



Rogers High School

NEWPORT

THE SALT VISIT TEAM REPORT

February 17, 2006



School Accountability for Learning and Teaching (SALT)

The school accountability program of the Rhode Island Department of Education

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**For information about SALT, please contact:
Rick Richards**

(401) 222-8401

rick.richards@ride.ri.gov

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Purpose and Limits of This Report

This is the report of the SALT team that visited Rogers High School from February 13 through February 17, 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 Rogers High School?

How well does the teaching at Rogers High School affect learning?

How well does Rogers High 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 Rogers High 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 126 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. In addition, the team spent 43 hours in conversations with teachers, staff, students and administrators.

The full visit team built the conclusions, commendations and recommendations presented here through intense and thorough discussion. The team met for a total of 33.5 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, the leadership team, 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 Rogers High 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 Newport 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 Newport district, RIDE and the public should consider what the report says or implies about how they can best support Rogers High 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 ROGERS HIGH SCHOOL

Rogers High School is located in the southern part of Newport, Rhode Island, off a main thoroughfare, minutes by car from the city's commercial and government center. The almost 40 acre campus includes the Newport Area Career and Technical Center (NACTC), six city-owned tennis courts, a quarter mile track, an all purpose playing field, and wooded areas. Rogers is approximately three-fourths of a mile from Fort Adams, which has two soccer fields that Rogers' teams use. The school is adjacent to Murphy Park, which has two ball fields, four tennis courts, and two basketball courts. The school has access by van to sailing facilities at the Newport Yacht Club.

The current facility was built in 1958. During a major renovation in 1997, an elevator for handicap accessibility and handicap accessible bathrooms were added, open space was enclosed for use as additional classrooms, and leaky windows were replaced. New roofs were put on the library and one wing of the school. The auditorium dome was re-covered in the summer of 2005. In spite of these efforts, facility-related items still need to be addressed.

A principal, two assistant principals, one dean, eight department chairs, 45 full- and part-time faculty at Rogers High School, ten faculty at the Newport Area Career and Technical Center (NACTC), four guidance counselors—one at NACTC—one reading specialist, one shared social worker, one shared school psychologist, one school nurse, and one librarian serve the students. The staff also comprises one behavior specialist, one School to Career Coordinator, one part-time Academic Lab Coordinator, one part time Athletic Director, one part-time Parent Outreach Coordinator, one teacher and one secretary assigned to an off-site collaborative alternative learning program, one clerical aide, four office personnel—secretaries, clerical and bookkeeping staff—seven para-educators, seven custodians, one maintenance man, and one plant engineer.

Rogers High School is a comprehensive high school with an enrollment of 765 students in grades nine through twelve. Sixty-six students attend NACTC from the sending communities of Middletown, Portsmouth, Little Compton, and Tiverton. Of the students at Rogers, 18.2% are black; 10.3% are Hispanic; 2.7% are Native American; and 66.6% are white. Twenty-two percent of the students participate in Special Education classes; 1.9% are limited English proficient (LEP) students; and 38% receive free or reduced-price lunch.

Students at Rogers High School earn recognition for their academic, athletic, and artistic achievements at an Honor Society induction ceremony, seasonal athletic banquets, a Black History month assembly, a ROTC awards assembly, an arts and writing celebration night, art displays, a senior banquet night, and a scholarship awards assembly. Every year students in both junior and senior classes receive scholarships in excess of \$200,000. Students have received full ROTC and full Academy scholarships, in addition to numerous college scholarships.

The faculty at Rogers High School includes a science teacher, who is National Board-certified; a National High School French Teacher of the Year; two teachers trained by the National Center on Education and the Economy (NCEE) as nationally certified trainers in English Language Arts for the America's Choice program; and a science teacher, who was awarded a \$10,000 Tapestry grant for chemistry and the arts. Also, several teachers meet the qualifications set by Rhode Island College so that students enrolled in their courses can receive college credit. Additionally, the Science Department has been awarded a Champlin grant in the amount of \$96,000 to renovate space for two Advanced Placement laboratories, which are planned to be in place by September 2006.

