incongruous with several tactics from the School Improvement Plan including tactic #3 to: "Provide students with appropriate services to enable them to achieve high academic and social standards necessary for vocational pursuits and higher education." Addressing the needs of the non-college bound was a major tenet of the 1991 NEASC Report. *(meetings with students, parents, school and district administrators, review of student schedules, following students, classroom observations, School Improvement Plan for North Smithfield Junior/Senior High School, New England Association of Schools and Colleges 1991 Report of the Visiting Committee, North Smithfield Junior-Senior High School Program of Studies 2000-2001, course standards and requirements)*

There is a willingness on the part of the professional staff to improve professional practice. Many teachers, both individually and collectively, have self-selected their own professional development. Additionally, there are also examples of informal mentoring occurring at both the department and team level. The learning needs of faculty, staff, and administration could be enhanced by formal, coordinated, focused professional development, curriculum development, and mentoring plans reflecting emerging standards-based instructional practices and chosen reforms of the school and district. *(School Improvement Plan for North Smithfield Junior/Senior High School, New England Association of Schools and Colleges 1991 Report of the Visiting Committee, conversations and/or interviews with staff and teachers, meeting with school and district administrators. 1999-2000 SALT Survey Staff Chart G.2)*

Sincere efforts have been made to improve communication within the school and between the school and community. However, frustration exists among some faculty, students, and parents regarding the voice

they have in the operation of the school. Although committees are open to all members of the faculty, many teachers have chosen not to participate on these committees. There is a perception among many faculty that their views and input often do not lead to change in existing practice. Mechanisms (school improvement team, advisory committee, school newsletter, etc.) have been developed to enhance two-way communication, but they are not producing the intended results. Various committees, particularly the school improvement team, are not viewed as effective vehicles for school-wide change. Major issues facing the school, like the move to a middle school model and scheduling concerns have not been effectively addressed through these committees. (*conversations and/or interviews with teachers, students, and school administrators, meetings with students, parents, school improvement team, school and district administrators, School Improvement Plan for North Smithfield Junior/Senior High School, North Smithfield Junior-Senior High School SALT Visit Handbook*)

Commendations for North Smithfield Junior/Senior High School:

The well-maintained orderly school

The attempts of 7th and 8th grade teachers to implement middle school practices

The emergent use of performance-based instruction and assessment

Recommendations for North Smithfield Junior/Senior High School:

Increase the administrative focus and support for the middle school.

Re-examine the current role of the guidance department to better meet the needs of the student body.

Continue to seek fiscally responsible resources from the district and community necessary to provide the programs, services, and personnel required to meet the educational needs of this student body.

Revisit and further implement the recommendations of the 1991 NEASC Visiting Committee relating to expanding resources for "junior high exploratory courses and courses for the non-college bound students", and coordinating the development of curriculum.

Design and implement an alternate learning program.

Create a department head position for special education.

Develop a more centralized professional development plan that supports the chosen reforms of the school and district.

Devise a plan to capitalize on the professional talents that exist within this building.

Encourage greater participation from students, faculty, and parents so that their views and input effect change in existing practices.

Refocus the school improvement team to serve as the forum for students, parents, teachers, and administrators to present school initiatives effecting teaching, learning, and the organization of the school. Use this team to better serve the needs of this learning community.

Recommendations for the North Smithfield School District:

Share the district's vision for a middle school model with all stakeholders, and enlist their support in carrying out this goal.

Increase the administrative focus and support for the middle school.

Continue to seek fiscally responsible resources from the school committee and community necessary to provide the programs, services, and personnel required to meet the educational needs of this student body.

Design and implement a teacher mentoring program that builds on the talents of the new and veteran faculty.

Hire the personnel necessary to develop standards-based curriculum and professional development experiences on a K-12 basis.

Support the professional development needs of the teachers at the Junior/Senior High School.

Assist the school in re-examining the role and function of the guidance department and various committees to better meet the needs of the students, teachers, and community.

Recommendations for the North Smithfield Town Council:

Make available the fiscal resources necessary for the students of this school to receive the educational program the teachers and administrators so desperately want to provide.

7. FINAL ADVICE TO THE SCHOOL

North Smithfield is a caring, dedicated community of learners willing to expand the educational opportunities of students. The capacity to make a good school even better exists within this dedicated and caring professional staff.

