



Newport Area Career and Technical Center

Newport

The SALT Visit Team Report

April 26, 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 on Conducting 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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This report is available at <http://www.rido.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 Newport Area Career and Technical Center from April 22 to April 26, 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 Newport Area Career and Technical Center 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 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 Newport Area Career and Technical Center.

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

- ◆ *observing a total of 170 complete and partial classes. The team spent a total of over 120 hours in direct classroom observation. Every classroom was visited, every teacher was observed more than once.*
- ◆ *conducting over 100 interviews with faculty and staff for a total of 53 hours*
- ◆ *observing the school outside of the classroom*
- ◆ *following eleven 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*
 - Newport Career and Technical Center*
 - school improvement team and industry partners*
 - school and district administrators*
 - Rogers High School principal*
 - Rogers High School guidance department*
 - students*
 - parents*
- ◆ *talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administrators*
- ◆ *reviewing completed and ongoing student work*
- ◆ *interviewing 19 teachers about the work of their students*

- ◆ *analyzing four years of state assessment results as reported in Information Works!*
- ◆ *reviewing the following documents:*

Newport Public Schools Strategic Plan, 2001-2006

Newport Public School Teacher Evaluation Program

*New England Association of Schools and Colleges
Commission on Public Secondary School Report of the Visiting Committee, Newport Area
Career and Technical Center October 21-24, 1996*

*Newport Area Career and Technical Center FY 2002 Newport Regional Perkins Plan, June
2001*

*Newport Area Career and Technical Center FY 2002 Newport Regional Perkins Plan
Amendment, March, 2002*

*New England Association of Schools and Colleges
Commission on Public Secondary School Report of the Visiting Committee, Rogers High
School, Newport, Rhode Island, March 5-8, 2000*

Newport Area Career and Technical Center Course Descriptions, 2002-2003

*Rogers High School Special Report, in response to the NEAS&C Visit Report, Spring, 2000
Report, November 1, 2001*

Rogers High School Academic Expectations, February 7, 2001

school improvement plans for Rogers High School, 2000-2001, 2000-2005

Rogers High School Program of Studies, 2002-2003

district and school policies and practices

records of professional development activities

classroom assessments

curricula guides

student portfolios

classroom textbooks

school improvement plan for Newport Area Career and Technical Center

district strategic plan

1999, 2000 SALT Survey report

NACTC Budgets, 2001-2002 binder

NACTC 2000-2001 Annual Report

NACTC Technology Plan

NACTC Examples of Student Work binder

NACTC Student Records binder

NACTC Career Pathways binder

NACTC Technical Writing Student Work Samples 2001-2002 binder

NACTC Examples of Cosmetology Student Work, Grades 10, 11, 12 binder

Sail Tall Ships, A Directory of Sail Training and Adventure, published book (internships)

1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002 Information Works!

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

1999, 2000, 2001 Rhode Island Writing Assessment results

Since the Newport Area Career and Technical Center receives a vast majority of its students from Rogers High School, it was important for the SALT Visit team to learn how the two schools work together for the success of the students they share. The team followed students into Rogers High School classes on the first day of the visit. It also interviewed six Rogers High School teachers about their students' work. These teachers are members of the math and English language arts departments who work with a majority of the students enrolled in the Center. During the week of the visit, members of the team interviewed the principal of Rogers and a representative from the guidance department. Several classroom teachers were interviewed as well. By conducting this abbreviated inquiry at Rogers High School, the team developed a view of how well the two schools interface for optimum student learning.

The full visit team built the conclusions, commendations, and recommendations presented here through intense and thorough discussion. The team met for a total of 31 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 Newport Area Career and Technical Center

Background

Newport Career and Technical Center, one of 10 Career and Technical Schools in the state, is located on the campus of Rogers High School, which is in the southern area of Newport, Rhode Island. The Center serves students in grades 9-12 for the towns of Newport, Middletown, Portsmouth, Tiverton, Little Compton, and Jamestown. Constructed in 1967 the school nearly doubled in size with the addition in 1971. The brick complex houses all of the career and technical programs except for the marine occupations program, which is located adjacent to the main building.