Rogers High School staff is involved in two primary reform efforts. For the last three years it received a total of \$400,000 from a Comprehensive School Reform (CSR) grant, which provides an organizing structure for the school's efforts to meet the requirements of the No Child Left Behind legislation and the Rhode Island Department of Education's High School Regulations. An Academic Lab, the Teacher Professional Development Center, and the Parent Outreach initiative are in place. With this money the school conducts summer literacy programs; after school safety net and tutoring programs; professional development support and trainers; Personal Literacy Plan (PLP) implementation support and training; curriculum alignment with the Grade Span Expectations (GSEs); Peer Review and Senior Exhibition committees support; classroom libraries; Advanced Placement (AP) training for six teachers; literacy materials and supplies; and job embedded professional development. A second reform effort is implementing the Principles of Learning (POL) network. School and district administrators and teachers from the four core areas have attended POL training. Learning walks have shaped professional development activities at the school.

In 2000, NEASC examined Rogers High School's accreditation and placed the school on probation with significant recommendations. The district and the high school administrators have worked diligently to address these. NEASC recognized this work, and granted full accreditation with 15 commendations in the school's Five-Year Progress Report of March 2005. Nevertheless, NEASC remains concerned about the science labs, library, and locker rooms. The school presented the School Committee with a plan to conclude this work.

3. PORTRAIT OF ROGERS HIGH SCHOOL AT THE TIME OF THE VISIT

Rogers High School is a sprawling school with several buildings on a lovely and expansive open campus. The grounds are shared with the Newport Area Career and Technical Center. The student body is both ethnically and socio-economically diverse. The school abounds with proud “Vikings” who provide a welcoming, respect-filled atmosphere to visitor and veteran alike. These students are friendly and happy to come to school. They have a good rapport with the teachers and administrators, and for the most part, they demonstrate good work habits.

The school is in a transitional period—of progress, not decline. Moving from what have been a few rough years, the school is currently picking up positive momentum for improving learning and teaching. Students, faculty, and staff are moving forward—some eagerly, some hesitantly, and some being pulled along. Students are on task in their classes; they are learning. Teachers are rising to the occasion, as they make substantive changes in the curriculum and their instruction. Strong new leadership is unmistakably evident at Rogers. There is resounding enthusiasm from and for the new principal, who leads by example. She effectively communicates a strong educational vision for the school and encourages everyone to participate in moving the school toward that vision.

There is still much to be done. While teachers are making strides in improving the learning of their students, some have yet to set clear and high expectations for student achievement and behavior in their classes. Special education students and English language learners (ELL) students require additional academic and emotional support. The issue of diversity must be addressed. Some students, who are ethnically, socio-economically, and academically diverse, say they feel they are treated unequally, especially in the selection of electives and in student placement into the more rigorous courses. The Advisory program lacks standardization and focus.

Budgetary cutbacks have had a negative affect on the operation of the school. Although the building is clean and well kept, the inconsistent heating system, a leaky roof, damaged ceiling tiles and drafty windows need to be fixed. Declining enrollment is projected to continue. The reduction in faculty this year affected course offerings and electives. Parents and students are disgruntled because this has limited the schedule, resulting in a lack of available classes and, at times, conflicting schedules between Rogers and the Career and Technical Center. Due to inadequate budgets, the school staff relies on grants for improving programs within the school.

4. FINDINGS ON STUDENT LEARNING

Many students at Rogers High School problem solve effectively. They know how to ask questions, draw on various resources, and utilize appropriate technology to find the answers to problems. They employ peer review to critique one another's work as they look for solutions. Students generally persist through challenging problems and use original and creative strategies to get the answer. They apply what they are learning to real life situations such as determining the amount of paint needed to redesign a gym floor, designing a web page, running a business, using spread sheets to manage finances, and charting plant growth. Students explain how they solved a problem through written, oral, and graphic representations. These processes help reinforce their thinking as they work to explain their solutions. The state assessment for math problem solving indicates a steady increase in the percentage of students who meet or exceed the standard over a four-year period. However, some students are not involved in problem solving activities. Rather, they "fill in the blanks" on worksheets, look for information in the text to answer literal questions, and perform other rote tasks only to complete an assignment. Still others disengage from the lesson and choose not to do the work as they sleep, talk with their classmates, and read magazines. Some students do accept redirection from the teacher. A few are frustrated because their teachers do not assist them with problem-solving tasks. *(following students, observing classes, reviewing classroom textbooks, talking with students, teachers, and parents, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing 2005 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries, reviewing completed and ongoing student work)*

