



Nayatt School

BARRINGTON

THE SALT VISIT TEAM REPORT

October 5, 2001



School Accountability for Learning and Teaching (SALT)

The accountability program of the Rhode Island Department of Education

The findings of this report are those of this SALT visit team. The names and affiliations of the members of the team are in the appendix. The team follows the school visit protocol in the *Handbook for Chairs on Conducting a SALT School Visit*. The team is required to focus on what it observes at the time of the visit and is restricted from comparing the school with any other. This school visit was supported by the Rhode Island Department of Education as one component of its accountability system, School Accountability for Learning and Teaching (SALT).

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This report is available at <http://www.ridoe.net/schoolimprove/salt>

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1. THIS PURPOSE AND LIMITS OF THIS REPORT

Overview

This is the report of the SALT team that visited Nayatt School from October 2 through October 5, 2001. The following features are at the heart of the report:

- ◆ The team seeks to capture what makes this school work, or not work, as a public institution of learning. Each school presents a unique picture.
 - ◆ The team does not compare this school to any other school.
 - ◆ When writing the report, the team deliberately CHOOSES the words that will best convey its message to the school, based on careful consideration of what it has learned about the school dynamics.
 - ◆ The team makes its judgment explicit.
- The major questions the team addresses are:

- ◆ How well do the students learn at this school?
- ◆ How well does this school teach its students?
- ◆ How well does this school support learning and teaching?

The SALT report creates accountability for improvement by directly connecting its judgments of quality and its recommendations for improvement to the actual work going on in this school at the time of the visit.

The team closely follows the visit protocol in the *Handbook for Chairs of the SALT School Visit*. The Catalpa endorsement certifies that this team followed the protocol and that this report meets all criteria required for a legitimate SALT visit report.

The visit team is made up of teachers, an administrator, and a parent 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.

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 Nayatt 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 administrator think and do during their day. Thus, the visit allows the team to build informed judgments about the teaching, learning, and support that actually takes place at Nayatt School.

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

- ◆ *observing a total of 89 complete and partial classes. The team spent a total of over 92 hours in direct classroom observation. Every classroom was visited at least once, and most teachers were observed more than once.*
- ◆ *observing the school outside of the classroom*
 - ◆ *following seven 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*
 - ◆ *reviewing student portfolios*

- ◆ *reviewing student science journals*
- ◆ *interviewing teachers about the work of their students*
- ◆ *analyzing three years of 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 Nayatt School
district strategic plan for Barrington Public Schools
1999, 2000 SALT Survey reports
district curricula
classroom textbooks
1998, 1999, 2000, 2001 Information Works!
1998, 1999, 2000, and 2001 Rhode Island Writing Assessment results
Nayatt School Accountability Binder
Nayatt School Celebrations Binder
Nayatt School Teaching Binder
Nayatt School Student Learning Binder
Nayatt School Technology Tips for the New and Old User
write ups of professional development activities
Barrington Public Schools Teacher Appraisal Manual

The full team built the conclusions, commendations, and recommendations presented here through intense and thorough discussion. The team met for a total of 28-1/2 hours in six separate meetings spanning the four days of the visit. This time is exclusive of the time spent in classrooms, with teachers, and in meetings with students, parents, and school, and district administrators.

The team must agree that every conclusion in this report:

- ◆ *is important enough to include in the report.*
- ◆ *is supported by the evidence the team has gathered during the visit.*
- ◆ *is set in the present.*
- ◆ *contains the judgment of the team.*

Using the Report

The team deliberately chooses the words, phrases, and sentences it uses in its conclusions, as well as in the *Portrait* and *Final Advice*. Thus, this report is the team's best attempt to encourage and support the school's continued improvement in strengthening the learning of its students.

The team reached consensus on each conclusion, each recommendation, and each commendation in this report.

It is important to note that this report reflects only the week in the life of the school that was observed and considered by this team. The report does not cover what the school plans to do or what it has done in the past. This report is not prescriptive.

