



# B. F. Norton Elementary School

CUMBERLAND

## THE SALT VISIT TEAM REPORT

March 10, 2006



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 B. F. Norton Elementary School from March 6-10, 2006.

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 B. F. Norton Elementary School?

How well does the teaching at B. F. Norton Elementary School affect learning?

How well does B. F. Norton 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 B. F. Norton 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.

The team closely followed a rigorous protocol of inquiry that is rooted in Practice-Based Inquiry®<sup>1</sup> (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. To gain the full advantages of a peer visiting system, RIDE did not participate in the editing of this SALT visit report. That was carried out by the team's chair with the support of Catalpa. Ltd. 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 109 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 30 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 35 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 B. F. Norton Elementary School can improve student learning. However, the most important audience is the school itself.

*This report is a decisive component of the Rhode Island school accountability system. The Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) expects that the school improvement team of this school will consider this report carefully and use it to review its current action plans and write new action plans based on the information it contains.*

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<sup>1</sup> Practice-Based Inquiry® is a registered trademark of Catalpa Ltd.

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 Cumberland School Department's 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 Cumberland School Department, RIDE and the public should consider what the report says or implies about how they can best support Cumberland Pier 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 B. F. NORTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

B. F. Norton Elementary School is one of five elementary schools in Cumberland, Rhode Island. It currently serves students in kindergarten through grade five. The original structure, built in 1889, served as the town high school. From 1961 through 1969, it served students in grades seven and eight. Finally, in 1969, B.F. Norton became an elementary school. The school was closed in 1985 and remained unused until the structure was torn down and rebuilt as an elementary school, which opened in 1994. The original cafeteria and gymnasium, preserved through the renovation, remain the center of the building. The facility consists of three floors with a total of 27 classrooms.

Of the 343 students in attendance, 277 (81%) are white, 43 (12%) are Hispanic, 18 (5%) are African American, and 8 (2%) are Asian. The school serves all elementary English Language Learner (ELL) students in the district. Seventy-five students are in full time ELL classes. The primary K/1 ELL class is a combined full day classroom. Thirty-seven special needs students are placed full- or part-time in inclusion or self-contained classes. Forty-two students receive resource or speech and language services. Forty-five percent of the students are eligible for free or reduced priced lunch. Eighteen percent of students receive literacy services.

The professional staff of B. F. Norton includes one interim principal, 40 full- and part-time faculty, 10 assistants, one secretary and office aide, and three custodians. There are three classrooms, including one ELL classroom, in grades one, two, four, and five, one kindergarten class with a morning and afternoon session, and four third grade classrooms, one of which is ELL.

B. F. Norton teachers provide in-house professional development and offer workshops and training to one another. These workshops include Running Records, Elements of a Guided Reading lesson, Running Records to Inform Guided Reading Instruction, a Phonemic Awareness Inquiry Group, The Power of Retelling, Using Read Alouds to Teach Comprehension Strategies, and Teaching Comprehension Strategies in Small Group Settings in Grades Three through Five. Teachers also collect formative literacy assessment data to make informed instruction decisions.

The structure of small-group literacy instruction is new this school year. All available literacy personnel including classroom, resource, special education, and itinerant literacy teachers instruct students based on their strengths and needs regardless of their classroom placements and/or educational labels.

Finally, the faculty and staff of B.F. Norton work together to build a professional learning community. They meet regularly to discuss student learning, develop common formative assessments, and analyze current levels of student achievement.

### 3. PORTRAIT OF B. F. NORTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AT THE TIME OF THE VISIT

Situated in the Valley Falls section of Cumberland, Rhode Island, B.F. Norton is a nurturing school that fosters the education of a multicultural student population. The school is bright, warm, and welcoming. The environment is well maintained, functional, and safe.

These students are enthusiastic and eager to learn on a daily basis. They work diligently and successfully on their reading skills and effective reading strategies. The inconsistent quality of student writing reflects inconsistent teaching practices. Students are learning to use and apply multiple strategies to solve problems.