A professional staff of one principal; 14 teachers, one resource teacher, one guidance counselor, one School to Career liaison, five technical assistants, one secretary for clerical support, one custodian, and two kitchen staff service the school community.

Of the 513 students attending classes at the Center, 245 are Career and Technical Center students; 109 students are enrolled in one period courses; and 159 students are in career pathway classes. The ethnic backgrounds of the Career and Technical Center students include 80% white, 12% black, 6% Hispanic, 1% Asian/Pacific Islander,; and 1% Native American. Four percent of the students are physically disadvantaged; 2% receive ESL services, and 27% of the student body receive special education services. Thirty one percent of the students are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch.

Several initiatives are under way or are in the implementation stage. Teachers from eight programs offered at the Center participate in the development of statewide standard curricula. An Automotive Youth Education System (AYES) certification program is expected to begin this fall. Up-to-date equipment in the Auto Technology Shop and the Carpentry Construction Shop are in place with additional equipment for Culinary Arts to be installed during the summer. Also, state-of-the-art technology is in place. Teleconferencing and distance learning technology, as well as many computers, are in place. The student-to-computer ratio is presently 2:1. Also, the Rhode Island Technology Education Council (RITECH) has recently selected Stephanie Martland, the Director of Hospitality, Travel, and Tourism for the Outstanding Technology Teacher of the Year Award for 2001-2002.

Student activities at the Center are primarily functions provided through the Skills USA Vocational Industrial Clubs of America (V.I.C.A.). Through their membership in this organization students participate in community service projects, professional development programs, social activities, and technical skill competitions. Students here fared well in the state competitions this year, taking first, second, or third place in Culinary Arts, Cosmetology, Health Knowledge Bowl, Prepared Speech, and Auto Technology. Several students will compete at the national level in June.

State Assessment Results for Newport Area Career and Technical Center

On the subtests of the 2001 New Standards Mathematics Reference Examination one in four of the 10th graders (26%) met or exceeded the standard in basic skills; one in eight of the tenth graders (13%) met or exceeded the standard in concepts; and one in nine of the tenth graders (11%) met or exceeded the standard in problem solving. Equity gaps (a difference of more than 15%) exist in math for multi-racial, Hispanic, black and special education students. Students at the Newport Area Career and Technical Center perform at the same level as similar students in the state on the Mathematics subtests in Skills, Concepts, and Problem Solving.

On the reading subtests of the 2001 New Standards English Language Arts Reference Examination one in six of the tenth graders (16%) met or exceeded the standard in Reading: Basic Understanding, and one in 10 of the tenth graders (10%) met or exceeded the standard in Reading: Analysis and Interpretation. Equity gaps (a difference of more than 15%) exist in reading for multi-racial, male, and special education students. Students at the Newport Area Career and Technical Center perform below the level of similar students in the state on the Reading subtests in Basic Understanding and Analysis and Interpretation.

On the writing subtests of the 2001 New Standards English Language Arts Reference Examination one in five of the tenth graders (21%) met or exceeded the standard in Writing: Conventions, and one in eight of the tenth graders (12%) met or exceeded the standard in Writing: Effectiveness. On the Rhode Island Writing Assessment one in four of the tenth graders (25%) met or exceeded the standard. Equity gaps (a difference of more than 15%) exist in writing for Hispanic, black, multi-racial and special education students. Students at the Newport Area Career and Technical Center perform at the same level as similar students in the state on Writing: Effectiveness subtest and below the level of similar students on the Writing: Conventions subtest. One in four of the eleventh graders (25%) met or exceeded the standard on the Rhode Island Writing Assessment.