The value of this report will be determined by its effectiveness in improving teaching and learning. By considering the importance to the school of what the team said and why, the school takes its first step in becoming accountable in a way that actually improves learning.

It is important to read and consider this report as a whole. Recommendations and commendations should be considered in relation to the conclusions they follow.

After the school improvement team considers this report it should make changes in the school improvement plan. The

revised plan will form the basis for negotiating a Compact for Learning with the district. The purpose of the Compact is to ensure that the school and its district work out an agreement about the best way to improve the school and the best way to target district support for the school. A RIDE Field Service Team representative will offer assistance in preparing the Compact.

2. PROFILE OF NAYATT SCHOOL

Backgrounds

Nayatt School is one of four elementary schools in the Barrington Public School System. It serves students in grades PK-3 for the town of Barrington, Rhode Island. Barrington is a town with a population of approximately 16,800. The present school first opened its doors to students in 1953. It originally served students in grades K-6. Since its construction, a three-room addition has been added and interior space has been reorganized. In the late 1980's Nayatt became a K-3 school.

A five-member elected school board governs the Barrington Public School District. A town manager and a five-member town council govern the town. Nayatt School students are served by a professional staff of one administrator, 37 full- and part-time faculty, one secretary, six teaching assistants, and two custodians.

Of the 371 students attending this school 95 percent are White, 2 percent are Asian/Pacific Islander, .8 percent are Native/Alaskan American, and .2 percent are Black. Sixty-four students, totaling 17 percent receive special education services and .5 percent applied for and receive free or reduced-price lunch.

Parent participation is encouraged in the placement of students entering the first grade. Nayatt School offers parents the following program options: single grade, first grade / second grade loop, multiage (grades 1-3) and K-1. Brochures, conferencing, a spring orientation, and classroom visitations provide parents with pertinent information about these programs.

Barrington is one of the East Bay communities. Nayatt School teachers participate in and benefit from the professional development provided by the East Bay Educational Collaborative. Nayatt School offers a number of complementary programs before and after school including: foreign language instruction before school, chess before school, and a YMCA program after school.

State Assessment Results for Nayatt School

On the 2001 Rhode Island Writing Assessment a little more than one in two of the third graders (56%) met or exceeded the standard. In 1998 a little more than one in three third graders (36%) met or exceeded the standard. This percentage has increased each year (41 percent in 1999, 45 percent in 2000) representing a 20 percent cumulative increase from 1998-2001

The most recently available Rhode Island Writing Assessment results have been appended to this report. *Information Works!* data for Nayatt School is available at www.ridoe.net.

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

Nayatt School is a neighborhood school nestled in the heart of Barrington. As you enter the lobby, you are greeted by a vibrant undersea mural populated by hundreds of beautifully crafted ceramic fish, individually made by the talented and creative students. This colorful atmosphere portrays the community spirit of the students, staff, teachers, principal, and volunteers, as well as the rich experiences that permeate this exciting and engaging learning community. As one moves through the school, the immediate impression is one of a caring, welcoming, learning community.

Individuality, excellence, and high expectations for performance are hallmarks of this school. Literacy and numeracy are highly valued by all in the community—parents, teachers, students, and school and district administrators. All are working to build a strong foundation of academic and social skills in an atmosphere that is mutually supportive, respectful, and challenging.

Teachers and staff care, nurture, and cultivate the academic and social growth of their students. Improving the quality of teaching and learning is an ongoing process that this learning community has dedicated itself to achieve. The talented and conscientious teachers continuously hone their craft to provide students with multiple opportunities to learn and grow. They willingly teach each other and seek professional development opportunities outside of the school.

Parents at this school are active partners in the education of their children and support their children's learning both in school and at home. They are proud of the school and respect the teachers; they are informed and involved. Teachers and parents at Nayatt School work together on behalf of the children to instill a love for learning, as well as the ability and desire to become life long learners. Although the school regularly employs a variety of effective home-school communication practices, some parents desire more frequent and detailed information about the academic progress of their children.

