



Brown Avenue School

Johnston

The SALT Visit Team Report

March 22, 2002



School Accountability for Learning and Teaching (SALT)

The accountability program of the Rhode Island Department of Education

The findings of this report are those of this SALT visit team. The names and affiliations of the members of the team are in the appendix. The team follows the school visit protocol in the *Handbook for Chairs of a SALT School Visit*. The team is required to focus on what it observes at the time of the visit and is restricted from comparing the school with any other. This school visit was supported by the Rhode Island Department of Education as one component of its accountability system, School Accountability for Learning and Teaching (SALT).

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For information about SALT, please contact Ken Fish at 401-222-4600, x 2200 or salt@ride.net.

This report is available at <http://www.ride.net/schoolimprove/salt/visits.htm>

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1. THE PURPOSE AND LIMITS of this report

Overview

This is the report of the SALT team that visited Brown Avenue School from March 18- 22, 2002. The following features are at the heart of the report:

- ◆ The team seeks to capture what makes this school work, or not work, as a public institution of learning. Each school presents a unique picture.
- ◆ The team does not compare this school to any other school.
- ◆ When writing the report, the team deliberately chooses the words that best convey its message to the school, based on careful consideration of what it has learned about the school dynamics.
- ◆ The team makes its judgment explicit.

The major questions the team addresses are:

- ◆ How well do the students learn at this school?
- ◆ How well does this school teach its students?
- ◆ How well does this school support learning and teaching?

The findings of the SALT report are presented in six report sections:

Profile describes some of the key features of the school and sums up the school's results on state tests.

The team writes *Portrait* as an overview of what it thinks are the most important themes in the conclusions that follow. While *Portrait* precedes the team's conclusions, it is written after they are complete.

The team's conclusions are about how well the team thinks the school is performing in each of the three SALT focus areas: Learning, Teaching and The School.

The team may award commendations in each focus area for aspects of the school that it considers unusual and commendable. The team must make several recommendations to the school for each focus area, drawing on the conclusions for that area. The team may make recommendations to other agencies, e.g. the district.

The team provides the school with some brief comments about how it thinks the school should proceed, in the *Final Advice* section.

The Catalpa Ltd. endorsement of the legitimacy of the report and its conclusions appears on the final page.

The SALT report creates accountability for improvement by connecting its judgments of quality and its recommendations for improvement directly to the actual work going on in this school at the time of the visit.

The team closely follows the visit protocol in the *Handbook for Chairs of the SALT School Visit*. The Catalpa endorsement certifies that this team followed the visit protocol and that this report meets all criteria required for a legitimate SALT visit 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.

Sources of Evidence for This Report

In order to write this report the team examines test scores, student work, and other documents related to this school. The school improvement plan for Brown Avenue 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, in the hallways, and on the playground. The team builds its conclusions primarily from information about what the students, staff, and administrators think and do during their day. Thus, the visit allows the team to build informed judgments about the teaching, learning, and support that actually takes place at Brown Avenue School.

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

- ◆ *observing a total of 85 complete classes and 31 partial classes. The team spent a total of over 76 hours in direct classroom observation. Every classroom was visited at least twice, and almost every teacher was observed three or more times.*
- ◆ *observing the school outside of the classroom*
- ◆ *following six students for a full day*
- ◆ *observing the work of teachers and staff for a full day*
- ◆ *observing the Lead Math Teacher*
- ◆ *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 administrator*
- ◆ *reviewing completed and ongoing student work*
- ◆ *interviewing teachers about the work of their students*
- ◆ *analyzing three years of state assessment results as reported in Information Works!*

◆ *reviewing the following documents:*

district and school policies and practices

records of professional development activities

teacher schedules

classroom assessments

Brown Avenue Elementary School Improvement Plan

Johnston Public Schools Revised Strategic Plan 2002

Johnston Mentor Teacher Program brochures

classroom textbooks and workbooks

1998, 1999, 2000, 2001 Information Works!

