



Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
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East Providence High School and Career & Technical Center EAST PROVIDENCE

THE SALT VISIT TEAM REPORT

April 30, 2004



School Accountability for Learning and Teaching (SALT)

The school accountability program of the Rhode Island Department of Education

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Purpose and Limits of This Report

This is the report of the SALT team that visited East Providence High School and Career & Technical Center from April 26 to April 30.

Although the high school and the Center functioned as two separate schools in the past, they are working to become one school. This large SALT team addressed both the school and the Center as if it were one, pointing out differences when it was appropriate.

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 carefully designed to make it possible for visit team members to make careful judgments using accurate evidence. The careful 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 East Providence High School and Career & Technical Center?

How well does the teaching at East Providence High School and Career & Technical Center affect learning?

How well does East Providence High School and Career & Technical Center 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 East Providence High School and Career & Technical Center 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* describes the theoretical constructs behind the SALT visit and stipulates the many details of the visit procedures. Contact Rick Richards at (401) 222-4600 x 2194 or ride0782@ride.ri.net for further information about the *Handbook* or other SALT protocols. The *Handbook* and other relevant documents are also available at www.Catalpa.org.

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 assures 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 246 hours in direct classroom observation. Most of this time was spent in observing complete lessons or classes. Almost every classroom was visited at least once, and many teachers were observed more than once. The team also spent over 70 hours in conversations with administrators, teachers and staff throughout the visit.

The full visit team built the conclusions, commendations, and recommendations presented here through intense and thorough discussion. The team met for a total of 35 hours in team meetings spanning the five days of the visit. This time does not include the time the team spent in classrooms, with teachers, and in meetings with students, parents, and school and district administrators.

The team did agree by consensus that every conclusion in this report is:

Important enough to include in the report

Supported by the evidence the team gathered during the visit

Set in the present, and

Contains the judgment of the team

Using the Report

This report is designed to have value to all audiences concerned with how East Providence High School and Career & Technical Center 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 East Providence 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 amend its School Improvement Plan to reflect these decisions.

The East Providence, RIDE and the public should consider what the report says or implies about how they can best support East Providence High School and Career & Technical Center 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 EAST PROVIDENCE HIGH SCHOOL AND CAREER & TECHNICAL CENTER

East Providence Senior High School opened in 1952, and the adjoining Career & Technical Center facility, which is part of the high school, opened in September 1970. The school is the only public high school in the City of East Providence, Rhode Island. The Career & Technical Center serves students from East Providence and the surrounding communities of Barrington, Warren and Bristol. Three-hundred-and sixty-nine students attend the Center. The high school also works in partnership with students from the Rhode Island School for the Deaf.

A principal, three assistant principals, and a director, 165 full- and part-time teachers, nine guidance counselors, 18 special educators, one audio-visual coordinator, one part-time psychologist, one part-time social worker, one student assistance counselor, two nurse teachers, two librarians, nine secretaries, 16 custodians and 23 aides serve the students at this school.

Of the 1984 students enrolled in the high school, 1,614 (81%) are white, 287 (14%) are Black, 54 (3%) are Hispanic, 18 (1%) are Asian Pacific Islander, and 11 (1%) are American Indian/Alaskan Native. Two-hundred-and-eighty students (14%) receive resource support, 76 (4%) are self-contained special education students. Three hundred sixty-three students (18%) receive free and reduced-price lunch.

Throughout the year the academic, athletic, musical, and artistic successes of students are recognized in a variety of forums. The school awards numerous scholarships to outstanding students. Students take advantage of a variety of community services and student volunteer programs. East Providence High offers many clubs and organizations and many athletic teams that students may join so that they might achieve, succeed and be recognized for their strengths and talents. Currently, 582 students participate in school-sponsored activities and clubs, and 778 students participate in athletics.

The East Providence Career and Technical Center is located on the campus of the East Providence High School. Offering twelve areas of professional training, the Center is equipped to expose students to in-house on-the-job training. In conjunction with the education component of the high school, Technical Center students are able to complete all academic and career requirements with complete success. Students have the opportunity to become certified in their areas of study.

