



Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
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ALAN SHAWN FEINSTEIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

PROVIDENCE

THE SALT VISIT TEAM REPORT

April 1, 2005



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 Alan Shawn Feinstein Elementary School from March 28-April 1, 2005.

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 Alan Shawn Feinstein Elementary School?*
- ◆ *How well does the teaching at Alan Shawn Feinstein Elementary School affect learning?*
- ◆ *How well does Alan Shawn Feinstein 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 Alan Shawn Feinstein 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, 2nd Edition* describes the theoretical constructs behind the SALT visit and stipulates the many details of the visit procedures. The *Handbook* and other relevant documents are available at www.Catalpa.org. Contact Rick Richards at (401) 222-4600 x 2194 or ride0782@ride.ri.net for further information about the SALT visit protocol.

SALT visits undergo rigorous quality control. Catalpa Ltd. monitors each visit and determines whether the report can be endorsed. Endorsement assures the reader that the team and the school followed the visit protocol. It also 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 101 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. Team members had conversations with various faculty and staff members for over 38 hours.

The full visit team built the conclusions, commendations, and recommendations presented here through intense and thorough discussion. The team met for a total of 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 Alan Shawn Feinstein 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 Department, RIDE and the public should consider what the report says or implies about how they can best support Alan Shawn Feinstein 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 ALAN SHAWN FEINSTEIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Alan Shawn Feinstein Elementary School is located in the heart of the Washington Park district of South Providence, Rhode Island. The school building is a proud, but aging, brick structure built around 1898. Originally known as Broad Street Grammar School, it is now named for Alan Shawn Feinstein, a local philanthropist.

ASF School serves students from diverse linguistic and racial backgrounds in kindergarten through fifth grade. Of the 480 students, 57.1% are Hispanic, 20.9% are white, 16.1% are African American, 5.7% are Asian and 0.2% is Native American. Eighty percent of the students receive free or reduced-price lunch; 23% receive ESL services; and approximately 12% have IEP's.

The faculty and staff consist of one principal, 19 full-time classroom teachers, and six specialty teachers for library, physical education, health, art and music. The support staff includes ten teaching assistants, an intensive resource teacher, a resource teacher, a speech pathologist, a Reading First coach, a literacy coach and a math coach. A nurse teacher, a Diagnostic Prescriptive teacher, a psychologist and an occupational therapist, as well as six Sodexo workers, three custodians, a secretary and a clerk complete the staff.

Literacy instruction is delivered through a balanced literacy approach. The reading and writing units of study, provided by the district and developed in conjunction with the literacy coaches, are the core curriculum. ASF School is a Reading First school. The monies from this grant allow teachers to study and apply research-based strategies designed to improve student achievement in reading. *Investigations* is the core math curriculum. The literacy, math and Reading First coaches provide the staff with many professional development opportunities embedded during the school day, as well as before and after school. A new science curriculum is beginning in fifth grade using FOSS Science Kits. Teachers within each grade level collaborate and plan weekly during their mutually-free time.

ASF School is student-centered. A student improvement team gives students an opportunity to voice their concerns and share their ideas. Lunches are organized on a buddy system with older students paired with younger students. A student of the month program recognizes and celebrates student accomplishments. Working with Casey Family Services, the school offers programs for parents that cover a range of student-centered topics.

The school maintains strong ties to the community. The Washington Park Library is an integral part of the literacy program. Through another generous donation, Alan Shawn Feinstein has provided the school with new health books. Tasca Ford and Lynch Construction have made generous donations and are hoping to become more involved with the students. A neighborhood business fundraising drive expands the school's community relations with the surrounding private businesses.

3. PORTRAIT OF ALAN SHAWN FEINSTEIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AT THE TIME OF THE VISIT

Alan Shawn Feinstein Elementary School, a majestic brick building built in 1898, is located in the Washington Park area of Providence, Rhode Island. This school, also known as ASF at Broad Street, services students from diverse cultural and socio-economic backgrounds; many live within walking distance. Students are the focus here, and teachers are committed to helping them learn. While Alan Shawn Feinstein has been categorized as a low-performing school, district leaders and teachers proudly state that student achievement here is improving.