Your school is meeting many of the demands imposed upon your high school in the face of limited funding and resource constraints. Public perception must be changed to allow for increased fiscal support for this school. Expand the objectives of the North Smithfield Junior/Senior High School's School Improvement Plan to include educating the entire town about in the importance of education and the desired programs to meet those needs. Work with your district, school committee, and parents to communicate your educational plans and secure the resources necessary for the students of this school. They are your gateway to the community.

Capitalize on your strengths of a strong professional staff, that largely possess a willingness to improve

their professional practice and provide the best possible education to the students of North Smithfield. Continue to strive toward your "Student Expectations and Indicators" they are laudable goals. 'The majority of this faculty is willing to learn and grow but would benefit from a concentrated effort at the building and district level to focus the school's professional development on the chosen reform initiatives of this school and district.

Expand the representation of students, teachers, parents, and community members on your school improvement team and use this body to address school-wide issues. Providing opportunities for these constituents to have a greater voice in the operation of this school will yield its own benefits.

There are wonderful examples of traditional and standards-based instructional practices in this school that could be effectively shared between and among departments and grades. Find ways to capitalize on the expertise that exist within this professional staff.

As you grapple with the recommendations of the SALT Visiting team and prepare for your upcoming New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) visitation we encourage you to look at the 1991 NEASC Report of the Visiting Committee. Although the school has made progress, many of the items cited in the 1991 NEASC report, (programs for the non-college bound, fiscal constraints, informal curriculum development, professional development, increasing community involvement, etc.) are still applicable today. Use the old NEASC report and this SALT report to establish objectives in the North Smithfield Junior/Senior High School Improvement Plan that will help you deliver the educational program the students of this school require. Use these reports and your School Improvement Plan to educate the citizens of North Smithfield about the needs and plans of this school.

As you work with this SALT report we hope you realize our conclusions, commendations, and recommendations are designed to help you achieve your school improvement efforts. For that is, unquestionably, the intent of our team.

APPENDIX

NORTH SMITHFIELD JUNIOR/SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT TEAM

Glenn Brodeur, Teacher

June Couture, Parent

Sheila Hagan, Parent/Teacher

Judith Kavanaugh, Special Education Teacher

Patricia Kolanka, Teacher

Eunice Nield, Faculty Advisory/Union Representative

Kevin Sheehan, Principal

Kathy Sylvia, Parent

THE SALT VISITING TEAM

Dr. Michael S. Barnes, Technology Education / Department Chairperson
Ponaganset Middle / Senior High School,
Foster-Glocester, Rhode Island
(on leave to Rhode Island Department of Education to serve as a SALT Fellow)
Chair of the Team

Mr. John Blaess, Assistant Principal,
Portsmouth High School,
Portsmouth, Rhode Island

Mr. Alan Cabral, Title 1 Language Arts Teacher
Calcutt Middle School,
Central Falls, Rhode Island

Mr. Edward M. Daft, Assistant Principal
East Providence High School,
East Providence, Rhode Island

Mr. Don DeSantis, Assistant Principal
Grove Street and Bernon Heights Schools,
Woonsocket, Rhode Island

Ms. Diane DeThomas, Media Specialist
Burrillville High School,
Burrillville, Rhode Island

Ms. JoAnn LaBranche, Social Studies Teacher
Lincoln High School,
Lincoln, Rhode Island

Ms. Karen E. Lehrach, Coordinator, Institute for Elementary and Secondary Education
Brown University
Providence, Rhode Island

Ms. Dorothy D. Martiesian, Family Consumer Science Teacher
Cranston East/West High School,
Cranston, Rhode Island

Ms. Donna A. Valentine, Business Teacher
Warwick Veterans Memorial High School,
Warwick, Rhode Island

Endorsement of SALT Visit Team Report

North Smithfield Junior/Senior High School

May 26, 2000

To complete the Catalpa Ltd. report endorsement, I have reviewed this report, observed a portion of the visit, and discussed the conduct of the full visit with the Visit Chair. Based on my knowledge derived from these sources of evidence, using the criteria specified in the *Endorsing SALT Visiting Team Reports by Catalpa Ltd.*, and using the methodology and procedures specified in the *SALT Visit Handbook –(3rd edition)*, I conclude that:

1. 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.
2. The conclusions and all other content of this report meet the criteria specified for a SALT Visit report.

Accordingly, Catalpa Ltd. endorses this report as a legitimate SALT Visit Report.



Thomas A. Wilson, EdD

CATALPA, LTD.

June 16, 2000