3. PORTRAIT OF EAST PROVIDENCE HIGH SCHOOL AND CAREER & TECHNICAL CENTER AT THE TIME OF THE VISIT

The East Providence High School and Career and Technical Center is an imposing structure from the outside but, upon entering its hallowed halls, one finds it is surprisingly inviting and friendly. The sprawling school is home to approximately 2,000 students who are well mannered and well behaved. The staff is loyal and experienced. The warm and caring attitude of the faculty is noteworthy. The new administrative team has a vision and is beginning to prioritize a course of action that the faculty can follow.

The theme ‘Townie Pride’ permeates all aspects of school life. At certain times the phrase describes attributes of the school that make it a place where students feel comfortable, relaxed and safe. At other times it describes attributes of the school that hold it back from reaching its full potential. Led by the administrators, a growing number of individuals use ‘Townie Pride’ as their rallying cry to improve student learning. But some use ‘Townie Pride’ as their reason to maintain tradition and the status quo, when true and relevant change is actually needed.

While the school offers quality instruction and student success through many wonderful and sometimes rigorous academic opportunities, most students are not challenged to realize their full potential in basic literacy and numeracy. The instruction is largely traditional with spots of creative teaching and experimentation.

The school’s practice of placing students in leveled and weighted courses discourages them from enrolling in the excellent classes and programs at the Center. There is a history of tacit acceptance of student tardiness, absenteeism, and a fail-for-a-quarter-and-pass-for-the-year grading system within which the physical education department must work. The outdated evaluation tool, which does not allow for teacher accountability and growth, and severe budgetary constraints all contribute to preserving traditions that the school cannot afford to keep.

4. FINDINGS ON STUDENT LEARNING

Conclusions

The quality and quantity of student writing at East Providence High School varies greatly depending on the content area and the class level of the students. Some students write high quality work using the writing process and following rubrics. Their writing demonstrates rich language, expresses clarity and depth of thought, as well as focus, organization and structure. Most students keep minimal notes, complete worksheets and answer questions that require short answers. Some students say they do not write at all. Very few students achieved the standard on the state assessment on writing effectiveness. *(following students, reviewing 2003 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries, discussing student work with teachers, observing classes, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, meeting with students and parents, talking with students and teachers)*

Student reading as a focus for learning is beginning to take root at East Providence High School. However, the students' efforts are still inconsistent and in progress. While some students read a variety of materials for different purposes, many read very little during the school day. When reading does occur, it often involves recalling specific details using textbooks and worksheets, rather than interpreting and analyzing concepts. Many students are not interested or engaged in the less challenging experiences. The New Standards Reference Examination results show that student reading skills are low; only 28% achieved the standard in reading for basic understanding, and only 21% achieved the standard in reading analysis and interpretation. In the latest SALT Survey 37% of the students indicated they did not read at all. Nonetheless, some students say they enjoy the newly instituted Drop Everything and Read (DEAR) time, because they can choose to read their own materials. Students' interest in reading is improving as evidenced by the increased circulation of library books. *(following students, observing classes, reviewing 2003 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries, talking with students, teachers, and school administrators, reviewing school improvement plan, reviewing 2003 SALT Survey report, meeting with school improvement team, students, school and district administrators, parents, reviewing classroom textbooks)*

Students engage in problem solving in core subjects, elective courses and, particularly, vocational education. Some students effectively problem solve through inquiry-based activities such as trouble shooting real-life problems, completing hands-on tasks, and finding solutions while working in cooperative groups. Unfortunately, the frequency and depth of student inquiry varies depending on the course, the course level, and student interest. Many students are not involved in rigorous inquiry-based activities. As a result, few students use higher order thinking skills to solve problems. This coincides with the low percentage of students who met the standard on the math subtest of the 2003 New Standards Reference Examination in problem solving. *(following students, observing classes, talking with students, teachers, administrators, reviewing 2003 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing classroom assessments)*

Students at East Providence High School are cooperative and compliant. While some take an active role in their learning, the majority is content to take a passive approach. They do not view themselves as active participants in their learning. In many classes students are not motivated to do their best work. They wait for the instructor to give them the answers, rather than actively seeking the answers for themselves. Short-term memory and cramming for the test are keys to success, even for strong learners. Most students display little interest in acquiring a base of knowledge. However, there are some who long for interaction, engaging activities, clear expectations, and constructive feedback from teachers. These students are ready for greater challenges. *(following students, observing classes, meeting with school improvement team, students, and parents, talking with students and teachers)*

Important Thematic Findings in Student Learning

Students are cooperative and compliant, and many perform only to the level of teacher expectations.