The school is spacious and immaculately clean. Fresh paint adorns the walls and floors; however, the age of the building is apparent. The heating system is outdated and cannot be accurately controlled. Paint is chipping from pipes and radiators; windows do not close properly, and the roof leaks. Yet, this aged building provides a safe and secure environment for learning. Each classroom is “organized for effort” and filled with rich literature, informative wall charts and brightly colored rugs. Teaching and learning is serious business at AFS School, and all are expected to do their share of the work. Teachers model how to be learners while helping children “role-play their way into the readers and writers they want them to be.”

A strong principal leads the school and works within this learning community to build a collaborative spirit. Supported by a strong leadership team, teachers strive to improve student achievement and teaching practices. The staff has embraced many new initiatives. There is a remarkable level of professionalism, as the teachers share and plan lessons together. The principal creatively has redesigned the schedule to offer weekly professional development and support. During grade level planning meetings, coaches work to ensure that the curriculum is coordinated and that instruction effectively is delivered. Teachers willingly share their students’ work and openly discuss their areas of need.

The school is not without its challenges. The strict district-mandated schedule for the units of study, as well as the numerous programs underway, limits the amount of time for small group instruction within the classrooms. The short school day adds to the problem. Additionally, the school building is in need of repair.

Student work reflects a wide-range of student achievement and learning styles. Too many students do not achieve the academic success of their grade level peers. Frequent teacher turnover creates gaps in teacher expertise. Despite the intense support for teachers, not all teachers reach the same level of success. Expectations for student achievement and behavior vary from class-to-class. Ineffective classroom management results in poor student behavior in a few classrooms. All of these factors hinder the forward momentum of the school and undermine efforts for student success.

4. FINDINGS ON STUDENT LEARNING

Conclusions

While most students can identify the attributes of quality-writing, many are just beginning to include these elements in their own work. Some students write with a strong voice, good sentence structure, similes, a strong story line and leads that hook the reader. In contrast, other students in the same classroom have difficulty including rich vocabulary and supporting details. Throughout the school, it is not unusual for students to ask, “Do you want to hear what I have written?” the moment a visitor enters the classroom. Students listen intently, as fellow students read samples of writing and give specific feedback to help their peers improve their work, such as “put more excitement in it and more yelling!” or “I heard your internal voice come through when you read.” Students can tell their peers why their writing is good, but often they do not carry this skill over to their own work. Most writing contains numerous errors in grammar and mechanics, and students do not adequately use the resources available within the classrooms to improve their work. Nevertheless, students at ASF write better than they read or problem solve. Seventy-seven percent of the students achieved or exceeded the standard on the 2004 New Standards Reference Examination in writing effectiveness, while twenty-nine percent met or exceeded the standard in writing conventions. Additionally, only eight percent achieved the standard on the 2004 Rhode Island Writing Assessment. *(following students, observing classes, talking with students, teachers, meeting with the school improvement team, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing classroom assessments, 2004 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries, 2004 Rhode Island Writing Assessment results)*

Similar to writing, student performance in reading varies greatly within the same classroom. While students are asked to read throughout the day, most students are not fluent readers. Many students read below grade level. Students know how to understand and discuss text that is read to them. But when they are asked to read independently, they know only a limited number of ways to decode the text, and they rarely check to see if the words make sense in the text. In classes where they practice and verbalize decoding, along with using other comprehension strategies, students are more competent, confident readers. *(following students, observing classes, meeting with students, school and district administrators, talking with students, teachers and school administrator, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing classroom assessments, 2004 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries)*