1998, 1999, 2000, 2001 New Standards Reference Examination results

1998, 1999, 2000, and 2001 Rhode Island Writing Assessment results

2001 New Standards English Language Arts Reference Examination School Summary

2001 New Standards Mathematics Reference Examination School Summary

Mentor Teacher Program brochure

Johnston Public Schools Professional Development Institute Course Bulletin Spring 2000

Contractual Agreement Between Johnston School Committee and the Johnston Federation of Teachers Local 1702 American Federation of Teachers AFL-CIO September 1999-August 31, 2002

English Language Arts Curriculum Standards draft, July 1998

Mathematics Curriculum Standards draft, July 1998

Brown Avenue PTO binder

Brown Avenue Elementary School Self-Study

Student portfolios

The full visit team built the conclusions, commendations, and recommendations presented here through intense and thorough discussion. The team met for a total of 27 hours in six separate meetings spanning the five days of the visit. This time is exclusive of the time the team spent in classrooms, with teachers, and in meetings with students, parents, and school and district administrators.

The team must agree that every conclusion in this report:

- ◆ *is important enough to include in the report.*
- ◆ *is supported by the evidence the team has gathered during the visit.*
- ◆ *is set in the present.*
- ◆ *contains the judgment of the team.*

Using the Report

The team deliberately chose the words, phrases, and sentences it used in its conclusions, as well as in the *Portrait* and *Final Advice*. Thus, this report is the team's best attempt to encourage and support the school's continued improvement in strengthening the learning of its students.

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

It is important to note that this report reflects only the week in the life of the school that was observed and considered by this team. The report does not cover what the school plans to do or what it has done in the past.

This report is not prescriptive. The value of this report will be determined by its effectiveness in improving teaching and learning. By considering how important it considers what the team has said and why, the school will take its first step in becoming accountable in a way that actually improves learning.

It is important to read this report and consider it as a whole. Recommendations and commendations should be considered in relation to the conclusions they follow.

After the school improvement team considers this report, it should make changes in the school improvement plan. The revised plan will form the basis for negotiating a Compact for Learning with the school district. The purpose of the Compact is to ensure that the school and its district work out an agreement about the best way to improve the school and the best way to target district support for the school. A RIDE Field Service Team representative will offer assistance in preparing the compact.

2. PROFILE OF Brown Avenue School

Background

Brown Avenue School is located in the western hills of the town of Johnston, Rhode Island. Constructed in 1934, the original school building was replaced by a two-room building eight years later. As enrollment in the school increased between 1961 and 1987, more classrooms and a cafeteria were added to the building.

One principal, 18 full- and part-time teachers, six support personnel, and seven teacher aides serve the 223 students at Brown Avenue School. Having served the school for 10 years before retiring three years ago, the principal has returned this year to serve one more year. Ninety-one percent of the students are white, four percent are black, four percent are Hispanic, and one percent is Asian/Pacific Islander. Twenty percent of the students receive special education services. Fifteen percent of the students are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch.

Two teachers at Brown Avenue School participated in the Model Classroom Initiative. In addition to taking part in computer technology training, these teachers received computers and technology related peripherals for their classrooms.

Since 1997 Brown Avenue students have participated in the Feinstein "I Can Make a Difference" program. Each year they compile an extensive "Good Deeds" portfolio. Throughout the year the school invites various health professionals to come to the school to talk to students and interact with them about health issues. Each year the school holds a "Brown Avenue Healthy Kid's Day" celebration in May. Students participate in a series of health activities and visit health-related display booths.

The after school programs at Brown Avenue include a sign language class, a Spanish as a second language class, and a computer club. A karate program, which is conducted by an outside company, is also available for students.

State Assessment Results for Brown Avenue School

On the subtests of the 2001 New Standards Mathematics Reference Examination seven in 10 of the fourth graders (70%) met or exceeded the standard in basic skills; one in two of the fourth graders (50%) met or exceeded the standard in concepts; and almost two in four of the fourth graders (38%) met or exceeded the standard in problem solving. *Information Works! 2001* (1998-2000 assessment data) shows that equity gaps (a difference of more than 15%) exist in mathematics for black students. The same assessment results show that students at the Brown Avenue School perform at the same level as similar students in the state in Basic Skills and Problem Solving and below the level of similar students in the state in Concepts.

On the reading subtests of the 2001 New Standards English Language Arts Reference Examination over three in four of the fourth graders (78%) met or exceeded the standard in Reading: Basic Understanding, and almost three in four of the fourth graders (72%) met or exceeded the standard in Reading: Analysis and Interpretation. *Information Works! 2001* (1998-2000 assessment data) shows that equity gaps (a difference of more than 15%) exist in reading for special education students. The same assessment results show that students at the Brown Avenue School perform at the same level as similar students in the state in Reading: Basic Understanding and below the level of similar students in the state in Reading: Analysis and Interpretation.