The principal, teachers, and the school improvement team at Nayatt School have embraced a commitment to continuous improvement. They demonstrate an obvious willingness and desire to provide children with a high quality education. Successful practices are refined and new approaches and strategies are researched and implemented. Teachers have high expectations for their students and exert considerable effort planning and implementing high quality assignments.

Nayatt School is a high performing learning community that is clearly moving in the right direction. This learning community is ready to take the next steps to enhance the learning of the children who attend this school. Accomplishing this will require additional job-embedded professional development, more explicit concentration on the learning represented by standards, ongoing changes in assessment practices, the integration of technology into the teaching and learning environment, and safety nets to ensure no child is left behind.

4. FINDINGS ON STUDENT LEARNING

Sources of Evidence

- ◆ *examining completed and ongoing student work*
 - ◆ *observing classes*
- ◆ *talking with students, teachers, and staff*
- ◆ *observing the school outside of the classroom*
- ◆ *meetings with the school improvement team, students, school and district administrators, and parents*
- ◆ *following students*
- ◆ *examining completed and ongoing student work*
- ◆ *interviewing teachers about their students work*
- ◆ *reviewing student portfolios*

Conclusions

Students at Nayatt School come with a wide variety of rich experiences to share with their classmates and enrich their learning. They are happy, enthusiastic, eager, and very respectful of peers and adults. Students feel comfortable and valued. Most students are actively engaged in learning, take ownership of their education, and work collaboratively to develop classroom rules and expectations for learning. They are developing responsibility for themselves and the school community. (*observing classes, talking with students, teachers, and staff, following students, observing the school outside of the classroom, meetings with the school improvement team, students, school administrator, and parents*)

The cooperative nature of the students fosters an interactive learning community, which supports the social, emotional, and academic development of students. Students often exhibit empathy for each other, encourage each other, and validate each other's work and behavior based on the clear expectations provided in each classroom. Many students value the responsibilities they have to the school community; they respect the working styles, as well as the uniqueness, of their peers. A number of students actively solicit the opinion of other students. (*observing the school outside of the classroom, observing classes, following students, meetings with the school improvement team, students, and parents, talking with students, teachers, and staff*)

Most students read very well. They are becoming more proficient readers by reading a wide variety of high quality literature and by engaging in reading experiences in both the classroom and library. Many are excited about reading, enjoy it, and are building the foundation needed to be life-long learners. Students read every day for many purposes in a variety content areas and genres. Some students keep detailed reading interest inventories, reading response journals, and independent reading logs. Many students are effective at word attack. Most students are better at literal and factual interpretations (plot, setting, characters, author's intent) than inferring, analyzing, and making connections between texts. Some students effectively make justifiable predictions and use textual evidence to support their positions. (*reviewing completed and ongoing student work, reviewing student portfolios, observing classes, following students, talking with students, teachers, and staff, interviews with teachers about student work*)

Many students exhibit a clear knowledge of mathematics skills and concepts. Students are communicating their mathematical thinking and understanding in a variety of forms (pictures, number sentences, and written explanations). Additionally, to develop mathematical skills and concepts students complete math journals, practice numbers, make calendars, and use skill-embedded math games, money, manipulatives, and calculators. Students are employing a variety of strategies to solve number sentences (equations) and mathematical problems. They can follow the steps of specific problem-solving strategies but are less adept at independently selecting and using multiple strategies on a single problem. (*observing classes, following students, reviewing student portfolios, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, talking with students, teachers, and staff*)

Most students demonstrate writing effectiveness in both process and product. Students write daily in a variety of forms and genres. They write in reflective journals, thoughtfully communicate mathematically and scientifically, respond to literature and teacher-generated writing prompts. Students enhance their writing in a variety of ways—using rubrics, word walls, and checklists. Many students can effectively create an organizing structure to their writing and apply conventions in the mechanics of creating a written piece. Fewer students can effectively engage the reader by establishing a context, include sensory images and supporting details, write from different perspectives, and provide closure. Students are more adept at producing writing in a given form than shaping language to communicate effectively with style, stance, and substance. (*reviewing, completed and ongoing student work, reviewing student portfolios, observing classes, interviewing*)

teachers about the work of their students, talking with students and teachers)