All students know there is more than one way to solve a problem. Each morning they practice reading word problems, attempt to solve them in their heads and share their solutions with the class. They also solve problems using paper and pencil. They draw diagrams, charts and pictures to prove their answers. They are developing their number sense by using manipulatives as tools to help them solve problems. Students use their math skills to build two and three-dimensional figures to scale. As a result, students are learning the skills they need to become successful problem solvers, but they are not there yet. They do not know how to explain their thinking mathematically or how to connect mathematical ideas. Students say they are rushed, that they do not have sufficient time to complete their work in math or to share their solutions. Many say the teacher gives the answer too quickly. Student progress in problem solving is slow. Many lack a solid foundation of basic mathematical skills and concepts. *(following students, observing classes, meeting with the school improvement team and district administrators, talking with students, teachers, parents, reviewing classroom assessments, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, 2004 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries, classroom textbooks)*

Student behavior differs from class to class. In classrooms where expectations are high for behavior and achievement, students rise to the challenge. They are excited, curious and motivated to learn. They proudly share their work and clearly articulate what they are good at doing and what they need to do to improve. In contrast, in a few classrooms where there are inconsistent expectations and follow-through, students are disrespectful, inattentive and easily distracted. Poor student behavior disrupts learning and negatively impacts the quality of student work. *(following students, observing classes, observing the school outside the classroom, talking with students and teachers, meeting with students, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, 2004 SALT Survey report, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing school improvement plan)*

Important Thematic Findings in Student Learning

Students:

- ◆ *Are curious learners who enjoy sharing their work*
- ◆ *Demonstrate a wide range of achievement and behavior*
- ◆ *Produce quality work when held accountable*
- ◆ *Struggle to complete work within strict time constraints*

5. FINDINGS ON TEACHING FOR LEARNING

Conclusions

Most teachers are skilled, knowledgeable writing instructors. Their joy and enthusiasm for writing motivates their students and encourages them to write. All teachers connect reading and writing by using quality literature to reinforce the focus of their writing lessons. This practice allows students to identify and analyze good writing and encourages them to use these elements in their own work. Teachers provide numerous opportunities and resources for students to write independently, but they do not place enough emphasis on grammar and mechanics. They express frustration about the limited time they have for writing instruction, as well as about the strict district mandated pacing schedule. They say they cannot provide sufficient time and support to students who require additional help and guidance in writing. *(following students, observing classes, meeting with the school improvement team and district administrators, talking with students, teachers, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing classroom assessments, 2004 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries, 2004 Rhode Island Writing Assessment results, 2004 SALT Survey report, reviewing district and school policies and practices)*

All teachers read to their students and consistently model how expert readers question, draw conclusions and make connections between what they read and their personal experiences. These excellent teaching practices help students discuss literature confidently. However, not all teachers effectively differentiate their reading instruction. Many teachers do not provide enough guided practice on decoding skills and fluency. Although they are beginning to use data to plan their lessons, many do not use this information to provide instruction in small groups or to individual students. Teachers report there is not enough time in the school day to teach all of the components of readers' workshop and balanced literacy. They mainly teach reading to the entire class, thus limiting their ability to reinforce and challenge individual students. Consequently, many students lack decoding and comprehension strategies. When reading independently, many students are not fluent readers and often do not understand what they read. *(following students, observing classes, meeting with the school improvement team, school and district administrators, talking with students, teachers, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing classroom assessments, reviewing school improvement plan, 2004 SALT Survey report, 2004 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries)*

Teachers report it is time to place more emphasis on professional development in math. Under the guidance of a math coach, they are beginning to develop competent techniques in math instruction. They encourage students to use a variety of math tools to solve problems, and they often integrate problem solving in their daily classroom routines. As a result, students are beginning to use these skills to solve problems in everyday situations, but they are not yet effective problem solvers. All teachers require students to keep math notebooks. However, those who do not consistently monitor their students' responses miss valuable information they need to reinforce and challenge their students. When students share their solutions to problems, teachers rarely question them to make them extend their thinking beyond surface knowledge. Math instruction generally is scheduled at the end of the day, and it is sometimes shortened due to lack of time. All of these factors contribute to students missing underlying math concepts, demonstrating weak basic math skills and having limited opportunities to learn from their peers. *(following students, observing classes, meeting with the school improvement team, students, parents, school and district administrators, talking with students, teachers, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing classroom assessments, reviewing school improvement plan, 2004 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries, reviewing records of professional development activities)*