The most recently available New Standards Reference Examination results have been appended to this report. Information Works! data for Newport Area Career and Technical Center is available at <<http://www.ridoe.net>>

3. PORTRAIT OF Newport Area Career and Technical Center AT THE TIME OF THE VISIT

The Newport Area Career and Technical Center exemplifies what is best in education. One enters the Center and at once feels welcomed. Bulletin boards and classroom displays showcase student work and applaud student achievement and success in national and state competitions. The word that best describes the school is community, a community of learning, caring, and pride. The pride, felt as a result of a job well done, is evident in the faces of the students.

The director, faculty, and staff are passionate about the Center and its students. Respect for one another is illustrated by the “can do” attitude and the high expectations voiced by parents, students, and teachers, alike. A team spirit pervades the faculty and staff, who work closely in a unified effort to provide quality standards-based teaching and learning. Instruction is framed in a very task-oriented setting culminating in a finished product, rather than a quiz or report. Learning is generally hands-on; students see the relevance in what they learn, and the effort they put into their work is admirable. But the learning is not confined to a mere building. Students are encouraged and supported in field experiences and internships in the surrounding business community.

Many characterize the Center as the “best kept secret on the island.” Herein lies the paradox. The school provides a rich and supportive educational environment where students are actively engaged in relevant activities and collaborations with their peers. A professional and highly qualified faculty supports students, providing all with a personalized education. Unfortunately, due to issues regarding recruitment, scheduling, and minimal support from sending schools, Newport Area Career & Technical Center is not utilized to its potential and enrollment deficiencies threaten the future of the programs offered here.

4. FINDINGS ON STUDENT LEARNING

Sources of Evidence

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

Conclusions

Self-motivated students are the norm at the Newport Area Career and Technical Center. They know what is expected of them and are very willing to get down to business. They enjoy what they do and share that enjoyment with others. The students work well together, supporting each other almost intuitively. They are task-oriented, focused, and have confidence in the value of what they do for their personal worth and gain. Students take great pride in their work as well as in their school. A unique rapport is apparent between students and teachers. Students know the teachers value them, and they feel worthwhile. There is mutual admiration and respect between and among students and teachers. Students feel that this is a safe and productive environment for learning. (*following students, observing classes, talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administrator, interviewing teachers about the work of their students, observing the school outside of the classroom*)

Students frequently use rubrics and criteria sheets to complete content tasks. Student portfolios include rubrics that students use to self assess, to guide their writing, and to appropriately revise their work. They are very comfortable using rubrics for all tasks. However, many students have not internalized the value and the significance of using rubrics for assessment. They have not made the connection of using the rubric as a tool to meet the standard. (*following students, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, observing classes, talking with students and teachers, reviewing classroom assessments*)

Students work collaboratively to solve problems. Tutoring, informal mentoring, and modeling by students are commonplace in classes. They often engage in tasks that have several outcomes and must make decisions using multiple problem-solving strategies. They use prior knowledge to solve new problems. Students use oral and written communication to explain their thinking. These skills are highly developed and will serve them well. (*following students, observing classes, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, interviewing teachers about*

the work of their students, reviewing classroom assessments)

In many classrooms what might be perceived as chaos is really highly energized, productive, and valid learning. Students are actively involved in problem solving, multi-tasking, team building, and using intra and interpersonal skills that provide a real life connection to learning. Students are acquiring valuable life skills that will successfully take them through many walks of life. *(following students, observing classes, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, meeting with the students, school administrator, parents, observing the school outside of the classroom)*

Students read and comprehend various technical texts. They learn to apply technical terminology to follow directions and explain procedures. They take this knowledge to the creative levels of synthesis and innovation. Also, students write entries in journals, produce reflective pieces, construct technical reports, and explain procedures they use in a “how to” format. Samples of process writing are present in some student portfolios, indicating the emergence of the integration of writing in the technical content areas. Students practice reading and writing in all program areas. They are beginning to see the importance of these skills in their lives. Reading and writing on a regular basis will help students improve their literacy skills. *(following students, observing classes, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, reviewing student portfolios, reviewing classroom assessments, interviewing teachers about the work of their students)*