Many students use a variety of self-management strategies to extend and refine their knowledge. Students often refine, revise, and reflect on their work, effectively using word walls, rubrics, checklists, and other tools to improve their work. They make choices in risk free environments which they help create and which foster their independence. *(following students, observing classes, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, reviewing student portfolios, interviewing teachers about the work of their students)*

Commendations for Nayatt School

The ownership students take for their own learning

The contributions students make to create an interactive learning community

The love of reading students exhibit

Students use of self-management strategies

Recommendations for Nayatt School

Provide more opportunities for students to self-select problem solving strategies, as well as to use multiple strategies on authentic problems.

Increase student focus on inferring, analyzing, making connections between texts, and using textual evidence to support their positions and predictions.

Hone the sophistication of the student performance while simultaneously working with increasingly complex assignments and texts.

Continue to analyze and disaggregate the New Standards Reference Exam test scores from Hampden Meadows School and use it to inform instruction.

Recommendations for Barrington School District

Provide the technical assistance, supports, and structures necessary for Nayatt School to harvest, analyze, and use state and local assessment data to inform instruction.

5. FINDINGS ON TEACHING

Sources of Evidence

- ◆ *observing classes*
- ◆ *observing the school outside of the classroom*
- ◆ *talking with students, teachers, and staff*
- ◆ *meetings with the school improvement team, students, school and district administrators, and parents*
- ◆ *following students*
- ◆ *reviewing classroom assessments*
- ◆ *interviewing teachers about the work of their students*
- ◆ *reviewing completed and ongoing student work*
 - ◆ *reviewing student portfolios*
 - ◆ *reviewing student science journals*
- ◆ *1998, 1999, 2000, and 2001 Rhode Island Writing Assessment results*
- ◆ *review of Nayatt School Accountability binder*

Conclusions

Teachers at Nayatt School are creative, dedicated professionals who exhibit exemplary effort in their pursuit of a high quality education for their students. They act as facilitators, role models, coaches, instructors, and work actively to enrich many aspects of their students' learning. Fostering a positive, enriching learning community in which students excel is a priority. Real life connections are a planned part of students' learning experiences. Reading, writing, and problem solving are well integrated across the curriculum. Teachers demonstrate an admirable willingness to continuously change and improve their professional practices in order to meet the evolving needs of their students. Many teachers provide a variety of learning opportunities with accommodations to meet the individual needs of their students. (*observing classes, following students, talking with students, staff, and teachers, meetings with students, school and district administrators, and parents*)

Teachers exert considerable effort to encourage students to improve, revise, and reflect on their work. Criteria, word walls and banks, checklists, brainstorming lists, webs, rubrics, and a print-rich environment enable students to become independent learners. Oral and written feedback is consistently provided to students regarding the quality of their work. Some teachers have extended this practice by effectively incorporating diagnostic comments with clear examples students can use to improve specific parts of their work. While assessments and feedback effectively guide the form, structure, and procedures embedded in student work, they are less effective at pushing student work to a higher level of complexity, deepening their understanding, and assessing for impact. Checklists and other tools are used when a rubric with criteria clearly linked to the bullets of specific content and performance standards would be more beneficial. In addition, while standards-based practices are embedded in many teaching and learning activities, the learning represented by the standards is not always explicitly made clear for students. (*observing classes, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, following students, reviewing classroom assessments, reviewing student portfolios*)

Improving the quality of student writing is a considerable focus of this school. Teachers focus on the writing process and provide many opportunities for students to write in all subject areas and for a variety of purposes. To develop strategies for effective writing, teachers incorporate opportunities for students to create reflective journals, communicate mathematically and scientifically, write narratives, and respond to literature, as well as to compose some self-selected writing. Teachers are implementing common writing prompts to assess systematically student performance between and among grades. This tremendous effort contributes to the twenty percent growth in test scores from 1998 to 2001. To build on their existing practices, teachers are incorporating the components of Six Traits writing. Presently, teachers' knowledge and implementation of the instructional practices associated with Six Traits are emergent. (*following students, talking with teachers and students, reviewing student portfolios, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, 1998, 1999, 2000 and 2001 Rhode Island Writing Assessment results*)