Many students write often and effectively across all disciplines. They are excited to write, and they attack the task seriously and eagerly. Students competently use graphic organizers, index cards, outlines, models, and prewriting templates to organize and develop their thoughts. They readily use the steps of the writing process (prewriting, drafting, self revision, peer revision, and publishing) to complete assignments. Students sometimes rewrite scenes from plays, compose reflections, write from different perspectives, and create short stories in different languages. Students also write memoirs, journal entries, research papers, brochures, responses to literature, and lab reports. They aptly use rubrics to guide their writing. It is not surprising that student scores on the state writing assessments have increased over the last four years. At the same time, some students write clearly only when their teachers support them while they write. Although their writing is less complex, it still communicates effectively to the reader. *(following students, observing classes, talking with students and teachers, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing classroom assessments, reviewing 2005 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, reviewing school report card)*

The vast majority of students productively engage in reading across all disciplines. Although some students show reluctance to read silently or out loud to the class, most students participate cooperatively in reading activities. “Book pass” reading and book discussions are among the student reading activities that generate enthusiasm and active participation. Students read a variety of genres including poetry, technical manuals, novels, historical fiction, primary source documents, and online resources. Students capably use reading strategies to gain meaning from text. These include annotation, underlining key phrases and main ideas, read alouds, think alouds, talk alouds (RA-TA-TA), and pre reading strategies that activate their prior knowledge. They make text-to-text, text-to-self, and text-to-world connections in both their classroom discussions and their writing about what they read. Students focus well when they read, and they effectively communicate book reviews to their peers. While some students read easily, others are developing the skills of good readers. Still others are at the initial stages of becoming good readers. It is evident that students are making progress toward increasing their personal literacy. Data supports the team’s observations. Half of the students meet or exceed the standard on the reading subtests of the 2005 New Standards Reference Examination, and an additional third nearly achieved the standard. *(following students, observing classes, meeting with the students and school and district administrators, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, reviewing school improvement plan, reviewing 2005 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing classroom assessments)*

Students at Rogers High School exhibit various qualities of proficient learners. Many are inquisitive as they genuinely seek to understand and delve into the subject matter. Students effectively communicate their thinking in various ways. Some examples include oral presentations, visual displays, writing samples, and modeling problem solving processes to the class. Admirably, there are groups of students who are more concerned about the process of learning than with the grade they will receive for their work. Some students say, even though they work hard in their classes, that opportunities to move up into the more desired rigorous levels are limited. Others say that their assignments are too easy and that they want more challenging work. These attributes indicate a student body working hard to learn. *(following students, observing classes, observing the school outside the classroom, talking with students and teachers, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, meeting with school improvement team, students, and parents, discussing student work with teachers)*

Important Thematic Findings in Student Learning

Students:

- ◆ *Utilize various reading, writing, and problem solving strategies successfully across disciplines.*
- ◆ *Are enthusiastic participants in the learning process.*
- ◆ *Are able to apply their learning to new situations.*
- ◆ *Communicate their knowledge effectively.*
- ◆ *Utilize technology appropriately to support and enhance their learning.*
- ◆ *Use original and creative approaches.*

5. FINDINGS ON TEACHING FOR LEARNING

Conclusions

Teachers in all disciplines instruct students how to write well. They challenge their students to write often and for a variety of purposes. They teach students how to use a number of writing strategies through modeling, repetition, guided questioning, evaluation, and direct instruction. They guide their students through the writing process to ensure high quality work. They frame writing assignments so that the tasks connect to content and to the students' own experiences. Some teachers allow students to revise their work to support their mastery of the learning process. Teachers in all disciplines utilize writing rubrics to provide consistent expectations for student work. Many teachers offer one-on-one help in the classroom and after school. Conversely, there are classes where little evidence of good writing instruction occurs. Teachers in these classes do not ensure that students use rubrics, models, and graphic organizers as aids when they are writing. Hence, students in these classes are not practicing they need to be successful writers. *(following students, observing classes, talking with students and teachers, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing classroom assessments)*

Rogers High School teachers work deliberately to improve their teaching practice. Many teachers effectively use a variety of questioning strategies, guided practice, rubrics, modeling, and graphic organizers to enhance student learning. They align their assignments and assessments with Grade Span Expectations and the National Standards. Most employ effective classroom management techniques, which create an appropriate environment for optimum learning. Professionals in the school universally exhibit their deep care and concern for students and their learning. They use project-based assessments that require students to apply and demonstrate their skills and the knowledge they have gained. They promote improved literacy skills across all disciplines. Although some teachers use differentiated instruction to meet the needs of a variety of learners, others do not do so effectively. Most teachers engage students during lessons and are available to help them after school. Others expect less from their students, and their students respond accordingly. *(following students, observing classes, talking with students and teachers, reviewing classroom assessments, reviewing completed and ongoing student work)*

