



The Reynolds School

BRISTOL-WARREN

THE SALT VISIT TEAM REPORT

January 27, 2006



School Accountability for Learning and Teaching (SALT)

The school accountability program of the Rhode Island Department of Education

**RHODE ISLAND BOARD OF REGENTS
FOR ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION**

James A. DiPrete, Chairman

Patrick A. Guida, Vice Chairman

Colleen Callahan, Secretary

Amy Beretta

Robert Camara

Frank Caprio

Karin Forbes

Gary E. Grove

Maurice C. Paradis

**RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY
EDUCATION**

Peter McWalters, Commissioner

The Board of Regents does not discriminate on the basis of age, color, sex, sexual orientation, race, religion, national origin, or disability.

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

(401) 222-8401

rick.richards@ride.ri.gov

CONTENTS

1.	INTRODUCTION	1
	THE PURPOSE AND LIMITS OF THIS REPORT	1
	SOURCES OF EVIDENCE	2
	USING THE REPORT	2
2.	PROFILE OF THE REYNOLDS SCHOOL	4
3.	PORTRAIT OF THE REYNOLDS SCHOOL AT THE TIME OF THE VISIT	5
4.	FINDINGS ON STUDENT LEARNING	6
	CONCLUSIONS	6
	IMPORTANT THEMATIC FINDINGS IN STUDENT LEARNING	7
5.	FINDINGS ON TEACHING FOR LEARNING	8
	CONCLUSIONS	8
	COMMENDATIONS FOR THE REYNOLDS SCHOOL	10
	RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE REYNOLDS SCHOOL	10
	RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE BRISTOL – WARREN SCHOOL DISTRICT	10
6.	FINDINGS ON SCHOOL SUPPORT FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING	11
	CONCLUSIONS	11
	COMMENDATIONS FOR THE REYNOLDS SCHOOL	13
	RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE REYNOLDS SCHOOL	13
	RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BRISTOL-WARREN SCHOOL DISTRICT	13
7.	FINAL ADVICE TO THE REYNOLDS SCHOOL.....	14
	ENDORSEMENT OF SALT VISIT TEAM REPORT	15
	REPORT APPENDIX	17
	SOURCES OF EVIDENCE FOR THIS REPORT	17
	STATE ASSESSMENT RESULTS FOR THE REYNOLDS SCHOOL	19
	THE REYNOLDS SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT TEAM.....	23
	MEMBERS OF THE SALT VISIT TEAM	24
	CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEMBERS OF VISIT TEAM	25

1. INTRODUCTION

The Purpose and Limits of This Report

This is the report of the SALT team that visited The Reynolds School from January 23 - 27, 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 The Reynolds School?

How well does the teaching at The Reynolds School affect learning?

How well does The Reynolds 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 The Reynolds 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 101 hours in direct classroom observation. Most of this time was spent observing complete lessons or classes. Almost every classroom was visited at least once, and almost every teacher was observed more than once. The team spent a total of over 32.5 hours interviewing the administration, faculty and staff of the school.

The full visit team built the conclusions, commendations and recommendations presented here through intense and thorough discussion. The team met for a total of 27 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 The Reynolds 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 Bristol-Warren School 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 Bristol-Warren School District, RIDE and the public should consider what the report says or implies about how they can best support The Reynolds 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 THE REYNOLDS SCHOOL

The John Post Reynolds School, constructed in 1918, was designed by W. Howe to accommodate the increased student population in Bristol at that time. The school has remained a public school in the Bristol—now the Bristol-Warren—School Department. Coinciding with minor renovations in 1999, the school has been organized as an Arts Magnet Program with enrollment open to all district students through a lottery system.

Two hundred and forty-nine students in kindergarten through grade five attend this school. Ninety-nine percent of them are white, and less than 1 percent is African-American. Fourteen percent of them receive special needs services in either inclusionary or pull-out resource settings. Eleven percent of them qualify for free or reduced-price lunch.