On the writing subtests of the 2001 New Standards English Language Arts Reference Examination almost two in three of the fourth graders (64%) met or exceeded the standard in Writing: Conventions, and more than one in two of the fourth graders (54%) met or exceeded the standard in Writing: Effectiveness. On the Rhode Island Writing Assessment more than one in three of the third graders (36%) met or exceeded the standard. *Information Works! 2001* (1998-2000 assessment data) shows that equity gaps (a difference of more than 15%) exist in writing for the following groups of students: black, male, and special education. The same assessment results show that students at the Brown Avenue School perform above the level of similar students in the state in Writing: Effectiveness and below the level of similar students in the state in Writing: Conventions.

The most recently available New Standards Reference Examination results have been appended to this report. Information Works! data for Brown Avenue School is available at <<http://www.rido.net>>www.rido.net.

3. PORTRAIT OF Brown Avenue School AT THE TIME OF THE VISIT

Brown Avenue School is a small, welcoming school where students are friendly and well behaved. They respect each other and adults. Many of them already perform satisfactorily in several learning areas. Teachers have formed a cohesive group and work well together. They share ideas and plan weekly lessons together. The principal is well liked and respected by teachers, students, and parents. Parents are pleased with how their children are treated at school. Brown Avenue School prides itself on its regular participation in many yearly community outreach projects.

Although teachers work very hard in their classrooms to help their students learn, they still do much of the work. Even though they sometimes group students for individual tasks, they focus many of their lessons on whole-group, teacher-directed instruction in which they give students few choices. Students complete their work in structured, quiet, predictable settings, but they seldom take risks or reflect on their own learning.

Standards and rubrics are displayed throughout the school, and teachers remind students of them throughout the day. They lead their students through the completion of isolated performance tasks, but they do not yet provide multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate their learning through the completion of complex, multi-step tasks and problems.

Teachers often participate in professional development and work to implement what they learn. As they recognize their individual needs for more training, they sometimes seek out more in-depth learning that can support them in their classrooms. Like their students, teachers are ready to move forward into more complex learning.

4. FINDINGS ON STUDENT LEARNING

Sources of Evidence

- ◆ *2001 Information Works!*
- ◆ *2001 Rhode Island Writing Assessment results*
- ◆ *2001 New Standards English Language Arts Reference Examination School Summary*
- ◆ *2001 New Standards Mathematics Reference Examination School Summary*
- ◆ *reviewing completed and ongoing student work*
- ◆ *following students*
- ◆ *observing classes*
- ◆ *interviewing teachers about the work of their students*
- ◆ *talking with teachers, students, and school administrator*
- ◆ *meeting with students*
- ◆ *observing the school outside of the classroom*
- ◆ *classroom textbooks and workbooks*

Conclusions

Brown Avenue students are friendly and well behaved. They respect each other and adults. They are happy to come to school and are prepared to learn. Many bring background experiences that give them a good foundation for learning. (*following students, observing classes, interviewing teachers about the work of their students, talking with teachers and school administrator*)

Students read independently throughout the day, both in small groups and with partners. They regularly read aloud in round robin fashion. Some students struggle with this activity, while others read fluently and with appropriate phrasing. Students often read silently after they have completed their assignments while waiting for others to finish. Most students comprehend and identify literal information in what they read. They retell stories, write summaries, identify story elements, and identify genre well. They can identify the appropriate strategies to use in specific reading situations. These skills help students in basic reading. On the 2001 New Standards English Language Arts Reference Examination 78 percent of the students achieved or exceeded the standard in Reading: Basic Understanding. Although some students make connections between their reading and their own lives, most students seldom interpret, reflect on, or analyze what they read. Brown Avenue students did not perform as well as similar students statewide in Reading: Analysis and Interpretation. (*following students, observing classes, interviewing teachers about the work of their students, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, 2001 Information Works!, 2001 New Standards English Language Arts Reference Examination School Summary, meeting with*

students, classroom textbooks)