Many students show limited interest in reading and writing.

Too many students are passive learners.

5. FINDINGS ON TEACHING FOR LEARNING

Conclusions

Great inconsistencies in the incorporation of literacy strategies exist among the teachers at East Providence High School. Some teachers are adept at utilizing a variety of appropriate strategies and materials to support their students' achievement of content standards. Their practices engage students in authentic, interesting, relevant reading. As a result, students are able to use the knowledge they gain from reading to write complex pieces that require higher level thinking, such as inferring, analyzing, and synthesizing. In the 2003-2004 SALT Survey teachers report that their students are performing these tasks more frequently. However, many teachers depend upon traditional approaches and materials that primarily promote the recall of information and provide limited writing opportunities. These practices do not motivate students to participate actively in the reading and writing processes. Consequently, some teachers perceive students as reluctant readers and ineffectual writers, and many students perceive themselves in a similar manner. *(following students, observing classes, discussing student work with teachers, talking with students, teachers, and school administrators, reviewing records of professional development activities, reviewing 2003 SALT Survey report)*

Problem solving is evident in some core subjects and electives through the use of projects, labs, and Common Tasks. In-depth learning occurs in these classes as students apply their knowledge critically and creatively to solve real life problems. Applied learning is particularly evident at the Career and Technical Center, where many teachers integrate it throughout the curriculum. However, the emphasis and application of problem solving is not clearly embraced by all departments and at all course levels. *(following students, observing classes, meeting with students, school administrators, and parents, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, reviewing classroom assessments, talking with students, teachers, parents, and school administrators)*

A great disparity exists among teachers concerning their expectations for student performance. Some teachers expect maximum effort, demand high quality work, and require students to participate actively. Many teachers, however, accept minimal effort and marginal work and are satisfied with passive participation. Generally speaking, teachers provide more rigorous, inquiry-based learning opportunities for students in higher-level courses and in the Career and Technical Center programs. Conversely, teachers of lower level courses often expect students to produce short answers, write brief summaries and perform basic computations. It is evident that students at East Providence High School rise to the level of their teachers' expectations. *(following students, observing classes, meeting with the school improvement team, students, school and district administrators, parents, talking with students, teachers, school administrators, meeting with school improvement team, students, school administrators, parents, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing classroom assessments)*

Teacher expertise is underutilized at both the high school and the Career and Technical Center. Teacher leaders fully embrace and implement literacy and numeracy reform in their instruction. However, efforts to share expertise, while emerging, are limited and not always accepted. Additionally, time is not built into the workday for teachers to examine student work, discuss common core beliefs, and share their best practices. Consequently, teachers have limited opportunities for peer observation, feedback, and collaboration. This hinders in-house professional development and diminishes the possibility of optimal learning of all students. *(following students, observing classes, meeting with school improvement team, students, school and district administrators, parents, reviewing school improvement plan, talking with teachers, school and district administrators, reviewing district and school policies and practices, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, reviewing records of professional development activities)*

Teachers do not agree about the appropriateness of the block schedule, and most report that they have not received training in how to use it. Some teachers effectively use the block schedule to support student learning. They vary their instruction, design student-centered learning and provide opportunities for students to collaborate. However, many teachers do not use this time well. Instruction often begins late and ends early. Students regularly use this class time to complete their homework assignments. Furthermore, an over-reliance on traditional, teacher-directed practices such as lectures, worksheets, read and respond, or other low-level activities limits the effectiveness of the extended block periods and prevents students from becoming fully engaged in their learning. *(following students, observing classes, talking with students, teachers, parents, and school administrators, meeting with school improvement team, students, school administrators)*

Commendations for East Providence High School and Career & Technical Center

Teacher-created Common Tasks

Teachers who integrate applied learning, literacy and numeracy activities

Teachers who lead the implementation of reform initiatives

Recommendations for East Providence High School and Career & Technical Center

Identify and implement better ways to utilize the block schedule to maximize student learning. Seek teacher expertise both in and outside the school to provide professional development for the staff.