The Reynolds School is identified by the Rhode Island Department of Education as a High Performing and Sustaining School. The faculty and staff include one principal, 27 teachers and six non-certified personnel. Numeracy and writing coaches are available to support the work of the staff. The school also has an active parent and guardian component that participates in many facets of school life.

Weekly events that occur at Reynolds include celebrations of student successes such as “Helping Hands,” and writer, dancer, artist, musician and actor of the week. A student government meets weekly to share and discuss issues at the school. Bi-weekly events include a school-wide town meeting and H.O.T. (Higher Order Thinking) Spots that are designed to extend student thinking and learning. There are several school wide and grade specific programs available to Reynolds students. These include a drama club, a dance program for grade 4 and 5 students and a Starbase Atlantis program for grade 5 students that is facilitated by the United States Navy. A partnership with the Silver Creek Nursing home is designed to encourage students to become involved in service that promotes positive learning.

The faculty and staff have been trained to use strategies to incorporate the arts in their instruction—including music, dance, theater, creative writing and the visual arts. The school and the school district have also made several professional development programs available to its teachers, including grade level meetings, PALS and DRA assessment training, PALM Pilot training, thinking strategies and writers’ workshop training, and school improvement planning.

3. PORTRAIT OF THE REYNOLDS SCHOOL AT THE TIME OF THE VISIT

Identified by the Rhode Island Department of Education as a ‘high performing school,’ The Reynolds Arts Magnet School is an impressive and unique learning community. Housed within the walls of the aged building are budding artists, poets, musicians, actors and great thinkers. This school and its cohesive school community are fostered, appreciated and loved by its many parents, staff, faculty, principal and—most important—the students.

Reynolds students are confident and accomplished learners. Most read, write and problem solve at high levels. They love to learn, enjoy being challenged and are comfortable taking risks as they learn and grow at school. They benefit greatly from the integration of the arts across the curriculum and the school culture that expects them to achieve and that celebrates their accomplishments. They also benefit from the many opportunities the teachers and school provide through programs such as town meetings, HOT Spots, and numerous clubs and activities for them to develop independent thinking and leadership and decision-making skills.

Most teachers do a remarkable job teaching and guiding students to become excited, enthusiastic and successful learners. These dedicated and hard working professionals provide effective—and often excellent—instruction. They effectively incorporate a variety of strategies and programs into their daily teaching to meet the needs of their students and provide them with the challenges they so clearly desire. Most teachers also go “above and beyond” to provide stimulating and constructive learning environments, integrate the arts into their teaching and facilitate the programs that help make this school so unique and meaningful for students.

Described as a “perfect fit” for this school, the principal is the tireless leader and cheerleader of the Reynolds School. He is dedicated to the school and its mission to be a democratic school founded upon a curriculum integrated in the arts. Everyone here appreciates and recognizes his dedication and efforts. He has both a vision for the school and the commitment necessary to make this still incomplete vision a reality.

While the story of the Reynolds School is mostly a positive one, several pieces are not yet in place to meet its mission “to ensure that all students achieve high academic standards and develop a love of learning through an arts integrated curriculum rich in democratic ideals.” Not all students achieve at standard or above. Not all teachers provide consistently effective instruction. Not all faculty and staff fully embrace arts integration and democracy as the identity of this school. Nor does this school have all the tools it needs to fulfill its mission—such as an adequate facility, enough faculty and sufficient material resources. Despite these and other challenges, the Reynolds School paints an impressive picture.

4. FINDINGS ON STUDENT LEARNING

Conclusions

Most students write well and in a variety of genres. They are excited to write and eager to share their work. They perceive themselves as good writers. Their writing exhibits clear thinking and an effective use of writing strategies. They use criteria and rubrics to guide their writing. Students begin to conceptualize their ideas through writing in kindergarten and build upon this foundation throughout all grade levels. They also create drawings and illustrations that effectively support their ideas. Some students have not yet mastered basic writing skills and do not follow the criteria to meet the grade level writing standards, and they do not write enough to develop their skills. *(following students, observing classes, talking with students and teachers, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing classroom assessments, reviewing school improvement plan, 2004 Rhode Island Writing Assessments results, 2004 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries)*

