



Samuel Slater Junior High School

PAWTUCKET

THE SALT VISIT TEAM REPORT

February 10, 2006



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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 Samuel Slater Junior High School from February 6 through 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 Samuel Slater Junior High School?

How well does the teaching at Samuel Slater Junior High School affect learning?

How well does Samuel Slater Junior 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 Samuel Slater Junior 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 138 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 28 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 33 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 Samuel Slater Junior 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 Pawtucket School Department District School Improvement Coordinators 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 Pawtucket School Department, RIDE and the public should consider what the report says or implies about how they can best support Samuel Slater Junior 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 SAMUEL SLATER JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Samuel Slater Junior High School, the first junior high school in Rhode Island, was built in 1918 and sits in the northwestern corner of Pawtucket. Recently, through student initiative, Slater received a Community Development Block Grant for campus beautification that provided a new parking lot, fencing, and a multipurpose field. In addition, a Champlin grant funded a new portable laptop computer lab.

Currently, 651 students from grades six through eight attend Slater. Of these, 35% are black, 29% are Hispanic, 34% are white, and less than 2% are Asian/Pacific Islander or other. Eighty-two percent of students receive free or reduced-price lunch. Sixteen percent receive special education services, five students have Section 504 plans, and five students are monitored for English as a Second Language (ESL) services. Additionally, 23% of students qualify for intensive literacy services because of their low assessment results. Ninety sixth graders are educated at Slater due to overcrowding at Baldwin Elementary School. Slater is a school-wide Title One school.

The professional staff of Slater Junior High School includes 58 full-time teachers, one assistant principal, and one principal. Two secretaries, five custodians, seven cafeteria workers, and seven teacher assistants complete the staff. Included among these employees are a Presidential Math Teacher of the Year, an American Red Cross Community Hero, a National Trainer of Thinking Mathematics, and a former president of Rhode Island Middle Level Educators.

Although a junior high school in name, Slater employs a middle school model. Teachers receive training in team building; students are heterogeneously placed on teams; teachers have two common planning periods per week; and there is a half hour advisory period each Wednesday.

Slater is one of three middle schools in the state belonging to the Rhode Island College (RIC) Middle Level Network. Education students from RIC complete practicum experiences, shadow students, attend team meetings, and complete their student teaching at this urban middle school. In turn, RIC middle level professors offer professional development to the Slater faculty. In addition, as part of a state grant, a RIC mathematics professor partners with Slater teachers for the purpose of improving their instruction.

The school offers many activities and incentives to supplement the academic program. The Friends of Slater, a parent/teacher organization, provides one way for families to support and learn more about the school. The Child Opportunity Zone (COZ) offers parents courses and workshops and also sponsors student clubs. Additionally, teachers advise over fifteen different after school clubs. Other after school programs include a Reading and Math ramp-up, team-based homework sessions, and several interscholastic and intramural sports teams. Slater partners with Gateway Healthcare for the after school A+ Adventure Program and with the Pawtucket Boys and Girls club to offer additional after school alternatives. Further, the school provides incentives such as the Wall of Fame, pizza and ice cream parties, and an annual trip to Six Flags to reward student achievement in academics, attendance, and attitude.

Slater partners with other organizations to provide additional student opportunities. These include the University of Rhode Island Guaranteed Admissions Program (GAP), Rhode Island Hospital Aids Awareness Program, the Bradley Hospital/Brown University Sleep Lab, the Rhode Island Children's Crusade, the YMCA Outrunning Obesity Program, and the YWCA Girls Group. The Blackstone Valley Health Center operates the school-based health center. Finally, the school participates in the Primetime Math initiative from the Rhode Island Department of Education Math/Science partnership.