Teachers in all disciplines convey the importance of reading to all students by insisting on the seriousness of reading and reading well. They reinforce students who are learning to improve their reading comprehension by requiring them to read often, both in school and at home, and by exposing them to a plethora of literary genres. Most teachers instruct students in the use of a variety of strategies to improve their reading comprehension, including using annotation and underlining key phrases. Teachers encourage students to analyze text and to be able to display their understanding in various formats (oral, written, and graphical representations). Unfortunately, not all teachers exert the same focused efforts to motivate and support student readers. These teachers do not ensure that students are on-task, and they have low expectations for completed work. *(observing classes, following students, reviewing classroom textbooks, talking with students and teachers, meeting with school improvement team, students, school and district administrators, and parents)*

Most teachers promote problem-solving strategies to develop and hone their students' critical thinking skills. They present tasks that require students to brainstorm, think creatively, develop ideas, and draw conclusions. Teachers ask students to self assess, utilize peer review, and work collaboratively as they problem solve and describe their findings. They present practical applications that lead students to make connections between what they learn in school and what they learn from real world dilemmas. Overall, the teachers provide their students with excellent problem-solving opportunities across all disciplines at Rogers High School. However, some teachers lack the presentation and/or classroom management skills to lead students effectively through the problem solving process. In these classes, students do not practice effective problem solving. (*observing classes, following students, talking with students and teachers, reviewing classroom assessments, discussing student work with teachers*)

Commendations for Rogers High School

The teaching of reading, writing, and problem solving across all disciplines

Caring and available faculty and staff

Project-based assessments

Multiple teaching strategies

Widespread use of rubrics

Recommendations for Rogers High School

Ensure that *all* teachers are teachers of writing and that *all* teachers use rubrics consistently.

Raise your expectations for *all* learners, and make sure that *all* students are challenged. Ensure that *all* students are on task during classroom activities.

Use professional development in writing, reading, problem solving, classroom management, and differentiated instruction to ensure that all students are held to high expectations. Utilize the expertise in your own school to support you in this work.

Build on your successes in promoting problem solving skills in your students.

6. FINDINGS ON SCHOOL SUPPORT FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING

Conclusions

The newly hired principal has overwhelming support of the students, faculty, staff, parents, and district administrators. She has a clear vision for the immediate and far reaching future. The principal brings a seemingly endless supply of energy and passion to and for the school. A strong bond within the core administrative team sets the tone for the rest of the school. The team leads by example and demonstrates extraordinary commitment and cooperation. Members of the school community comment favorably on the many school improvements and attribute these to the principal. She embraces the challenges that the school faces by developing structures to support progress. The principal promotes autonomy for administrators, teachers, and paraprofessionals, and she also effectively delegates responsibilities focusing on the strengths of the individual. This has all been accomplished in a very short time. The principal effectively navigates this transition period within the school and district. She admits that there are many elements of Rogers High School that are still “works in progress.” Some examples include revamping the schedule, meeting mandates for graduation by proficiency, the advisory system, the use of school-wide rubrics, the Advanced Placement system, the academic lab upgrade, and diversity and equity issues. Although some people within the school have reserved their judgment, most are optimistic about the school’s future based on the principal’s effective leadership. *(meeting with school improvement team, students, school and district administrators, and parents, talking with students, teachers, parents, and school and district administrators, observing the school outside the classroom, Rogers High School Teachers’ Handbook, 2005-2006)*

School administrators support and encourage professional development. Admirably, time for good collaboration and useful professional development is built into daily teacher schedules, a practice that is new this year. The School Improvement Plan identifies many professional development areas such as aligning the curriculum to the Grade Span Expectations (GSEs), assisting with personal literacy plans, examining on-going local assessments, writing curriculum, and collaboration. Teachers and administrators form steering committees to address the specific high school professional development needs such as designing and implementing the senior exhibition to fulfill the Rhode Island State Diploma System requirements. Curriculum guides show that the curriculum is aligned to the standards and the GSEs. All of these activities promote and support improvements in learning and teaching. However, the implementation of standards and expectations is having more positive effects in some disciplines than in others. *(observing classes, following students, talking with teachers and school administrators, meeting with school improvement team and school and district administrators, reviewing school improvement plan, reviewing district and school policies and practices, reviewing records of professional development activities)*