Most students read well as their reading, written work, oral presentations and discussions demonstrate. They read fluently, use proper expression and decoding strategies, and comprehend. They know how to read a variety of texts for both enjoyment and information. Students read independently, with partners and with their teachers in small groups. They value their reading and are proud of it. They say that reading is fun and that they like having many opportunities to read. These help them improve and become better learners. Some students do not read at grade level but receive supplemental reading services. Others do not read at grade level but are making progress within their classrooms. Some of these students also have difficulty using strategies other than sounding out words to decode them, while they read. *(following students, observing classes, meeting with students, school and district administrators, and parents, talking with students and teachers, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, 2004 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries, reviewing classroom textbooks)*

Most students successfully problem solve in all areas of the curriculum. Parents say that students know how to ‘think outside of the box’ and continue to learn to think creatively and critically. Students concur and say that they are encouraged to think for themselves and to take chances. These students find more than one way to solve problems, test their solutions, explain their thinking orally and in writing, and reflect on their work. They also practice and develop their problem solving skills in school-wide programs such as student government, class and town meetings, and peace promotion. In these programs, students build important leadership skills and collaborate to address issues that affect the school and community. Some students do not problem solve well because they do not know what to do or how to begin a task. Some shut down when challenged, while others rely on the teachers to lead them to the correct answers. *(following students, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, meeting with students and parents, talking with students and teachers, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing classroom assessments, 2004 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries)*

Students know they are part of a strong and unique learning community. In this community, they support and respect one another. They are proud of their school and enjoy participating in the variety of programs and the many creative opportunities available to them. They are very enthusiastic and invested in the life of the school. They are empowered to make decisions, and in many ways, they take charge of their school activities and celebrations. As a result, students are confident, accomplished and well-rounded learners, who are willing and able to lead. *(following students, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, meeting with the school improvement team, students, school and district administrators, and parents, talking with students, teachers, and school administrators)*

Students at this school love to learn. They say they like to work hard, and it is evident that they strive for quality in their work. Students are proud of their learning and accomplishments, and they enjoy their many opportunities to celebrate them. They are comfortable and confident learners, and they are willing to take risks and engage in the work of learning. They develop skills and abilities through regularly sharing their learning and thinking with adults and their peers. Most students embrace and expect high standards and appreciate and seek out challenges to further their 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, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing classroom assessments)*

Most students behave well. These students follow school rules and classroom rituals and routines, and they respect themselves and others. They listen to and support one another and act as members of a cooperative and well-functioning community. However, this good behavior is not consistent throughout the school. Some students do not behave as well in some classrooms or in less structured environments such as the cafeteria and hallways. These students engage in horseplay, are noisy and do not follow class and school rules. These behaviors inhibit learning and in some instances create a safety risk. Parents and students also express concerns that this misbehavior occurs at recess as well as in the bus lines. *(following students, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, meeting with students, school and district administrators, and parents, talking with students and teachers)*

Important Thematic Findings in Student Learning

- ◆ *Most students read, write and problem solve well in all areas of the curriculum.*
- ◆ *Students accept and expect high standards, and they take risks.*
- ◆ *Students are proud of their work and are eager to share.*
- ◆ *Students respect and support one another.*
- ◆ *Students enjoy school and are enthusiastic learners.*

5. FINDINGS ON TEACHING FOR LEARNING

Conclusions

Most teachers effectively use a variety of techniques to teach students to write well. They set clear expectations for writing by providing criteria and using rubrics to guide learning, and they hold their students accountable. They consistently and across all grade levels use the district writers' workshop model to develop their students' writing skills and help them become confident and creative writers. They successfully guide their students to share and celebrate their writing to both improve and reflect upon it. Teachers teach different genres of writing by making connections to literature, thus helping students see important relationships between reading and writing. They also help students integrate the arts in their writing through the use of songs, poems, drawings, constructions and the performing arts. While most teachers provide excellent writing instruction, some do not teach writing as well or do not engage all of their students. Some are learning to become better writing teachers, yet others use writing rituals and routines that are inconsistent or ineffective, or they do not hold their students accountable for quality work. *(following students, observing classes, talking with students and teachers, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing classroom assessments, reviewing classroom textbooks, reviewing district and school policies and practices, reviewing school improvement plan)*

