



Narragansett High School

Narragansett

The SALT Visit Team Report

November 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 the 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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1. THE PURPOSE AND LIMITS of this report

Overview

This is the report of the SALT team that visited Narragansett High School from November 18 through November 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 at the end of the report.

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 Narragansett High School was the touchstone document for the team. No matter how informative documents may be, however, there is no substitute for being at the school while it is in session—in the classrooms, in the lunchroom, and in the hallways. The team 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 Narragansett High School.

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

- ◆ *observing a total of 195 complete and partial classes. The team spent a total of over 170 hours in direct classroom observation. Every classroom was visited at least once, and almost every teacher was observed multiple times.*

- ◆ *observing the school outside of the classroom*

- ◆ *following nine students for a full day*

- ◆ *observing the work of teachers and staff for a full day*

- ◆ *meeting at scheduled times with the following groups:*

 - teachers*

 - school improvement team*

 - school and district administrators*

 - students*

 - parents*

- ◆ *talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administrators*

- ◆ *reviewing completed and ongoing student work*

- ◆ *discussing student work with teachers*

- ◆ *analyzing five 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*

 - school improvement plan for Narragansett High School*

 - Narragansett High School Plan of Action*

 - Narragansett School System Strategic Plan Revision for 2002-2003*

 - Agreement between Narragansett School Committee and Narragansett Educational Support Professionals, NEARI/NEA, July 1, 2002-June 30, 2005*

 - Narragansett School System Teacher Evaluation Handbook, Implemented 2002-2003*

 - Narragansett High School 2002-2003 Handbook for Students and Parents*

 - Narragansett High School Faculty and Staff Photos and Teacher Schedules binder*

 - Narragansett Student Work collection, Summer 2002*

 - 2002 SALT Survey report*

 - Narragansett High School Self Study*

 - Narragansett Faculty Handbook, 2002-2003*

Narragansett High School Program of Studies, 2002-2003

NEASC Report, 1997

NEASC Two-year Progress Report, 1999

NEASC Five-year Progress Report, 2002

Article 24 Professional Development Expenditures for 2001-2002 and 2002-2003

2002 Information Works!

2002 New Standards Reference Examination results

2002 Rhode Island Writing Assessment results

2002 New Standards English Language Arts Reference Examination School Summary

2002 New Standards Mathematics Reference Examination School Summary

classroom assessments

classroom textbooks

various curriculum guides

Newsletters, Mariner Forecast Folder

The full visit team built the conclusions, commendations, and recommendations presented here through intense and thorough discussion. The team met for a total of 32 hours in eleven 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.

2. PROFILE OF Narragansett High School

Background

Narragansett High School is centrally located in a residential area of the suburban community of Narragansett, Rhode Island. Built in 1975, the school is adjacent to the Narragansett Pier School that accommodates grades five through eight. In 1995 students in grades seven and eight were moved from the High School to the Narragansett Pier School, leaving grades nine through twelve in the original high school building. The two schools share some athletic fields. The High School renovations include a new heating system and a new roof, but no additions have been constructed.

A principal, two associate principals, 53 teachers, three guidance counselors, one psychologist, one speech and language pathologist, one substance abuse counselor, one occupational therapist, one social worker/special education program leader, eight clerical staff, four custodial, and four kitchen staff service the students here.

Of the 528 students at Narragansett, 505 (96%) are white, 7 (1%) are black, 3 (1%) are Hispanic, five (1%) are Asian/Pacific Islander, and six (1%) are Native American. One hundred and fifty students (28%) receive special education services. Of these students, 123 receive resource assistance, 13 are monitored, and 14 receive self-contained special education services. Of these 14 students, five participate in the school-to-career opportunities that the school offers. Forty-three students (8%) receive free and reduced-price lunch.