Challenge and engage your students more often in activities that require higher order thinking skills.

Provide rigorous inquiry-based activities for all students at all levels.

Expand opportunities for peer observation, feedback and collaboration. Institute common planning time.

Incorporate challenging, relevant, and engaging literacy and numeracy strategies across all disciplines.

Recommendations for The East Providence School District

Identify, acknowledge, and honor demonstrated excellence in teaching.

Support the school monetarily to make the recommended changes as outlined in the Teaching for Learning section of this report.

Empower teachers as they implement the school's vision to make the necessary changes for improved student learning.

6. FINDINGS ON SCHOOL SUPPORT FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING

Conclusions

The administrative team faces a significant challenge in leading East Providence High School and the Career and Technical Center. The team is energetic and committed to the students, and it is beginning to articulate a new vision for student learning. Teachers and students benefit from the new programs that the leadership team is implementing and supporting. These include the Drop Everything and Read (DEAR) time, the anticipated advisor/advisee program and the Landscape/Greenhouse course of study. However, the slow pace of reform, the lack of clarity about roles and accountability, and the reluctance to accept the ultimate responsibility for breaking the many traditions—all—prevent the East Providence High School from reaching its full potential. The team works hard and recognizes the challenges it faces. Limited leadership and limited support from the community, the district, and elected officials, as well as the ongoing budget crisis, have a further negative affect on the leadership team's ability to meet its responsibilities to serve the needs of each and every student. *(following students, observing classes, observing the school outside the classroom, talking with students, teachers, school administrators, meeting with school improvement team, students, school and district administrators, and parents, reviewing school improvement plan, reviewing district and school policies)*

The Career and Technical Center offers a proactive program for student learning. For the most part the curriculum enables students to acquire a theoretical and practical education and marketable skills. In these curricula, students are evaluated not only on what they learn, but also on the skills they develop. By providing valuable services to the community they have established a symbiotic relationship with the community. Unfortunately, monetary constraints an inadequate physical plant, and the lack of materials for classroom instruction prevent these programs from realizing maximum use. For example, state-of-the-art kitchen equipment, though purchased, remains idle. Enrollment at the Career and Technical Center is limited due to the course weighting policy that can negatively affect a student's class rank. As a result, college bound students often are discouraged from taking advantage of the excellent courses and programs offered at the Career and Technical Center. Also, the ninth grade exploratory classes are not adequate to expose students sufficiently to the career choices found here. *(observing classes, following students, observing the school outside the classroom, reviewing district and school policies and practices, talking with students, teachers, parents, and school administrators, meeting with students, school administrators, and parents)*

Opportunities for professional development at East Providence High School are limited, and many teachers do not see this as a necessary component for their growth and development. Although some teachers work continually to improve their teaching methods, others continue to engage in outdated practices. The obsolete and ineffective evaluation tool and the lack of established accountability for the implementation of current, innovative strategies allow many teachers to escape taking responsibility for their instruction. In addition, as a result of the district's freeze on the school's professional development money, there is limited funding for training. Also, the expertise of some trained faculty members is underutilized and unappreciated. Therefore, great opportunities for job-embedded professional development are missed. *(meeting with school improvement team, school and district administrators, talking with teachers, school and district administrators, reviewing records of professional development activities, reviewing school improvement plan, reviewing district and school policies and practices, review district strategic plan)*