3. PORTRAIT OF SAMUEL SLATER JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL AT THE TIME OF THE VISIT

Samuel Slater Junior High School is a large, imposing, three story red brick building approaching its 100-year anniversary. Despite the age of the building, it is brightly lit, spotlessly clean, and decorated with colorful posters, cultural flags, trophies, and pictures of its students. Faculty, staff, and students are attentive and welcoming to visitors, and all describe Slater as a safe and welcoming place to learn.

Slater students are building a foundation to become effective readers, writers, and problem solvers. While they excitedly come to school, this excitement does not permeate all aspects of their learning. Within some classrooms, disruptive behavior interferes with the learning of students. Not all students are challenged to think critically.

Teachers are dedicated to their profession and care about their students. Many employ effective instructional practices to meet students' learning needs in reading, writing, and problem solving. These pockets of excellence have not yet spread to encompass the entire faculty. At times, teachers' sincere concern for students' lives outside of school results in lowered expectations for Slater learners.

Slater benefits from a strong leadership team that sets the focus and direction for the school. The great sense of pride here helps build a community where all are welcomed. Numerous programs and activities provide needed supports to facilitate student learning. The well-written school improvement plan defines actions to improve learning here. Full implementation, however, has not yet occurred. Importantly, expectations for some students are higher than those for other students.

4. FINDINGS ON STUDENT LEARNING

Conclusions

Many students at Slater Junior High School solve problems adeptly, particularly in their science and math classes. These students know how to create hypotheses and test them using experiments. They know how to access and utilize the tools they need to solve problems such as manipulatives, rulers, and cellular phones. Some of these students work well with one another in cooperative groups as they gather and share information necessary to solve problems. Other students, though, solve problems less adeptly. These students overly depend on their teachers to give them the next steps when solving problems. When they work in cooperative groups, they wait for their peers to solve the problem and then copy their work or ideas. Teachers report that students frequently want to be spoon-fed the strategy or answer before thinking about it on their own. Many lack the confidence and/or the initiative to take the steps to begin. Additionally, some of these students completely avoid the challenge of problem-solving and simply sit there, draw, or talk. *(following students, observing classes, meeting with students, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, talking with students and teachers, discussing student work with teachers, 2004 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries)*

Most students at Slater recognize that reading is important, both in and out of school, and they understand the expectation that they read 25 books per year. Some, however, disregard the importance and find ways to circumvent this expectation. These students admit they fake their reading logs and forge their parents' signatures on the forms. Others avoid participation in self-selected/silent sustained reading by sitting in the corner of their classrooms, pretending to read, or doodling. Over half of Slater students read below grade level. But, these low assessment results are not the whole story. Almost all Slater students are making progress and learning strategies to read better. Across content areas, students accurately respond to comprehension questions about their reading. They are able to connect their reading to other books they have read or to experiences in their lives, identify story elements such as setting, and make reasonable predictions supported by textual evidence. Far fewer students, though, demonstrate the ability independently to conduct in depth analysis and interpretation. few, though, do this exceptionally well. For example, they represent literary elements by creating soundtracks for their literature circle books, and they compare and contrast themes in literature and poetry. Importantly, Slater students say that they enjoy reading because "it puts them in another world," and "helps them learn stuff." *(following students, observing classes, meeting with the school improvement team, students, and parents, talking with students and teachers, reviewing completed and ongoing student work)*

Slater Junior High School students write extensively and are building a foundation to become effective writers. They write frequently across content areas to communicate their ideas to different audiences. Their stories, poems, and speeches employ creativity and originality. They know how or are learning how to formulate a thesis, create a hook to make the reader want to read their writing, and how to organize and separate ideas and details into coherent paragraphs. This is a good start. While students are building this foundation, many do the minimum when they are not writing formal essays or projects. For example, their journals, reading responses, and lab reports lack the same quality, detail, or effort that is found in their essays or projects. Teachers rightly report that students' conventions, spelling, and grammar need work. (*following students, observing classes, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, talking with students and teachers, 2004 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries*)