The principal, parents, students and the SALT team—all—concur that the teachers at ASF School are dedicated, hard-working professionals, who genuinely respect and care about their students. Many are passionate about their work. Their strong organizational skills help them manage the numerous programs and initiatives underway. Teachers collaborate and draw on the strengths of their colleagues. This collaboration is beginning to develop a consistency of practice among teachers, yet not all are at the same level of expertise. Teachers and administrators report there is a large teacher turnover, and thus, some teachers have missed valuable professional development in literacy and numeracy instruction. While many have high expectations for learning, not all hold their students accountable for quality work. Furthermore, not all teachers differentiate their instruction or provide their students with adequate support and challenge. These ineffective practices hinder students from making progress. In a few classrooms, teachers lack effective behavior management skills. Students in these classrooms are often inattentive, do not complete their work and disrupt not only their own learning, but also the learning of others. *(following students, observing classes, observing the school outside the classroom, meeting with students, parents, school and district administrators, talking with students, teachers and school administrator, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing school improvement plan, 2004 SALT Survey report)*

Commendations for Alan Shawn Feinstein Elementary School

Dedicated professionals, who continuously strive to improve

Skilled instructors of writing

Supportive, collaborative teachers

Recommendations for Alan Shawn Feinstein Elementary School

Increase time for guided practice and instruction in reading, writing and math. Differentiate instruction to meet the needs of struggling and advanced students. Hold all students accountable for quality work.

Continue to provide support and mentoring for teachers in classroom management techniques.

Expand questioning techniques to encourage student exploration and the discovery of mathematical concepts and basic skills. Help students make mathematical connections to develop their number sense.

Continue to promote strong literacy and numeracy practices. Seek ways to provide more balance in numeracy and literacy professional development.

Continue to collaborate to raise the level of expertise of all teachers in literacy and math.

Recommendations for Providence School District

Reduce the number of units of study, and re-examine the rigid schedule to allow more time for differentiated instruction and in-depth study.

Re-examine the focus of professional development to provide more balance between literacy and math.

6. FINDINGS ON SCHOOL SUPPORT FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING

Conclusions

A strong collaborative leadership team consisting of an administrator, three coaches and several teachers effectively guides this school. The principal sets high expectations for herself, as well as for her staff and the students. She holds everyone accountable. Her leadership style promotes shared responsibility. Everyone learns from one another. It is a true learning community, where the leadership values and promotes professional development. Developing teacher expertise in an environment where the teacher turnover rate is high is a constant challenge for this team. Highly skilled and knowledgeable coaches provide weekly training and support at grade level meetings, as well as to individual teachers. Teachers openly reflect on their teaching practices and strive to improve. As a result, this leadership team is moving the school toward increased student achievement and improved teacher expertise. *(following students, observing classes, meeting with the school improvement team, parents, school and district administrators, talking with students, teachers, school administrator, 2004 SALT Survey report, reviewing records of professional development activities, reviewing school improvement plan)*

Teachers, administrators and students—all—say there is not enough time in the school day to accomplish everything. The principal reports she is constantly trying to find adequate time for professional development. Students say they are rushed to complete assignments and that they often don't finish them. Teachers say they must adhere to a strict daily schedule, as well as a yearly calendar for the units of study. This rigidity often compromises valuable content and time for small group instruction. Teachers report that there is little “wait and think” time. Additionally, teachers lose valuable time addressing behavioral issues. Students complain that disruptive behavior frequently interrupts their learning. All of these factors have negative impact on valuable learning time. *(following students, observing classes, observing the school outside the classroom, meeting with the school improvement team, students, school and district administrators, talking with students and teachers, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing classroom assessments)*

Just as in the regular education classrooms, there is a wide range of student achievement and teacher expertise in the ESL classrooms. In ESL classrooms, where expectations for student achievement and behavior are high and teachers give students intensive support, student work often exceeds that found in the regular education settings. Conversely, in classrooms where there is a lack of follow-through and accountability, students do not receive the same intensive support. Consequently, quality of work suffers. *(following students, observing classes, meeting with school and district administrators, talking with students and teachers, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing classroom assessments)*