East Providence High School has numerous outstanding programs. Some standouts are athletics, the fine and performing arts, the Partners Program, and a variety of club offerings. These innovative and creative programs provide opportunities for many students to find their niches in such a large school setting. Therefore, quite a few students are highly motivated to become actively involved in their school experience. However, the existence of some of these programs and the access to them are not apparent to the entire student body. While the school spirit at East Providence High School is a strength, it is limited to certain programs at the exclusion of others. The potential to provide an excellent support system, an enriched school culture, and personalized learning for all students is not fully realized. *(meeting with school improvement team, students, school administrators, and parents, following students, observing classes, observing the school outside the classroom, talking with students, teachers, parents, school administrators)*

The guidance department is an integral part of East Providence High School and Career and Technical Center. The guidance counselors support the academic and social needs of students by recommending class selection; preparing students for post-graduate plans, which includes their participation in the newly instituted Career Day; and helping them with emotional and personal issues. Longstanding guidance practices, questions of accessibility and effectiveness, and the reluctance to accept innovations decrease the effectiveness and success of this department. Furthermore, there are policies in the school that limit its ability to fulfill the mission of the guidance department: student placements that limit student movement within a content area; class weights that inhibit student course selection; the lack of standardized progress and deficiency reports; and the ongoing tension associated with student participation in the Career and Technical Center. All of these factors work against the benefit of students and their learning. *(following students, observing classes, observing the school outside the classroom, meeting with school improvement team, students, school administrators, and parents, talking with students, teachers, school administrators, reviewing school policies and practices)*

The long-standing culture at East Providence High School makes implementing any new policy or practices a daunting task. Even with the notable presence of a young and dynamic administrative team, the present learning environment is fraught with inconsistencies around policies. Due to a lack of a clearly articulated attendance policy, absenteeism is chronically high, compelling teachers to repeat lessons. Students who are rarely absent report that they often choose not to attend class because they know the teacher must deal with students who previously were absent. There are few repercussions when students are late; therefore, students experience no sense of urgency to arrive at school or class on time. When enforcement of the tardiness policies occurs, a positive student response is notable. There are similar concerns around the issue of smoking. A persistent minority of students and an occasional staff member ritually smoke between classes without consequence. The lack of penalties affects adherence to this rule. The current physical education policy, which allows students to participate for only three quarters of the year, is problematic—academically and behaviorally. All of these factors are deterrents to effective classroom instruction and optimal student learning. *(following students, observing classes, observing the school outside the classroom, meeting with school improvement team, students, school and district administrators, and parents, talking with students, teachers, school administrators, reviewing student handbook, reviewing district and school policies)*

Commendations for East Providence High School and Career & Technical Center

The variety of outstanding student-centered programs

The many worthwhile programs at the Career and Technical Center

Emergent reform initiatives

Career Day

Recommendations for East Providence High School and Career & Technical Center

Continue to support and make programs at the Career and Technical Center accessible to all students.

Redesign the 9th Grade Exploration Program at the Career and Technical Center so students may become more fully aware of the career paths open to them here.

Reconsider the weighting and leveling of courses to eliminate the negative impact on student course selections.

Celebrate student work and successes throughout the school and the school community.

Clarify and articulate roles for the leadership team.

Find creative ways to fund the initiatives that are underway here.

Re-examine and address the guidance policies that are identified in this report.

Design and implement an effective attendance policy.

Acknowledge and address the smoking problem.

Revise the grading policy of the Physical Education Department.

Recommendations for East Providence School District

Resolve the political differences with the town leaders that obstruct the educational progress in this school and funding for this school.

Provide the school with its Article 31 professional development monies.

Work with the school to implement new policies and programs that will enhance student learning.

Install the purchased state-of-the-art kitchen in the Career and Technical Center.

7. FINAL ADVICE TO EAST PROVIDENCE HIGH SCHOOL AND CAREER & TECHNICAL CENTER

As do many other high schools in the state, East Providence High School has a number of challenges ahead as it attempts to improve learning for its students. The new administrative team must grapple with making changes in policies and practices, which have persisted for years. Some examples include confronting absenteeism and tardiness, curtailing the use of tobacco on school property, eliminating the school's leveling and weighting policies and the stigma that some courses have acquired due to these policies.