Students have a varying range of knowledge and ability in the use of technical math skills. Measuring distances and amounts, making metric conversions, determining ratios and proportions, using spatial geometry and accounting procedures are just a few examples of the various mathematics skills that students employ. These skill tasks are embedded in the content areas that students find relevant and serve as the foundation for further development in mathematics. *(following students, observing classes, talking with students and teachers, classroom textbooks, reviewing completed and ongoing student work)*

Commendations for Newport Area Career and Technical Center

Engaged and motivated students

Students who are respectful of peers, faculty and staff

Students who are proud of their school and their accomplishments

Recommendations for Newport Area Career and Technical Center

Develop the connection in both teachers and students of using rubrics as tools to meet the standard.

Continue your efforts to incorporate and extend problem-solving activities in all content areas.

Further incorporate literacy skills in the technical content areas, so that students will become more proficient readers and writers.

Utilize the students’ content math skills as stepping-stones to learning higher-level mathematics.

5. FINDINGS ON TEACHING

Sources of Evidence

- ◆ *observing classes*
- ◆ *talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administrator*
- ◆ *interviewing teachers about the work of their students*
- ◆ *meeting with the school improvement team, students, school and district administrators, parents, and industry partners*
- ◆ *following students*
- ◆ *reviewing completed and ongoing student work*
- ◆ *reviewing various curricula guides*
- ◆ *reviewing records of professional development*
- ◆ *reviewing student portfolios*
- ◆ *reviewing classroom assessments*

Conclusions

Teachers have an excellent rapport with students. They are willing to “go the extra mile” to support their students. Teachers take the time to know each student as a complete person. A genuine interest and pride in students and students’ accomplishments is evident. The faculty and staff are excellent role models, who exhibit, through their dedication, the value of hard work. The instructors willingly and effectively assume the role of “teacher as facilitator” of their students’ learning. They establish a comfortable, nurturing, and supportive environment that enables students to flourish. This positive environment builds trust and confidence and allows students to extend their learning in innovative ways. (*following students, observing classes, talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administrator*)

Standards are evident throughout the Center. Industry standards are displayed on the walls, in portfolios, and in student work. Teachers are at various stages in the process of aligning their curricula to industry standards. They effectively use these standards to ensure that students meet industry competencies and certification requirements where appropriate. Content and process standards in math and English language arts are posted in many classrooms. Teachers are beginning to utilize these standards to guide student progress toward higher achievement. The recent addition of a full-time writing coach is helping to embed these literacy skills into the technical content of all programs. With this consistent emphasis on using standards, teachers raise the bar on student learning. (*following students, observing classes, talking with teachers, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, reviewing various curriculum guides, reviewing classroom assessments, interviewing teachers about the work of their students*)

Teachers simulate valuable workplace experiences for their students in the context of their classrooms. The following few examples of real life experiences that teachers have established for their students provide valuable services to the public: the cosmetology program offers students opportunities to work with clients in a salon setting; culinary arts students prepare and serve foods in a restaurant setting; and auto technology students provide automotive services to the public. Teachers also initiate and maintain relationships with industry partners who provide mentoring, shadowing, and internship experiences. These practical experiences allow students to make meaningful connections between the classroom instruction and real life application. *(following students, observing classes, talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administrator, interviewing teachers about the work of their students, reviewing classroom assessments, meeting with the school improvement team, students, school and district administrators, and parents)*

Portfolios for students are kept in most classrooms. Teachers have a reference framework to use as a model for portfolio development. Each teacher tailors the format used by students in the various programs. Some portfolios are assessment portfolios, which are used as learning tools that provide many opportunities for students to reflect on their work over time and to achieve mastery. Others are career portfolios that consist of compilations of “best work” examples, awards, and resumes for presentation to prospective employers or post secondary institutions. Although career portfolios are predominant and effective, assessment portfolios are in need of further development. While teachers have made a concerted effort, more time and professional development are needed to continue and improve their efforts regarding assessment portfolios. *(following students, talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administrator, observing classes, meeting with industry partners, students, school and district administrators, parents, reviewing classroom assessments, reviewing records of professional development activities, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, reviewing student portfolios)*