Teachers at BF Norton collaborate and support their students and colleagues in a variety of ways. They excel at reading instruction, and the entire faculty works to ensure proficiency in this area. Most problem-solving instruction remains at an adequate level and occurs through the use of the math *Investigations* program.

The exceptional school climate here helps every student learn. In the absence of a permanent principal, teacher leaders have commendably stepped up to keep the school going. School improvement efforts provide a starting point for further improvement.

## 4. FINDINGS ON STUDENT LEARNING

### Conclusions

B. F. Norton students read well and know how to use the skills and strategies of good readers. They know how to choose “just right” books that will help them become better readers. Importantly, they think about themselves as readers. While reading, they make decisions about how to help themselves read better. Students know how to apply strategies to decipher and understand words they don’t know; for example, they skip the word and go back to reread or use picture clues. They use their extensive knowledge of letters, letter sounds, and letter combinations to identify unfamiliar words. Students comprehend text well. They retell stories with a clear beginning, a middle, and an end. They make reasonable predictions about future events in the books they read, and many take this a step further by revising their predictions as they gain more information. Each student makes clear and, at times, meaningful connections to text. These students are excited, confident readers who say they love to read. They enjoy sharing their reading experiences with one another through discussions and “book commercials.” Students actively participate in effective discussions related to their reading activities. BF students are just beginning to learn the more difficult skills necessary to analyze and interpret text effectively. In some classrooms, they consider the motivation of characters in stories. Other students read between the lines to figure out what happened and draw conclusions. *(following students, observing classes, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, talking with students, teachers, and parents, meeting with the school improvement team, students, school leaders, district administrators, and parents, reviewing school improvement plan, 2004 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries, reviewing classroom assessments)*

The quality of writing here varies from student to student. The strong student writing employs “juicy” words and has a clear beginning, a middle, and an end. B. F. Norton’s strong writers develop their topics using important and relevant details. They include creative figurative language to make their writing more interesting. Yet many students’ writing shows little development of ideas or variety in sentence structure. Too many students remain unclear about the aspects of quality writing. When asked what makes good writing good, they say simply, “It makes sense,” or “I don’t know.” In most classes, students do not spend enough time writing. The school reports that writing is not a focus area at this time, and it shows in the students’ writing. *(following students, observing classes, meeting with the school improvement team and students, talking with students, teachers, and school leaders, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, reviewing school improvement plan)*

Most B.F. Norton students know how to employ successfully a variety of problem solving strategies. Of note, they adeptly apply these strategies to content areas in addition to math. For example, they use logical reasoning to narrow down choices in social studies, create tables to organize information for reading, and use manipulatives and work backwards from a solution to solve math word problems. Further, they work productively together in groups to solve problems—respecting one another’s ideas, listening to one another’s thinking, and building upon the suggestions of their classmates. They challenge one another’s thinking as well, insisting that their peers “Prove it!” Most students can clearly explain their thinking strategies to members of the SALT team. When doing so for math, they use appropriate mathematical language like, “I used an array,” or “This is a multiple of...” Some students, though, are not as successful in solving problems. These students often sit passively in their groups and wait for their peers to solve the problem for them. They then struggle to explain how they came to an answer. These students say that problem solving is hard, and they often do not know where to begin when faced with a problem. *(following students, observing classes, meeting with students and school leaders, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, talking with students and teachers, 2004 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries, discussing student work with teachers)*

Students at B. F. Norton love learning, school, and their teachers. They come to school eager to learn and are respectful of their peers and teachers. They feel safe and comfortable in their learning environment. Students understand the behavioral expectations here and strive to meet them, but they are less clear about how to achieve high academic standards. Instead, they rely on their teachers to tell them if their work is good. Students show genuine concern for one another. They offer each other assistance and encouragement , such as “You can do it!” and “Keep trying!” Parents report that students love to share what they are learning at school. These attitudes help create a productive learning environment where every student can be successful. *(following students, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, meeting with the school improvement team, students, school leaders, and parents, talking with students, teachers, parents, school leaders, and district administrators, 2006 SALT Survey report)*