Most teachers teach reading well, instilling a love of reading in their students. These teachers establish a culture for reading by having a text-rich environment. They celebrate and talk about books, and they have numerous books and reading materials available in their classrooms. They are skilled at instructing and modeling a variety of strategies for both decoding words and comprehension. They engage students in reading for a variety of purposes including research, information, and author studies, as well as for enjoyment. They effectively use authentic texts as models for writing, thereby successfully connecting reading to writing and the arts. Teachers say that the implementation of the new reading program has been challenging and at times frustrating, but they also say they are seeing success, particularly with the Making Meaning and SIPPS portions of the program. Some teachers, however, do not teach reading strategies explicitly or effectively. They do not create a classroom climate conducive to reading or follow the district reading program to ensure consistent and effective reading instruction. *(following students, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, meeting with students, school and district administrators, and parents, talking with students, teachers, and parents, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing school improvement plan, reviewing classroom assessments, reviewing classroom textbooks)*

Most teachers teach problem solving well by fostering an atmosphere of freedom for students to take risks and experiment. Students and parents say that one of the best things about this school is that “Teachers don’t give you the answers. They make you work hard and find the answers yourself.” Teachers effectively teach students to hypothesize strategies and solutions through ‘accountable talk.’ They use rubrics and criteria to guide students’ work and provide time for students to explore. These teachers teach children to listen, share ideas, and respect differing views. Teachers often ask their students to “turn and talk,” thus requiring them to collaborate and expand their thinking. Notably, they teach these problem solving skills across the curriculum. However, teachers in some classrooms do not teach problem solving as effectively. They direct all of the learning; they assume students know the strategies to solve problems; and they often appear to teach without concern about whether students contribute or understand. Additionally, these teachers maintain classroom environments that do not provide students with sufficient opportunities to explore and take risks productively. *(following students, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, meeting with the school improvement team, students, school and district administrators, and parents, talking with students, teachers, school administrators, and parents, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, reviewing school improvement plan, reviewing classroom assessments)*

Most teachers are passionate about teaching. They are professional in their interactions and are committed to developing their skills as teachers. They are creative and flexible as they work to integrate the arts into their instruction. They care about their students and nurture them. They value their students’ opinions and work hard to accommodate their varied learning styles. Further, many teachers work “above and beyond,” before, during, and after school, to provide additional learning opportunities to enrich their students’ lives. Commendably, these teachers recognize that there is always room for improvement and growth. They take on challenges and new initiatives despite often-inherent frustrations. Students, the principal and the district administrators agree that teachers are the strength of this school. Parents say, “The school is blessed” with great teachers, and the SALT team concurs. *(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, parents, and school administrators, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, 2005 SALT Survey report)*

Most teachers teach reading, writing and problem solving in ways that effectively reach students. These teachers create rituals and routines in their classrooms. They give students the tools to succeed and coach them to be independent and accomplished learners. They challenge students to attain high standards and provide instruction that allows them to meet these standards. They integrate the arts into their teaching and provide opportunities for students to share and celebrate their work. Some teachers, however, do not teach their students as effectively. They primarily lecture and direct most of their students’ learning. They ask students basic questions rather than engage them in higher-level thinking. They teach their lessons without paying attention to whether students are responding and learning. Students in these classes do not achieve as well as they might. *(following students, observing classes, meeting with the school improvement team, students, school and district administrators, and parents, talking with students, parents, and school administrators, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing classroom assessments, reviewing school improvement plan)*