Teachers ask students to make decisions and select from various solutions. They have high expectations that challenge students to employ divergent thinking in problem solving. Students work as teams or individually, with the teacher acting as a facilitator in an inquiry-based class setting. Problem solving is embedded in the culture of the learning and in the performance tasks that students complete on a daily basis. Teachers prepare students to hold themselves to high standards so they become effective problem solvers in every facet of their adult lives. *(following students, observing classes, talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administrator, reviewing classroom assessments, interviewing teachers about the work of their students, meeting with industry partners)*

Commendations for Newport Area Career and Technical Center

- Knowledgeable and talented teachers
- Teachers who are open and responsive to reform
- Collegial, cordial and caring teachers
- Proud professionals
- Strong alliances with business and industry professionals

Recommendations for Newport Area Career and Technical Center

- Continue to foster strong connections with your students.
- Continue to integrate and align curricula to New Standards Performance Standards in English language arts and mathematics.
- Increase and expand the involvement of the literacy coach in teachers’ professional development so that they incorporate more literacy strategies into their instruction and assessment.
- Maintain the high standards teachers have established for mentoring, shadowing, and internships. Also, continue to

attract the public into the school setting to avail itself of the services your students provide.

Clarify the purpose and set criteria for both career and assessment portfolios. Seek out and participate in professional development for the creation and effective use of assessment portfolios. Expand the use of career portfolios for every program.

Continue to challenge students to use diverse problem-solving strategies.

Recommendations for Newport School District

Continue to provide professional development in standards-based instruction and portfolio development.

Creatively support the funding of the literacy coach. Expand this support to include a similar approach in the area of mathematics.

6. FINDINGS ON THE SCHOOL

Sources of Evidence

- ◆ *observing classes*
- ◆ *following students*
- ◆ *talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administrator*
- ◆ *observing the school outside of the classroom*
- ◆ *meeting with the school improvement team, students, Rogers and Newport Area Career and Technical Center administrators and guidance counselors, district administrators, parents, and industry partners*
- ◆ *reviewing the school improvement plan for Rogers High School and the Newport Career and Technical Center*
- ◆ *interviewing teachers about the work of their students*
- ◆ *reviewing the teacher evaluation tool*
- ◆ *reviewing the technology plan*
- ◆ *reviewing records of professional development activities*
- ◆ *reviewing the 2000-2001 Annual Report of Newport Area Career and Technical Center*

Conclusions

The Newport Area Career and Technical Center is Newport County's "best kept secret." The learning climate provides all school community members with opportunities conducive to the optimal development of academic, technological, and personal success skills. This is evident in the placement rate of 98.4% (72% in post-secondary institutions, 16.2% in the work place, and 10.2% in the military). These statistics reflect the high academic achievement of students attending the Center. Surprisingly, parents report that they do not feel completely informed about the great programs in which their children are involved. Initial efforts to share this "secret" more openly with the public, as well as with prospective students and their families, is underway so as to fully utilize the outstanding resources found here. Declining enrollment in some programs may be due to scheduling conflicts and a misperception of the Center's college preparatory role. Also, the Center does not have a regional identity. In fact, most of the sending districts prefer to keep their students in their own high schools. The director is currently working with these district superintendents on strategic planning for the future direction and growth of the Center. Recruiting efforts by stakeholders are evident, but more aggressive efforts are imperative to increase enrollment. *(meeting with the students, school and district administrators, and parents, 2000-2001 Annual Report of Newport Area Career and Technical Center, talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administrator)*

