



Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
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The Charlotte Woods Elementary School

PROVIDENCE

THE SALT VISIT TEAM REPORT

April 2, 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 The Charlotte Woods Elementary School from March 29-April 2, 2004.

At the same time a different SALT team visited the Sergeant Cornel Young, Jr. Elementary School. Each team focused on their assigned school, even though the schools shared some features because they share the same facility.

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 The Charlotte Woods Elementary School?

How well does the teaching at The Charlotte Woods Elementary School affect learning?

How well does The Charlotte Woods Elementary 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 Charlotte Woods Elementary 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* 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 168 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 almost every teacher was observed more than once.

The full visit team built the conclusions, commendations, and recommendations presented here through intense and thorough discussion. The team met for a total of 35.5 hours in team meetings spanning the five days of the visit. This time does not include the time the team spent in classrooms, with teachers, and in meetings with students, parents, 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 Charlotte Woods Elementary 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 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 Providence School District, RIDE and the public should consider what the report says or implies about how they can best support The Charlotte Woods Elementary 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 CHARLOTTE WOODS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Charlotte Woods Elementary School, located in the “South Providence” neighborhood of Providence, Rhode Island, opened its doors in September 1998. Named after a woman known for her tireless work to improve family life and inner city conditions, Charlotte Woods School was the first new elementary school located in this area since 1960. The school shares the building and some faculty and staff with Sgt. Cornel Young, Jr. Elementary School in the B. Jae Clanton Complex.

Charlotte Woods serves a multi-ethnic population from kindergarten through grade five. Of the 422 students, 60% are Hispanic, 23% are black, 11% are Asian, five percent are white, and 0.7% is Native American.

Charlotte Woods has one principal, 12 regular education teachers, five ESL teachers and three special education self-contained teachers. The support staff includes one literacy coach, one math coach, one resource teacher and one intensive resource teacher, as well as a social worker and a psychologist. All support personnel are full time, with the exception of the speech therapist, occupational therapist and the descriptive diagnostic teacher. Apart from a part-time music teacher, all full-time itinerant teachers, as well as a guidance counselor, a nurse and one clerk, are shared between Charlotte Woods Elementary and Sgt. Cornel Young, Jr. Elementary. The itinerants include an art teacher, a music teacher, four physical education teachers and a librarian. Fourteen teacher assistants, three cafeteria workers, two lunch monitors, six maintenance personnel, one secretary and one clerk complete the staff.

A highly dedicated faculty and staff implement the New Standards Curriculum to increase student achievement. Charlotte Woods’ teachers work with Meeting Street School’s inclusion program to provide the least restrictive environment for all special education students. They collaborate with Rhode Island College, Providence College, the University of Rhode Island and Brown University to offer practicum and student teaching experiences for several college students. MET students volunteer in the classrooms. Teachers also run a Family Math Night, and presentations are made to the PTO about literacy and math by the respective coaches to inform parents about what their students are learning. Students participate in a Power Lunch Reading Program in conjunction with Fleet Bank, mentoring program under the guidance of the Urban League, and after school literacy and math programs for grades two and three, as well as an after school Title One reading program for students in grades four and five. Other notable programs include Justice Rules, the Audubon Society and the Festival Ballet program. All of these emphasize the importance of academic achievement and the need to be well informed.

Students, families, faculty members and the business community collaborate to provide a rich, diverse cultural experience for all. Students participate in many activities to develop an understanding of the cultural diversity reflected within the school. A continuously expanding network of partnerships, both within the school and outside of it, supports these activities.

3. PORTRAIT OF THE CHARLOTTE WOODS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AT THE TIME OF THE VISIT

Charlotte Woods Elementary School shares the B. Jae Clanton complex with Sgt. Cornel Young, Jr. Elementary School. This “two schools in one” complex attempts to address the problems historically related to larger schools by providing smaller learning communities for the 749 students served by these two schools. Built in 1998, this sparkling facility welcomes students from low socio-economic and multi-ethnic backgrounds. A middle school, two high schools and the South Providence Recreation Center surround the school. Litter lines the streets and sidewalks in the neighborhood, and multi-family homes show signs of years of neglect. Children are happy to come to school, leaving behind the problems and stresses of their personal lives.