Most teachers effectively, creatively and successfully manage their classrooms to promote proper behavior and student learning. They create respectful and stimulating learning environments. These teachers establish a consistent and predictable atmosphere based on practiced rituals and routines. They have clear expectations for behavior and performance, and they clearly communicate them. Students in these classes remain on task and learn. Some teachers, however, do not manage their classes as well. Some of these teachers are rigid and harsh. Others have inconsistent expectations of student conduct and inconsistently exert discipline and apply consequences. These practices confuse students and limit the productiveness and respect in their learning environment. (*following students, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, meeting with students, school and district administrators, and parents, talking with students, teachers, parents, and school administrators*)

Commendations for The Reynolds School

- ◆ *Passionate, respectful, nurturing teachers*
- ◆ *Effective instruction using a variety of techniques and strategies*
- ◆ *Arts integration and connections between reading, writing and problem solving*
- ◆ *Clear expectations for learning*
- ◆ *Sharing student success and celebrating it*

Recommendations for The Reynolds School

- ◆ *Continue to find ways to integrate the arts into daily instruction in all classrooms.*
- ◆ *Continue to provide opportunities for students to share and celebrate learning.*
- ◆ *Continue to seek out opportunities to collaborate with classroom and special subject teachers.*
- ◆ *Strive to create consistent instruction and management in all classrooms.*
- ◆ *Establish rituals and routines in all classrooms.*
- ◆ *Develop and clearly communicate high expectations for all students in all classrooms.*
- ◆ *Ensure sufficient opportunities for students productively to explore and take risks.*
- ◆ *Provide instruction based on continuous monitoring of student understanding and needs.*

Recommendations for the Bristol – Warren School District

- ◆ *Work with the teachers to find ways to integrate the arts into daily instruction in all classrooms.*
- ◆ *Guide and support teachers to create consistent instruction and management in all classrooms.*

6. FINDINGS ON SCHOOL SUPPORT FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING

Conclusions

This school has a distinct and strong culture inspired by the arts. It is a nurturing and caring community that celebrates students and their learning. Students are clearly the focus of this school, and there is a feeling of pride that permeates this place. Moreover, this school truly brings to life the joy of learning. It is not surprising that this is a high-performing school. *(following students, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, meeting with the school improvement team, students, school and district administrators, and parents, talking with students, teachers, parents, and school administrators, reviewing school and district report cards)*

This is a unique and impressive school. It effectively implements an arts integration program founded upon democratic principles. This is evident throughout the school and in most classrooms. Important elements include bi-weekly town meetings, H.O.T. (*Higher Order Thinking*) Spots, student government, magical mailbox, writers, artists, musicians, actors and dancers of the week, and various clubs and boards. By organizing and leading these programs, students develop not only their sense of self, but their leadership skills and confidence as learners and communicators. However not all teachers are as equally or passionately vested in this mission. This hinders the overall success of this program. *(following students, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, meeting with the school improvement team, students, school and district administrators, and parents, talking with students, teachers, parents, and school administrators, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing school improvement plan, reviewing district and school policies and practices)*

This school facility is inadequate for the needs of the entire school community. When asked what the greatest challenge is for this school, most say simply “the building.” Classrooms are small and, in some cases, teachers do not have enough space to teach, and students cannot learn comfortably or effectively. Some teachers cannot use teaching materials such as charts and learning centers, and they do not have accessible space for books and supplies. The design of the building exacerbates noise and interferes with teaching and learning. Further, due to insufficient space on the campus, students must cross a street daily for recess and library. *(following students, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, meeting with the school improvement team, students, school and district administrators, and parents, talking with students, teachers, parents, and school administrators)*

The principal is a passionate supporter of this school and its mission. District administrators, faculty, staff and parents say he is the “perfect fit” and the “heart and soul” of this school. He has a strong knowledge of school leadership, listens to students, staff and parents, and takes seriously his role as an instructional leader. He encourages his staff to participate in decision-making. While being the school’s greatest cheerleader, he also recognizes that there is still work to be done including maintaining the integrity of the arts magnet school model and expanding the integration of the arts while at the same time fulfilling district, state and federal mandates. *(following students, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, meeting with the school improvement team, students, school and district administrators, and parents, talking with students, teachers, parents, and school administrators)*