Slater students say they like coming to school because it is a safe place, they want to be with their friends, and they enjoy participating in after school activities. They articulately express themselves and politely welcome members of the SALT visit team. But students' attitudes toward learning are inconsistent. Some report that the school is preparing them for their future, their classes push them, and they enjoy making progress. These students do their homework, participate in class, and strive to do well. Too many students, though, say that they are not challenged in their classes, that they must sit and wait while other students finish work, or that other students disrupt their learning. These students look out the window, express dissatisfaction with their learning, passively listen to lectures, take notes or do worksheets for long periods of time, or misbehave. Most of these students are ready and willing to do more. (*following students, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, 2004 SALT Survey report, meeting with the students, talking with students and parents, Slater Jr. High Self Study 2004-2006*)

Important Thematic Findings in Student Learning

Students:

- ◆ *Are making progress in the skills of reading, writing, and problem solving and are ready for more challenges to move them forward.*
- ◆ *Enjoy coming to school, though not necessarily to learn.*

5. FINDINGS ON TEACHING FOR LEARNING

Conclusions

Most teachers, particularly math, science, and unified arts teachers, effectively teach problem solving. They teach students specific strategies to solve problems, such as drawing a picture, creating an experiment to draw conclusions, and research skills. They help students find ways to organize information to solve problems such as graphic organizers, charts, and graphs. Further, they guide students to draw and justify their solutions to problems. These teachers often require students to solve problems grounded in the real world such as creating and marketing products to be sold in school, researching ways to save money during an oil crunch, or deciding what web sites will most help them complete projects. Some teachers, though, provide most of the thinking for their students and solve the problem themselves. Furthermore, these teachers do not always allow sufficient time for their students to think through the problem and come to a next step or conclusion on their own. Consequently, while many students solve problems well, others are overly dependent on their teachers to do the thinking for them. *(following students, observing classes, talking with students and teachers, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, Slater Jr. High Self-Study 2004-2006, reviewing school improvement plan)*

Most teachers emphasize students' comprehension of text and require them to use reading to answer literal, basic comprehension questions whose answers can be found directly in the text. While this is important, only a few teachers expect their students to tackle the more difficult skills of analyzing and interpreting text. Consequently, while all students are learning strategies to understand what they read, not all are practicing these higher-level skills. Teachers in all subject areas at Slater require students to read, but almost all instruction in reading strategies occurs in English/Language Arts classes. *(following students, observing classes, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, talking with teachers, discussing student work with teachers, 2004 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries, 2005 SALT Survey report)*

Teachers at Slater Junior High School require their students to write often and in varied formats such as essays, brochures, midterm exams, and journals. They help generate student interest in writing by providing interesting assignments such as persuasive speeches, brochures on water conservation, and personal, reflective poetry. Teachers effectively develop students' writing skills by demonstrating good writing, asking students to analyze the quality of writing samples, and instructing them in the use of organizers and rubrics. Students report that they understand the purpose of rubrics and use them to meet their teacher's expectations for good writing. All of these practices help students build the foundation necessary to become better writers. Of note, many teachers limit their feedback to students about their writing to comments such as "good job" or to assigning a score on a rubric. *(following students, observing classes, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, talking with students and teachers, 2004 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries, reviewing school improvement plan, Slater Jr. High Self Study 2004-2006)*

Instructional practices here vary greatly from classroom to classroom. There are, in fact, pockets of excellent instruction here. These teachers do a fantastic job helping each and every child in their classes learn. Unfortunately, these pockets do not yet encompass the entire school community. While Slater Junior High School teachers and administrators report that differentiated instruction prevails, the SALT team disagrees. When asked how they differentiate their instruction, some teachers say, "I have had training but haven't implemented it yet," "I don't do it," or "I grade some kids easier than others." While desks in almost every classroom are set up in groups, many teachers do not use these groups well. For example, they simply give a group of students a worksheet of questions to answer together, and students copy the answers from one another. Ineffective classroom management inhibits student learning in some classes, as noted in Slater's Self Study: "lack of teacher control in some classes," and "behavior of some kids changes dramatically with different teachers." Hence, the educational experience and learning of some students here exceeds that of others. *(following students, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, meeting with the school improvement team, students, school and district administrators, and parents, talking with students and teachers, Slater Jr. High Self-Study 2004-2006; reviewing school improvement plan, school and district report cards, 2004 SALT Survey report)*