Supported by strong literacy and math coaches, many new initiatives are underway at Charlotte Woods. ESL (English as a Second Language) teachers at every grade level seamlessly incorporate the special challenges of the ESL population into the existing school curriculum, and yet a high level of frustration exists, as hard working, dedicated teachers strive to meet the needs of their students, as well as to fulfill the district mandates.

The “two schools in one concept” presents a host of problems, beginning with dual leadership. While the newly assigned principal of Charlotte Woods has attempted to address many issues, the lack of agreement and coordination between the principals of the two schools undermines the effectiveness of essential procedures and policies. Breakdowns in communication exist among leadership, faculty, staff and parents. Inconsistent teaching practices and the lack of accountability and follow through impede effective school improvement. Discipline issues, unprofessional demeanor of staff and low parent involvement compound the problems. While students are excited and eager to learn, the disruptive behavior of some students interferes with the learning of others. Absenteeism and tardiness of students and support staff interrupt the flow of instruction. Many students find that reading, writing and math are difficult.

4. FINDINGS ON STUDENT LEARNING

Conclusions

All students at Charlotte Woods School love to read. They say they get to go “places in books where they don’t get to go.” Students intently listen to read alouds and enjoy reading to one another. They proudly celebrate their success by reading their books to the class. Many students choose to stay after school to be members of the Book Buddy Club. They know how to choose appropriate books to read independently, and they even read in the hall while waiting to use the bathrooms. While reading a variety of genres at their independent reading levels, students know how to identify basic story elements, as well as how to connect reading to their own lives and to other books they have read. They know how to use a variety of strategies to understand text, including writing or drawing pictures about what they have read, summarizing stories, taking notes and identifying words they don’t know. Although students say these practices help them know what a book is about, they often do not know. For the most part, students successfully answer recall questions, but they have difficulty answering interpretive questions or questions that require them to think critically. The majority of students read below grade level. *(following students, observing classes, observing the school outside the classroom, meeting with students, talking with students and teachers, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, 2003 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries, 2003 Information Works!)*

Student writing, which often is simplistic, contains short choppy sentences and lacks the creative elements necessary for a quality piece. Their writing often contains numerous errors in spelling, grammar and punctuation. However, the eagerness of students to share and celebrate their writing motivates them to write. Students say they like to write about their own lives because “the ideas are already in their heads.” When they do, their writing contains voice and descriptive details. In contrast, when they write about unfamiliar topics, the quality of their writing declines, and it varies from class to class. While students know how to fill out graphic organizers and use criteria charts, many do not know how to use these tools effectively to develop and improve their writing. Most student writing contains the elements required by the classroom rubrics, but it rarely extends beyond what is expected. In some classes students revise and edit their work using teacher feedback and peer editing, but they rarely improve their writing without being prompted. *(following students, observing classes, talking with students, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing classroom assessments, 2003 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries, 2003 Rhode Island Writing Assessment results)*

When solving math problems, many students often are confused and don’t know where to begin. They say that math is hard. They are overwhelmed by the inconsistent use of math terms utilized in the numerous math programs that are taught in each class. Students solve problems on a daily basis using the *Two Problem Approach (2PA’s)*, *Math Matters* (head problems), *Plexers*, *Investigations*, and the Scott Foresman Math series. As a result, they do not learn a common math language or a consistent approach to problem solving. Students know numerous math strategies, but they struggle to choose the appropriate strategies and tools to solve specific problems. Some students know how to explain their solutions to problems effectively and clearly articulate their math reasoning, but many do not. Many struggle to transfer their math knowledge from one program to another. It is not surprising that only 2% of the students met or exceeded the standard in math concepts, and 7% of the students met or exceeded the standard in problem solving. *(following students, observing classes, talking with students, teachers, meeting with the school improvement team, students, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, classroom textbooks, 2003 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries, 2003 Information Works!)*