## Important Thematic Findings in Student Learning

Students:

- ◆ *Have a positive attitude towards school, their classmates, and learning*
- ◆ *Are excited, confident readers who comprehend well*
- ◆ *Work well together in groups*
- ◆ *Show varied success in writing*
- ◆ *Successfully apply problem solving skills*

## 5. FINDINGS ON TEACHING FOR LEARNING

### Conclusions

Reading instruction is the strength of this school. B. F. Norton teachers know each and every student as readers and make appropriate choices to help their students make significant progress. They effectively introduce books to students for guided reading, walking students through the pages, building enthusiasm for the book to come, helping students relate the book to their prior knowledge, and setting a clear purpose for the reading. Then, they listen to each child read in his or her small group and intervene, when necessary, to instruct him or her in comprehension strategies, appropriate pacing, flow, intonation, and understanding words. Classroom teachers, reading specialists, and special educators all take responsibility for instructing groups of students, and students can even go to different grades for instruction. B.F. Norton teachers share quality literature with students using read alouds, and they explicitly teach comprehension strategies by reading to students. This exposes students to more difficult books, helps build student enthusiasm and excitement for reading, and helps all readers, even those who struggle, practice their reading strategies. *(following students, observing classes, talking with students, teachers, and parents, meeting with the school improvement team, students, school leaders, and parents, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing school improvement plan, 2004 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries, 2006 SALT Survey report, reviewing classroom assessments)*

In contrast, the quality of writing instruction varies throughout the school and is inconsistent from classroom to classroom. A few teachers are excellent writing instructors. These teachers model quality writing and elicit strategies from students to improve their own writing. Further, these teachers use literature to point out aspects of good writing such as using details and figurative language. They conference with students and ask probing questions to help students improve their writing. In too many classrooms, however, assigning journal writing and requiring only prompt responses dominates writing instruction. These teachers ineffectively explain or do not explain the expectations for quality writing or the purpose for their assignments. Teachers report that they lack the time to teach writing every day. It is not surprising, then, that the quality of student writing here is not consistent. *(following students, observing classes, meeting with the school improvement team and students, talking with students and teachers, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, 2004 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries, reviewing school improvement plan)*

The problem solving instruction at B.F. Norton ranges from adequate to excellent. Teachers present students with multi-step problems that most say are challenging. They remind students of their previous instruction and expect them to explore and discover solutions on their own, with partners, or in cooperative groups. Teachers require students to demonstrate the use of multiple strategies and explain the thinking behind their conclusions. Some teachers take this a step further. They encourage students to share their conclusions with the rest of the class and highlight their unique thought processes. In a few cases, teachers provide extensive and interesting problems to help students use their problem solving in more authentic situations. For example, they help students develop ways to help hurricane victims. The school recognizes that students are making progress in problem solving, but teachers say they don't know why. Almost all problem solving instruction entails implementing the Math Investigations program, and many teachers say they want and need additional professional development to use the program effectively. *(following students, observing classes, 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)*

Teachers exude enthusiasm for their students and their profession. They dedicate an enormous amount of time and personal funds to enhance their students' learning. Teachers meet over the summer, come in early, and stay late. They purchase numerous texts to enhance their classroom libraries. Teachers among grade levels willingly collaborate to help students and share resources. Teachers and staff who are new to the school report that the faculty here welcomes them and offers "anything they need" to help. Parents say the teachers are accessible, promptly respond to concerns, and genuinely care about their students. Most importantly, B. F. Norton teachers push one another to achieve high standards! *(following students, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, meeting with the school improvement team, students, school leaders, district administrators, and parents, talking with students, teachers, parents, and school leaders, 2006 SALT Survey report)*

### **Commendations for B. F. Norton Elementary School**

Effective reading instruction that meets the needs of each individual student

Dedicated, collaborative, and enthusiastic professionals

### **Recommendations for B. F. Norton Elementary School**

Continue your strong instructional practices in reading comprehension strategies. Push students to achieve the more difficult skills of analyzing and interpreting text.