Almost all Slater teachers "go the extra mile" before, during, and after school to support their students as learners. Students say they can and want to go to their teachers after school for help, to chat, or to clean the teacher's room. The teachers run clubs, some without compensation, and they throw celebrations such as "Dessert Night" to celebrate student success. School and district administrators report that as many as 25 teachers show up at school dances and sporting events. They spend more than the district provided stipends to provide the classroom materials and books their students need. Remarkably, some distribute their cell phone numbers to parents and even call students before school to wake them up. These teachers are overwhelmingly concerned about their students' emotional backgrounds and disadvantages. At times, though, their concern for "these urban kids" overshadows their academic responsibilities and results in lowered expectations for student learning. *(following students, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, meeting with the school improvement team, students, school and district administrators, and parents, talking with students and teachers, Slater Jr. High Self Study 2004-2006)*

Commendations for Samuel Slater Junior High School

Caring, involved teachers who “go the extra mile”

Foundation building in reading, writing, and problem solving

Recommendations for Samuel Slater Junior High School

Expand problem solving and reading instruction throughout all curricula areas.

Allow students to grapple with problems and solve them independently.

Consider your individual instructional practices. If necessary, improve your differentiation, cooperative grouping, and classroom management.

Increase instruction of reading analysis and interpretation.

Provide additional, substantive feedback to students about the quality of their writing.

Continue the use of graphic organizers and rubrics to improve student writing.

Hold high expectations for all students.

Recommendations for Pawtucket School Department

Provide additional and/or necessary professional development in differentiated instruction, cooperative learning, and classroom management. Assist and ensure classroom implementation.

6. FINDINGS ON SCHOOL SUPPORT FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING

Conclusions

Slater benefits from a strong, educationally focused leadership team comprising a principal and an assistant principal. These administrators participate in student advisory, teach classes from time to time, and provide necessary resources to help teachers improve their craft. The assistant principal handles discipline fairly and to the satisfaction of faculty, staff, parents, and students. This team walks the building and meaningfully interacts with students in the hallways, the cafeteria, and the classrooms. Both administrators have an open door policy, and students and teachers approach them with their issues and concerns. Parents say they can come to the school at any time and the principals are always accessible. Students run up to hug their principals! Teachers and staff say the leaders are awesome, tremendous, and supportive. District administrators attribute “the results of the school” to its effective leadership. Together, these leaders create an environment conducive to student learning. *(following students, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, talking with students, teachers, and school administrators, meeting with the school improvement team, students, school and district administrators, and parents, 2005 SALT Survey report)*

The Slater Junior High School School Improvement Plan is clear and comprehensive. It addresses the key growth areas of the school and successfully addresses many areas of concern found in the Slater Jr. High Self Study 2004-2006. Additionally, it includes input from most of the school community. The large team, which includes parents, administrators, staff, and teachers from each grade level/team, well represents the different constituencies of the school. Although this plan clearly defines the school’s focus for improvement, its implementation is not consistent. Many teachers, particularly in math and English/Language Arts, work to ensure that the action steps of the plan occur in their daily teaching. Others report that the plan does not apply to them or their content areas. Still others are unfamiliar with the specific content of the plan. The school reports that this plan has been in place only since January. Consequently, not all students benefit from full implementation of the plan by all teachers. *(following students, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, reviewing school improvement plan, meeting with the school improvement team, district administrators, and parents, talking with teachers)*