In its fourth year of use, the Interactive Math Program continues to provide interdisciplinary and real world problem-centered approaches to math teaching and learning. The horticulture program provides hands-on learning and performance-based assessment. Project Adventure is part of the physical education experience for all grade levels. An Advisor/Advisee program, begun this fall, provides students with teacher support in small group settings, especially in the ninth and twelfth grades. A Cisco Program, a DNA Symposium and a Showcase Portfolio Public Review are some of the unique activities available to students at Narragansett High School.

Narragansett High School students have access to computers through an up-to-date Media Center, five model classrooms, and two application labs. Also, every classroom is wired for the Internet, and no computer is more than 3 years old.

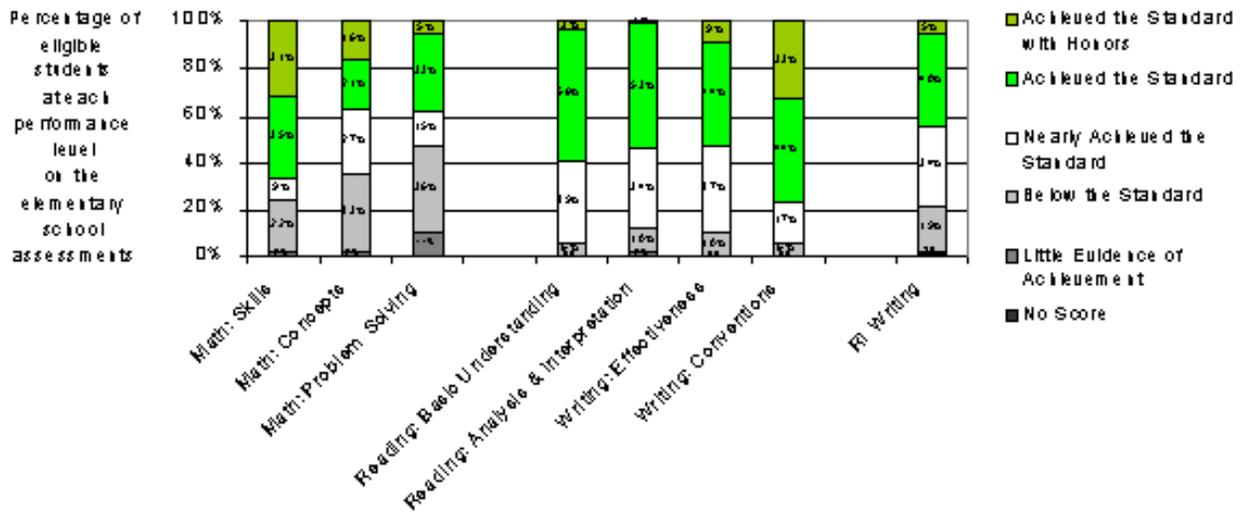
State Assessment Results for Narragansett High School

This section of the school profile shows results from the latest available state assessment program in four different ways: against performance standards; compared to similar students in the state; across student groups within the school; and over time. Assessment results create pieces of evidence that the visit team uses as it conducts its inquiry. The team uses this evidence to shape its efforts to locate critical issues for the school. It also uses this evidence, along with other evidence, to draw conclusions about those issues.