Teachers willingly collaborate collegially—vertically and horizontally—to share their expertise with each other, to group students, and to improve student performance. They value their own learning and actively seek professional development opportunities to hone their craft. Effective practices are modeled for both students and colleagues. Some teachers even carry out demonstration lessons for their peers. Specialists are valued as an integral part of this school. Effective partnerships exist among classroom teachers, specialty, library media, enrichment, reading, and resource teachers and support services, among others, to generate educational experiences that excite and motivate students. (*following students, observing the school outside of the classroom, observing classes, reviewing student portfolios, meetings with the school*)

improvement team, school administrator, talking with teachers, review of Nayatt School Accountability binder)

Literacy is highly valued in this school. Children read every day in multiple genres. Teachers' knowledge and love of literature is readily apparent and serves as a motivating force for children. They routinely conference with students individually and in groups about the literature read by students and teachers. Nayatt teachers exert considerable effort to collect information from a number of sources—running records, high frequency word lists, interest inventories, observations, student conferences—about the reading achievement of their students. This information is most often used to group students according to reading level and to provide additional reading support. A few teachers augment these groups with flexible grouping strategies to target the specific instructional needs that students require to become effective word solvers and analytical readers. Additionally, a few teachers effectively delve deeply into literature by engaging students in book chats, author studies, and genre studies. Effective practices include: comparing and contrasting themes, evaluating author's craft and literary merit, making connections between multiple texts, and specifically focusing on the bullets found in content and performance standards. *(observing classes, following students, reviewing student portfolios, interviewing teachers about the work of their students, reviewing completed and ongoing student work)*

The Kits in Teaching Elementary Science (KITES) program enhances and complements the cooperative atmosphere the energetic teachers at Nayatt School create in the school and classroom. The inquiry-based model is a powerful motivating force for students that actively engages them and provides an umbrella for both literacy and numeracy learning. Scientific reasoning, making predictions, drawing conclusions, and transferring knowledge are all artfully infused by teachers into these science experiences—making them both hands-on and minds-on. Consistent teaching throughout the school supports this cohesive, sequential, and rigorous science program. This common approach by the teaching staff enhances student achievement and skyrockets the development of higher level thinking skills. *(observing classes, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, meeting with students, talking with students, teachers, and staff, reviewing student science journals)*

Considerable emphasis is placed on developing students' mathematical abilities. Teachers use Everyday Mathematics and supplement it with additional mathematical problem solving. Strong emphasis is placed on developing higher order thinking skills and using strategies in real life contexts. A number of hands-on, skill building, logical reasoning, and communications tasks are incorporated in the students' daily experiences. Rubrics, displays of student work, constructive feedback, teacher modeling, large and small group instruction all contribute to growth in mathematical thinking. While teachers are building the students' knowledge of problem solving strategies, many students still have difficulty determining resources and strategies for solving problems, as well as showing mathematical ideas in a variety of ways. *(examining completed and ongoing student work, reviewing portfolios, observing classes, talking with students and teachers, following students)*

Commendations for Nayatt School

The staff's obvious caring and dedication to students

Teachers' willingness to continuously hone their teaching craft

Providing a positive school community with high expectations for learning

The teachers' effective integration of the KITES program with other disciplines and the excitement it generates for learning

The love of reading and writing fostered by the staff

Recommendations for Nayatt School

Create rubrics and other assessments explicitly linked to the bulleted sections of the Primary Literacy Standards and/or other standards, and then devise instructional tasks to scaffold student work through the learning represented by the standards.

Increase the use of specific constructive comments with clear examples students can use to improve parts of their work.