The special education, English as a Second Language, and remediation services that are in place throughout Rogers High School and the Newport Area Career and Technical Center are excellent, with some notable exceptions. Some students require emotional support as part of their Individual Education Plans (IEPs). However, the school psychologist and social worker divide their time between Rogers and other district schools. This leads to gaps in the needed mental health services for these students. Special education students enrolled in regular academic classes receive limited in-class support, although some content teachers and special education teachers collaboratively teach a few classes. While all ELL students receive some direct instruction within the English as a Second Language class, they are not provided with sufficient resources in the regular education classes to close the gap in language acquisition. Sometimes students are paired so that one can “help” the other navigate the requirements in their “regular” classes. Few opportunities exist for collaboration between classroom teachers and ESL providers to support these students better. Effective remediation services through the Standards classes are available to all identified students in English and math content areas. Although teachers say that opportunities exist for students to exit remedial services, the student perception is that they are “locked into” the track. *(following students, reviewing school improvement plan, observing classes, talking with students, teachers, and school administrators, meeting with school improvement team, students, school and district administrators, and parents)*

Rogers High School teachers support the use of technology throughout the school. Students and teachers report that the numbers and availability of computers are sufficient. The technology in the Academic Lab has been improved, and the principal states that in the future it will be open to more classes. The team noted a potential problem in regard to computer use. The lack of password protection for student work on the computer system raises questions about whether the system encourages plagiarism and student mistrust of the security of their work. *(following students, observing classes, meeting with students and school administrators, talking with students, teachers, and school administrators, observing the school outside the classroom, reviewing school improvement plan, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing classroom assessments)*

Declining enrollment, reduction in staff, and the introduction of common planning time result in scheduling dilemmas and fewer elective choices for students. Some students are placed in classes for which they have little or no interest. Parents express concern that the adoption of the English Standards courses led to the elimination of honors English in ninth and tenth grades. To be in touch with incoming students, the ninth grade guidance counselor visits one advisory class per day. This rotation results in only one visit per month to each class, and students say they do not feel connected to their counselor. While the school developed a curriculum for the advisory program, expectations for the advisory period are unclear for both students and advisors. Overall, the program, as implemented, is lacking direction, and students express dissatisfaction in attending the advisory period. Some students say “nothing happens” during this time. In contrast, great pride and empowerment come from the diversely populated Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) program, in which students exhibit leadership qualities within their school and community. Unfortunately, the ethnic diversity of Rogers High School students is not reflected in their enrollment in the Advanced Placement (AP) and college preparatory (CP) courses. The administration is aware of this and plans to study the situation. Finally, the Short Term Educational Placement (STEP) program successfully deters inappropriate behavior; however, student accessibility to their assignments during this program is inconsistent. *(following students, observing classes, meeting with school improvement team, students, school and district administrators, and parents, talking with students, teachers, parents, and school administrators)*

The aging buildings at Rogers High School are generally clean and well maintained. The Auditorium is a beautiful and enormous space that is ideal for community presentations. However, structural issues such as leaking roofs, unreliable heat, drafty windows, crumbling ceilings, and inadequate lighting in some areas of the school distract from the learning environment. Years of neglect, budgetary constraints, and the sprawling nature of the campus make it difficult to maintain the buildings in a timely and cost-effective manner. Some cosmetic and structural improvements recently have been made. The district is aware that the “vintage” furniture needs to be replaced and has pledged to do so. A Facilities Subcommittee developed a five-year plan for renovating and improving the school. The district reports that it will continue to make the needed improvements with available monies over the next few years. Teachers write grant proposals and are awarded grants to augment their departmental budgets. Most department heads report that their budgets are survivable, although gaps do exist between departments, and the funds for new textbooks are inadequate. *(following students, observing classes, observing the school outside the classroom, meeting with school improvement team, students, school and district administrators, and parents, talking with students, teachers, and school administrators, NEASC Five Year Report, 2005)*

Commendations for Rogers High School

Strong leadership and school vision

Structured professional development time

Staff initiative in securing grants

JROTC program

Building cleanliness

Recommendations for Rogers High School

Examine the service delivery model for students with IEPs. Improve in-class and mental health supports for these students.