Slater students express extreme pride in their school, as do faculty, staff, parents, and administrators. The school climate is safe, orderly, and caring. The spotlessly clean, well-decorated building welcomes parents, students, and visitors alike. Everyone celebrates student success, for example, by using the wall-of-fame, throwing reading score pizza parties, and placing student brochures in the town library. The annual Six Flags trip to reward students for attendance and achieving the honor roll provides a major incentive for students to come to school and/or do well. Some parents and students from across the school, though, say they feel some teams and the Program for Advanced Standing Students (PASS) students have more fun and learn more. The SALT team agrees that some students learn more and more is expected of some than others. This inequity creates an expressed sense of entitlement within some students and disenfranchisement within others. *(following students, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, meeting with students, parents, and school administrators, talking with students, teachers, and parents, Slater Junior High School Self-Study 2004-2006)*

District administrators attribute the learning gains of special education students at Slater to the inclusion model in place. In many cases, inclusion teachers, teaching assistants, and content teachers co-teach seamlessly and meet the needs of each student. The SALT team struggles to identify not only which students in these classrooms are special education students but also which adult is the content teacher. In others classrooms, however, the content teacher dominates the classroom instruction. At times the other adults may walk around to keep students on task or simply sit in the back of the classroom. Slater's self study notes this, saying, "Special ed teachers sometimes look like aides in the room, not actively involved." This fails to optimize the learning of all students in these classrooms. *(following students, observing classes, meeting with district administrators, talking with students, teachers, and school administrators, Slater Junior High Self Study 2004-2006)*

The school successfully implements a variety of programs to address the academic and physical needs of its students. Advisory, which occurs once a week for half an hour, entails small groups of students meeting with staff and faculty to discuss relevant topics and fosters relationships between students and adults. Most students and faculty say they like this time. The School Based Clinic keeps students in school by providing necessary medical services not only for them, but also for their families. Students may attend after school programs such as Ramp-Up to gain and practice literacy and numeracy skills. Instructional teams run homework clubs to provide additional assistance to students. These programs, among others, support student learning within the classroom. *(observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, talking with students, school administrators, and teachers, meeting with the school improvement team, students, school and district administrators, and parents, reviewing school improvement plan)*

Commendations for Samuel Slater Junior High School

Strong, effective, educationally focused leadership team

Well-written school improvement plan and representative school improvement team

Variety of programs to address student needs effectively

Pervasive school pride

Recommendations for Samuel Slater Junior High School

Continue with your strong, effective educationally focused leadership team.

Fully implement all aspects of the school improvement plan within all classrooms.

Continue various program offerings to meet various student needs.

Consider the roles of all adults within inclusion classrooms. Make changes, as necessary, to improve student learning.

Address and rectify the inequity in learning and expectations among classes, teachers, teams, and programs.

Continue to celebrate students' success!

Recommendations for Pawtucket School Department

Provide necessary training to optimize the effectiveness of all adults within inclusion classrooms. Ensure implementation.

7. FINAL ADVICE TO SAMUEL SLATER JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Slater Junior High School has a warm, nurturing, and welcoming environment with an established sense of family. Together, you are building a strong foundation of learning.

This school has the leadership, school improvement plan, and other support structures in place to achieve its vision of becoming “a high performing school.” Use these, as well as your dedication and the excellence and expertise that are already here, to build upon these strengths. Instill rigor in all classrooms and hold high expectations for all students to move them beyond the basics.

You are moving in the right direction and poised for excellence. Use the conclusions, commendations, and recommendations in this report to guide you on your way. We wish you luck on this important endeavor.

ENDORSEMENT OF SALT VISIT TEAM REPORT

Samuel Slater Junior High School

February 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*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.