Focus additional instructional tasks on developing the effectiveness and impact of student writing.

Expand the professional development offered around standards-based education, the Six Traits writing, balanced literacy, examining student work, and establishing criteria in rubrics and other performance assessments.

Delve more deeply into literature by increasing the opportunities for students to engage in book chats, author studies, genre studies, literature circles, and book clubs.

Expand, school wide, the use of flexible grouping strategies to target specific instructional needs as evidenced by running records, observations, conferencing, and student work.

Continue to examine the current mathematical program and instructional approaches to ensure that students concurrently develop skills, concepts, and the ability to select and use multiple problem solving strategies, as well as to show ideas in a variety of ways.

Recommendations for Barrington School District

Continue to support the professional development of teachers and staff of Nayatt School with an emphasis on the areas outlined above.

Provide the technical assistance and resources required by Nayatt School to implement the recommendations of this SALT report.

6. FINDINGS ON THE SCHOOL

Sources of Evidence

- ◆ *observing classes*
- ◆ *observing the school outside of the classroom*
 - ◆ *talking with many students, teachers, staff, and school administrators*
- ◆ *meetings with the school improvement team, students, school and district administrators, and parents*
- ◆ *talking with students, teachers, and staff*
- ◆ *following students*
- ◆ *Reviewing school improvement plan for Nayatt School*
- ◆ *reviewing Nayatt School Accountability binder*
- ◆ *reviewing Nayatt School Technology Tips for the New and Old User*
- ◆ *reviewing write ups of professional development activities*
- ◆ *reviewing Nayatt School Celebrations Binder, Accountability Binder, Focus School Binder r*
- ◆ *reviewing Barrington Public Schools Teacher Appraisal Manual*
 - ◆ *reviewing district curricula*

Conclusions

Nayatt School is a professional learning community that continues to be cultivated by the principal and teacher leaders. A quest toward excellence and high standards is a hallmark of this school. The strong partnership between school, family, and community is the foundation of this innovative and supportive school. All recognize that school experiences are the cornerstones of academic, social, and emotional growth; these are highly valued. Many programs and opportunities exist—looping, single grade, multiage, pre-school, language-based, enrichment, support services, etc.— to meet the educational and developmental needs of each child. The hard working, invested, and dedicated staff and school leaders work effectively and carefully to orchestrate the talents and individuality of parents and students in this finely tuned learning institution. Nevertheless, efforts to maintain continuity among programs and sequentially build on student learning are hindered by the lack of K-12 standards-based curricula with grade level benchmarks. (*meetings with the school improvement team, students, school and district administrators, and parents, talking with students, teachers, and staff, observing the school outside of the classroom, reviewing Nayatt School Accountability binder, reviewing district curricula*)

The partnership between family and school contributes to a cooperative, productive, learning environment at Nayatt school. Parents work in concert with the school to provide enriching opportunities that expand learning horizons. A number of enriching opportunities have been spearheaded and/or actively supported by parents including: science nights, foreign language instruction, chess club, arts night—among others. Teachers inform parents in a number of ways—school newsletters, class newsletters, PTO meetings, phone calls, parent conferences, and home link folders, etc. Additionally, some teachers maintain web sites, which provide parents and students with an instantaneous snap shot of daily classroom life. Even so, some parents desire more specific constructive feedback about the individual academic and social development of their children and additional guidance on the programmatic choices available in the school. (*talking with students, teachers, and staff, meetings with the school improvement team, students, school and district administrators, and parents, reviewing Nayatt School Celebrations binder, Accountability binder, and Student Learning binder*)

The school improvement team at Nayatt School exerts considerable effort to establish an ambitious strategic direction for this school. This team, comprised of teachers, parents, and a community member, see the school immersed in a continuous growth curve focused on excellence. The school improvement team considers their school improvement plan an organic document, subject to revision, based on past successes in the school's improvement efforts and the information gained through self-study activities. However, the present action plans in the SIP lack timelines, measurable objectives, and designated personnel who are responsible for their implementation. This limits the ability of the school community to determine when these objectives have been met. (*reviewing school improvement plan for Nayatt School, meeting with the school improvement team*)