Results in relation to performance standards

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

Table 1. 2001-02 Student Results on Rhode Island State Assessments

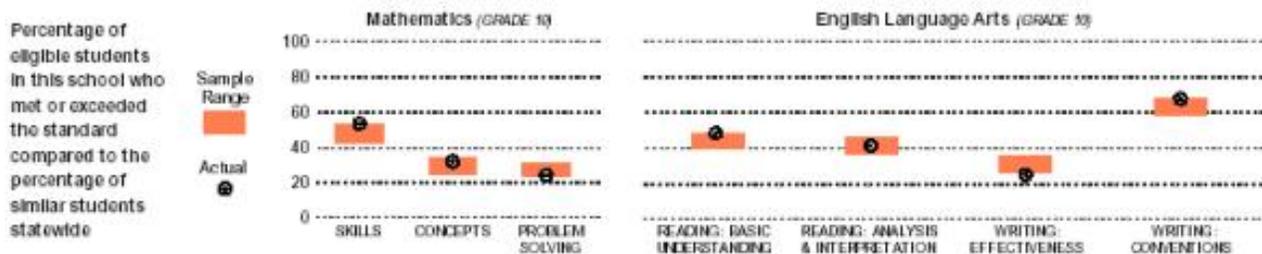


While students at Narragansett High School perform well in the areas of Math: Skills and Writing: Conventions, they perform with less proficiency in Reading: Basic Understanding and in the subtests that require the more complex aspects of literacy and numeracy.

Results compared to similar students in the state

This chart includes the performance levels of students with special education needs, students participating in ESL or bilingual programs, low socio-economic status (a composite of income level, racial background and parental education), as well as the performance of students with none of these characteristics. Taking all these characteristics into account, the graph displays the overall performance of students in this school compared to - a group of students from across the state whose characteristics match this school's students.

Table 2. 2000-2001 Student Results in Comparison to Similar Students Statewide

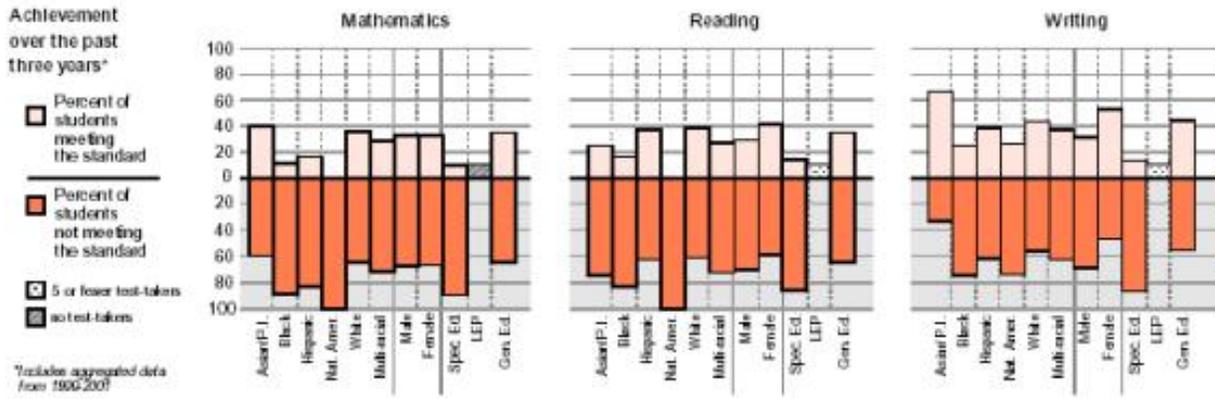


Students at Narragansett High School perform as well as similar students state wide in all seven of the New Standards Reference Exam subtests.

Results across student groups within the school

An important way to display student results is across different groups of students with different characteristics who are in the school. This display creates information about how well the school meets the learning needs of its various students. Since breaking students into these smaller groups can result in groups becoming too small to show accurate results, this display shows the results based on three years of testing. The Department defines an important gap between different groups (an equity gap) to be a gap of 15% or more.