Students at Charlotte Woods School are eager, ‘thirsty’ learners. They say they would rather be in school than anywhere else. Moreover, they believe that learning is important. However, the behavior of some students often interferes with the learning of many others. Students say that they are often distracted when they try to do their work. Teachers report that problems outside of school interfere with student learning in the school. Frequent absences and tardiness interrupts their learning. Students do not clearly understand the expectations for appropriate behavior both inside and outside of the classroom. Inconsistent, conflicting expectations and consequences within the school, as well as between the two schools, confuse students and send mixed messages about behavior. *(following students, observing classes, observing the school outside the classroom, talking with students, teachers, meeting with the school improvement team, students, school administrator, reviewing school improvement plan, 2002 SALT Survey report)*

Important Thematic Findings in Student Learning

- ◆ *Students are eager learners, who are capable of more.*
- ◆ *Students do not consistently and independently apply learning tools and strategies to improve their work.*
- ◆ *Students lack an understanding of their personal responsibility for their work and their actions.*

5. FINDINGS ON TEACHING FOR LEARNING

Conclusions

Most teachers accept the balanced literacy program and teach reading and writing using a variety of materials and methods. However, the focus of instruction varies from class to class. While teachers teach reading using leveled texts for guided and independent reading, some teachers focus more frequently on reading accuracy than on comprehension of text. All teachers teach reading strategies, word studies, and the identification of the basic story elements. They encourage students to connect text to other books they have read. Several teachers take anecdotal notes and running records on student progress and are beginning to use this information to change their instruction. While the Literacy coach demonstrates and co-teaches lessons, as well as provides professional development, not all classroom teachers consistently practice and reinforce these skills. As a result, students are not progressing at the rate they could. *(following students, observing classes, talking with teachers, meeting with the school improvement team, students, district administrators, reviewing school improvement plan, district strategic plan, completed and ongoing student work, classroom assessments, 2003 SALT Survey report)*

Teachers teach students how to use many writing tools, such as graphic organizers and criteria charts, to guide and organize their writing. However, the instruction of the effective use of these tools, as well as the expectations for quality writing, differs from class to class. Only a few teachers involve students in the creation of rubrics and criteria charts to encourage them to take more ownership of and responsibility for their own writing. Often, rubrics do not challenge students to reach a higher level of proficiency. Teachers teach writing following the district's prescribed units of study, but they report strict pacing of these units limits the amount of time students have to revise their work. Consequently, too few teachers regularly monitor and assess student progress, provide personal feedback and encourage students to reflect on their work and revise it. While a Literacy coach supports teachers and students in writing instruction, a few teachers do not consistently follow through or reinforce the strategies and skills students need to improve their writing. As a result, the quality of writing differs from class to class, and not all students exit their grades with similar skills and competencies. *(following students, observing classes, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing classroom assessments, 2003 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries, 2003 Rhode Island Writing Assessment results, talking with students, teachers, 2003 SALT Survey report)*

Teachers at Charlotte Woods School teach math using a variety of programs. These programs include *Investigations*, *Math Matters*, *Two Problem Approach*, *Plexers* and the Scott Foresman Math series. Teachers say it is necessary to juggle programs to ensure student success on the performance tests, as well as on the achievement tests. But, in fact, students are confused about how to solve math problems. The *Investigations* program is in its second year of implementation, and many teachers still lack the confidence required to implement the program effectively. While a math coach demonstrates lessons and provides professional development during common planning time, scheduling problems limit time for math coach support, as well as the teachers' ability to provide uninterrupted periods of math instruction. Many teachers do not consistently provide students with individual feedback, check their accuracy or teach a common math language. Limited differentiation of instruction hinders students from extending their knowledge. As a result, students exit their grades with gaps far too wide for success in math. *(following students, observing classes, talking with students, teachers, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing classroom assessments, 2003 Information Works!, meeting with the school improvement team, district administrators, reviewing district and school policies and practices, 2003 SALT Survey report)*