Advocate for the expansion of certified mental health providers to meet the needs of all students at Rogers High School.

Advocate for a full time ESL educator. Implement a centralized tracking and monitoring process for ELL students so that they are well known and well supported as they transition into the full school program.

Analyze the enrollment data of minority students in Advanced Placement and college preparatory classes, and ensure equal access.

Investigate and address the ability of students to move between tiers.

Fully utilize the professional expertise within your school to advance pedagogy.

Review the structure of the STEP program, and ensure that students have adequate access to their work.

Continue to advocate for the five-year plan for facilities improvement.

Look into a way to secure student work saved on computers.

Continue your progress toward your stated leadership goals.

Address the flaws that hindered the smooth implementation of this year's schedule, while building the 2006-07 schedule.

Examine the effectiveness of the present Advisory Program, and make the necessary adjustments.

Recommendations for Newport School District

Expand the certified mental health provided to meet the needs of all students at Rogers High School.

Provide necessary supports to improve the service delivery model for students with IEPs.

Support this report's recommendations for the ESL program.

Support the five-year plan for facilities improvement.

7. FINAL ADVICE TO ROGERS HIGH SCHOOL

Rogers High School has established a positive climate for substantive change. The caring environment here encourages students and adults to grow. Rogers High School's strong leadership must continue to encourage and sustain the school community as it makes the effort to improve learning and teaching. Continue to support, evaluate, and develop all the newly instituted structures and programs at the school. Use that information, as well as the conclusions and recommendations in this report, to make improvements in what you do. The achievement of your goals will be accomplished only if everyone within the school is invested. So keep talking to one another and share your perspectives to build consensus.

Teachers, raise your expectations for student behavior and achievement. Your students are ready for the challenge. Students have excellent classroom skills, and they would benefit from additional cooperative learning. Encourage your colleagues who are very effective in the classroom to keep designing and implementing great lessons. More importantly, find ways to share successes with your colleagues.

Everyone within the school must work hard to fix the schedule for next year. Ensure time in the schedule for teachers to continue their collaboration for the success of all students. Challenge students with increased rigor at all ability levels and with appropriate, meaningful course selection. Boost the students' sense of ownership in their educational choices. Continue to advocate for growth and opportunity for all students regardless of race, income, or ability. Create more opportunities for all students to have a voice in their school.

Rogers High School is making the changes that will improve learning and teaching; do not let up after we are gone. Administrators, continue to move the school forward with support and enthusiasm. Keep your positive attitude. Everyone, keep your eyes on the wealth of intelligence, potential, and pride that your students possess. Good luck to you in this endeavor. Go Vikings!

ENDORSEMENT OF SALT VISIT TEAM REPORT

Rogers High School

February 17, 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*¹.

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*®² 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*³ 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?)

¹ See *The Handbook for Chairs of the SALT School Visit, 2nd 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.

² Practice-Based Inquiry® is a registered trademark of Catalpa Ltd.

³ See *The Foundations of Practice-Based Inquiry*® (2006, Catalpa Ltd.) and *Practice-based Inquiry*® *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.

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 Rogers High 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 29, 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 Rogers High School was the touchstone document for the team. No matter how informative documents may be, however, there is no substitute for being at the school while it is in session—in the classrooms, in the lunchroom and in the hallways. The team 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 Rogers High School.

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

- ◆ *observing classes directly*
- ◆ *observing the school outside of the classroom*
- ◆ *following 9 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 Rogers High School

Newport Public Schools Strategic Plan 2005-2008

Contract between Newport School Committee City of Newport, RI and the Teachers Association of Newport 2001-2004 and Tentative Agreement September 6, 2005

2005 SALT Survey report

Rogers High School Teachers' Handbook, 2005-2006

Notes from the Guidance Department Winter, 2006

NEASC Five Year Report

High School Regulations binder

School Support System Report, May 2005

Rhode Island Department of Education Peer Review, November 9, 2005

Rogers High School Senior Project/Exhibition Steering Committee binder

Newport Public Schools Staff Evaluation Tools 2005-2006

Academic Lab Sheet

Various curriculum guides

Ninth Grade Team binder

Comprehensive School Reform Program 2005-2006

Comprehensive School Reform Grant

classroom textbooks

2005 SALT Survey binder

2004-2005 Information Works!

