



# Leo A. Savoie School

WOONSOCKET

## THE SALT VISIT TEAM REPORT

December 9, 2005



School Accountability for Learning and Teaching (SALT)

The school accountability program of the Rhode Island Department of Education

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## The Purpose and Limits of This Report

This is the report of the SALT team that visited Leo A. Savoie School from December 5 - 9, 2005.

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

The major questions the team addressed were:

How well do students learn at Leo A. Savoie School?

How well does the teaching at Leo A. Savoie School affect learning?

How well does Leo A. Savoie School support learning and teaching?

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

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

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

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

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

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

The team made its judgment explicit.

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

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

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

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

## Sources of Evidence

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

The team spent a total of over 101 hours in direct classroom observation. Most of this time was spent observing complete lessons or classes. Almost every classroom was visited at least once, and almost every teacher was observed more than once. Team members had conversations with various teachers and staff for a total of 25 hours.

The full visit team built the conclusions, commendations and recommendations presented here through intense and thorough discussion. The team met for a total of 26 hours in team meetings spanning the five days of the visit. This time does not include the time the team spent in classrooms, with teachers, and in meetings with students, parents, and school and district administrators.

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

Important enough to include in the report

Supported by the evidence the team gathered during the visit

Set in the present, and

Contains the judgment of the team

## Using the Report

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

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

The Woonsocket School Department, RIDE and the public should consider what the report says or implies about how they can best support Leo A. Savoie School as it works to strengthen its performance.

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

## 2. PROFILE OF LEO A. SAVOIE SCHOOL

Leo A. Savoie School is one of ten public elementary schools in Woonsocket, Rhode Island. The school first opened its doors to students in 1967.

Nineteen classrooms, a cafetorium, a technology lab, a library, a parent-teacher room, a resource room, a speech and language room, a counseling room, a nurse's office, and a main office comprise the school facilities. The school grounds also include a nature trail and a playing field.

Approximately 400 students in kindergarten through grade five attend Leo A. Savoie School. Of these students, 5% are African American, 3% are Asian, 14% are Hispanic, and 78% are white. Approximately thirty eight percent of students qualify for free or reduced price lunch. Further, 24% of students receive special education services: 8% receive resource services and 16% are in self-contained placements.

There are 19 classrooms at Leo A. Savoie School: two full-day kindergartens, two first grades, a first-second grade inclusion class, two second grades, two third grades, a third-fourth grade inclusion class, two fourth grades, a fourth-fifth grade inclusion class, two fifth grades, a primary self-contained, and three intermediate self-contained classes. The full-time professional staff includes one principal, 22 full-time classroom teachers, one resource teacher, one speech/language pathologist, and eight full-time assistants. One occupational therapist, a social worker, two speech/language pathologists, a psychologist, a physical therapist, two art teachers, two music teachers, two physical education teachers, three librarians, one technology teacher, and one literacy coach work at Leo A. Savoie School part-time. Savoie also employs a secretary, a part-time nurse, a part-time nurse clerk, two full-time custodians, three full-time cafeteria staff, and four part-time lunchroom assistants.

Leo A. Savoie School currently uses The Four Square Model to improve students' writing. Teachers across all grades and classrooms use this model to help students organize their thoughts during the prewriting process.

A district initiative, the *Institute for Learning: Principles of Learning*, is currently in place at Leo A. Savoie School. The *Education Alliance: Classroom Walk-Throughs Institute* complements this initiative. Information gained during walk-throughs is discussed with the entire staff and helps direct professional development choices.

Almost all special education teachers at Savoie are trained in the Wilson Reading Program, a multi-sensory systematic approach to reading instruction. They use this training to teach reading and reading skills to special education students and struggling students, as a response to intervention. The faculty works collaboratively to implement the program. The school continues to focus on teacher training and program implementation through professional development and acquiring appropriate Wilson reading materials for instruction.

### 3. PORTRAIT OF LEO A. SAVOIE SCHOOL AT THE TIME OF THE VISIT

Leo A. Savoie School is a two story, brick building located just off a busy road in an urban setting. Pictures depicting previous classes and a warm and friendly staff greet students, teachers, and parents alike when they enter the school. Students enjoy coming to school here, feel safe, and like their teachers. Teachers obviously respect and support one another.