Most students behave well at this school. They behave well in environments that have consistent and enforced structure, high expectations, and established rituals and routines. However, when these are lacking, inconsistent or absent, student behavior deteriorates. Although parents, teachers, staff and the principal are aware that student behavior is not consistently good, current school-wide policies and practices are not adequate to create proper school-wide student behavior. *(following students, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, meeting with students, school and district administrators, and parents, talking with students, teachers, parents, and school administrators, reviewing district and school policies and practices)*

Parents are strongly involved in this school and their children’s education. An active parent advisory council advocates for and supports the district, this school and the arts magnet model. Parents help write grants and provide funds for trips, celebrations, activities and professional development for parents and teachers. Many parents also volunteer to help teachers and children in their classrooms, as well as with the numerous school-wide activities. The principal and teachers say that parents care greatly about their children’s education and are always here when needed. While parents are thrilled with this school, some express concerns about class and school-wide issues such as student behavior, school safety and inconsistent mutual respect. *(observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, meeting with the school improvement team, school and district administrators, and parents, talking with teachers, parents, and school administrators, 2004 SALT Survey report, reviewing district and school policies and practices)*

This school is inconsistently resourced. Recent budget cuts have limited the number of faculty available to service students with learning gaps and behavioral needs. Therefore, not all students receive sufficient support. Further, service providers report that, while they work well with their colleagues, they have limited opportunities to collaborate with classroom teachers. Teachers say they have adequate instructional resources such as textbooks, wall charts, manipulatives and consumables. However, they report that there is only one copy machine for the school, technology is inadequate and often failing, and storage is severely lacking. *(following students, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, meeting with the school improvement team, and school and district administrators, talking with teachers and school administrators, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing classroom assessments, reviewing completed and ongoing student work)*

The district has implemented a new K-5 elementary literacy program. To support this, it has provided professional development before and during the school year. Most teachers implement this program and report that, while the initial implementation has been frustrating, their comfort level is increasing and they are seeing progress in their students. This program and their accompanying instruction seem to be helping students learn and progress. However, not all teachers implement all elements of the program. This contributes to the inconsistent instruction in this school. *(following students, observing classes, meeting with the school improvement team and school and district administrators, talking with teachers and school administrators, reviewing district and school policies and practices, reviewing school improvement plan, reviewing records of professional development)*

Commendations for The Reynolds School

- ◆ *Unique and impressive school*
- ◆ *Distinct culture inspired by the arts*
- ◆ *Effective integration of the arts*
- ◆ *Passionate and dedicated principal*
- ◆ *Strongly involved parents*

Recommendations for The Reynolds School

- ◆ *Work with the school district and community to secure a new facility.*
- ◆ *Continue to integrate the arts while balancing district, state, and federal mandates.*
- ◆ *Continue to work towards the full implementation of the K-5 Elementary literacy program.*
- ◆ *Involve the entire school community to make good behavior consistent throughout the school.*
- ◆ *Provide opportunities for necessary collaboration between service providers and classroom teachers.*
- ◆ *Work with the school district and the community to secure adequate funding for needed resources.*
- ◆ *Maintain the strong and positive relationships with parents.*

Recommendations for Bristol-Warren School District

- ◆ *Work with the Reynolds School and the Bristol and Warren communities to secure a new facility.*
- ◆ *Provide adequate funding for needed resources.*
- ◆ *Continue to support the school to work towards full implementation of the K-5 Elementary literacy program.*
- ◆ *Continue to support the Reynolds School as an arts magnet school.*

7. FINAL ADVICE TO THE REYNOLDS SCHOOL

Continue to embrace the school's mission to integrate the arts across the curriculum in all classrooms. Recognize and celebrate that the arts integration mission is successfully influencing your instruction and student learning, and this makes your school unique and impressive.

Work together as a community to provide consistent and focused instruction in reading, writing and problem solving. Work together as a community to provide consistent and focused management of school wide behavior. Work together to maintain high standards, while also maintaining the focus on child-centered learning.