Develop consistent and explicit instruction in writing across classrooms. Provide clear expectations for quality writing to students.

Teach writing daily. Expand instruction to encompass additional writing genres and purposes beyond journals and prompt responses.

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

Present students with additional complex and challenging problems. Expand student reflection and explanation.

Continue to push yourselves to achieve high standards.

### **Recommendations for Cumberland School Department**

Provide necessary and high quality, school-wide development in the area of effective writing and problem solving instruction.

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

### Conclusions

B. F. Norton teachers express their disappointment in the lack of a full-time, permanent principal for their school. An interim principal currently fills the position due to the departure of the administrator earlier this school year. The teachers and staff here have taken charge to ensure that the school continues to move forward. These educational leaders hold one another to high standards, maintain a collegial and professional learning environment dedicated to students, and undertake preparations for the SALT visiting team. They put the children and their needs ahead of everything else. District administrators and the interim principal express their admiration for the leadership qualities of the faculty and staff at B.F. Norton and encourage them to “Keep it up!” The SALT team agrees. All students here benefit from the strong leadership that exists, already, at this school. *(following students, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, meeting with the school improvement team, school leaders, district administrators, and parents, talking with teachers, school leaders, and district administrators)*

The B. F. Norton School Improvement Team well represents the different constituencies that make up the school community. It includes teachers, support personnel, parents, and a district representative. Some teachers and parents say, though, that they are unaware of when the team meets. The self-study activities include following students and analyzing SALT Survey data. Yet the recommendations made from the self-study include very few changes to be made in student learning or teaching for learning. Instead, it reads like a wish list of what the school wants and things over which it has no control, such as additional assistants and smaller class sizes. The plan itself is clear, thorough, and detailed, and it addresses necessary areas of improvement. Yet several elements of this “five year plan” are insufficiently implemented at this time. Some teachers claim that they have not received a copy of the plan, which makes implementation difficult. The SIT asserts that its focus area is reading, and that writing and problem solving will be addressed later. It is not surprising, from the school improvement team efforts in place, that reading is a strength of this school. These efforts are a good start. *(observing classes, reviewing school improvement plan, meeting with the school improvement team, students, parents, and school leaders, talking with students and teachers, SALT team member binder including the Self-Study)*

This school lacks the sufficient computer technology to meet the needs of 21<sup>st</sup> Century learners. Of the 104 computers here, 92 do not “meet the standard,” according to the district. They are old, slow, and too low on memory to run current programs. Technical support is limited to two volunteers who come to the school. Teachers report difficulty printing and accessing online resources. The district says that plans are in place to improve this situation, which the SALT team agrees is necessary. *(following students, observing classes, talking with students, teachers, and district administrators, meeting with students and school leaders)*

The special education model in place at B. F. Norton serves these students well. All staff collaborates and places student learning first. They work together seamlessly, co-teaching and sharing responsibilities to address the specific needs of each child. Norton benefits from significant personnel to do this important work; at times more than four adults work in their inclusion classrooms. Special educators and support staff service all students, not only the students to whom they are assigned. Consequently, students and the SALT team can identify neither the special educators nor the special education students. District administrators recognize the strength of the inclusionary model at this school. All of these practices help maximize the learning of each student in these classes. *(following students, observing classes, meeting with students, district administrators, and parents, talking with students, teachers, parents, and district administrators)*

Students, staff, faculty, and parents all describe B. F. Norton as a warm, welcoming, and nurturing school. They're right! Everyone feels safe and comfortable coming here, and students say they wish the school day were longer. The brightly lit hallways, colorful lockers, and spacious classrooms contribute to a feeling that learning is important and valued. Teachers report that they don't want to leave and cry with joy when they describe their school. The school has more than adequate staffing to reach each student, including reading specialists, special educators, a full-time guidance counselor, and assistants, although these resources are not distributed equally among classrooms. All of the numerous personnel support one another and work towards a common goal: helping each student learn. This focus, the collaborative environment, and the available resources help make this a place where student learning can flourish. *(following students, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, meeting with the school improvement team, students, school leaders, district administrators, and parents, talking with students, teachers, parents, school leaders, and district administrators)*