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 Samuel Slater Junior 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 7, 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 Samuel Slater Junior 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 Samuel Slater Junior 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 10 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*
 - Slater 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 Samuel Slater Junior High School
 - district strategic plan
 - 2005 SALT Survey report
 - classroom textbooks
 - 2005 Information Works!
 - 2004 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries

School and District Report Cards

School Binders Including:

- All About Slater Notebook
- Advisory Notebook
- RIC Partnership Notebook
- Student Teacher Notebook
- School field Trip
- School Substitute Teacher Records
- Project Jump folder
- Balanced Literacy Guide
- Team building folders
- Team meeting Folders
- Sample lesson plans and work of teachers not meeting on Monday
- Feinsein Hunger Brigade Community Service
- School Improvement Notebook
- Slater Junior High Self-Study 2004-2006

State Assessment Results for Samuel Slater Junior 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:

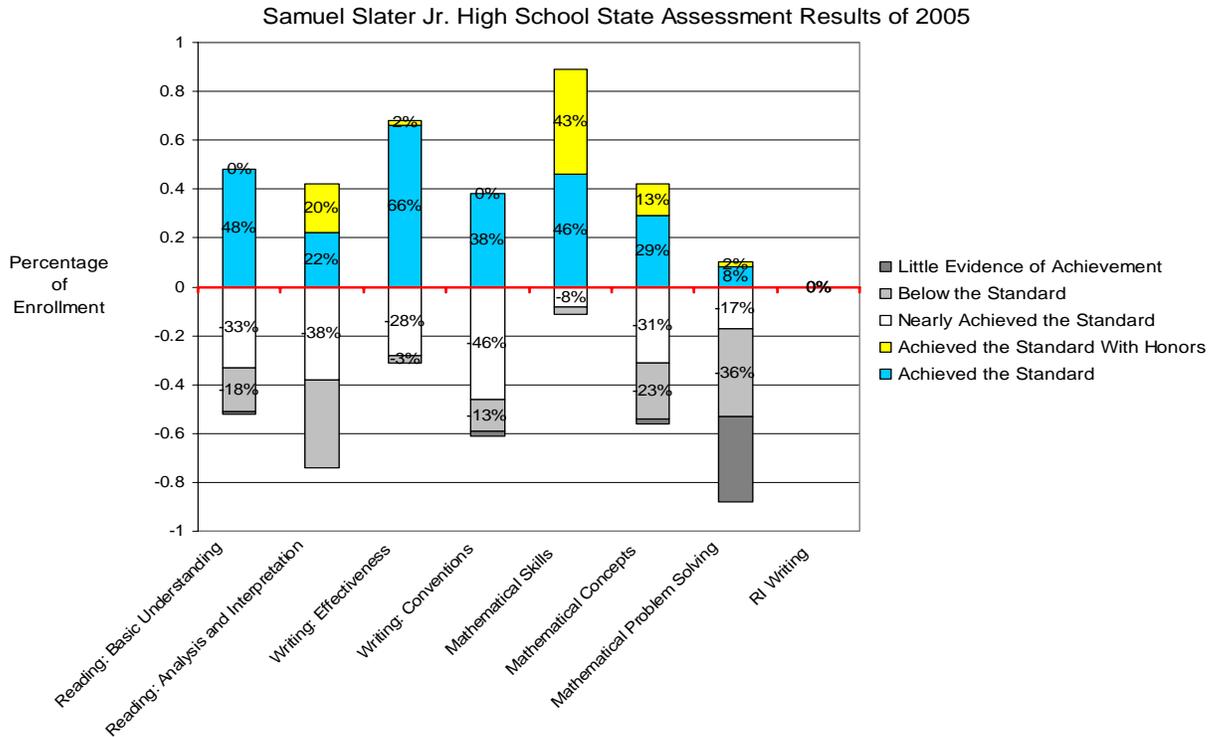
- ◆ *against performance standards,*
- ◆ *across student groups within the school, and*
- ◆ *over time.*

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

RESULTS IN RELATION TO PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

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

Table1. 2003-05 Student Results on Rhode Island State Assessments



REPORT CARD FOR SAMUEL SLATER JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

In 2005, schools were classified by their attendance rate. Using this measure, Samuel Slater Junior High School "Made Adequate Yearly Progress."