Also, it is important that the school unify the programs found in the main building with those found at the Career and Technical Center, so that all students can share in and benefit from the variety of courses and programs that are available. At the same time, the team must continue to make strides in implementing new practices, such as personalization and common planning time, as identified by the Rhode Island Board of Regents. Although the needs are diverse and challenging, the seeds for effective change have been planted; the efforts have begun.

According to the 2003 New Standards Reference Examination results, however, the students at East Providence High School perform considerably below their peers in all subtests. Something must be done to reverse this discrepancy. Positive change in student performance will occur with adequate, on-going professional development for teachers and staff in all content areas in the integration of literacy and numeracy. Use your talented in-house teachers to provide this training. Build a system of accountability to ensure that all teachers strive to use best practices in their daily instruction. Update your teacher evaluation tool to make it more reflective of the kinds of instruction that must be in place now.

However, to be truly effective all members of the school community, the city leaders, the central and local administrators, the teachers and the staff must be on board with a consistent and focused vision. All must work together cooperatively to establish and support a workable plan to realize this vision. Only then will the proper fiscal management, allocation of resources and collaboration be harnessed to allow for all the necessary changes required here. Then all members of the school community can share in the pride that the success of their students will certainly create. While this is a difficult task, it must be done so that 'Townie Pride' will extend to the academic success of all students. Good luck to you in this noble endeavor.

ENDORSEMENT OF SALT VISIT TEAM REPORT

East Providence High School and Career & Technical Center

April 30, 2004

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 www.Catalpa.org). 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 Ltd. 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 be 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* (available at www.Catalpa.org).

Since unexpected circumstances might result in either the team or the school straying too far from the protocol for a visit, Catalpa Ltd. 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 Ltd.'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 routine steps that Catalpa Ltd. completed for this review were:

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

The findings from the review are:

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

Accordingly, Catalpa Ltd. endorses this report.



CATALPA LTD.

Thomas A. Wilson, EdD

Catalpa Ltd.

May 23, 2004

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 East Providence High School and Career & Technical Center 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 East Providence High School and Career & Technical Center.

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

- ◆ *direct classroom observation*
- ◆ *observing the school outside of the classroom*
- ◆ *following 21 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*
 - East Providence School Department Strategic Plan, 2003-2006*
 - East Providence School Department Budget, April 13, 2004*
 - East Providence School Department Policy Book*
 - East Providence School Department Applied Learning Strand, binder*
 - East Providence School Department Facilitator Project, binder*
 - Agreement between East Providence Education Association and East Providence School Committee, 2002-2005*
 - East Providence High School SALT Survey Report, 2003-2004*
 - East Providence High School Student Handbook, 2003-2004*
 - East Providence High School Program of Studies*
 - East Providence High School PTSO Newsletters*
 - East Providence High School Teachers' Guide*
 - East Providence High School, Freshman Orientation Guide, 2004-2005*
 - East Providence High School Agenda*
 - East Providence High School Attendance Data, 2003-2004 binder*
 - East Providence High School Teacher Handbook, 2003-2004*
 - East Providence Senior High School 2004 Spring Sports Program Faculty Schedules 2003-2004*
 - East Providence High School Media Center binder*
 - East Providence High School Curriculum Guides*
 - East Providence High School English Language Arts and Math, Revised Curricula, binder*
 - East Providence High School Examining Student work binder*
 - East Providence High School English Language Arts Best Practices, binder*
 - East Providence High School World Languages, binder*
 - Special Services 2001, binder*
 - Professional Development Activities, 2003-2004*
 - Websites to Enhance the Instruction of Algebra, binder*
 - Problem Solving Strategies Handbook for Middle School and High School Math Teachers, Spring, 2002*
 - Science Department Notebook, binder*
 - Social Studies Best Practices, binder*
 - Math Department Common Tasks, binder*
 - The Academy of Finance, binder*
 - The Academy of Finance Presents Around the World in a Day, binder*
 - The Academy of Finance Senior Capstone Project, International Research Report, binder*

Business Department, binder
Art Department and Family and Consumer Science, binder
Teacher Evaluation Instrument
Grade 9 Reading Binder
The Handbook of Content Literacy Strategies: 75 Practical Reading and Writing Ideas
records of professional development activities
classroom assessments
school improvement plan for East Providence High School and Career & Technical Center
classroom textbooks
2003 Information Works!
2003 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries
2003 Rhode Island Writing Assessment results
School and District Report Cards

State Assessment Results for East Providence High School and Career & Technical Center

Assessment results create pieces 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 for the school. It also uses this evidence, along with other evidence, to draw conclusions about those issues.