### **Commendations for B. F. Norton Elementary School**

- Effective and amazing teacher leadership
- Strong beginning efforts for school improvement
- Successful inclusionary special education practices
- Exceptional school climate focused on student learning

### **Recommendations for B. F. Norton Elementary School**

- Procure a full-time principal to complement and support the teacher leadership already in place here.
- Continue strong teacher educational leadership.
- Revise the school improvement plan to provide reasonable, one-year results statements to work towards. Implement the plan fully in all classrooms.
- Be creative in finding ways to obtain and utilize technology within your classrooms.
- Continue strong inclusionary practices focused on students.
- Continue to foster a school climate conducive to student learning.

### **Recommendations for Cumberland School Department**

- Procure a full-time principal to complement and support the teacher leadership already in place here.
- Support school improvement efforts underway here, and provide assistance in school improvement plan revision and implementation.
- Follow through on plans to provide additional technology and support to this school.
- Continue to support the strong inclusionary practices in place here.

## 7. FINAL ADVICE TO B. F. NORTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

B. F. Norton provides a positive learning environment where students come first. This school is on track to become a model school for its dedication to student excellence. Take the risk to move on from your focus on reading. Use your expertise and enthusiasm to improve learning and instruction in writing and problem solving. Certainly this school can achieve anything it decides to work on. Keep up the good work! We wish you the best as you continue to work toward even higher standards.

## ENDORSEMENT OF SALT VISIT TEAM REPORT

### B. F. Norton Elementary School

March 10, 2006

#### How SALT visit reports are endorsed

The Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) contracts with Catalpa Ltd. to monitor all SALT school visits and to examine each SALT visit team report to determine whether it should be endorsed as a legitimate SALT school visit report. Catalpa Ltd. monitors the preparations for the visit, the actual conduct of the visit and the post-visit preparation of the final report. This includes observing the team at work, maintaining close contact with the chair during the visit and archiving all of the documents associated with a visit. Catalpa Ltd. carefully reviews the text of the final report to make sure that the conclusions and the report itself meet their respective tests at a satisfactory level. The endorsement decision is based on the procedures and criteria specified in *Protocol for Catalpa Ltd. Endorsement of SALT School Visit Reports*<sup>2</sup>.

The *SALT Visit Protocol*, which describes the purposes, procedures and standards for the conduct of the SALT school visit, is the basis for report endorsement. The SALT visit protocol is based upon the principles and procedures of *Practice-based Inquiry*<sup>®3</sup> that are based on a 160-year-old tradition of peer visits that governments and accreditation agencies continue to use to assess the performance of schools.

The *SALT Visit Protocol*<sup>4</sup> requires that all SALT visits be conducted at an exceptionally high standard of rigor. Yet, because visits are “real-life” interactive events, it is impossible to control all of the unexpected circumstances that might arise. Nevertheless most of the unexpected things that happen do not challenge the legitimacy of the visit. Teams and schools adapt well to most surprises and maintain the rigor of the visit inquiry.

Catalpa Ltd. made its judgment decision about the legitimacy of this report by collecting evidence from the conduct of this visit to answer 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 that are specified in the visit protocol? (Are the conclusions important, accurate and set in present, do they show the team’s judgment?)

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

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<sup>2</sup> See *The Handbook for Chairs of the SALT School Visit, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition*. This handbook includes the SALT Visit Protocol and many guidance documents for chairs, schools and RIDE. It is available from the SALT Project Office and Catalpa.

<sup>3</sup> Practice-Based Inquiry<sup>®</sup> is a registered trademark of Catalpa Ltd.