Teachers at Charlotte Woods School are nurturing, hard-working, dedicated professionals, who work collaboratively and cooperatively to provide a safe, caring environment for their students. However, they are frustrated by the lack of support from the school and district leaders and struggle to implement district mandates, as well as to handle the overwhelming problems of their students and their families. While teachers receive job-embedded professional development from coaches and fellow teachers, not all of them "buy-in" to the new programs or consistently implement these new teaching practices. The lack of accountability and follow through by responsible parties results in inconsistent teaching practices and expectations throughout the school. *(following students, observing classes, meeting with the school improvement team, school and district administrators, talking with students, teachers, parents and school, reviewing school improvement plan, completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing classroom assessments, records of professional development activities, district strategic plan)*

Commendations for the Charlotte Woods Elementary School

Caring, supportive teachers

Pockets of excellent teaching of balanced literacy and math

Recommendations for the Charlotte Woods Elementary School

Increase the consistency of teaching practices in reading, writing and math. Balance instruction time for comprehension and reading accuracy. Provide a consistent focus for math instruction throughout the school.

Increase the differentiation of instruction and academic rigor in all areas to allow students to extend their knowledge. Create a system for monitoring student progress by looking at student work across all grade levels using common rubrics on a consistent and regular basis. Use this information to guide instruction.

Provide students with frequent feedback and opportunities for self-reflection and correction with teacher guidance.

Provide more time for students to develop their writing pieces.

Consistently involve students in developing criteria and rubrics to increase their understanding of expectations. Raise the level of expectations to increase consistency of quality work.

Increase professional responsibility to follow through on teaching practices modeled by coaches. Hold teachers accountable for the implementation of these new initiatives.

Provide uninterrupted blocks of time for students to explore and discuss math concepts and math reasoning. Increase monitoring of student work and understanding.

Continue and expand the use of your excellent teachers and coaches, as mentors, to improve and hone instruction practices.

Recommendations for the Providence Public School District

Continue to provide support and professional development for teachers and coaches in balanced literacy and math. Individualize professional development to meet the unique needs of students at Charlotte Woods Elementary School.

Modify the district pacing schedule for balanced literacy to allow for differentiation of instruction.

Eliminate Stanford 9's to align assessments with the district-mandated programs.

6. FINDINGS ON SCHOOL SUPPORT FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING

Conclusions

The new principal faces overwhelming challenges created in part by the “two schools in one” model. Day-to-day discipline consumes the greater part of his time. While teachers report that both student behavior in the halls and the cleanliness of the building have improved, they say there is a continued need for more consistency, accountability and follow-through. Daily communication between the administrators of the two schools is not effective or constructive, resulting in inconsistent expectations of students and staff. Procedures are not in place for regular communication among the principal, the faculty, staff and parents. As a result, important information is not disseminated in a timely manner; expectations for staff and student behavior are not consistent; and the delineation of responsibilities is not clearly articulated. Parent involvement in school activities is minimal. Teacher leaders and coaches are involved in far too many administrative duties, limiting their effectiveness as instruction mentors. While the principal does attend common planning sessions with every grade level, more support and follow through are needed to ensure consistency and implementation of effective instruction practices. *(meeting with the school improvement team, students, parents, school and district administrators, talking with students, teachers, school administrator, observing the school outside the classroom, reviewing school improvement plan, district and school policies and practices)*

Safety procedures are not consistently implemented at Charlotte Woods School. While signs request visitors to report to the office, many enter the school building and walk directly to the classrooms, sometimes without visitor passes. Parents go to the classrooms without being announced. Dismissal is so chaotic that parents and older students can enter the building through multiple doors. Parents express concerns that the middle school students congregate in the adjoining areas outside the school and bully the younger students. While notices have been sent home regarding school safety, the lack of a student/parent handbook prevents consistent understanding and reinforcement of school safety policies and procedures. *(following students, observing the school outside the classroom, observing classes, meeting with students and parents, talking with students, teachers, parents, school and district administrators, talking with students and teachers, reviewing school improvement plan, 2003 SALT Survey report)*