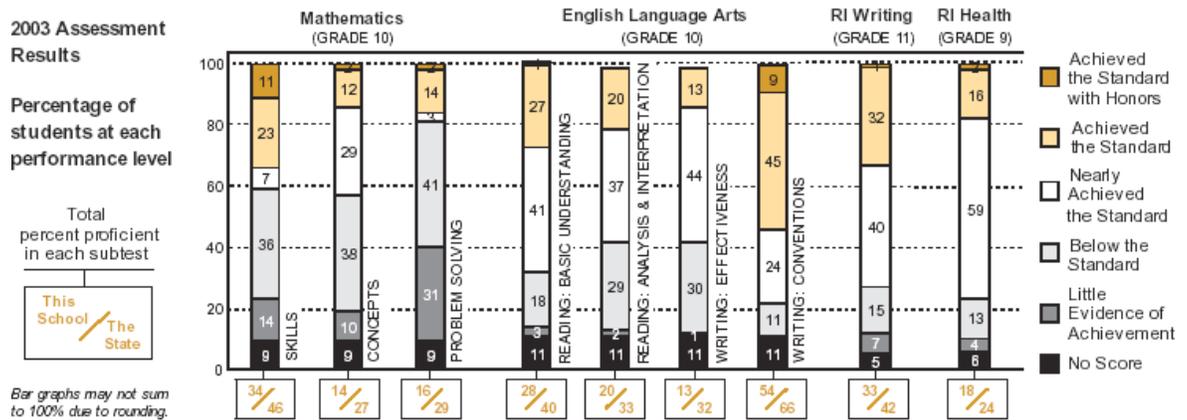
This school's results are from the latest available state assessment information. It is presented here in four different ways:

- ◆ *against performance standards;*
- ◆ *compared to similar students in the state;*
- ◆ *across student groups within the school;*
- ◆ *and over time.*

RESULTS IN RELATION TO PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

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

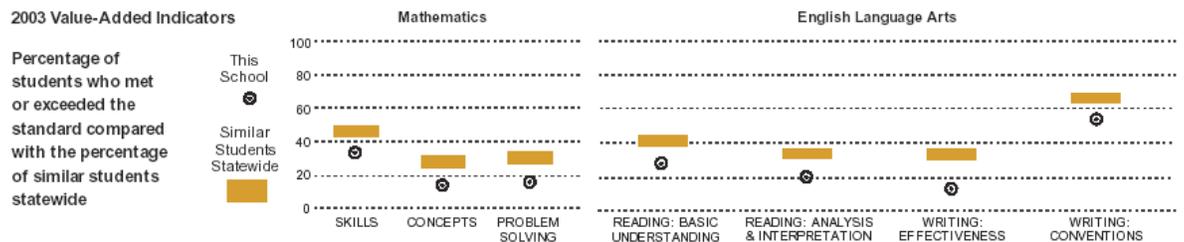
Table 1. 2002-03 Student Results on Rhode Island State Assessments



RESULTS COMPARED TO SIMILAR STUDENTS IN THE STATE

This chart includes the performance levels of students with special education needs, students participating in ESL or bilingual programs, low socio-economic status (a composite of income level, racial background and parental education), as well as the performance of students with none of these characteristics. Taking all these characteristics into account, the graph displays the overall performance of students in this school compared to - a group of students from across the state whose characteristics match this school's students.