Although Rogers High School and Newport Area Career and Technical Center share the same campus and are separated by a common driveway, these entities do not work collaboratively to enhance the educational opportunities for all students. An underlying belief at Rogers, which emanates from the top down, is that the Center is only an occasional resource, rather than a path to post secondary education in addition to career and technical

employment. Academic rigor for career and technical students is not apparent in many classes. This may be due to the perception that career and technical students are not “college material.” The guidance department does not encourage the option of career programs for all students. The current “Career Pathways” scheduling does not empower students to make career exploration choices at the Center. Students report that, in the ninth grade, they are funneled into “Career Pathways” clusters that may not be of interest to them. This potentially creates a negative impression of career and technical studies. Rogers and the Center do not share a common vision for the Center; this leads to conflicting educational philosophies that limit learning opportunities for some students. *(meeting with the school improvement team, students, Rogers and Newport Area Career and Technical Center school administrators and guidance counselors, district administrators, parents, reviewing Rogers and Newport Area Career and Technical Center school improvement plans, Newport Area Career and Technical Center Career Pathways binder observing classes, talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administrator, interviewing teachers about the work of their students)*

Professional development in *Principles of Learning* and *America’s Choice Schools* is underway in the district. The administration conducts learning walks within the schools. The director of Newport Career and Technical Center provides his teachers with valuable feedback about what is working well in various classes. He reports that the faculty will also conduct learning walks in the near future. Teachers at the Center participate in professional development activities such as standards-based instruction and looking at student work to improve student learning and teaching. The teacher evaluation tool includes components that support and promote the professional development of teachers. These are exemplary activities that provide teachers with the tools to improve teaching and learning. However, job embedded professional development to integrate literacy and mathematics standards and activities seamlessly into various classes and programs unique to the Center has not occurred. For optimum results, teachers must have clear direction and understanding in how to apply these standards in their subject areas. *(reviewing the teacher evaluation tool, talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administrator, meeting with school and district administrators, reviewing records of professional development activities)*

Technology is apparent in all classrooms at the Center and mirrors its use in industry settings. Students work on computers in high tech labs, creating web and graphic designs, PowerPoint presentations, and many other projects. Students have Internet access, which they use for research, information analysis, and problem solving. This available technology enables students to complete independent projects in all areas. Distance learning and teleconferencing are in place to enhance educational opportunities for students in several areas. Teachers are extremely knowledgeable and up-to-date about the use of technology in their program areas, and they incorporate industry-related software into their lessons. Teachers report that there is strong administrative support for obtaining and maintaining necessary equipment. The availability of technology at the Center enables students to acquire the practical experience and skills necessary for future academic and professional growth and success. *(following students, observing classes, meeting with students, school and district administrators, parents, reviewing the technology plan and school improvement plan, talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administrator)*

The NACTC effectively makes the connection between school and community. Each of the content programs offers mentoring, shadowing, and internship opportunities with industry-based partners. Some examples of this valuable work experience include the following: the Academy of Information Technology, a pilot program, provides internships with such companies as Raytheon, SEA Corp., and the Naval Undersea Warfare Corp; the Marine Occupation program offers similar shadowing and internship experiences with local marinas and restoration facilities; the Health Occupation program places students at the Newport Hospital and local health centers; the Automotive Technology program interns students at local dealerships. In addition, the Center fosters strong relationships between content programs and industry through advisory boards that share information about current trends and industry-needed skills. These boards are instrumental in providing a bridge to future employment or post-secondary education for Newport Area Career and Technical Center students. These opportunities authenticate classroom theory, connecting instruction to real life practice. These partnerships prove to be a “win-win” situation for both the school and the community at large. *(observing the school outside the classroom, meeting with the school improvement team and industry partners, students, school and district administrators, parents, talking with students, teachers, staff and school administrators, interviewing teachers about the work of their students)*