Consistent school wide discipline procedures are not in place at Charlotte Woods School. While the school improvement plan specifically states the need for interventions to teach students appropriate behavior, as well as the need for a uniform code of conduct for both schools within this building, these action plans are not in place. At present, the only school-wide options available to teachers for disciplining students are discipline referrals, calling parents and suspension. Some teachers purposely work on social skills as part of the curricula. Most teachers post classroom rules and consequences, but behavioral expectations vary from classroom to classroom and school to school. While the teacher buddy system, as stated in the school improvement plan, offers a consistent place for students to go for time out, no consistent interventions exist for the two schools within the B. Jae Clanton complex. Some faculty and staff speak to students in an unprofessional, disrespectful manner, sending mixed messages about appropriate school behavior and language. As a result, students lack a clear understanding of behavioral expectations. *(meeting with the school improvement team and school administrator, reviewing school improvement plan, talking with students, teachers and parents, observing classes, following students, observing the school outside the classroom, reviewing district and school policies and practices, 2003 SALT Survey report)*

There are several models of special education at Charlotte Woods School, including self-contained, intensive resource and resource. These programs are effective models for supporting student learning. Students receive instruction support in small groups, as well as within their classroom settings. However, the lack of time for on-going collaboration and planning with the regular classroom teachers limits their coordination of instruction and their alignment with the classroom curriculum. Teachers report that they attend common planning sessions, but not with the grade appropriate teachers. *(following students, observing classes, discussing student work with teachers, talking with teachers and district administrator, reviewing school improvement plan)*

An organized curriculum exists for health, physical education, art and music. However, in some classes this curriculum is not followed, and the same activities are done with students at all grade levels. Teachers report that a lack of needed supplies and materials, as well as the large number of students they must teach at one time, hinder their ability to implement their programs effectively. *(following students, observing classes, talking with teachers, meeting with school administrator, reviewing completed and ongoing student work)*

Commendations for the Charlotte Woods Elementary School

Strong teacher leaders and coaches

Clean, bright learning environment

Use of teacher buddy program

Recommendations for the Charlotte Woods Elementary School

Coordinate leadership to promote a unified approach and consistent expectations for teaching and student learning and behavior. Communicate this plan to all stakeholders on an ongoing basis.

Provide consistent and meaningful feedback to teachers regarding the effectiveness of their teaching practices. Provide time for cross-grade level articulation, and continue the focused learning walks to increase consistency and raise the level of student expectations.

Develop effective, open and consistent lines of communication among all members of the learning community. Delineate and communicate the appropriate responsibilities for administrative duties. Coordinate these plans with both schools.

Establish protocols for monitoring the consistency and implementation of instruction. Hold all stakeholders accountable.

Continue to explore and implement ways to involve parents. Develop a school newsletter in the students' home languages to inform parents regularly of school news and activities.

Distribute the parent/student handbook in the students' home languages to help ensure the consistency of school policies and procedures.

Develop, implement and articulate a consistent behavior policy for students in both schools within the building. Include an intervention program to diffuse, de-escalate and re-direct student behavior, as stated in the school improvement plan. Provide professional development in behavior management for all staff and faculty.

Establish, communicate and implement a dismissal policy to ensure the safety of all students. Monitor school entrances to eliminate unauthorized visitors.

Recommendations for the Providence School District

Encourage, support and facilitate collaboration of administrators for both Charlotte Woods and Sgt. Cornel Young, Jr., schools. Provide the principal with a mentor for guidance, support and encouragement.

Continue to support math and literacy coaches to develop consistent learning expectations and teaching practices.

Encourage principals of the surrounding schools to collaborate and enforce safety procedures for students and staff.

7. FINAL ADVICE TO THE CHARLOTTE WOODS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Charlotte Woods School is a nurturing, multicultural learning environment, where teachers work hard to provide a clean, safe place for students to learn. The SALT Team recognizes and acknowledges the challenges and frustrations that you face every day. We applaud your effort to work together, and urge you to continue so that consistency in all areas of learning and behavior is achieved.