Table 3. 2000-2001 Student Results across Subgroups

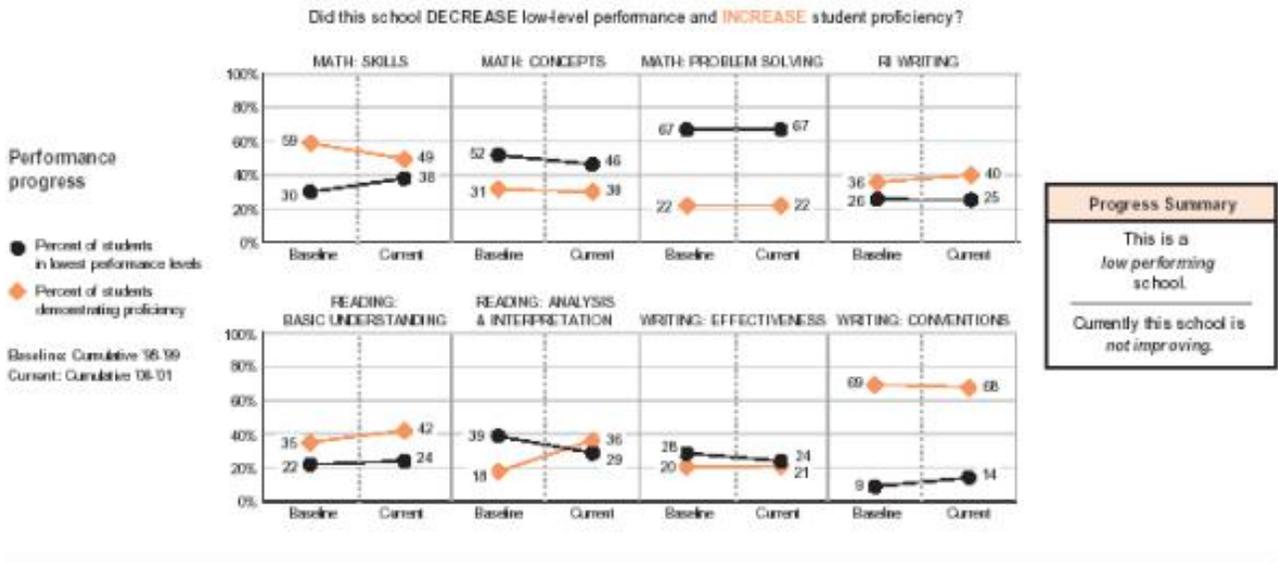


Equity gaps exist among various ethnic and racial groups, when compared with the performance of white students. Also, equity gaps in mathematics, reading and the writing areas exist for special education students and for males in the writing subtests.

Results over time

Now that the state assessment program has been functioning for five years, it is possible to show results over meaningful periods of time. This display shows changes in the percentage of students at or above standard and the percentage of students in the lowest performance categories. These displays correspond to the targets the Department of Education asked schools to set four years ago and are the basis for the department categorizing schools as improving or non-improving.

Table 4. 2000-2001 Student Results Showing Change Over Time



The only subtest that shows clear improvement is reading analysis and interpretation. Math skills shows clear evidence of decline, and the remaining subtests show a mixture of results.

Performance Progress results for the 2002 New Standards Reference Examination tests were made public during the week of December 2, 2002. Narragansett High School results indicate that its new progress status is moderately performing with improvement in both math and English Language arts.

Information Works! data for Narragansett High School is available at <<http://www.rido.net>>www.rido.net.

3. PORTRAIT OF Narragansett High School AT THE TIME OF THE VISIT

Narragansett High School is located amidst pastoral athletic fields and in a wooded area that provides the setting for both Project Adventure activities and landscaping by the school's horticulture students. The 27-year-old building houses friendly students, a collegial professional staff and a new team of influential educational leaders, who have complementary leadership styles. Students feel they belong here; they are comfortable with the administration and faculty, as well as with each other. A harmonious atmosphere prevails.

Media Center—the heart of the school—is a comfortable, but serious, place for students to read. Students utilize the variety of up-to-date computer technology that is available there, as well as in the classrooms and computer labs. The Cisco Academy also supports students in developing technical expertise.

The school is united in its goal to raise student achievement and improve teacher instruction. Innovative instruction takes place at Narragansett High School, where teachers employ a variety of strategies to facilitate learning. However, a teacher-centered approach predominates. Much work needs to be done to ensure that students at various learning levels are highly challenged and that their learning needs are met. Inconsistent expectations for student behavior and achievement hinder students from reaching levels of higher learning. Students' attitudes toward learning vary greatly. While some are highly motivated and responsible, others are at the other extreme.