Students write daily in most subject areas. Their writing includes journal entries, information reports, poetry, and essays. A few students effectively use descriptive and figurative language; their writing is rich in detail, includes a logical development of ideas, and shows a clear voice. Although many students are competent writers, their writing often lacks originality. Students regularly respond to prescribed prompts, use steps to develop their writing, and complete finished pieces. They participate in minimal in-depth self- and peer editing, which would support them in becoming independent, reflective writers. Student writing skills are reflected in their performance on the state assessments. On the 2001 New Standards English Language Arts Reference Examination 54 percent of students achieved or exceeded the standard in Writing: Effectiveness and 64 percent achieved or exceeded the standard in Writing: Conventions. On the 2001 Rhode Island Writing Assessment 36 percent of third graders achieved or exceeded the standard. *(following students, observing classes, interviewing teachers about the work of their students, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, talking with teachers and students, 2001 New Standards English Language Arts Reference Examination School Summary, 2001 Rhode Island Writing Assessment results, meeting with students, observing the school outside of the classroom)*

Students demonstrate proficiency in basic operations in mathematics. Many also complete exercises on probability, estimating, graphing, and working with geometric shapes, fractions, and patterns. Their mathematical skills are reflected in their performance on the state assessments. On the 2001 New Standards Mathematics Reference Examination 70 percent of students met or exceeded the standard in skills. During half of the school year students in grades three and four spend one hour a week working with the district Math Lead Teacher on performance tasks. Otherwise, they practice simple problem-solving strategies everyday by completing a math problem of the day. Most of them can name the strategy they have used to solve a problem and write the steps they have used to solve the problem. This activity enables students to develop basic skills in problem-solving, but it is not enough to help them develop the higher order thinking skills that they need to solve complex, multi-step problems. *(following students, observing classes, meeting with students, classroom textbooks and workbooks, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, 2001 New Standards Mathematical Reference Examination School Summary)*

Commendations for Brown Avenue School

Students who are friendly, well behaved, and respectful

Recommendations for Brown Avenue School

Challenge all students to take risks.

Engage all students in writing tasks that not only are in response to prompts, but that are open-ended.

Eliminate round-robin reading. Engage all teachers in sustained and ongoing professional development that focuses on a comprehensive approach to teaching reading. Implement that knowledge in all classrooms.

Participate in professional development in complex, multi-step problem solving in mathematics. Engage students in solving complex, multi-step math problems across all grade levels.

5. FINDINGS ON TEACHING

Sources of Evidence

- ◆ *observing classes*
- ◆ *observing the school outside of the classroom*
- ◆ *talking with teachers, staff, and school administrator*
- ◆ *interviewing teachers about the work of their students*
- ◆ *meeting with school improvement team, school and district administrators, parents, students*
- ◆ *following students*
- ◆ *reviewing completed and ongoing student work*
- ◆ *classroom textbooks*
- ◆ *reviewing classroom assessments and student portfolios*

Conclusions

Teachers at Brown Avenue School are hard working and open to change. They share ideas and materials with one another and regularly use each other as resources. Teachers recognize the importance of their work. (*following students, observing classes, talking with teachers, staff, and school administrator, meeting with the school improvement team, school and district administrators, parents*)

Most teachers seat students in small groups in their classrooms. They sometimes structure learning activities that students complete in those small groups or in pairs. However, teachers mostly use large-group instruction throughout the day to disseminate information to students. When teachers call upon individual students to answer directed questions, other students wait and listen. This emphasis on large-group instruction allows only a few students to be engaged. In addition, most teachers offer students limited choices. Most of the time students are compliant and do what they are told to do. Few students take an active role in their learning or are given opportunities to take risks in their learning. (*following students, observing classes, meeting with students, reviewing completed and ongoing student work*)

A few teachers individualize their instruction to address individual student differences. Some group students for reading and send a few of them to another grade for mathematics instruction. However, most teachers do not meet the diverse learning needs of their students. They deliver the same instruction to all students and assign all students the same task to complete at the same time. Some teachers repeat an assignment to re-teach a lesson, but they do not tailor the assignment to the students who need the reinforcement. (*following students, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, interviewing teachers about the work of their students*)

Teachers use various tools for evaluating student work. These include rubrics and standards, student portfolios, publisher's theme assessments, "Running Records," projects, and teacher-made tests. However, the instruction of only a few teachers demonstrates that they analyze student performance, reflect on their analysis, and then use this

information when they plan future lessons so that their instruction can meet the different needs of individual students. (*following students, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, classroom textbooks, interviewing teachers about the work of their students, reviewing classroom assessments and student portfolios*)