<sup>4</sup> See *The Foundations of Practice-Based Inquiry*<sup>®</sup> (2006, Catalpa Ltd.) and *Practice-based Inquiry*<sup>®</sup> *Guide to protocol design*. (2006, Catalpa Ltd.)

The sources of evidence that Catalpa used for this review were: (These are the steps tailored for each visit.)

Discussion with the chair, the school and the RIDE project director about issues related to the visit before it began.

Daily discussion with the visit chair about possible endorsement issues as they arose during the visit.

Observation of a portion of this visit.

Discussion with the principal at the end of the visit regarding any concerns he/she had about the visit.

Thorough review of the report in both its pre-release and final forms.

### The Endorsement Decision

The conduct of the B.F. Norton Elementary School visit did not raise any issues of note.

Catalpa Ltd. fully endorses the legitimacy of this report and its conclusions.

The points that support this are compelling:

1. RIDE has certified that this team meets the RIDE requirements for team membership.
2. The conduct of the visit by both team and school was in reasonable accord with the SALT School Visit Protocol.
3. There is no methodological or other, reason to believe that the findings of this report do not represent the full corporate judgment of a trained team of peers led by a certified chair.
4. The conclusions meet the established tests for conclusions. They are important, supported by evidence from practice, set in the present, and they show the team's judgment.
5. The report meets the criteria for a report. It is fair, persuasive and potentially useful to the school.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom Wilson".

**Thomas A. Wilson, Ed.D.**

**Catalpa Ltd.**

**March 31, 2006**

## 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 B. F. Norton 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 B. F. Norton 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 leaders 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 B. F. Norton Elementary School
  - district strategic plan
  - 2006 SALT Survey report
  - 2005 Information Works!
  - 2004 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries
  - School and District Report Cards
  - Curricula Binders
  - School and Classrooms' Newsletters Binder

## State Assessment Results for Rogers High 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:

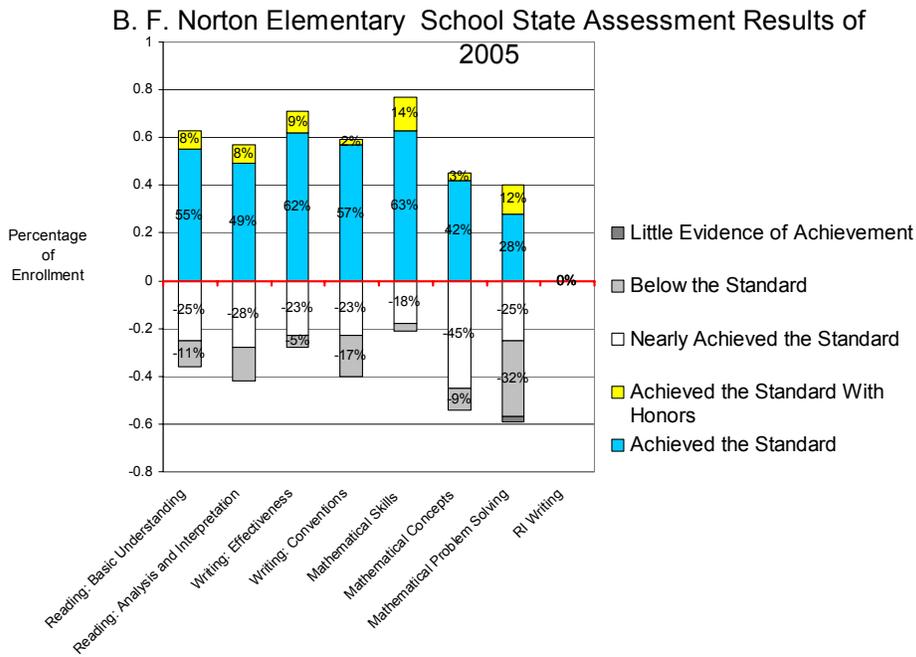
- ◆ *against performance standards,*
- ◆ *across student groups within the school, and*
- ◆ *over time.*

Information Works! data for Rogers 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. 2004-05 Student Results on Rhode Island State Assessments*





**REPORT CARD FOR B. F. NORTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

In 2005, schools were classified by their attendance rate. Using this measure, B. F. Norton Elementary School *Made Adequate Yearly Progress*.