Supporting the professional growth of teachers and the high quality instruction is a priority of this school and district. A variety of professional development is available from the district and the East Bay Educational Collaborative. The teachers at Nayatt School willingly share and collaborate, model lessons for their peers, and share the knowledge they

acquire during various professional development experiences. Teachers and students have a variety of high quality instructional materials available to support teaching and learning in math, science, English Language Arts, and the arts. There is a rich collection of print materials in the Library Media Center. Furnishings, facility renovations, and physical space constraints have received less attention than instructional materials. Although there are some excellent examples of technology use in the school and a variety of technological training has occurred, access to technology and the use are limited on a schoolwide basis. *(talking with teachers, meetings with the students, school and district administrators, observing classes, reviewing Nayatt School Technology Tips for the New and Old User, reviewing write ups of professional development activities, following students)*

The Barrington Public Schools teacher evaluation instrument is an ineffective tool for improving professional practice. While the goal-setting option does enable teachers to pursue individual goals for professional growth, the checklist option provides insufficient feedback to assist teachers in improving their practice. Additionally, the present tool lacks clear indicators of performance aligned with RI Beginning Teachers Standards. Tenured teachers are evaluated only once every three years. *(reviewing Barrington Public Schools Teacher Appraisal Manual, meeting with the district administrators)*

Commendations for Nayatt School

The contributions parents make to this learning community

The professional learning community cultivated by the principal and teacher leaders

Teachers' willingness to collaborate and share ideas and expertise

Recommendations for Nayatt School

Use common planning time and/or rotating subs to expand the examination of student work between and among classes and grades.

Focus this analysis on establishing common expectations for performance at each grade level, determining the current strengths and needs of students, and deciding what implications that has for future instruction.

Add timelines and measurable outcomes to the action plans in the school improvement plan and designate personnel who will be responsible for their implementation.

Establish a prioritized focus on a few key tactics designed to improve student performance.

Increase the amount of constructive feedback provided to parents about the individual academic and social development of their children.

Expand on the information provided to parents about the looping, multi-age, single grade, and other programmatic options that are available to their children.

Investigate various options for infusing technology into the curriculum and increase the access to and use of technology throughout the school.

Recommendations for Barrington School District

Develop K-12 standards-based curricula with grade level benchmarks to increase uniformity between and among grades and schools.

Formulate anchor papers and other annotated exemplars of student work aligned to the grade level curricula benchmarks described in the previous recommendation.

Assist the school in revising its school improvement plan to include timelines, measurable criteria, and the designation of personnel responsible.

Work with the Barrington Teachers' Union and the four-person evaluation committee to revise the teacher evaluation system to be an effective tool for both evaluating teachers and improving the craft of teaching. Include clear indicators of performance aligned with the Rhode Island Beginning Teacher Standards.

Recommendations for the Barrington Teachers Union

Work with the designee of the school committee and the four-person evaluation committee to revise the teacher evaluation system to be an effective tool for both evaluating teachers and improving the craft of teaching. Include clear indicators of performance aligned with the Rhode Island Beginning Teacher Standards.

7. FINAL ADVICE TO THE SCHOOL

Nayatt School is an exceptional learning institution committed to educational excellence and high standards of performance. The staff, teachers, and principal all desire to provide the best quality education. Your collaborative nature and reflective practices form a strong foundation that will continue to help children grow, learn, and develop.

Your school is comprised of hard-working, dedicated, and resourceful teachers, aides, and support staff. Parents are an integral and important part of this learning community. Many of your students bring a strong foundation and rich set of experiences to this school. This high-quality learning institution is on the threshold of becoming a truly outstanding school. The professional staff is eager to take the next steps on the journey towards excellence. Build on this strong foundation and existing collaboration in your future reform efforts.