Teachers have had only minimal training in standards-based instruction, and they are at the beginning stages of implementing standards. They post standards in their classrooms, create a rubric for the lesson, and ask students to recite the standard for that lesson. Teachers then lead students through isolated performance tasks. They do not yet provide multiple opportunities for students to apply their understanding to complex tasks that are independent of the teacher. (*following students, observing classes, talking with teachers, meeting with parents and students, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, interviewing teachers about the work of their students*)

Commendations for Brown Avenue School

Teachers who are hard working and open to change

Teacher recognition of the importance of their work

Recommendations for Brown Avenue School

Group students more often, both heterogeneously and homogeneously, in order to allow them more opportunities to collaborate and cooperate in their learning.

Give students opportunities to initiate and take risks in their own learning.

Provide more challenging activities in which students have a choice.

Engage in professional development in the following areas: differentiation of instruction in all literacy areas, multiple intelligences, flexible grouping, standards-based instruction, and assessment. Incorporate what you learn in your classroom practice.

Recommendations for Johnston School District

Provide Brown Avenue School with the necessary resources for teachers to engage in the professional development specific to this school's needs.

6. FINDINGS ON THE SCHOOL

Sources of Evidence

- ◆ *observing classes*
- ◆ *talking with teachers, school administrator*
- ◆ *meeting with the school improvement team, parents, school and district administrators*
- ◆ *following students*
- ◆ *Brown Avenue Elementary School Improvement Plan*
- ◆ *reviewing teacher schedules*
- ◆ *Johnston Mentor Teacher Program brochure*
- ◆ *Johnston Public Schools Revised Strategic Plan 2002*
- ◆ *Johnston Public Schools Professional Development Institute Course Bulletin Spring 2000*
- ◆ *observing Lead Math Teacher*
- ◆ *Contractual Agreement Between Johnston School Committee and the Johnston Federation of Teachers Local 1072 American Federation of Teachers AFL-CIO September 1999-August 31, 2002*
- ◆ *English Language Arts Curriculum Standards draft, July 1998*
- ◆ *Mathematics Curriculum Standards draft, July 1998*
- ◆ *Reviewing completed and ongoing student work*
- ◆ *Brown Avenue PTO binder*
- ◆ *Brown Avenue Elementary School Self-Study*

Conclusions

Teachers do not have regularly scheduled planning time beyond their itinerant time to look together at student work, reflect upon their practice, and plan for the different needs of students. However, most teachers within grades regularly use their itinerant time to plan similar lessons together. (*reviewing teacher schedules, talking with teachers*)

The Johnston School Department provides opportunities for teachers to grow professionally through the district Professional Development Institute (PDI), which offers professional development in various areas that can be

beneficial to them. The district also provides a part-time Math Lead Teacher, who instructs third and fourth grade students in complex problem solving. The district mentoring program for new teachers, however, is limited as a tool to promote teacher growth, because it does not provide for extensive contact between mentor and mentee; also, the mentor may not share the same content area with the mentee. Because it is primarily a checklist, the teacher evaluation tool also is a weak instrument. It is limited as a tool to improve teacher performance. (*Johnston Mentor Teacher Program brochure, Johnston Public Schools Revised Strategic Plan 2002, Johnston Public Schools Professional Development Institute Course Bulletin Spring 2000, talking with teachers, observing Math Lead Teacher, Contractual Agreement Between Johnston School Committee and the Johnston Federation of Teachers Local 1702 American Federation of Teachers AFL-CIO September 1999-August 31, 2002, meeting with school and district administrators*)

The Brown Avenue Elementary School Improvement Plan includes five tactics and the Result Statements for each tactic. Many of the Result Statements have already been achieved. The plan does not reflect an in-depth self-study and does not focus on student learning. Additionally, the plan does not show how the school will measure the accomplishment of the Result Statements. The plan is severely limited as a plan for improvement; it cannot provide the template for Brown Avenue School to increase student learning. (*Brown Avenue Elementary School Improvement Plan, meeting with the school improvement team, district administrators*)