Build upon the expertise of the staff, the teachers, the principal and the support of parents in continuing to create an academic environment that best serves your students. Provide opportunities for teachers to observe and learn from their colleagues through learning walks and less formal observations. Strengthen the culture of respect and cooperation in your school.

Work to expand the model, and remain passionate. Work to involve and vest every teacher in the school's mission. Use your collective wisdom, vision, joy and knowledge to continue to promote a school striving for excellence.

ENDORSEMENT OF SALT VISIT TEAM REPORT

The Reynolds School

January 27, 2006

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The steps Catalpa completed for this review were:

- discussion with the chair about any issues related to the visit before it began
- daily discussion of any issues with the visit chair during the visit
- observation of a portion of the visit
- discussion with the principal regarding any concerns about the visit at the time of the visit
- thorough review of the report in both its pre-release and final version form

The findings from the review are:

1. This team was certified to meet team membership requirements by RIDE staff.
2. This report was produced by a legitimate SALT Visit that was led by a trained SALT Visit Chair and conducted in a manner that is consistent with SALT Visit procedures.
3. The conclusions are legitimate SALT visit conclusions.
4. The report is a legitimate SALT visit report.

Accordingly, Catalpa Ltd. endorses this report.



CATALPA LTD.

Thomas A. Wilson, EdD

Catalpa Ltd.

February 12, 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 The Reynolds 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 The Reynolds School.

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

- ◆ *observing classes directly*
- ◆ *observing the school outside of the classroom*
- ◆ *following 7 students for a full day*
- ◆ *observing the work of teachers and staff for a full day*
- ◆ *meeting at scheduled times with the following groups:*
 - teachers*
 - school improvement team*
 - school and district administrators*
 - students*
 - parents*
- ◆ *talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administrators*
- ◆ *reviewing completed and ongoing student work*
- ◆ *interviewing teachers about the work of their students*
- ◆ *analyzing state assessment results as reported in Information Works!*
- ◆ *reviewing the following documents:*
 - district and school policies and practices
 - records of professional development activities
 - classroom assessments
 - school improvement plan for The Reynolds 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

The Reynolds School SALT binders 1-4

The Reynolds School Looking at Student Work binder

The Reynolds School Assessment Data 2005-2006 binder

The Reynolds School Student Government binder

The Reynolds School Self-Study 2001 binder

Bristol Warren Regional School District Comprehensive Literacy
Assessment & Intervention System binder

Bristol Warren Regional School District Elementary Mathematics
binder

Bristol Warren Regional School District K-5 End of the Year Math
Assessments binder

Bristol Warren Regional School District Improving Student Behavior
binder

State Assessment Results for The Reynolds 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.*

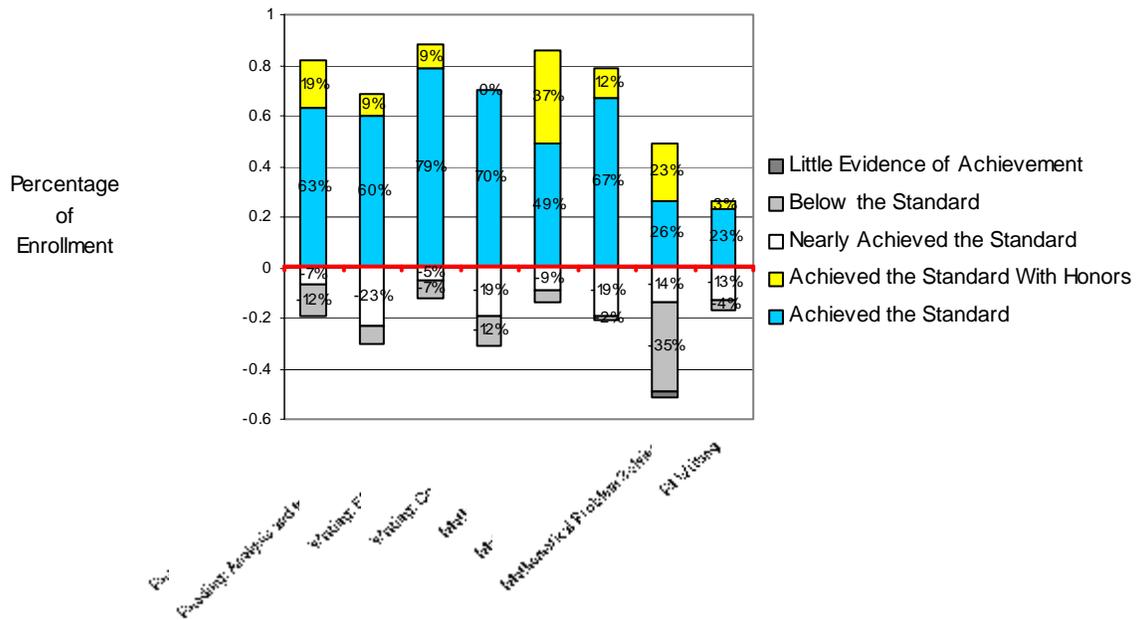
Information Works! data for The Reynolds School is available at [/www.infoworks.ride.uri.edu/2005/default.asp](http://www.infoworks.ride.uri.edu/2005/default.asp).