As you embark on the next steps, make student learning the focus of your efforts. Thoughtfully and purposefully harvest the data from classroom assessments, grade level prompts, an examination of student work, as well as from your state assessment results. With only one state assessment much of the evidence you acquire about student learning must be generated from individual classroom tasks and assessments. Make examining student work an ongoing part of your self-study efforts. Meet by program option, by grade level, whole school, and include specialty teachers and support personnel in this conversation. On a schoolwide basis determine what skills, knowledge, and ability your children currently have and still need. Then alter instructional strategies and programmatic approaches in order to close gaps in performance.

The different program options designed to meet the educational needs of each child are a powerful and positive part of this learning community. Work to refine the guidance provided to parents about the different options available. A number of staff and parents feel additional guidance would minimize misinformation and enable parents to make more informed choices regarding the option best suited to their individual child's needs.

As you move forward, examine existing practices and planned changes to ensure that children engaged in different approaches to learning develop comparable achievement levels. While the journey for children can and should be different, the destination must be the same. Distributing resources—time, money, personnel, and materials—equally is not always equitable. Let your analysis of student learning be the driving force that guides your instructional choices, programmatic options, strategic planning, and budgetary decisions. In other words, let the specific learning needs of your children be the driving force behind your efforts at continuous improvement.

Continue your established traditions of reflective practice and ongoing professional development with a focus on embedding standards-based practices more deeply into the reforms of the school. Many of your practices are clearly standards-based, but connections to the learning represented by the standards are not always explicitly made for students. Clearly linking your assessments and instructional tasks to the bullets (performance indicators) listed under the standards will support you in your efforts to help children develop complex understandings and use knowledge meaningfully and purposefully.

When reading and reflecting upon this report, the school and its community should bear in mind that, by design, this SALT report is not a celebration of all the wonderful things taking place in this school. Rather, it is a presentation of those items that, in the visiting team's judgment, the school and community must focus on if they are to help all students of all achievement levels perform at higher levels. As you work with this SALT report we hope you realize our conclusions, commendations, and recommendations are designed to help you make this outstanding learning community better meet the needs of your students. For that is, unquestionably, the intent of our team.

NAYATT SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT TEAM

Carol Blaeser
Teacher

Lori Codega
Teacher

Beth Cundy
Parent / Chair

Nancy Penza
Principal

Kathryn Dunn Swanson
Teacher

Karen Sylvia
Teacher

William H. Thurber
Community Member

Andrew Todd
Parent

Caroline Tortolani
Parent

THE SALT VISIT TEAM

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Technology Education / Department Chairperson
Ponaganset Middle / Senior High School
Foster-Glocester, Rhode Island
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Chair of the Team

Rose Mary Choiniere
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Pawtucket, Rhode Island

Traci Clays
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Guiteras School
Bristol, Rhode Island

Rosanne DiCenso
Literacy Coach
Martin Luther King Elementary School
Providence, Rhode Island

Ann Larson
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Portsmouth, Rhode Island

Sue Moore
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Carey Elementary School
Newport, Rhode Island

Laura Zucker
Grade 1 Teacher
R.C. LaPerche Elementary School
Smithfield, Rhode Island

**NEW STANDARDS REFERENCE EXAMINATION AND RI WRITING
ASSESSMENT RESULTS (2001)**

ENDORSEMENT OF PRE RELEASED SALT VISIT TEAM REPORT

Nayatt School

October 5, 2001

To complete the Catalpa Ltd. report endorsement, I discussed the conduct of the visit with the Visit Chair while it was in process, and I have reviewed this report. Based on my knowledge derived from these sources of evidence, using the criteria specified in the *Endorsing SALT Visit team Reports by Catalpa Ltd.*, and using the methodology and procedures specified in the *Handbook for SALT Visit Chairs, 1st edition*, I conclude that:

1. 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.
2. The conclusions and all other content of this report meet the criteria specified for a SALT Visit report.

Accordingly, Catalpa Ltd. endorses this report as a legitimate SALT Visit Report.



Thomas A. Wilson, EdD

Catalpa Ltd.

October 22, 2001