Your students are ready and eager to learn. Channel their enthusiasm to stretch their minds and improve their achievement. A focus on consistency, differentiated instruction and increased rigor will only accelerate their growth. Invite your principal into the daily lessons of your classrooms, and make him part of your school learning community. Expand ways to instruct special education students within the regular education classroom, as you continue to use your expert teachers to build your capacity for instruction. We are confident that with time and training you will be successful, and so will your students.

Discipline is the responsibility of the entire school community. All members need to work together to provide a safe and secure learning environment. Both home and school must set high expectations for behavior and consistent consequences for inappropriate behavior. With district support, develop an intervention plan to re-direct student behavior, and implement this plan in both schools. Be certain to include parents in the decision-making process.

The leadership challenges of the B. Jae Clanton complex are daunting. Coordination of leadership is paramount. Open, consistent lines of communication will increase consistency on all fronts, reduce undercurrents and provide clear expectations for students, teachers and parents.

The SALT team sees your potential to become a safe and dynamic learning community. Expect only the best from yourselves, your students and your leaders.

ENDORSEMENT OF SALT VISIT TEAM REPORT

The Charlotte Woods Elementary School

April 8, 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 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 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 two portions 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.

April 26, 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 The Charlotte Woods Elementary 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 Charlotte Woods Elementary School.

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

- ◆ *direct classroom observation*
- ◆ *observing the school outside of the classroom*
- ◆ *following 9 students for a full day*
- ◆ *observing the work of teachers and staff for a full day*
- ◆ *meeting at scheduled times with the following groups:*
 - teachers*
 - school improvement team*
 - school and district administrators*
 - students*
 - parents*
- ◆ *talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administrators*
- ◆ *reviewing completed and ongoing student work*
- ◆ *interviewing teachers about the work of their students*
- ◆ *analyzing state assessment results as reported in Information Works!*
- ◆ *reviewing the following documents:*
 - district and school policies and practices*
 - records of professional development activities*
 - classroom assessments*
 - school improvement plan for The Charlotte Woods Elementary School*
 - district strategic plan*
 - 2003 SALT Survey report*
 - classroom textbooks*
 - 2003 Information Works!*
 - 2003 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries*
 - 2003 Rhode Island Writing Assessment results*
 - School and District Report Cards*
 - Binders:*

Parent Involvement Activities
Charlotte Woods 2002-2003 SALT Initiative
Charlotte Woods Test Data
Providence Public Schools Scope and Sequence for
Writing/Reading/ELL/Math/Science
Grade K-5 Literacy Coach Units of Study and Schedule
Art Scope and Sequence 2003
Music Scope and Sequence
Health Scope and Sequence
Balanced Literacy Definition and Frameworks
Code of Behavior

Contract Between the Providence School Board and the Association
of Providence Public School and Staff Administrators July 1, 2001-
June 30, 2004

Agreement Between Providence School Board Department of Public
Schools Providence, Rhode Island and Rhode Island Council 94
Providence, Rhode Island School Clerical Employees Local 1339
Affiliate of A.F.S.C.M.E

Providence Public Schools District-wide Code of Behavior grades K-5

Technology Plan overview- Providence Public School Technology Plan
overview

Lift Framework for Teaching and Learning

State Assessment Results for The Charlotte Woods Elementary School

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.

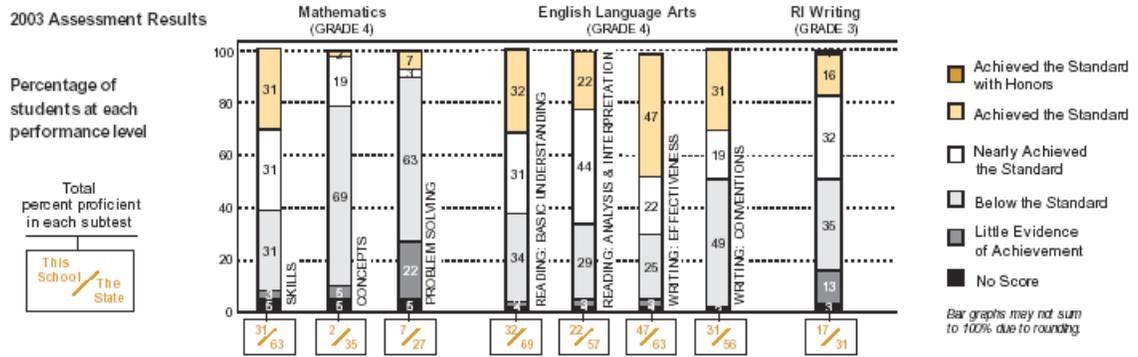
This school's results are from the latest available state assessment information. It is presented here in four different ways:

- ◆ *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*.

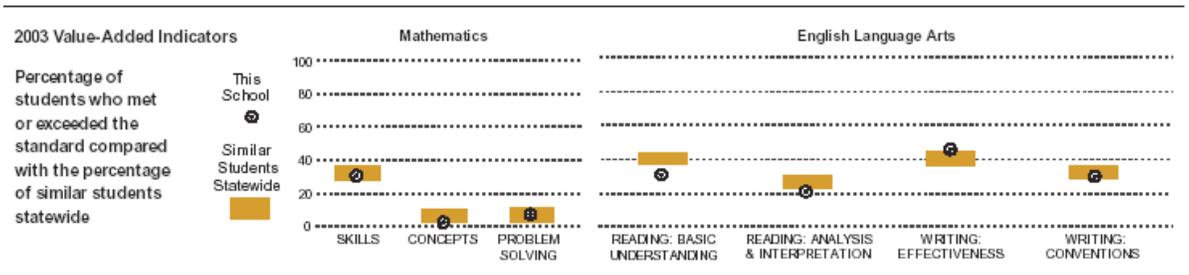
Table1. 2002-03 Student Results on Rhode Island State Assessments



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.

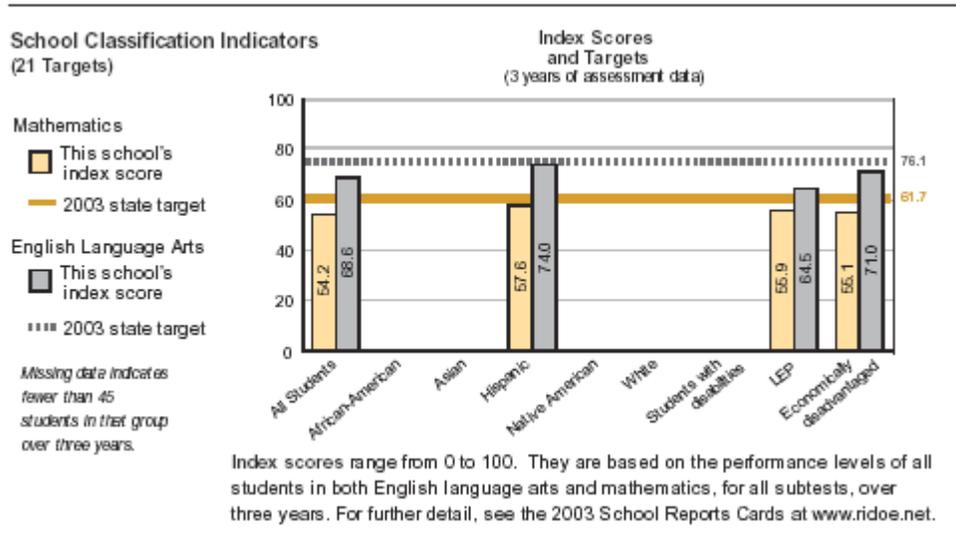
Table 2. 2001-2002 Student Results in Comparison to Similar Students Statewide



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. 2001-2002 Student Results across Subgroups



RESULTS OVER TIME

Now that the state assessment program has been functioning for five years, it is possible to show results over meaningful periods of time. This display shows changes in the percentage of students at or above standard and the percentage of students in the lowest performance categories. These displays correspond to the targets the Department of Education asked schools to set four years ago and are the basis for the department categorizing schools as improving or non-improving.