2002-2005 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries

School and District Report Cards

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:

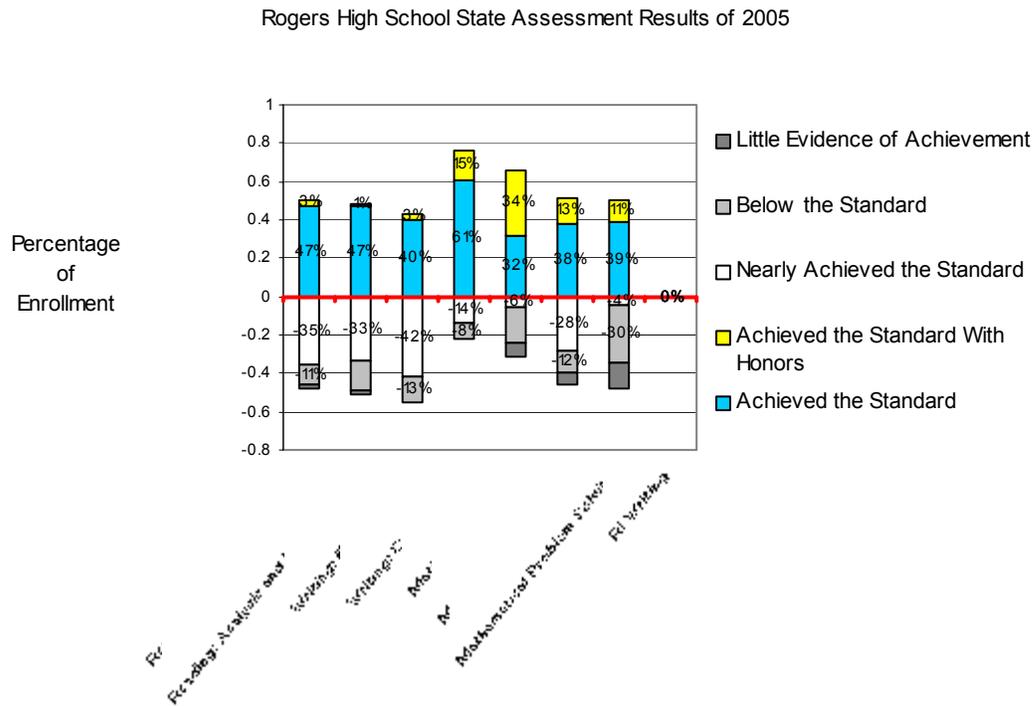
- ◆ *against performance standards,*
- ◆ *across student groups within the school, and*
- ◆ *over time.*

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*.