While the Johnston School District is working to revise the math and health curricula, the school currently lacks comprehensive, standards-aligned curricula that include a hierarchy of benchmarks for student performance at each grade level. Without an updated, rigorous curriculum to guide and inform instruction Brown Avenue School is very limited in its ability to set clear expectations and goals for student achievement. (*English Language Arts Curriculum Standards draft, July 1998, Mathematics Curriculum Standards draft, July 1998, following students, observing classes, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, meeting with district administrators*)

Brown Avenue School participates in many community outreach activities such as Pennies for Leukemia, Valentines for Vets, Operation Shoebox, and Holiday Food Baskets. Participation in these activities fosters good citizenship among students and promotes strong community awareness among them as well. (*Brown Avenue PTO binder, Brown Avenue Elementary School Self-Study, meeting with the school improvement team and parents, talking with school administrator*)

Commendations for Brown Avenue School

The many community outreach activities

Recommendations for Brown Avenue School

Continue the school involvement with community outreach activities.

Work with the district to establish scheduled common planning time. Use that time to examine student work, reflect on practice, and plan for the different needs of students.

Conduct a thorough and intensive self-study by utilizing the following: this SALT report, as well as the latest Information Works! results, when they become available; the 2002 SALT Survey report, when it becomes available; an internal and external needs assessment; and a close examination of student work. Analyze and use all the information you gain as you revise your school improvement plan.

Revisit and revise the school improvement plan so that it focuses on student learning. Include clear and high goals and the evidence for designing the goals, action steps, resources needed, team members responsible, and measurement criteria for achieving those goals.

Work with the district to develop updated rigorous curricula and benchmarks.

Work with the district to strengthen the mentoring program and to develop a teacher evaluation instrument that

includes reflection, goal setting, and portfolios.

Recommendations for Johnston School Department

Work with the Johnston Federation of Teachers Local 1702 to develop scheduled common planning time for teachers, a revised teacher evaluation instrument, and a strengthened mentoring program.

Work with the school to develop updated rigorous curricula and benchmarks.

7. Final Advice to the School

At Brown Avenue School your daily practice reflects your belief in the importance of your work. Many of your students perform well. Now you must center your efforts on increasing the learning of every student in all areas. Build on the mutual support you share, and encourage each other as you move forward.

Engage every student in your classes in learning through individualized instruction that addresses the differing needs of each student. Empower students to become independent thinkers, who initiate their own learning and assume responsibility for it. Provide them with challenging opportunities in which they can choose and take risks to learn. Give students the opportunities to show their learning in various ways.

Establish the time to reflect, both as individuals and as a team, on the results of your practice. Use your classroom assessments to drive your instruction to ensure that you not only meet the needs of every student, but that you challenge them as well.

Revisit and revise the Brown Avenue School Improvement Plan. Involve everyone in a thorough, in-depth self-study. Include all of your data, but center your self-study on the examination of student work to help you clearly understand what your students know and what they need to learn next. Determine your next steps and revise the Brown Avenue School Improvement Plan so that it provides you with a clearly focused guide to increase the learning of all of your students.

Continue to engage in professional development. Extend your professional development experiences to include sustained and ongoing training with respected experts who will assist, monitor, and support you in implementing what you learn.

You have a good foundation on which to build; with a renewed focus you and your students will continue to grow as teachers and learners.

The Brown Avenue School Improvement Team

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The SALT Visit Team

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New Standards Reference Examination and RI Writing Assessment Results (2001)

Endorsement of SALT Visit Team Report

Brown Avenue School

March 22, 2002

To complete the Catalpa Ltd. report endorsement, I discussed the conduct of the visit with the Visit Chair while it was in process, I observed a portion of the visit in progress and I have reviewed this report. Based on my knowledge derived from these sources of evidence, using the criteria specified in the *Endorsing SALT Visit team Reports by Catalpa Ltd.*, and using the methodology and procedures specified in the *Handbook for SALT Visit Chairs, 1st 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 conclusions and for a SALT Visit report.
3. During the endorsement period, teachers and a parent sent written comments about this report to RIDE. I have carefully reviewed these comments as part of my review of this report. While some comments raise points about the conduct of the visit, no comment represented a challenge to the legitimacy of the conclusions in this report. It is possible that the school will not use the report well, because of how it has chosen to respond. That does weaken the report's potential usefulness to the school. With productive leadership, this report can have real value to the school.

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



Thomas A. Wilson, EdD
Catalpa Ltd.
May 14, 2002