RESULTS IN RELATION TO PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

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

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

Reynolds School State Assessment Results of 2005



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

Index Proficiency Score, 2002-04	English Language Arts Target score: 76.1				MATHEMATICS Target score: 61.7			
	this School	Target Met?	this District	thE State	this School	Target Met?	this District	thE State
All Students	93.1	YES	89.1	86.1	89.1	YES	79	77.5
African Americans	*	YES	*	77.8	*	YES	*	65.9
Asian	*	YES	*	84.5	*	YES	*	77.1
Hispanic	*	YES	*	75.8	*	YES	*	65.8
Native Americans	*	YES	*	83.9	*	YES	*	73
White	93.6	YES	85.7	88.5	89.2	YES	80.6	82
Students with Disabilities	*	YES	68.8	69.5	*	YES	63.7	66.4
Students with Limited English Proficiency	*	YES	80.9	68.9	*	YES	64.9	61
Students who are Economically Disadvantaged	*	YES	81.8	77.8	*	YES	74.2	68.4

PERCENT of students tested, 2002-04	Target: 95%			
	this school	target met?	THIS DISTRICT	the state
English Language Arts	100	YES	99.6	99.1
Mathematics	100	YES	99	99.4

Attendance Rate	Target: 90%			
	this school	target met?	THIS DISTRICT	the state
	95.7	YES	94.9	94.8

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:

High Performing and Sustaining

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 REYNOLDS SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT TEAM

Ann Marie Vaillancourt
Chairperson

Chuck Mello
Principal

Vicki DeMello
Teacher/Parent

Carol Glanville
Teacher

Dona Paull
Teacher

Susan Rancourt
Parent

David Steege
Parent

Arlene Vacchelli
Teacher

MEMBERS OF THE SALT VISIT TEAM

Andre Audette
Standards Coach
Pawtucket School Department
Rhode Island Department of Education
Office of Progressive Support and Intervention
Regents SALT Fellow
Team Chair

Patricia Bird
Guidance Counselor
Ranger School and Fort Barton School
Tiverton School Department
Tiverton, Rhode Island

Johanna Cadoret
Kindergarten Teacher
John F. Kennedy Elementary School
Middletown School Department
Middletown, Rhode Island

Sybil Grayko
Grade 1 Teacher
Carey Elementary School
Newport School Department
Newport, Rhode Island

Dr. Doug Pierson
Principal Teacher
Peace Dale Elementary
South Kingstown School Department
South Kingstown, Rhode Island

Susan Viveiros
Special Needs Teacher
Metcalf School
Exeter-West Greenwich School Department
Exeter, Rhode Island

Julie Zeng
Music Teacher
A. B. Hennessey School and Silver Spring School
East Providence School Department
East Providence, Rhode Island

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEMBERS OF VISIT TEAM

INSERT HERE