The lack of curriculum coordination, strategic and in-house professional development, a flexible schedule, and consistent implementation of school policies also affect the school's ability to maximize the learning experience for all students.

4. FINDINGS ON STUDENT LEARNING

Sources of Evidence

- ◆ *2002 Rhode Island Writing Assessment results*
- ◆ *2002 New Standards English Language Arts Reference Examination School Summary*
- ◆ *2002 New Standards Mathematics Reference Examination School Summary*
- ◆ *reviewing completed and ongoing student work*
- ◆ *following students*
- ◆ *observing classes*
- ◆ *talking with students and teachers*
- ◆ *discussing student work with teachers*
- ◆ *reviewing classroom assessments*
- ◆ *observing the school outside the classroom*
- ◆ *reviewing classroom textbooks*

Conclusions

Students write in a variety of ways across the curriculum. Most write meaningful reflections in a number of subject areas, including music and art. Some students successfully sharpen and improve their writing skills by completing assignments such as research papers, laboratory reports, POW's (problem of the week), and literary analyses and summaries. In some classes, students revise their writing using multiple drafts and peer editing. The effective summaries and explanations in student portfolios show improvement over time in various subjects. While many students write daily, the quality of their writing reflects a range of ability in both content and mechanics throughout the various levels and classes. Nevertheless, the writing scores have improved on the 2002 New Standards Reference Examination: 53% of the students achieved or exceeded the standard in the area of Writing: Effectiveness, and 77% achieved or exceeded the standard in the area of Writing: Conventions. (*observing classes, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, following students, talking with students, teachers, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing classroom assessments, 2002 New Standards English Language Arts Reference Examination School Summary*)

Students read purposefully when completing creative projects, book reviews, reflections, and factual summaries of key points. Serious reading occurs in the Media Center, where students clearly show a respect for reading. Students enthusiastically share their thinking about reading and openly discuss their feelings with other students. Many students successfully employ various reading strategies to gather information, to solve problems and to deepen their understanding by using techniques such as highlighting, note taking and employing graphic organizers. Still, many students are just average readers. Students and teachers report that few students engage in leisure reading outside of school. Also, some students do not effectively analyze or interpret what they read; some students express a level of frustration when they are asked to read challenging assignments. These factors hinder their ability to learn. (*observing classes, following students, observing the school outside the classroom, 2002 New Standards English Language Arts Reference Examination School Summary, discussing student work with teachers, talking with students and teachers, reviewing classroom assessments, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, reviewing classroom textbooks*)

Students use computation and problem-solving skills in many curricular areas. They often work cooperatively, using manipulatives and mathematical tools to tackle problems and arrive at solutions. They also use appropriate mathematical vocabulary to explain their thinking processes. Some students make real life connections and applications to the problems they try to solve. Given this context, students demonstrate high interest and inquisitiveness. Some students analyze information; make inferences and predictions with ease, while others—even within the same class—struggle to do this. Students report their lack of confidence in understanding math, and they exhibit a range of abilities in math. This range is corroborated by the 2002 New Standards Reference Examination results in Mathematics. (*observing classes, following students, talking with students and teachers, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, reviewing classroom assessments, 2002 New Standards Mathematics Reference Examination School Summary*)

Many students are highly engaged, competent and confident learners, while others are apathetic and unmotivated in certain classes. Still others are passive and do not take responsibility for their learning. Students are aware that different teachers hold different expectations for class work and student discipline. Thus, students reflect different attitudes toward learning in different classes. Students see the need for school improvement to support better learning, but they are not proactive enough to initiate change. (*following students, observing classes, observing the school outside the classroom, meeting with students*)

Commendations for Narragansett High School

Students' willingness to express themselves verbally

Student-to-student collaboration

Recommendations for Narragansett High School

Inculcate a serious attitude toward learning in all students in all classes and across the curriculum.