Table 1. 2003-04 Student Results on Rhode Island State Assessments

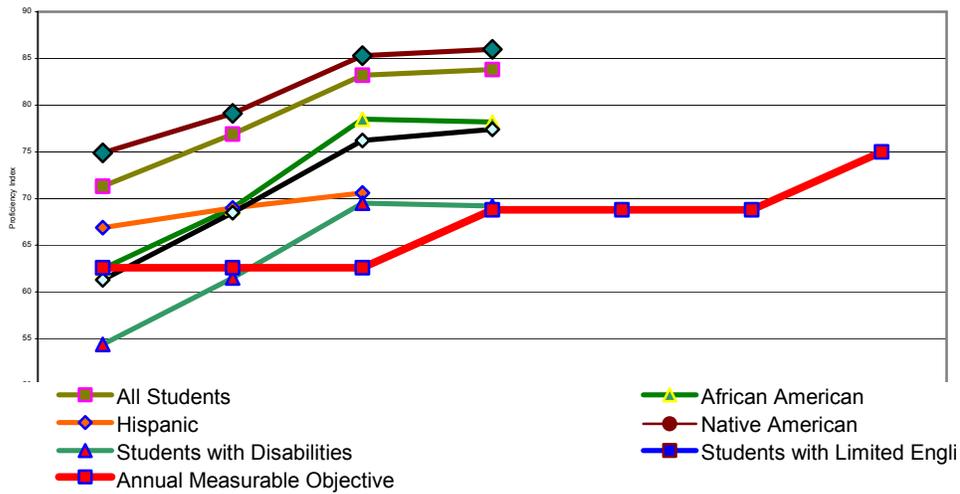


RESULTS ACROSS STUDENT GROUPS WITHIN THE SCHOOL

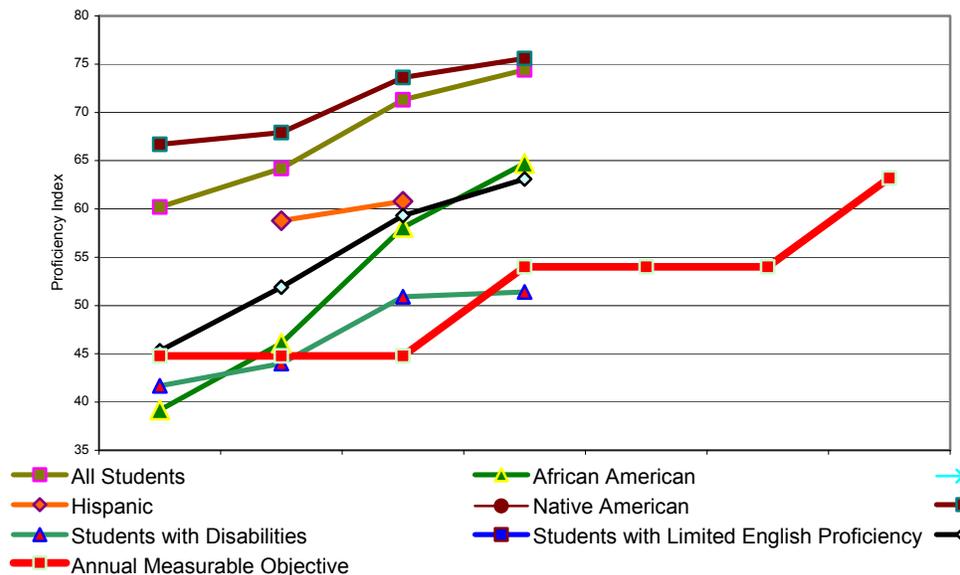
An important way to display student results is across different groups of students in this school who have different characteristics. This display creates information about how well the school meets the learning needs of its various students, in accord with the federal *No Child Left Behind* legislation. 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 2002-2005 Student Results across Subgroups

Annual Proficiency, Rogers High School Ela, Grade 10-11



Annual Proficiency, Rogers High School, Grade 10-11 Math



REPORT CARD FOR ROGERS HIGH SCHOOL

The 2005 Report Card shows the performance of Rogers High School compared to the school’s annual measurable objectives (AMO). This report card describes Rogers High School as a Moderately Performing with Caution 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 ROGERS HIGH SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT TEAM

Mario Andrade
Assistant Principal

Zinovia Canale
English Department Chair

Sandra DelBonis
Parent

Amelia Dias
Student

Patti DiCenzo
Principal

Jo Eva Gaines
School Committee

Sharyn Harrington
Parent

John Heino
Athletic Director/Faculty

Andrea Hollis
Parent

Joseph Martins
Director, Newport Area Career and Technical Center

Don Mays
Martine Luther King Center

Linda Moitoza
Guidance

Edith Morin
Social Studies Department Chair

Jackie Naspo
Assistant Principal

Carol Pembrook
Mathematics Faculty

Carol Richards
Science Faculty

MEMBERS OF THE SALT VISIT TEAM

Margaret M. Della Bitta
Science Teacher
South Kingstown High School
Rhode Island Department of Education
Office of Progressive Support and Intervention
Regents SALT Fellow
Team Chair

Richard Alarie Jr.
English/ESL Teacher
ESL Secondary Literacy Coach
Shea High School
Pawtucket, RI

Samantha S. Benetti
Math Teacher
East Providence High School
East Providence, RI

Kyleen Carpenter
Head of School
Blackstone Academy Charter School
Pawtucket, RI

Edward DeFusco
Music Teacher
Narragansett Pier Middle School
Narragansett, RI

Genevieve Mack
Inclusion Specialist
Feinstein High School
Providence, RI

Mary L. McSally
Special Educator, Department Chair
South Kingstown High School
South Kingstown, RI

Jeffrey N. Perry
Technology Education Teacher
Winman Junior High School
Warwick, RI

Dennis Soares
World Language Teacher
Tiverton High School
Tiverton, RI

Alicia Storey
Assistant Principal
South Kingstown High School
South Kingstown, RI

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEMBERS OF VISIT TEAM