The Charlotte Woods Elementary School has been categorized as in need of improvement, insufficient progress on the basis of its assessment from 2000 to 2003. The following is the school report card that shows the schools' performance in relation to the 2004 annual measurable objectives. (AMO)

Information Works! data for The Charlotte Woods Elementary School is available at <http://www.ridoe.net>.

Rhode Island School: The Charlotte Woods Elementary School
 Rhode Island District: Providence

School Report Card - 2003 - Accountability

Grade 4

Index Proficiency Score

Student Group	English Language Arts - Target Score: 76.1						Mathematics - Target Score: 61.7					
	2000-02	2001-03	Change	Target Met	District 01-03	State 01-03	2000-02	2001-03	Change	Target met	District 03	State 01-03
All Students	66.6	68.6	1.9	5	71	84.2	53.2	54.2	0.9	0	59.2	74.2
African-American	*	*	*	1	72.9	76.4	*	*	*	1	58.5	62.8
Asian	*	*	*	1	76.3	83.8	*	*	*	1	65.9	73.9
Hispanic	73.6	73.9	0.3	0	72.5	74.6	58.7	57.5	-1.1	0	60.4	62.6
Native American	*	*	*	1	75.4	83.9	*	*	*	1	62.1	71.3
White	*	*	*	1	78.3	89	*	*	*	1	65.8	79.6
Students with Disabilities	*	*	*	1	54.5	68	*	*	*	1	51.4	62.6
Students with Limited English Proficiency	69	64.5	-4.5	0	65.4	66.6	61.1	55.9	-5.2	0	55.7	56.7
Economically Disadvantaged Students	69.9	71	1	3	72.9	76.9	55.5	55.1	-0.4	0	60.3	65.1

* fewer than 45 test takers.

Percent of Students Tested (2001-2003):

	This School	This District	This State
ELA	97.5	96.2	98.5
Mathematics	97.4	96.8	98.5

Attendance Rate: (2003)

This School	This District	The State
91.5	92.5	94.6

Targets Met/Missed:

	Targets Met	Targets Missed
ELA	7	2
Mathematics	5	4

Classification:

School in Need of Improvement/Insufficient Progress

Target Met Code:

- 0 - did not meet target
- 1 - met target because of minimum N
- 2 - 3 year AMO
- 3 - 3 year SH
- 4 - 1 year AMO
- 5 - 1 year SH

THE CHARLOTTE WOODS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT TEAM

Carol A. Andrews
Chair
Grade 2 Teacher

Michaela Bagley
Secretary

Frank C. Piccirilli
Principal

Kerry Incera
Intensive Resource Teacher

Stephanie Rezendes
Special Education Teacher

Betty Christie
Grade 1 Teacher

Jean Altruda
Literacy Coach

Mari-Ellen Boisclair
Math Coach

Karen Garnett
Grade 3 Teacher

Saihong S. Kelly
1st Grade ESL Teacher

Courtney Catullo
4th Grade ESL Teacher

Elizabeth Cabral
Special Education Teacher

Robbi Jennings
Kindergarten Teacher

Camille Pezzi
Music Teacher

Donald Proto
Physical Education Teacher

Ana Hernandez
Parent

Joselyn Luna
Parent

Louise Tillinghast
Parent

MEMBERS OF THE SALT VISIT TEAM

Ruth S. Haynsworth
Grade 5 Teacher
Stony Lane Elementary School
North Kingstown, Rhode Island
On leave to the Rhode Island Department of Education
To serve as a SALT Fellow
Team Chair

Virginia Jacobs
Parent
Coventry, Rhode Island

Jodi Joseph
Grade 1 Teacher
Glen Hills Elementary School
Cranston, Rhode Island

Janet Schock Kraus
Art Teacher
Jamestown School-Melrose
Jamestown, Rhode Island

Karen Francis Meyer
Resource Teacher
Henry Barnard School
Providence, Rhode Island

Caroline Monti
Resource Teacher
Fishing Cove School
North Kingstown, Rhode Island

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Dunn's Corner Elementary School
Westerly, Rhode Island

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