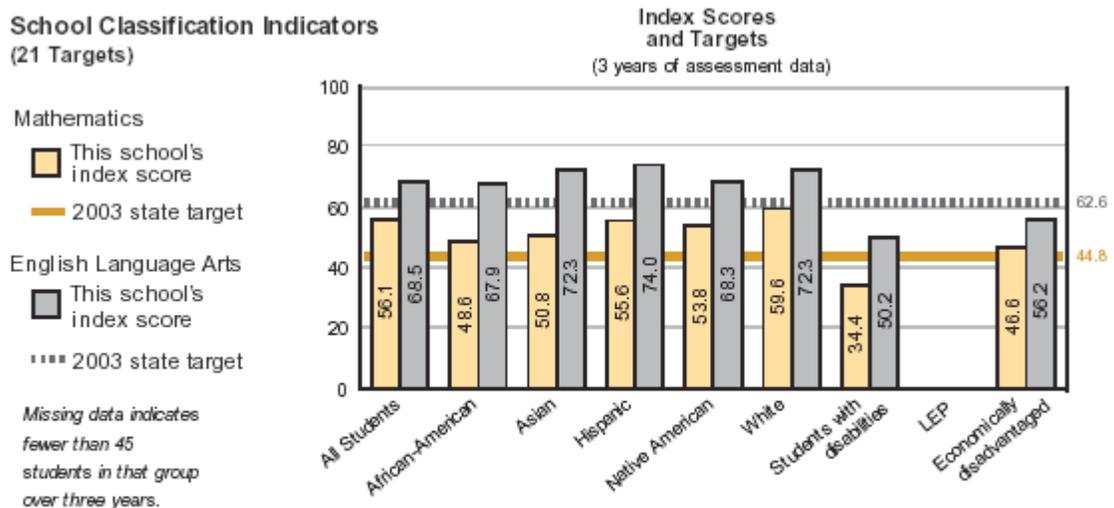
Table 2. 2002-2003 Student Results in Comparison to Similar Students Statewide



RESULTS ACROSS STUDENT GROUPS WITHIN THE SCHOOL

An important way to display student results is across different groups of students with different characteristics who are in the school. This display creates information about how well the school meets the learning needs of its various students. Since breaking students into these smaller groups can result in groups becoming too small to show accurate results, this display shows the results based on three years of testing. The Department defines an important gap between different groups (an equity gap) to be a gap of 15% or more.

Table 3. 2002-2003 Student Results across Subgroups



Index scores range from 0 to 100. They are based on the performance levels of all students in both English language arts and mathematics, for all subtests, over three years. For further detail, see the 2003 School Reports Cards at www.rido.net.

SCHOOL REPORT CARD

The following is the school report card that shows the school's performance in relation to the 2003 annual measurable objectives (AMO). East Providence High School and Career & Technical Center is categorized as a school in need of improvement and making insufficient progress. It has been identified as in need of improvement for the second year.

Information Works! data for East Providence High School and Career & Technical Center is available at <http://www.rido.net>.

THE EAST PROVIDENCE HIGH SCHOOL AND CAREER & TECHNICAL CENTER
IMPROVEMENT TEAM

Karen Antonelli, English Teacher, Co-Chair
Belinda Wilkerson, Guidance Counselor, Co-Chair

Administrators

Edward M. Daft, Principal
Frank DeVall, Assistant Principal
Liz Legault, Assistant Principal
Charles Rocha, Director, Career and Technical Center

Faculty

George Currier, English Teacher
Maureen Spaight, Social Studies Teacher
Kathleen Lord, Mathematics Teacher
Dennis Albert, Career and Technical Teacher
Stephen Prew, Special Education Teacher
Filomena Cunha, Secretary

Parents

Lisa Avedisian
Denise Ensign
Ruth Hainsworth
Sue Jeffrey
Dorrie King
Mary Ann Leonardo
Chris Partington
Amy Shanley
Alisa Spivey
Karen Stitt
Carol Tente
Fred Tente
Roslyn Thomas
Dawn Vierra
Diane Wildgoose

Community Member

Paul Rodriguez. F.O.P

Students

Scott Lemos, Grade 10
Shanna Lima, Grade 11
Cheslea Vallante, Grade 12
Claudine Varela, Grade 12
Ashley West, Grade 11

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