The 2004 Report Card shows the performance of B.F. Norton Elementary School compared to the school’s annual measurable objectives (AMO). This report card describes B. F. Norton Elementary School as a *Moderately Performing and Improving School*.

Index Proficiency Score, 2003-05	English Language Arts Target score: 68.8				MATHEMATICS Target score: 54			
Student Group	this School	Target Met?	this District	the State	this School	Target Met?	this District	the State
All Students	83.8	YES	83.3	81.5	74.4	YES	73.9	70
African Americans	78.2	YES	76.1	71.3	64.7	YES	65	52.2
Asian	*	YES	*	78.9	*	YES	*	68
Hispanic	*	YES	*	69.4	*	YES	*	52.5
Native Americans	*	YES	*	73	*	YES	*	56.7
White	86	YES	85.6	84.6	75.6	YES	75.5	75
Students with Disabilities	69.2	YES	67.5	63.2	51.4	NO	49.9	46.5
Students with Limited English Proficiency	*	YES	*	56.2	*	YES	*	45.4
Students who are Economically Disadvantaged	77.4	YES	75.9	71.1	63.1	YES	62.9	54.5

PERCENT of students tested, 2003-05	Target: 95%			
	this school	target met?	THIS DISTRICT	the state
English Language Arts	99.4	YES	98.6	97.1
Mathematics	98.8	YES	98	97.3

Graduation Rate	Target: 75.3%			
	this school	target met?	THIS DISTRICT	the state
	78.4	YES	78.9	85

TARGETS MET/MISSED, THIS SCHOOL		
	TARGETS MET	TARGETS MISSED
English Language Arts Index Score	9	0
Mathematics Index Score	8	1
Percent Tested	2	0
Graduation Rate	1	0

this school is classified as:

**Moderately Performing with Caution**

- 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.

Δ Graduation rate based on fewer than four years of data. NOTE: For information on targets and classifications, please see Quick Guide .

**THE B. F. NORTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT TEAM**

Lucy Borges  
Community Representative

Jay Brochu  
Parent Representative

Sandra Costa  
Parent Representative

Jackie Crowley  
District Math/Science Coordinator

Flo DiRosario  
Inclusion Instructional Aide

Jessica Macedo  
Grade 5 Teacher

Kristen Marshall  
Reading Specialist

Mary Lynne Miller  
Resource Teacher, CTA Representative

Anna Parenteau  
Inclusion Teacher

Deborah Rude  
Reading Specialist, SIT Co-Chair

Elizabeth Simao  
Grade 1 Teacher

## MEMBERS OF THE SALT VISIT TEAM

Catherine E. C. Hutz  
English Teacher  
North Smithfield Junior-Senior High School  
on leave to the  
Office of Progressive Support and Intervention  
Rhode Island Department of Education  
Regents SALT Fellow  
Team Chair

Joan DiOrio  
Principal  
Fallon Memorial School  
Pawtucket, Rhode Island

Suzy Quinn  
Grade 2 Teacher  
E. W. Flynn Elementary School  
Providence, Rhode Island

Gayle Glew  
Grade 2 Teacher  
William Winsor School  
Smithfield, Rhode Island

Christine Greco  
Literacy Coach  
Harris Elementary School  
Woonsocket, Rhode Island

Christina Keiser  
Grade 5 Teacher  
F. J. Varieur Elementary School  
Pawtucket, Rhode Island

Roberta Kay McLear  
Grade 3 Teacher  
Lincoln Central Elementary School  
Lincoln, Rhode Island

Alyssa Nadeau  
Grade 6 Special Education Inclusion Teacher  
Halliwell Memorial School  
North Smithfield, Rhode Island

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

INSERT HERE