Polite students fill classrooms—they put their best foot forward to complete and participate in classroom activities. Their learning of reading, writing, and problem solving remains at a basic level, as do their teachers' expectations for them. Pockets of excellent instruction have not yet spread throughout the entire faculty, while unnecessary repetition of content and skills impedes student progress. Savoie teachers work exceptionally hard, yet the absence of consistent and effective school-wide instruction and high expectations for all limits student learning and achievement.

A strong and well-organized School Improvement Team effectively leads the school's efforts to improve learning and teaching. Further, teachers use the School Improvement Plan to guide their classroom instruction. The new principal is a positive force, adding direction to the school. Additionally, special education inclusion classrooms help all students in these classes learn better, although self-contained students seldom interact with the rest of the school.

Teachers here are working hard to improve their instruction and student learning, although much work remains to be done.

## 4. FINDINGS ON STUDENT LEARNING

### Conclusions

Leo Savoie students say they love to read! Most students, however, read at a superficial level. When reading, they focus on simply reading the words and literally comprehending the story. When their teachers ask them to do so, all students know how to make reasonable predictions about their reading. They also make straightforward connections between the characters and events in their reading and their own experiences. While these skills are commendable, too many students show little development in the depth of their predictions and connections as they progress through the grades. Other students, however, know how to make more advanced connections between their reading and events in the world or other books they have read. Students in a few classrooms are beginning to learn how to make inferences from their reading, to analyze story elements such as character development and setting, and to react to the effectiveness of the author's style and evaluate it. Additionally, during discussions and in their response journals, a few students effectively cite textual evidence to support their assertions. Savoie students are good, solid basic readers, but most have not yet acquired the more difficult skills necessary to analyze and interpret text. It is not surprising, then, that only 63% of them achieved the standard or achieved the standard with honors on the Basic Understanding subtest of the 2004 New Standards Reference Examination, and only 50% did so on the Analysis and Interpretation subtest. *(following students, observing classes, meeting with the school improvement team, students, school and district administrators, and parents, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, talking with students and teachers, reviewing school improvement plan, 2004 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries)*

Savoie students have a firm grasp of the basic elements of writing. They know how to complete a graphic organizer on a given prompt and transfer ideas into a three or four sentence paragraph. These paragraphs generally contain a beginning, a middle, and an end. Students employ mostly straightforward, simple sentences, although many try to use longer sentences that often become run-ons. These elements too often result in writing that is "almost mechanical in terms of format," as noted in Savoie's self-study. Many students lack a clear understanding of what makes good writing good. They too often evaluate their own writing based on how long it is, the correctness of spelling, or how appropriate their capitalization and punctuation are, as opposed to the quality of the writing. In fact, many students say they know that their writing is good either because it contains these basic characteristics or because the teacher tells them it is good. Students in a few classes demonstrate more advanced writing skills. These students know how to interject a strong sense of their own personalities into their writing, how to choose "robust" and interesting vocabulary, and how to use dialogue effectively to develop their characters and storylines. *(following students, observing classes, meeting with students and school and district administrators, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, talking with students and teachers, reviewing school improvement plan, Leo A. Savoie Elementary School Self-Study Report 2005-2006)*

Savoie students are thoroughly learning a multitude of problem solving strategies. They know how to draw an appropriate picture and use that to help them understand and think through a problem. They use manipulatives to compare and contrast the lengths of their names. Students create lists and charts to determine repeating patterns. They use graphs to determine the number of classmates buying lunch. Students employ logical reasoning to eliminate incorrect answers to problems. While these numerous strategies are important to learn, most students apply them in limited situations. They use them to solve straightforward problems independently or when their teachers direct them to do so. Most importantly, when faced with a problem to solve, most students focus on simply finishing the problem and arriving at the correct answer. Therefore, as Savoie's self-study notes, students' "ability to solve problems in more than one way and to justify solutions orally and in writing," is limited. In some cases, when faced with a problem that they cannot answer, frustrated students simply give up and wait for the teacher to give them the answer. Additionally, few students regularly share their solutions to problems with one another. These findings align with the 2004 New Standards Reference Examination Problem Solving results: a mere 15% of students achieved the standard or achieved the standard with honors. (*following students, observing classes, meeting with students and district administrators, talking with students and teachers, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing classroom assessments, reviewing school improvement plan, 2004 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries*)

Students at Leo A. Savoie Elementary School behave well and politely hold doors open for visitors, greet one another, work well together, and say "please," and "thank you." They show respect for themselves, their friends, and the adults in the school. They follow established classroom routines and compliantly do what their teachers ask them to do—finishing one task to move on to the next. Most students have little understanding of the purpose of their assignments and say they want to do well "to get good jobs" and "make our parents happy." While these behaviors contribute to smoothly functioning classrooms, they offer little in the way of helping students become self-directed, lifelong learners. In a few classrooms, children show a true passion and love of learning. These students choose to write about topics of personal relevance, challenge themselves to learn better, and clearly understand why they do what they do in class. As a whole, Savoie students are comfortable with their learning and ready for greater challenges. (*following students, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, meeting with students and parents*)

## Important Thematic Findings in Student Learning

Students:

- ◆ *Compliantly do what is asked of them*
- ◆ *Routinely practice and firmly grasp the basics of reading, writing, and problem solving*
- ◆ *Are comfortable with what they know and ready for greater challenges*

## 5. FINDINGS ON TEACHING FOR LEARNING

### Conclusions

Teachers at Savoie are striving to improve their students' reading skills, with varying levels of success. Many teachers report their need to improve their instruction of reading. They choose to ask the literacy trainer to model effective practices for them and help them help their students. Most Savoie teachers are in the beginning stages of changing their instruction. In the classroom, all Savoie teachers expect students to read often, whether independently, in small groups, or during literacy center time. Some teachers more effectively help their students learn to read and expect much more from them than other teachers. While all teachers read aloud to their students and ask questions about what they have read, a few teachers take this to the next level. They ask meaningful, thought provoking questions that go beyond literal comprehension to help students interpret and analyze the book. Most teachers instruct small groups of students in reading during "guided reading." Guided reading, though, looks different from classroom to classroom. The less effective instruction entails the teacher simply reading the book with a small group of students and asking them to answer basic questions whose answers can be found directly in the text. The effective teachers of guided reading at Savoie group students flexibly according to their current reading levels. They teach these groups specific strategies based on their current needs: analyzing story elements, helping them with intonation and appropriate pacing, helping them use punctuation as a clue to understanding text, and helping them determine the meaning of unfamiliar words through context clues. Due to these inconsistent expectations and practices, not all students are learning the skills necessary to analyze and interpret text effectively. *(following students, observing classes, meeting with students and school and district administrators, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, talking with students, teachers, and school and district administrators, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing classroom assessments, 2004 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries, reviewing school improvement plan)*

Writing instruction at Savoie too often focuses on beginning writing skills. Very few teachers utilize methods beyond a graphic organizer to help their students learn to write. Far too many teachers' criteria for good writing overemphasize the number of sentences in a paragraph, grammar, spelling, and indentation. These basic criteria hinder students' development of the more sophisticated elements of good writing. Teachers occasionally provide models of "3" level writing to their students, but a select few actually model the process of developing strong written pieces. Very few teachers point out the elements of quality writing in the books they read to or with their students. Further, from grade to grade, teachers instruct the same basic skills. Hence, while most students competently employ these basic elements of writing, they show little development in the quality and sophistication of their writing as they progress through the grades. District administrators report that these teachers have just begun to realize the need to change their instructional practices in writing. *(following students, observing classes, meeting with the school improvement team, students, and school and district administrators, talking with students, teachers, and district administrators, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing school improvement plan, 2004 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries, school and district report cards)*

Problem solving instruction at Savoie, as evident in the self-study notes, is piecemeal. In most cases, teachers require students to solve a problem of the day, but far too much “problem solving instruction” entails emphasis on students’ acquisition of basic mathematical skills. Expectations for quality problem solving in far too many classes emphasize students finding the “correct answer,” as opposed to generating a variety of justified solutions. Problem solving instruction at Savoie repeats the same strategies from year to year, and most teachers’ expectations for students’ problem solving sophistication remains the same from grade to grade. Too often teachers walk students step-by-step through solving a problem or tell students what strategy to use, as opposed to letting students explore, discover, and struggle through problems themselves. High quality problem solving instruction does exist in a few classrooms. These teachers provide real-life, complex, multi-step problems for their students such as creating a Thanksgiving menu or inventing their own marble games. In some cases, teachers ask students to explain their thinking clearly, either orally or in writing; their students also share their solutions with one another. As a consequence, not all Savoie students are developing the necessary skills to solve sophisticated problems. Teachers say they need additional professional development to instruct problem solving effectively. *(following students, observing classes, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing classroom assessments, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, reviewing school improvement plan, talking with students and teachers, 2004 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries, Leo A. Savoie Elementary School Self-Study 2005-2006)*

Teachers too often unnecessarily repeat content and skills across grades. For example: students in kindergarten to grade 3 are using the same weather graph activities; during math instruction rounding is done in grades 3 and 5 without change; and in reading across grade levels, students are making predictions and connections to text in the same way and at the same level of depth. Although there is consistency of content, instructional methods and effectiveness vary greatly from class to class. To illustrate, most teachers say they are teaching “guided reading,” but practices are not the same in all classrooms. Furthermore, almost all teachers use the problem of the day, but not all use this approach to have students justify and explain multiple solutions. Importantly, parents say some teachers have higher expectations for their students than other teachers. The repetition of basic skills and inconsistent instructional methods hinders “all students” from moving beyond basic learning. *(following students, observing classes, meeting with students and parents, talking with students and teachers, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing classroom assessments, classroom textbooks)*

Leo A. Savoie teachers embody the spirit of educational professionalism. Their dedication to improving their teaching is remarkable—they work exceptionally hard and honestly admit to themselves and to others that they need to improve their practice. Admirably, they currently meet within study groups to learn new methods to help their students learn to read and write. District administrators praise their willingness to take risks and adopt new instructional initiatives. These teachers volunteer to run Parent Teacher Council functions, enabling the parent members to spend time with their children. They come early and stay late to meet the needs of their students. Additionally, many teachers voluntarily use their preparation time to consult with one another and plan together. The dedication of all staff members enhances the school’s learning community and shows promise for increasing student learning. *(observing classes, following students, observing the school outside of the classroom, meeting with the school improvement team, students, school and district administrators, and parents, talking with students, teachers, and school and district administrators)*

## Commendations for Leo A. Savoie School

Dedicated and hardworking teachers committed to improving instructional practices

## Recommendations for Leo A. Savoie School

Move your students beyond the basics of reading, writing, and problem solving. Eliminate unnecessary repetition of skills and activities.

Analyze expectations for student educational development across grades in reading, writing, and problem solving. Use the information to raise expectations for quality work as students progress through the grades.

Model effective reading, writing, and problem solving for students.

Integrate reading with writing instruction. Connect reading to writing by emphasizing quality elements of writing in reading selections.

Adjust criteria charts to emphasize the elements of quality writing.

Pursue and attend high quality, school-wide professional development in the areas of reading, writing, and problem solving.

Provide students with additional real-life problems. Provide time for students to explore and discover multiple solutions to the problems they solve.

Continue to seek to improve your teaching.

## Recommendations for Woonsocket Education Department

Provide and require high quality, school-wide professional development in the areas of reading, writing, and problem solving.

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

### Conclusions

The inclusionary classrooms at Savoie, led by expert teachers, work well for the students placed there. Visitors to these classrooms cannot distinguish between the special education students and the regular education students. The teachers collaborate to make their instruction meet the individual needs of each student. These kids are learning! Unfortunately, the self-contained students remain isolated from the rest of the school. They have limited interaction with their peers and lack constant, appropriate educational and social peer role models. The school reports that the toughest kids in the district are assigned here. District administrators say they assign special education students to the best teacher available for the individual student. But teachers say their special education students change from year to year, and that the constant movement of students from one school to another makes it difficult to maximize the learning of each student. Special education at Savoie serves many students well, but too many other students less well. *(following students, observing classes, talking with students, teachers, and school administrators, meeting with school and district administrators, reviewing school and district report card)*

NSRE scores from 2002 through 2004 show a decline in student achievement. The SALT team knows of the bubbling error resulting in a significant number of ‘no scores’ for special education students for English Language Arts. Despite this technical problem, it is important to note that district administrators say the trends in these test scores reveal pertinent information about how well Savoie students are learning—and the SALT team agrees. Although the 2005 attendance rate qualified Savoie as a school making “adequate yearly progress,” these academic downward trends result in a still accurate 2004 “school in need of improvement” label. While the 2004 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries are two years old, the information contained therein remains relevant to Savoie School. Admirably, the school improvement team is using this information, among other sources of data, to inform their school improvement planning. *(following students, observing classes, 2004 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries, meeting with school and district administrators, reviewing school and district report cards)*

The current principal at Savoie Elementary School is the fourth principal at the school in six years. Parents and staff voice their hope that she remains in this school. Unfortunately, she is working at Savoie under a one-year contract. Despite this, the principal provides the leadership that these students and staff need. Her organized and caring style fits very well in this school. Parents, students, and staff say she is approachable and addresses their concerns in a timely fashion. She walks the school building daily, consults with teachers and students, and reads aloud to students during indoor recess. The principal personally attends to morning and afternoon dismissal, which run like clockwork. A few teachers report they would like more formal whole school communication from the principal, which the SALT team agrees is necessary. District administrators say that the principal is a huge advocate for getting what her school needs, whether that is donated office supplies or the key to the crosswalk traffic light. This effective principal helps create an environment where students feel safe and comfortable, which improves their ability to learn well. *(following students, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, meeting with the school improvement team, students, school and district administrators, and parents, talking with students, teachers, and school administrators, Leo A. Savoie Elementary School Communications binder)*

Savoie's School Improvement Team comprises a balanced membership that includes teachers, parents, and the school administrator. They well represent the school's constituencies. The School Improvement Plan effectively and clearly focuses on student learning in reading, writing, and problem solving. The plan thrives in classrooms—teachers use it to choose student activities, lesson content, and instructional practices. The self-study conclusions, informed by a variety of data sources such as following students, observing classrooms, and looking at student work, thoroughly and honestly address strengths AND shortcomings in student learning and teaching for learning. These commendable efforts help Savoie teachers move in the right direction to improve student learning. *(following students, observing classes, meeting with the school improvement team and school and district administrators, talking with teachers and school and district administrators, reviewing school improvement plan)*

**Commendations for Leo A. Savoie School**

Excellent inclusionary classrooms

Effective School Improvement Plan actively used in classes

Representative School Improvement Team

Honest and thorough self-study

Approachable and resourceful principal

**Recommendations for Leo A. Savoie School**

Integrate self-contained special education students with peers, when appropriate.

Continue to use your self-study data and School Improvement Plan to improve student learning.

Continue to implement effective inclusionary practices.

Implement regular, frequent, and formal school-wide communication between administration and faculty.

**Recommendations for Woonsocket Education Department**

Limit or eliminate the frequent movement of special education students into and out of Leo A. Savoie Elementary School.

Extend the current principal's one-year contract. Keep her at this school.

## 7. FINAL ADVICE TO LEO A. SAVOIE SCHOOL

The SALT team wishes to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of the principal, faculty, and staff of Leo A. Savoie Elementary School. It is obvious that you care about your students and work to support their many needs.

The talent and dedication are already here to achieve excellence. Collaborate with one another to identify the strong instructional strategies already in use and help spread them throughout the entire faculty. As you continue to work together, focus on improving the consistency and effectiveness of your classroom instructional practices. Build on the strengths of your students, and raise your expectations for their achievement. Help them to love learning for learning's sake.

You are fortunate to have committed members on your school improvement team, who work well together. Use their strength and leadership to guide your next steps in improving student learning.

We congratulate you on your efforts thus far and hope for your future successes. Use this report and your own self-study as guides to improve learning and teaching at Leo A. Savoie School. Good luck to you as you embark on this important work.

## ENDORSEMENT OF SALT VISIT TEAM REPORT

### Leo A. Savoie School

December 9, 2005

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The steps Catalpa completed for this review were:

- discussion with the chair about any issues related to the visit before it began
- daily discussion of any issues with the visit chair during the visit
- observation of a portion 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.

***DRAFT ENDORSEMENT***



**CATALPA LTD.**

Thomas A. Wilson, EdD

Catalpa Ltd.

December 30, 2005

## REPORT APPENDIX

### Sources of Evidence for This Report

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

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

- ◆ *observing classes directly*
- ◆ *observing the school outside of the classroom*
- ◆ *following 7 students for a full day*
- ◆ *observing the work of teachers and staff for a full day*
- ◆ *meeting at scheduled times with the following groups:*
  - teachers*
  - school improvement team*
  - school and district administrators*
  - students*
  - parents*
- ◆ *talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administrators*
- ◆ *reviewing completed and ongoing student work*
- ◆ *interviewing teachers about the work of their students*
- ◆ *analyzing state assessment results as reported in Information Works!*
- ◆ *reviewing the following documents:*
  - district and school policies and practices
  - records of professional development activities
  - classroom assessments
  - school improvement plan for Leo A. Savoie School
  - district strategic plan
  - 2005 SALT Survey report
  - classroom textbooks
  - 2005 Information Works!
  - 2004 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries
  - School and District Report Cards

Summer Enrichment Activities June 2005 Binder

School and District Documents Binder

Indian Rock Nature Trail Binder

Communications Binder

Technology Integration Binder

Leo A. Savoie Elementary School Emergency Management Plan  
2005-2006

Leo A. Savoie Elementary School Self Study Report 2005-2006

Leo A. Savoie Elementary School Communications binder

Parent/Teacher Council Binder

Woonsocket Education Department Curriculum Binders:

Health, Dance, and Physical Education

Visual Arts and Theatre

Mathematics

Gifted and Talented

Family and Consumer Sciences

Applied Learning Technology

English Language Art and Reading

Character Education

World Languages

Social Studies

Science

## State Assessment Results for Savoie Elementary School

State assessment results create evidence that the visit team uses as it conducts its inquiry. The team uses the most recent evidence available to locate critical issues about the school. While 2005 state test score evidence is available for high schools, the most recent test score data for elementary and middle schools comes from 2004 testing. This school's results are presented here in three different ways:

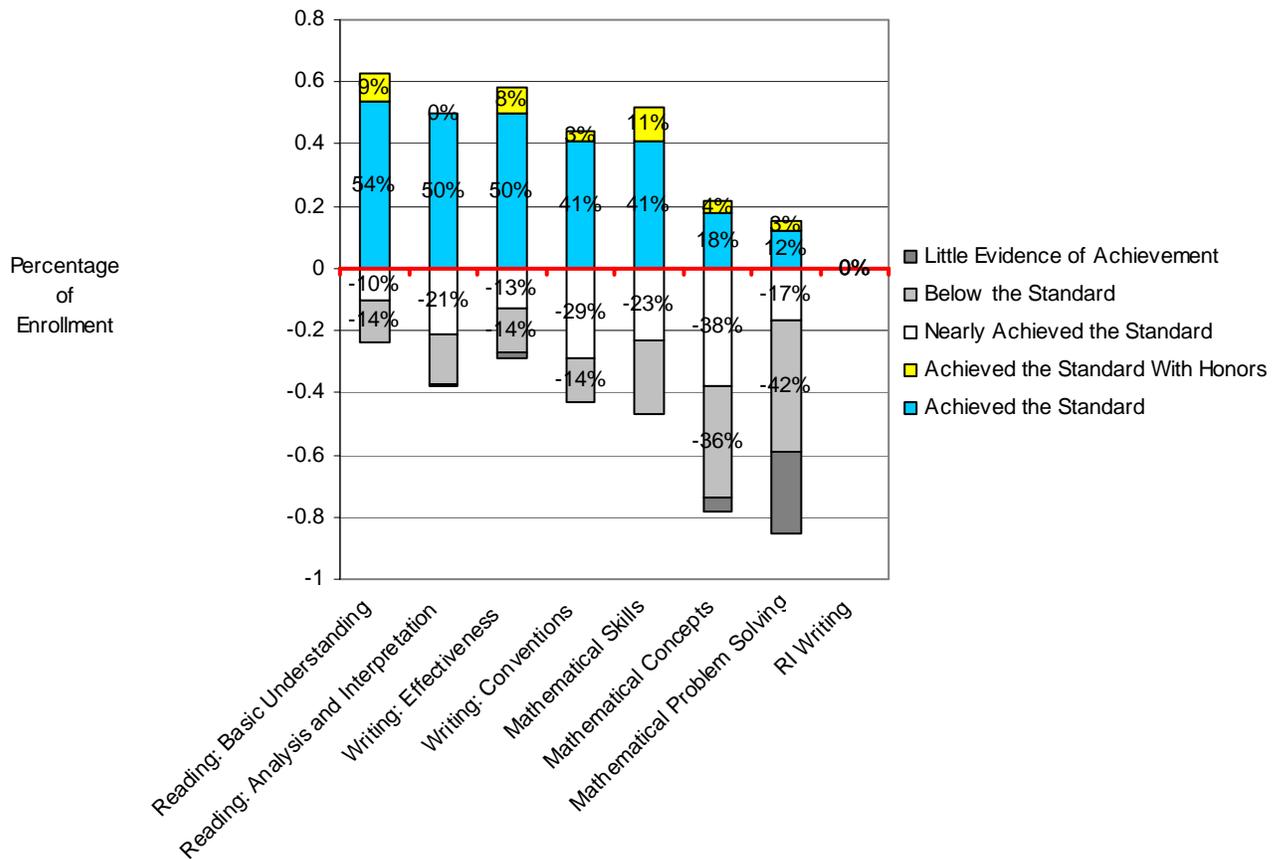
- ◆ *against performance standards,*
- ◆ *across student groups within the school, and*
- ◆ *over time.*

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

**RESULTS IN RELATION TO PERFORMANCE STANDARDS**

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

**Table 1. 2004 Student Results on Rhode Island State Assessments**



**RESULTS ACROSS STUDENT GROUPS WITHIN THE SCHOOL**

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

*Table 2 2002-2004 Student Results across Subgroups*



**2004 REPORT CARD FOR SAVOIE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

This Report Card shows the performance of Savoie Elementary School compared to the school’s annual measurable objectives (AMO). These report card scores describe Savoie Elementary School as *in need of improvement; insufficient progress*.

In 2005, schools were classified by their attendance rate. Using this measure alone, Savoie Elementary School *made adequate yearly progress*.

Index Proficiency Score, 2002-04	English Language Arts Target score: 76.1				MATHEMATICS Target score: 61.7			
	this School	Target Met?	this District	thE State	this School	Target Met?	this District	thE State
All Students	78.9	YES	79.9	86.1	68.4	YES	69.3	77.5
African Americans	*	YES	74.7	77.8	*	YES	66.3	65.9
Asian	*	YES	81.7	84.5	*	YES	71.6	77.1
Hispanic	*	YES	71.5	75.8	*	YES	64.2	65.8
Native Americans	*	YES	*	83.9	*	YES	*	73
White	81.8	YES	80.4	88.5	71	YES	71.4	82
Students with Disabilities	49.1	NO	60.8	69.5	47	NO	58.9	66.4
Students with Limited English Proficiency	*	YES	62.8	68.9	*	YES	59.1	61
Students who are Economically Disadvantaged	68.8	NO	75.1	77.8	58.8	YES†	66.8	68.4

PERCENT of students tested, 2002-04	Target: 95%			
	this school	target met?	THIS DISTRICT	the state
English Language Arts	99.6	YES	99.3	99.1
Mathematics	99.6	YES	99.4	99.4

Attendance Rate	Target: 90%			
	this school	target met?	THIS DISTRICT	the state
	94.5	YES	93.6	94.8

TARGETS MET/MISSED, THIS SCHOOL		
	TARGETS MET	TARGETS MISSED
English Language Arts Index Score	7	2
Mathematics Index Score	8	1
Percent Tested	2	0
Attendance Rate	1	0

this school is classified as:

**School in Need of Improvement/  
Insufficient Progress**

KEY: \* Student group has too few students to calculate results.

† “Safe Harbor” - Student group has fallen short of the target but has made sufficient improvement over last year’s score.

†† Student group has met the target based only on the most recent year of test results. NOTE:

For information on targets and classifications, please see Quick Guide .

**THE LEO A. SAVOIE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT TEAM**

Kathleen Crowley  
Teacher

Lisa Desplaines  
Parent Representative

Kelly Guglietti  
Teacher

MaryBeth L'Esperence  
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Audra L'Etoile  
Teacher

Michelle Lisiecka  
Teacher

Karen MacBeth  
Principal

Michelle Sgambato  
Teacher, Chairperson

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Parent Representative

Joanne Vincent  
Teacher

## MEMBERS OF THE SALT VISIT TEAM

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**CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEMBERS OF VISIT TEAM**

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