The 2004 Report Card shows the performance of Samuel Slater Junior High School compared to the school's annual measurable objectives (AMO). This report card describes Samuel Slater Junior High School as a Moderately Performing and Improving School.

Index Proficiency Score, 2002-04	English Language Arts Target score: 68				MATHEMATICS Target score: 46.1			
Student Group	this School	Target Met?	this District	thE State	this School	Target Met?	this District	thE State
All Students	77.2	YES	74.6	80.3	56.1	YES	54.1	66.5
African Americans	76.8	YES	72.3	71.2	55.7	YES	47.8	49.5
Asian	*	YES	*	79.3	*	YES	*	64.9
Hispanic	76.4	YES	72.4	69.5	51.4	YES	49.7	48.8
Native Americans	*	YES	*	76.7	*	YES	*	58.6
White	78.5	YES	77.9	84.4	60.8	YES	59.3	72.8
Students with Disabilities	60.2	YES†	57.6	63.3	38.1	YES†	37.5	46.8
Students with Limited English Proficiency	*	YES	63.3	61	*	YES	40	43.3
Students who are Economically Disadvantaged	76.2	YES	73	70.8	53.9	YES	50.6	50.9

PERCENT of students tested, 2002-04	Target: 95%			
	this school	target met?	THIS DISTRICT	the state
English Language Arts	99.5	YES	98.8	98.6
Mathematics	99.5	YES	98.6	98.8

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

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

this school is classified as:

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

KEY: * Student group has too few students to calculate results.
 † "Safe Harbor" - Student group has fallen short of the target but has made sufficient improvement over last year's score.
 †† Student group has met the target based only on the most recent year of test results. NOTE:
 For information on targets and classifications, please see Quick Guide .

THE SAMUEL SLATER JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT TEAM

Gerardine Cannon
Reading Teacher

Stacy Martins
Grade 8 Special Educator, Blue Team

Merry Caswell
Principal

Derece Mercer
Parent Representative

Joseph Fleming
Assistant Principal

Michelle Monahan
Unified Arts Teacher

Byron Johnson
Grade 7 Special Educator, Gold Team

Lauren O'Connell
Grades 7 and 8 Special Educator,
Silver Team

Linda Karsulavitch
Assistant Chairperson

Francine Paradis
Grade 8 Teacher, Gold Team

Roberta King
Grade 7 Teacher, Blue Team,
Chairperson

Mary Parella
Child Opportunity Zone (COZ)
Coordinator

Karen Landry
Teacher Assistant

Debra Scarpelli
Grade 7 Teacher, Gold Team

Wendy Lapuc
Special Educator

Stewart Shaffer
Unified Arts Teacher
Claudia Vieira
Grade 6 Teacher

Rebecca Lerner
Parent Representative

Carol MacNaught
School Psychologist

Jeanne Waters
School Social Worker

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

Tao Albrecht
Geography Teacher
Flat River Middle School
Coventry, Rhode Island

Lisa Bagwell
Science and English Language Arts
Teacher
Portsmouth Middle School
Portsmouth, Rhode Island

S. Kai Cameron
Facilitator for Community
Partnerships
Providence School District

Kathleen Campopiano
Guidance Counselor
Martin Middle School
East Providence, Rhode Island

Noreen Hoyle
Intensive Resource English and
Mathematics Teacher
Samuel W. Bridgham Middle School
Providence, Rhode Island

Claire Ledoux
Resource Teacher
Ricci Middle School
North Providence, Rhode Island

Diane Maruszczak
Science Teacher
Aldrich Junior High School
Warwick, Rhode Island

Dayna Miller
Language Arts and Social Studies
Teacher
Kickemuit Middle School
Warren, Rhode Island

Lois Short
Principal
Burrillville Middle School
Burrillville, Rhode Island

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEMBERS OF VISIT TEAM

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