Continue and expand effective writing and revision activities in all curricular areas.

Continue to develop student skills in analysis and interpretation in reading. Foster a positive attitude towards reading.

Expand the use of problem solving activities that make real life connections and applications.

Increase instruction for all students in analyzing information and making inferences and predictions.

5. FINDINGS ON TEACHING

Sources of Evidence

- ◆ *observing classes*
- ◆ *following students*
- ◆ *2002 Information Works!*
- ◆ *2002 SALT Survey Report*
- ◆ *discussing student work with teachers*
- ◆ *talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administrators*
- ◆ *meeting with the school improvement team, students, school and district administrators, and parents*
- ◆ *reviewing completed and ongoing student work*
- ◆ *reviewing classroom assessments*
- ◆ *reviewing records of professional development activities*

Conclusions

A number of dynamic, engaging teachers clearly articulate high expectations for learning and behavior. These teachers demand students to perform high quality work, and their classes are academically rigorous. When teacher expectations about learning are clear, students are engaged and focused, and their progress in learning is evident. However, other teachers often do not set the appropriate expectations for learning that will stretch student potential. Although a range of approaches are adopted to complement the teaching of various disciplines, assigned tasks often are not challenging enough to meet student abilities, interests and needs. Inconsistent enforcement of discipline in the classroom creates a less conducive environment for learning. This conveys an inconsistent learning experience to students in terms of varied teaching strategies, teaching resources, and the level of difficulty of student assignments and orderliness in the classroom. (*following students, interviewing teachers about the work of their students, discussing student work with teachers, talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administrators, meeting with the school improvement team, students, school and district administrators, and parents, reviewing completed and ongoing student work*)

All classes prominently display standards for learning. A number of teachers frequently utilize these standards to drive their instruction. Their lessons require students to identify standards, examine their work and reflect on their progress. Various teaching methods are used throughout the curricula areas. Many teachers engage in a variety of teacher driven instructive practices such as lectures and worksheets, while others prefer to use student-based research and hands-on learning to guide their students through new material. Probing questions, group assignments, experiments with lab reports, educational games, literary circles, portfolios and multi-media presentations are only a few examples of exceptional techniques that teachers use to engage students actively in their learning. In classes where tasks are not systematically organized, individual learning styles are not addressed; expectations are not clear; and some students are less engaged, generally disruptive and frequently off-task. This hinders their learning. (*following students, observing classes, meeting with students and school administrators, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing classroom assessments, 2002 SALT Survey Report, talking with students, teachers and school administrators*)

Teachers work hard to become effective facilitators of their students' learning. New and innovative techniques are in progress to ensure that students develop the habit of life-long learning. However, teachers report that they have too little time to

collaborate and share their knowledge and expertise with one another. Information from professional development activities is not systematically disseminated among the faculty. A number of teachers voluntarily discuss instructional practices and assessment strategies in the Critical Friends Groups. The majority of teachers do not involve themselves in similar activities that would greatly increase their collaboration and effectiveness in the classroom. The lack of scheduled time also hampers the teacher-mentoring program in its efforts to support new teachers in their growth. Valuable opportunities for teacher development are not used to their fullest. (*observing classes, talking with students and teachers, reviewing records of professional development activities, discussing student work with teachers, meeting with the school improvement team, students, school and district administrators*)

Commendations for Narragansett High School

Participation in Critical Friends Groups

Effective use of student portfolios across the curriculum

Recommendations for Narragansett High School

Increase academic rigor through a sustained use of exceptional teaching techniques.

Communicate clear and high expectations for all students. Hold students accountable to these expectations.

Develop and share strategies to address individual student learning styles.

Enforce consistent rules in all classes for proper student behavior.

Develop job-embedded professional development, using your teacher leaders as facilitators.

Recommendations for Narragansett School District

Promote the use of teacher leaders to further teacher development and school reform.

Provide school-based professional development in the effective use of standards, rubrics, and the differentiation of instruction.

6. FINDINGS ON THE SCHOOL

Sources of Evidence

- ◆ *observing classes*
- ◆ *observing the school outside of the classroom*
- ◆ *talking with many students, teachers, staff, and school administrators*
- ◆ *reviewing district strategic plan*
- ◆ *meeting with the school improvement team, students, school and district administrators, parents*
- ◆ *2002 SALT Survey Report*
- ◆ *following students*
- ◆ *reviewing school improvement plan*
- ◆ *Narragansett High School Plan of Action*
- ◆ *reviewing district and school policies and practices*
- ◆ *reviewing completed and ongoing student work*
- ◆ *discussing student work with teachers*

Conclusions

Narragansett High School students, faculty, and administrators take pride in the welcoming, relaxed atmosphere in the school's hallways and classrooms. Students converse freely and openly with the principal, two associate principals, and the teachers and staff. The Advisory Program, in its infancy, shows great potential for fostering personalization, which many students crave in the high school experience. Administrators take great pride in the climate of the school, and their enthusiasm permeates the school culture as a whole. Although administrative communication and support for teachers have greatly improved over the past few years, some incongruities still exist. Although students, parents, and teachers receive student handbooks outlining the school's policies, there are obvious inconsistencies in the enforcement of these policies that adversely affects student learning. While many teachers and students exhibit pride in their school by adhering strongly to established school policies, not all teachers and students take ownership of their disciplinary actions and behavior. This weakens the impact of class lessons and reduces the time spent on task. (*observing classes, talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administrators, following students, observing the school outside the classroom, reviewing district and school policies and practices*)

Narragansett High School is well equipped with technology and adequately funded in technology. All students have access to computers, the Internet, peripheral equipment in classrooms, the Media Center, and several multi-functional labs. The Media Center is professionally staffed and appropriately equipped to allow students to perform serious research. It also provides a comfortable learning environment. Expectations are high, and students are held accountable for their work. Technology labs are multi-functional and used across the curriculum. Equipment and software programs are well maintained by full-time technical personnel. Other forms of technology in use include graphing calculators, new stereomicroscopes, a state-of-the-art school security system, audio and video equipment, color copiers, scanners and LCD projectors. The Cisco Academy

Network Program offered at Narragansett High School prepares students for high-demand technical careers. Students are knowledgeable about technology and comfortable with integrating it into their daily learning experiences, because of its availability and effective application. *(observing classes, meeting with the school improvement team, students, school and district administrators, parents, following students, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers)*

Narragansett High School offers a variety of excellent programs for its students. The intent of these programs is to allow students to succeed in their learning by respecting their unique interests in such areas as: School-to-Career, the Interactive Mathematics Program, Project Adventure, Humanities, and Horticulture. These programs help students connect what is happening in the classroom with the real world. Although these programs are well intended, some problems exist. The School-to-Career program serves a limited number of students. Humanities provides an integrated curriculum, but the integrated approach is not offered to all students. Also, Humanities teachers have little time to collaborate. While the leadership at Narragansett High School supports the Interactive Mathematics Program, the teachers report that a poor image of this program exists at the feeder school and among fellow faculty members. Also, the fragmentation of the music program reduces its value for students. The inflexibility of the school schedule limits the effectiveness of some of these programs. *(observing classes, meeting with the school improvement team, students, school and district administrators, parents, talking with teachers, and school administrators, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing completed and ongoing student work)*

The administrative team possesses complementary leadership styles, which set a positive tone for school improvement and foster a common respect among administrators, teachers, and students. This empowers teachers to become leaders through shared decision-making. The faculty and administrators are developing a common vision for school improvement. As reported in the SALT Survey, a significant majority of parents feel valued as important partners in the education of their children. An effective School Improvement Team, composed of administrators, teachers and parents, is part of this leadership team. Under their direction, faculty and student action teams implement tactics based upon the school's self-study. However, the plan, as written, does not specify how the school will review and evaluate the various tactics that are underway this year. Also, there is limited job-embedded professional development that is needed to raise the level of achievement for all students and to implement the common vision. The administrators and faculty recognize the need for the vertical articulation of curriculum both within and outside the school. Addressing these needs will result in a more coherent, comprehensive program for student learning and teaching. *(meeting with the school improvement team, students, school and district administrators, parents, 2002 SALT Survey Report, reviewing school improvement plan, Narragansett High School Plan of Action, reviewing district strategic plan)*

Commendations for Narragansett High School

- A welcoming and friendly atmosphere
- Influential Leadership Team
- Effective School Improvement Team
- Inviting and effective Media Center
- Quality and quantity of technology

Recommendations for Narragansett High School

- Enforce existing school policies consistently.
- Maintain the availability and use of high quality technology.
- Investigate and implement a more flexible scheduling model to maximize the effectiveness of the many fine programs underway here.
- Expand integrated programs so they are available to all students.
- Coordinate curriculum articulation within and outside the school.
- Develop better communication with the middle school community regarding the excellent offerings available at the high school.

Expand job-embedded professional development opportunities for the faculty. Focus professional development to align with school goals.

Recommendations for Narragansett School District

Develop a coordinated K-12 curriculum in all areas.

Support the development of better communication with the middle school community regarding the excellent offerings available at the high school.

7. Final Advice to the School

Narragansett High School has all the qualities necessary to be an excellent high school. The professional staff is competent and caring. The school is well maintained and supported by the community. Technology is in place. Through the implementation of standards, benchmarks and rubrics, as well as special integrative programs and classes, the school demonstrates improved learning and teaching. This improvement is supported by the increase in student performance levels on the 2002 New Standards Reference Examination.

The administrators and teacher leaders have done a good job of developing and maintaining a vision for the school. It is time, however, to make hard decisions regarding curriculum coordination, scheduling, focused professional development and clear and consistent expectations for improved learning and teaching. It is time for more faculty members to step forward and become involved in establishing good discipline in all classes and differentiating instruction to meet the needs of all students, and, by so doing, to decrease student frustration or boredom experienced by some students.

Do not be satisfied with your present achievements. Continue to foster instructional leadership, so your teacher leaders can move the school toward an even brighter future. Enhancing curriculum articulation and faculty collaboration results in synergy, and team spirit does matter. Strengthen the culture of self-evaluation, and be reflective. Your Critical Friends Groups are a good start in establishing your school as a learning organization. Cater to the differences in your students' learning styles. Further stretch the potential of your more able students and, at the same time, take greater care to support effectively those who are less able. In this way, you will optimize learning, a worthy goal for all your students.

The students are willing to take direction, and they are capable of achieving higher academic and behavior standards. But, the educators must set those standards and establish, support and demand rigor. The students will respond. They are ready to move to greater levels of achievement in all areas. Use the findings in this report as a map, as you continue your journey toward excellence. Good Luck to you. You have what it takes to reach your goal.

The Narragansett High School Improvement Team

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John Kennedy, Associate Principal

Daniel Warner, Associate Principal

Cathy Capalbo, Teacher

Sarah Quan, Teacher

Donna Good, Librarian

Sandi O'Brien, Guidance

Mary Beth Almeida, Parent

Maureen Chronley, Parent

Jeanne Ehmann, Parent

Debbie Ranaldi, Parent

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Kathy Velle, Parent

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Endorsement of SALT Visit Team Report

Narragansett High School

November 22, 2002

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The steps Catalpa completed for this review were:

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

The findings from the review are:

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

Accordingly, Catalpa Ltd. endorses this report.



CATALPA LTD.

Thomas A. Wilson, EdD

Catalpa Ltd.

DATE: January 22, 2003