The school improvement plan, as written, is an adequate document for informing school improvement efforts this

year. Timelines, target dates, and personnel responsibilities are specified in the document. While some of the action plans are implemented or underway, the plan, as a whole, is not a living document affecting overall school change at this time. The faculty does not understand the functions of the school-based coordinator, as described in the Action Plans. It is not apparent that the new administration has a clear understanding of the functioning, composition, and role of the school improvement team and the implementation of the plan. The SIT does not meet on a regular basis to review and update the work needed to complete the plan this year. Nor does it meet or communicate with the Rogers school improvement team for successful articulation and cooperation. There is not an effective school improvement team in place to move the school forward in its reform efforts. *(meeting with the school improvement team, school and district administrators, parents, reviewing the school improvement plan, talking with teachers, staff, and school administrator)*

Commendations for Newport Area Career and Technical Center

The sense of family in the school community

The director's support of faculty

The effective use of technology

Diverse learning experiences for students

The strength of partnerships in the community

Professionals who are committed and open to reform

Recommendations for Newport Area Career and Technical Center

Provide professional development in incorporating integration of literacy and mathematics into program content.

Define the role and duties of the school-based coordinator, and maximize the services this person provides.

Establish cooperative working relationships among teachers and guidance counselors from Rogers and other sending schools so that they are informed and can more effectively promote the opportunities available to students at the Center.

Improve communication and collaboration between the two schools at all levels to make the most effective use of the Center as an educational partner.

Establish an identity for the Center within the region.

Initiate and sustain an aggressive marketing plan to create awareness of the Center and its benefits in preparing students for post secondary education, as well as employment.

Creatively maximize recruitment and retention efforts to increase enrollment.

Establish ongoing communication and articulation with the middle schools to increase awareness of the Center as a viable educational choice.

Explore scheduling alternatives to maximize enrollment opportunities.

Provide additional professional development in the use of computer-based technology.

Maintain state-of-the-art technology.

Maintain industry contacts and partnerships.

Reconstitute your school improvement team using SALT guidance material. Revisit and revise your school

improvement plan so that it is up-to-date and leading you in your reform efforts. Establish a reciprocal arrangement with Rogers High School for membership on the respective school improvement teams.

Recommendations for Newport School District

Explore the possibility of accepting out-of-district students to Rogers in the ninth grade to establish their school identity at the high school prior to enrolling at the Center.

Encourage and support the development of meaningful connections between Rogers and NACTC at all levels to maximize the educational opportunities at the Center for all students.

Support the Center's outreach activities for increasing enrollment.

7. Final Advice to the School

The Newport Career and Technical Center is a dynamic personalized learning community that enjoys a sense of “family.” With pride and conviction you bared your educational soul during our visit, and we witnessed a spirit worth remembering. Administration, faculty, staff, and students are passionate about the importance of hands-on instruction, applied learning, and the classroom-workplace connection. The facility hums with activity, and both students and teachers spark with enthusiasm over personal and collaborative discovery. No one is bored here.

The new director works diligently to support his staff and to promote the school’s many fine qualities. He is keenly interested in the integration of math and English language arts standards and instruction in the technical content taught here. As this school moves forward, it must reconstitute the school improvement team and continue to build on the fantastic innovative base you have already established. Revise your school improvement plan to reflect the recommendations found in this report. And continue your progress in reform efforts to bring your students’ learning to an ever-higher standard.

Ironically, this vital paradigm of reform is threatened by declining enrollment. There is more than just a physical driveway that separates the Center from Rogers High School. The lack of cooperative relationships and conflicting philosophies between Rogers and the Center results in a loss of educational opportunities for some students. Scheduling conflicts, recruitment and retention issues, misperceptions of career and technical education, and ineffective relationships with sending schools also contribute to this enrollment decline. It is essential that the Center be recognized as a valuable educational resource to Rogers High School and the entire regional community.

There are few places in this world where student success is almost certainly guaranteed. But the Center, Newport’s “best kept secret” promotes success, supports success, and attains success on a daily basis. Newport Career and Technical Center is truly the gem of the ocean-state!

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

Endorsement of SALT Visit Team Report

Newport Area Career and Technical Center

April 26, 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 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 a SALT Visit report.

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



Thomas A. Wilson, EdD
Catalpa Ltd.
May 21, 2002: