



Northern Lincoln Elementary School

LINCOLN

THE SALT VISIT TEAM REPORT

November 18, 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 Northern Lincoln Elementary School from November 14-18, 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 Northern Lincoln Elementary School?

How well does the teaching at Northern Lincoln Elementary School affect learning?

How well does Northern Lincoln Elementary 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 Northern Lincoln Elementary 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, 2nd 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. Contact Rick Richards at (401) 222-8401 or 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 113 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.

The full visit team built the conclusions, commendations and recommendations presented here through intense and thorough discussion. The team met for a total of 24 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 Northern Lincoln Elementary 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 Lincoln District 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 Lincoln School District, RIDE and the public should consider what the report says or implies about how they can best support Northern Lincoln Elementary 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 NORTHERN LINCOLN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Northern Lincoln Elementary School, one of five elementary schools in the town of Lincoln, Rhode Island, serves students in grade two through grade six. It opened its doors to students in 1971. An addition to the building was completed in 1997. Recent renovations include fresh paint to the interior walls, a security system and a new playground facility.

Of the 365 students in attendance, 90% are white, 5% are Hispanic, 3% are Asian/Pacific Islander, and less than 1% is black. Thirty-five percent of the students are eligible for free or reduced price lunch; 26% of the students receive Title I services, and 19% of the students receive special education services.

The administrative staff includes one principal, currently in her second year, and two part-time vice-principals, who each serve for ninety days. The professional staff includes 26 classroom teachers, eight specialists, three reading teachers, two nurse teachers, one speech and language pathologist, one psychologist, one social worker and a part-time diagnostic-prescriptive teacher. Additionally, the staff includes seven teaching assistants, one library clerk, three custodians and one school secretary. In preparation for the opening of a new middle school in Lincoln, the sixth grade teachers attend department meetings and professional development with the current middle school faculty, in addition to attending faculty meetings at Northern Lincoln Elementary.

Several new initiatives are underway at Northern Lincoln Elementary. Students who are not succeeding in the classroom are identified and helped through the “Response to Intervention” model, which calls for direct intervention instructional strategies to take place in the regular education setting for students with academic and behavior problems. Several inclusion models of instruction are designed so that all students receive the benefit of instruction in the general education setting, where special educators and reading specialists plan and instruct with classroom teachers. Another important initiative is the school-wide character development and consistent discipline program. A code of conduct for all students provides rewards and consequences that are consistent and natural. Training all teachers in the Second Step Program, a social skills and violence prevention program, promotes consistent expectations for student behavior throughout the school.

Finally, Northern Lincoln Elementary School recently received a writing grant that allows students to write and publish their own books in a writing and publishing center. Northern Lincoln is starting this initiative to promote the love of writing in all students.

3. PORTRAIT OF NORTHERN LINCOLN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AT THE TIME OF THE VISIT

Located in the mill village of Manville, Rhode Island, Northern Lincoln Elementary School is set in a residential area. This school houses students from diverse socio-economic backgrounds in grades two through six. The recently reshingled school shares a multi-purpose room and a library with the Early Learning Center, located in an adjacent building. The school is immaculately clean, a testament to the conscientious efforts of the custodial staff. New landscaping and a new playground are clues to the many changes that are happening inside.

During the last five years, a lack of administrative stability at both the district and school levels left the school floundering. By all accounts, teachers have been the “cement” that has held the school together. Their hard work and dedication is evident everywhere. Both teachers and support staff willingly work beyond school hours and volunteer their time and resources to do whatever it takes to help their students. They meet regularly and frequently to improve their instructional practices.

Students at Northern Lincoln like to come to school; yet these eager learners meet with a range of success. Throughout the school students smile in response to the frequent praise they receive from teachers, staff, administrators and their peers. They are cognizant of their own strengths and weaknesses and accept differences in others.

A new administrative team consisting of one principal and two part-time vice principals now leads the school. The vice-principals, who each serve for ninety days, are mainly in charge of discipline. They work closely with the principal to provide a safe, nurturing environment for students. This administrative team provides consistency and allows the principal to be the educational leader. Under her leadership, many new initiatives are underway to address both academic and behavior problems.

The most obvious change in instruction is a shift to an “inclusionary learning model.” Regular educators, special educators and reading specialists instruct regular education, special education and literacy students in the general education setting. In addition to creating a need for more consistency in instruction and student expectations, this shift creates opportunities for teachers to share their expertise.

While many new instructional initiatives are underway here, their positive effect on student achievement has yet to be realized fully. The academic and social needs of these students present great challenges to the school. Many students find that reading, writing and math are difficult. The entire faculty and staff of Northern Lincoln are working to change the school’s image from being a “school of choice” to being a “school to be chosen.”

4. FINDINGS ON STUDENT LEARNING

Conclusions

Students at Northern Lincoln are learning the elements of quality writing and are just beginning to include these elements in their work. Students do know how to write with strong leads that hook the reader. They use imaginative words and can establish a clear beginning, middle and end in what they write. Some students know how to use dialogue and supporting details to enhance and enrich their stories. In addition, students effectively use graphic organizers to list their ideas, but far too many do not know how to transfer their ideas into coherent sentences and paragraphs. Their weak sentence structure and paragraph development often confuse the reader. Most students do understand how teachers use writing rubrics to grade their work, but not enough know how to use the rubrics independently as a tool to improve their own writing. Many rely too heavily on their teachers to direct and support them in making revisions and edits. In some classrooms, students do not spend enough time writing during the school day. These findings are consistent with the scores on the 2004 New Standards Reference Examination writing effectiveness and conventions subtests, as well as teachers' comments that students are beginning to improve and that they need to focus on their organization and mechanics. *(following students, observing classes, talking with students and teachers, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, reviewing classroom and district assessments, discussing student work with teachers, 2004 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries)*

This same pattern continues with reading. Students within each classroom demonstrate a wide range of reading abilities. Students who read well confidently use phonics skills, reread sentences, and utilize context and picture cues to figure out unfamiliar words. They understand the difference between how to read for information and how to read for pleasure. They know how to choose books appropriate for their reading level and purpose. Some can successfully analyze and interpret text by making inferences, comparing and contrasting, and making predictions. Additionally, they relate their reading to other books they have read and to the events in their personal lives. Many students, however, do not read well and are just learning to use these skills. In some classrooms students do not practice these skills frequently enough to improve. In some classrooms, students do not spend enough time reading during the school day. *(following students, observing classes, reviewing classroom assessments, discussing student work with teachers, talking with students and teachers, 2004 New Standards Reference Examination, reviewing completed and ongoing student work)*

Students at Northern Lincoln are learning the skills to become effective problem solvers, and they use these skills to solve problems in their daily routines. They know how to use multiple ways to solve problems. They use their problem solving knowledge to divide their classes into groups of a specific number, when they build shelters for a physical education project or when they take a survey and convey their findings in a vertical bar graph. But many students do not know how to explain their reasoning in a logical and sequential manner when faced with a math problem. Their written justifications rarely explain the solutions mathematically or contain appropriate mathematical language. Many heavily rely on their teachers to show them what to do. While only thirty-six percent of the students achieved or exceeded the standard in math problem solving on the 2004 New Standards Reference Examination, teachers report that students are improving. (*following students, observing classes, meeting with the school improvement team and students, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, talking with students and teachers, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing classroom assessments, SALT Data Analysis Committee Reports 2005, 2004 New Standards Reference Examination*)

Teachers say, and the SALT team agrees, that students at Northern Lincoln are energetic, imaginative learners. In most classrooms, students listen attentively, confidently ask questions and willingly take risks. They thrive on positive reinforcement, and most are motivated to improve. They enjoy celebrating their successes and the successes of their peers. They understand the importance of school and the value their education. (*following students, observing classes, observing the school outside the classroom, meeting with the school improvement team, students, parents and, school and district administrators, talking with students, teachers and parents*)

By and large, students behave well in most classrooms. They take responsibility for their behavior, are respectful and make good choices about which students to emulate. In a few classrooms, however, the behavior of some students interferes with the learning of others. Some students with behavior challenges talk out and make inappropriate comments. Students report that bullying is more prevalent with older students and usually occurs when they are on the playground and the buses or in the cafeteria or the bathrooms. Teachers and school administrators report that student behavior is improving. (*following students, observing classes, observing the school outside the classroom, meeting with the school improvement team, students, parents and school and district administrators, talking with students and teachers, SALT Data Analysis Committee Reports 2005, reviewing records of professional development activities, 2003-2004 Information Works!*)

Important Thematic Findings in Student Learning

Students:

- ◆ *Are learning the skills to become effective readers, writers and problem solvers*
- ◆ *Have difficulty organizing their ideas, both orally and in writing*
- ◆ *Rely too heavily on teacher direction*
- ◆ *Are aware of expectations and consequences for behavior*

5. FINDINGS ON TEACHING FOR LEARNING

The SALT team recognizes and commends the dedication of Northern Lincoln teachers. They are passionate about their teaching and their students' learning. They strive to meet the social, emotional and educational needs of their students, and they proudly state, "All kids belong to all teachers." They also recognize the need continually to improve their instructional practices and pursue this goal actively through professional development. They can be found in their classrooms long after the end of the school day, even on Fridays, working with their colleagues to plan and coordinate their lessons. District and school administrators report that teachers volunteer hours of their time and donate many supplies to the Family Literacy Center, housed off-site, centrally located for easy access for parents and students. Parents state that these teachers make this school "the best kept secret in the state." *(following students, observing classes, meeting with the school improvement team, students, school and district administrators and parents, reviewing records of professional development activities)*

The teaching of reading is a priority, and teachers report the need to change and adjust their instructional practices to meet the diverse needs of their students. As a result, they are now beginning to teach reading using many new school-wide research-based reading practices. Most keep extensive records of student performance to help them individualize their instruction and monitor student progress. Most give constructive feedback that helps students identify their areas of strengths and weaknesses. While all read and discuss quality literature with their students, teachers do not consistently use rigorous questioning that requires students to analyze and interpret text. Consequently, not all students are able to use or develop critical thinking skills. Teachers use common rubrics to evaluate student work, but their expectations for student responses vary greatly. At least two teachers, sometimes three, simultaneously instruct reading within most classrooms, allowing them to focus on the needs of their individual students. Teachers report that teaching collaboratively helps them improve their instruction but that it also increases their need to plan and coordinate their lessons. They recognize the need for more professional development to maximize the full potential of this instructional team. *(following students, observing classes, talking with teachers, students and school administrators, meeting with the school improvement team and school and district administrators, reviewing classroom assessments, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers)*

The instruction of writing is inconsistent at Northern Lincoln Elementary School. All teachers teach writing. Many teachers expertly teach their students how to write well. They do this by reading literature and discussing the elements within the literature that make it quality writing. They teach their students the skills they need to include these elements in their own work. They give adequate time for students to practice, and they hold them accountable for including these elements in their writing. However, these effective instructional practices are not evident in every classroom. Despite a common rubric, teachers inconsistently interpret and score students' work. As a result, the quality of student writing varies from class to class. *(following students, observing classes, talking with students and teachers, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, reviewing classroom assessments, SALT Data Analysis Committee Reports 2005, reviewing school improvement plan)*

This inconsistent pattern in teaching continues with problem solving. The teachers, who explicitly instruct problem solving strategies and provide students with time to apply them, help students learn to problem solve well. In these classrooms, teachers explain their thinking and encourage students to reciprocate. These effective teaching practices help students understand there is more than one way to solve a problem and encourage students to use their critical thinking skills. While all teachers teach problem solving, not all teachers require students to justify their answers and clearly explain their reasoning using appropriate mathematical language. More importantly, some teachers do not require any justification. As a result, students miss important opportunities to think critically. (*following students, observing classes, talking with students and teachers, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, reviewing classroom assessments, SALT Data Analysis Committee Reports 2005, classroom textbooks*)

Commendations for Northern Lincoln Elementary School

Willingness and openness to adopt new instructional practices

Dedicated professionals who embody the belief that instruction of students is the responsibility of the entire school community

Teachers who strive to meet the social, emotional and educational needs of students

Recommendations for Northern Lincoln Elementary School

Increase consistency of effective instructional practices and rigorous expectations in reading, writing and problem solving both within and across grade levels.

Continue on-going training in literacy, co-teaching and inclusion practices. Increase the use of expert teachers in this school as resources to improve instructional practices.

Require all students to analyze and interpret text thoroughly.

Consistently require all students to explain their mathematical reasoning using appropriate mathematical language.

Continue to self-reflect and analyze teaching practices to identify and improve effective instruction and to help make professional development choices.

Recommendations for Lincoln School District

Help and support teachers in developing consistent instructional practices and expectations for student learning.

Support the use of expert teachers within Northern Lincoln Elementary School for job-embedded professional development.

Continue to provide time for teachers to share their training experiences and insights, as well as to collaborate with one another.

6. FINDINGS ON SCHOOL SUPPORT FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING

Inclusionary practices, newly instituted, are a priority at Northern Lincoln Elementary, where there is an “**All** students are **our** students” agenda. These practices provide students with positive role models and allow teachers to educate all students within the regular education setting. They are helping teachers address the social, emotional and academic needs of each student. Teachers, as well as school and district administrators, report that discipline problems have decreased. They also say that many students have higher expectations for their own learning and behavior. In addition, teachers say their students are more motivated and less frustrated. Parents report that their children recognize and accept individual learning differences without judgment. While these inclusionary practices are having a positive impact, the SALT team notes some areas of concern. In some classrooms the ratio of students with special needs to regular education students is too high, reducing the effectiveness of inclusion. In a few classrooms, when more than one teacher instructs students, the roles and responsibilities of the teachers are not always clearly defined, therefore reducing the effectiveness of everyone teaching the class. Teachers report a lack of time to plan effectively with all the teachers who instruct in their classrooms. As a result, teacher expertise is not used to the fullest potential to maximize all students’ learning. *(following students, observing classes, talking with students, teachers, parents and school administrators, meeting with the school improvement team, parents and school and district administrators, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, reviewing district and school policies and practices)*

The new leadership team at Northern Lincoln Elementary School provides necessary direction and support. The dynamic principal glows when she reports that being principal of Northern Lincoln is her “dream job.” Two, ninety day vice-principals skillfully oversee discipline, allowing the principal to focus on learning and teaching. To guide instruction, she requires herself and her staff to ask continually, “Why are we doing this?” and “Why is it important?” Her open door policy encourages input from teachers and parents and makes them feel part of the decision-making process. Most teachers say she respects and values their professional judgment and provides them with the time and resources to try new things. Her numerous incentive programs increase attendance, improve behavior and recognize excellence of both students and faculty. She visits classrooms regularly and attends common planning times to stay well-informed about the teaching and learning here. Her creative scheduling practices carve out time during the school day for teachers to plan and collaborate. This effective leadership team keeps the focus on improving student learning. *(following students, observing classes, talking with students, teachers, parents and school administrators, meeting with the school improvement team, parents and school and district administrators, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, reviewing district and school policies and practices)*

Scheduling is a priority, and it emphasizes the school's commitment to collaboration. The current schedule provides weekly common planning time and daily teacher "prep" time. While this schedule is impressive, not all teachers who have flexibility in their schedules use it to create a common time to coordinate their instruction. Sharing facilities and staff with the Early Learning Center further restricts scheduling flexibility. Some teachers express concern about the duration of lunch and recess and its impact on instructional time. *(following students, observing classes, talking with students, teachers, parents and school administrators, meeting with the school improvement team, parents and school and district administrators, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, reviewing district and school policies and practices)*

As a whole, the school improvement team is not representative of the Northern Lincoln school community; the number of parents far exceeds the number of teachers. While few members of the present school improvement team wrote the school improvement plan, all teachers were given the opportunity to provide input. As written, many action steps in the plan do not clearly state what students and teachers need to do to reach the desired results, but rather describe programs the school will implement. Hence, the school improvement plan is not an effective tool to improve student learning and teaching. *(reviewing school improvement plan, meeting with the school improvement team and parents, talking with teachers and school administrator)*

A core group of parents are pro-active, and many support student learning in numerous ways. They provide mini-grants to teachers for classroom initiatives. They volunteer in classrooms, run the new publishing center and organize the book fair. A monthly newsletter increases communication between home and school. The PTA also promotes community outreach by supporting the Family Literacy Center, where students can get help with their homework, listen to stories and find books to read. The center also provides adult learning classes, including classes about literacy and numeracy. This valuable community outreach program helps parents help their children, both academically and socially. Parents are a valuable resource for the Northern Lincoln community, and they report that they want to expand their number of volunteers. *(observing the school outside the classroom, talking with students and teachers, meeting with the school improvement team, students and school and district administrators, Northern Lincoln PTA news, Northern Lincoln Elementary School SALT team binder)*

Commendations for Northern Lincoln Elementary School

School-wide inclusionary practices

Creative scheduling that supports teacher collaboration and coordination of instruction

Effective, pro-active leadership

Recommendations for Northern Lincoln Elementary School

Re-examine the ratio and composition of students in classrooms to maximize the learning of all students.

Continue to evaluate the inclusionary practices to determine if they benefit all students. Use these findings to make necessary adjustments to ensure academic rigor for all.

Define roles and responsibilities for all teachers. Continue professional development to promote effective co-teaching and inclusionary teaching practices.

Continue to focus school leadership on student learning, and involve all members of the learning community in the decision-making process.

Adjust schedule so that teachers, who teach the same group of students, benefit from common planning time. Re-examine scheduling of shared facilities and staff with the Early Learning Center to minimize conflicts and maximize student learning.

Reconfigure the school improvement team to be more representative of the entire Northern Lincoln Learning community. Revise the school improvement plan so that the action steps more clearly address student learning and teaching.

Recommendations for Lincoln School District

Continue to fund and support the two, ninety day vice principals.

Re-examine the sharing of facilities and staff with the Early Learning Center to minimize conflicts and maximize student learning.

Maintain support staff and funds for inclusionary practices.

7. FINAL ADVICE TO NORTHERN LINCOLN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

The SALT team applauds the dedication of the entire learning community at Northern Lincoln Elementary. We recognize and commend your dedication to addressing the social, emotional and educational needs of all students. You have all the necessary components in place to change Northern Lincoln from a “school of choice” to a “chosen school.” You are definitely on the right track to improve student learning, yet there is still more work to do.

Use your instructional time wisely to provide more opportunities for your students to read, write and problem solve. Increase consistency of instruction and expectations for student work. Come to consensus on the interpretation of your school-wide rubrics so that all students are held to the same high standard.

The fact that you have implemented inclusionary practices school-wide is extraordinary. Continue to self-evaluate and pursue professional development to make adjustments to better meet the needs of all students.

The SALT team urges you to use the conclusions in this report to guide your next steps. Spread the excellent teaching practices that presently exist by learning from the experts on your staff. Draw on your strengths and determination as a learning community to continue your quest for educational excellence.

ENDORSEMENT OF SALT VISIT TEAM REPORT

Northern Lincoln Elementary School

November 18, 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, 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 three 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, Ed.D.

Catalpa Ltd.

December 4, 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 Northern Lincoln Elementary 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 Northern Lincoln Elementary School.

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

- ◆ *observing classes directly*
- ◆ *observing the school outside of the classroom*
- ◆ *following 8 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 Northern Lincoln Elementary 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

Home School Communication Binder

Title 1 Handbook

Teacher Resource Book

SALT Data Analysis Committee Report 2005

Agreement between The Lincoln Teachers' Association, Local 1461, American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO and The School Committee of the Town of Lincoln, RI, September 1, 2003-August 31, 2006

Agreement between the Lincoln School Committee and the Rhode Island Council 94, AFSCME, AFL-CIO on behalf of Lincoln School Department Employees, Local 2671, July 1, 2001-June 30, 2004

Northern Lincoln Elementary School Writing Benchmarks Grades 2-6

Reading/Writing Curriculum binder

Math/Social Studies Curriculum binder

Northern Lincoln Elementary School SALT team member binder

Northern Lincoln PTA news

State Assessment Results for Northern Lincoln Elementary School

Assessment results create sources 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 about the school. It also uses this evidence, along with other evidence, to draw conclusions about those issues.

This school's results are from the latest available state assessment information. It is presented here in three different ways:

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

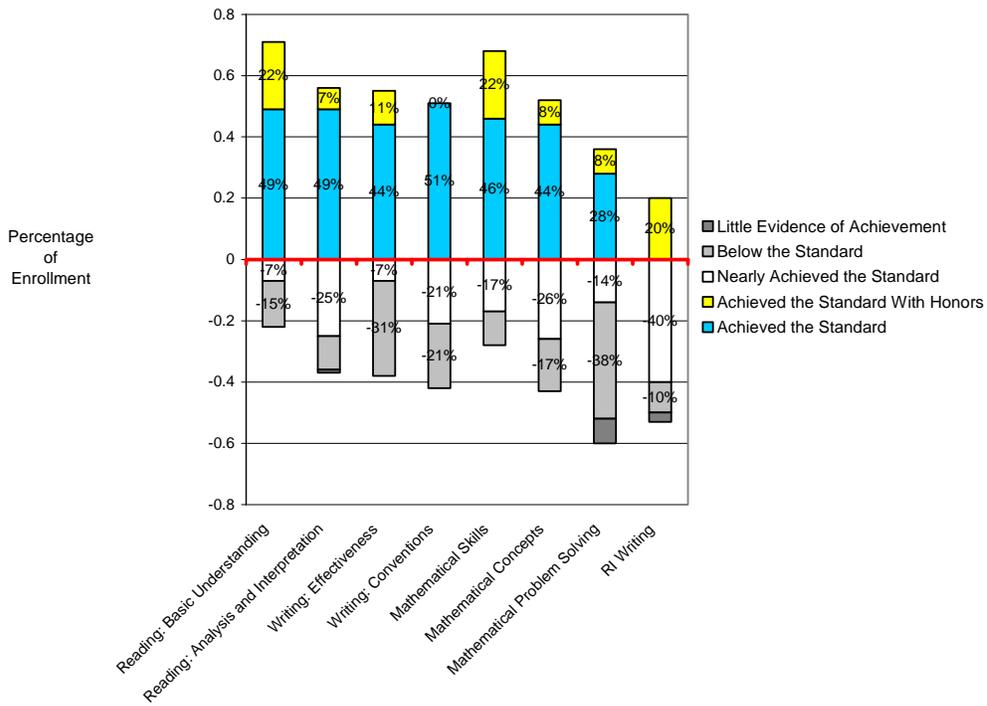
Information Works! data for Tolman Senior High School is available at [/www.infoworks.ride.uri.edu/2005/default.asp](http://www.infoworks.ride.uri.edu/2005/default.asp).

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*.

Table1. 2003-04 Student Results on Rhode Island State Assessments

Northern Lincoln Elementary School State Assessment Results of 2005

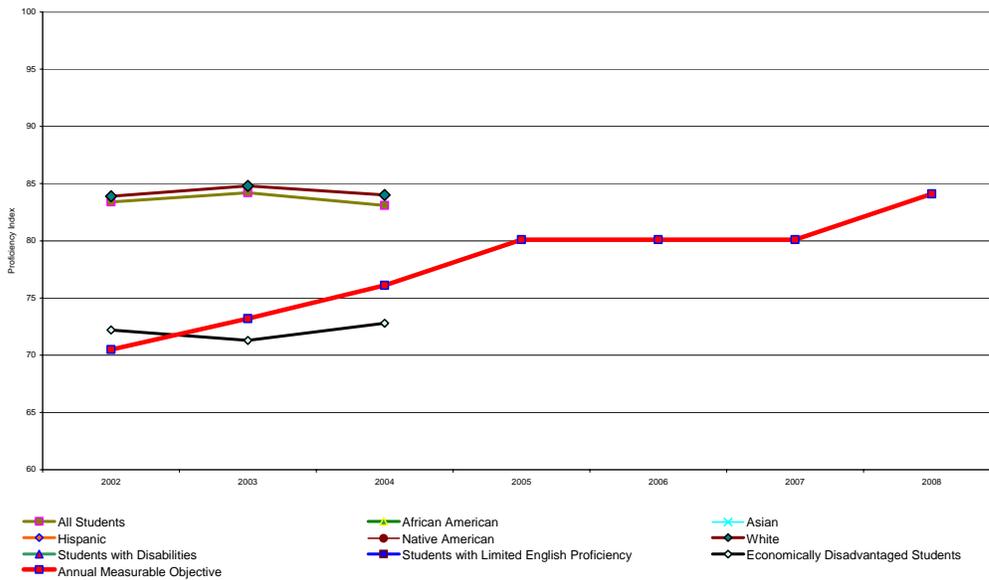


RESULTS ACROSS STUDENT GROUPS WITHIN THE SCHOOL

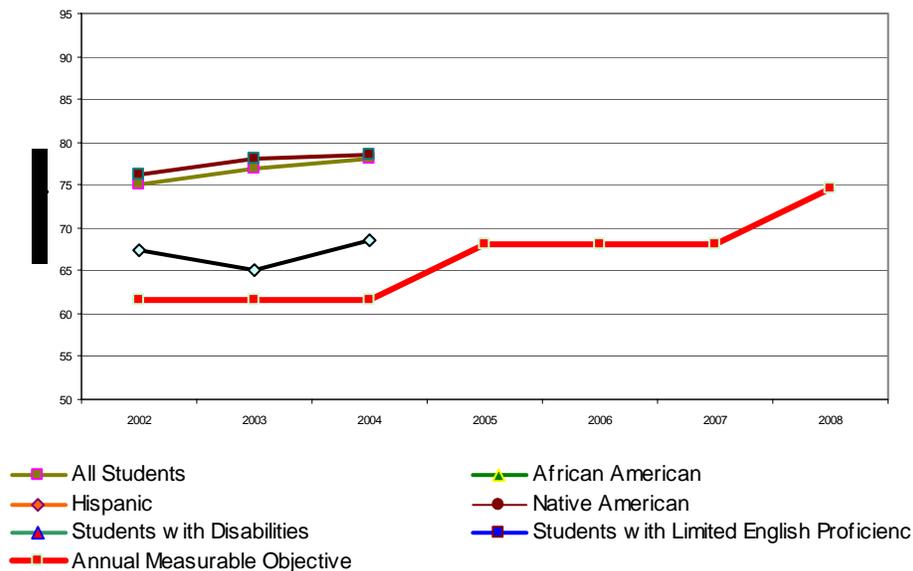
An important way to display student results is across different groups of students in this school who have different characteristics. This display creates information about how well the school meets the learning needs of its various students, in accord with the federal *No Child Left Behind* legislation. 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

Annual Proficiency, Northern Lincoln Elementary School, ELA, Gr. 4



Annual Proficiency, Northern Lincoln Elementary Gr. 4 Math



REPORT CARD FOR NORTHERN LINCOLN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

This Report Card shows the performance of Northern Lincoln Elementary School compared to the school’s annual measurable objectives (AMO).

These report card scores describe Northern Lincoln Elementary School as a school in need of improvement, improving.

Table 3. Report Card for Northern Lincoln Elementary School

Index Proficiency Score, 2002-04	English Language Arts Target score: 76.1				MATHEMATICS Target score: 61.7			
Student Group	this School	Target Met?	this District	thE State	this School	Target Met?	this District	thE State
All Students	83.1	YES	88.5	86.1	78.1	YES	82.6	77.5
African Americans	*	YES	*	77.8	*	YES	*	65.9
Asian	*	YES	*	84.5	*	YES	*	77.1
Hispanic	*	YES	*	75.8	*	YES	*	65.8
Native Americans	*	YES	*	83.9	*	YES	*	73
White	84	YES	84.3	88.5	78.5	YES	83.3	82
Students with Disabilities	*	YES	65.2	69.5	*	YES	66.8	66.4
Students with Limited English Proficiency	*	YES	*	68.9	*	YES	*	61
Students who are Economically Disadvantaged	72.8	NO	73.8	77.8	68.6	YES	71.2	68.4

PERCENT of students tested, 2002-04	Target: 95%			
	this school	target met?	THIS DISTRICT	the state
English Language Arts	98.1	YES	97.4	99.1
Mathematics	98.6	YES	98.7	99.4

Attendance Rate	Target: 90%			
	this school	target met?	THIS DISTRICT	the state
	95.7	YES	96.1	94.8

TARGETS MET/MISSED, THIS SCHOOL		
	TARGETS MET	TARGETS MISSED
English Language Arts Index Score	8	1
Mathematics Index Score	9	0
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:

THE NORTHERN LINCOLN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT TEAM

Sue Ayotte
Grade 5 Teacher

Linda Cliff
Principal
SIT Co-chair

Tracey D'Alosio
Parent

Amy Dark
Parent

Cyndi Fuchs
Parent/PTA President

Mary Janetti
Parent

Kathy Murphy
Parent

Linda Newbury
Nurse/Teacher

Margaret Rock
Grade 5 Teacher

Lisa Santilli
Parent
SIT co-chair

Kris Turgeon
Parent

Barbara Winsor
Parent

MEMBERS OF THE SALT VISIT TEAM

Ruth S. Haynsworth
Grade 5 Teacher
Stony Lane Elementary School
on leave to the
Office of Progressive Support and Intervention
Rhode Island Department of Education
Regents SALT Fellow
Team Chair

Victoria Belmont
Grade 1-2 Looping Teacher
Primrose Hill Elementary School
Barrington, Rhode Island

Pamela Clark
Resource Teacher
Austin T. Levy Elementary School
Burrillville, Rhode Island

Courtney Langelo
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Silver Spring Elementary School
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Leo A. Savoie Elementary School
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Denise Moretti-Foggo
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Hope Valley, Rhode Island