In most settings, special education students are receiving excellent support for learning. They are serviced in two self-contained classrooms and one fifth grade inclusion classroom. Additionally, an intensive resource teacher and a resource teacher service students, both inside and outside the regular education classrooms. The inclusion model and the resource model encourage teachers to collaborate and individualize their instruction, and they do it well. In classes, where there are clear expectations for student behavior and achievement, student work shows significant progress. Conversely, where high expectations for student behavior are not apparent, students show a lack of respect for their peers and their teacher. More importantly, student behavior in these classrooms interferes with their academic and social achievement. *(following students, observing classes, observing the school outside the classroom, meeting with the school improvement team, school and district administrators, talking with teachers and school administrator, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing classroom assessments, reviewing records of professional development activities)*

The school facility is clean, bright, spacious and secure. However, the age of the building is apparent in the out-dated heating system and the leaky roof. Many items are in need of repair. Windows do not close or open properly, and paint on radiators, pipes and ceilings is chipping. There are many broken chairs in the auditorium, and a few student chairs and desks in some classrooms are not the appropriate size. These factors are not conducive to productive student learning. *(following students, observing classes, observing the school outside the classroom, meeting with the school improvement team, students, and school administrator, talking with students and teachers, Gates Foundation grant budget)*

The school improvement plan is lengthy and cumbersome. The benchmark goals or targets are not specific. Many action steps are detailed, yet others are vague. While the plan describes changes in teaching practices, it frequently fails to address changes in student learning behaviors. While the plan states who is responsible for evaluation, it does not indicate what evidence will be used to assess progress towards targets and goals. Despite the complexity of the plan, however, much of what it says is evident within many classrooms. Teachers use the frequently mentioned assessment tools for monitoring student progress to inform their instruction effectively. *(following students, observing classes, meeting with the school improvement team, school and district administrators, talking with teachers, reviewing school improvement plan, reviewing classroom assessments)*

Commendations for Alan Shawn Feinstein Elementary School

- Strong, collaborative leadership team
- Highly skilled coaches
- Frequent, relevant professional development
- Strong learning community

Recommendations for Alan Shawn Feinstein Elementary School

Explore ways to increase valuable learning time. Create time to provide more small group instruction. Foster effective, consistent behavior management to reduce interruptions to learning.

Continue to include the entire learning community in the decision-making process.

Reduce the number of units of study, and re-evaluate pacing schedule.

Ensure academic rigor and accountability for all students.

Consider becoming a site-based managed school.

Recommendations for Providence School District

Make needed repairs to the building.

Explore ways to increase instructional time.

Reevaluate the pacing schedule for units of study. Reduce the number of units.

Continue to provide and support balanced professional development for all teachers

7. FINAL ADVICE TO ALAN SHAWN FEINSTEIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

The SALT team applauds the strong learning community that you are creating at Alan Shawn Feinstein Elementary School. It is evident that the entire staff puts their “hearts and souls” into their work. Your strong leadership team and professional collaboration are true models for others to emulate.

The professional development provided to teachers is commendable. It is timely and responsive to the needs of both students and teachers. We admire the level of honesty and reflection witnessed during your grade level support team meetings, and we urge you to continue. These open discussions position you well to move your students to higher levels of success. Place more emphasis on professional development in math so that teachers have the same opportunity to develop and share their expertise in math, as they have had in literacy.

You have many skilled teachers on your staff. Take advantage of their expertise to raise the level of expectations for student achievement and behavior. Increase the consistency and effectiveness of your classroom management and differentiated instruction. Spend more time on guided practice in all subjects. As a staff, you must develop common expectations for quality work and agree to hold all students accountable. Your students will only benefit.

The diversity and rich cultural backgrounds of your school community are an asset. Celebrate the multiculturalism, and use it to encourage students to become educated responsible citizens. You are poised to achieve greater levels of success both for yourselves and for your students. Keep up the momentum!

ENDORSEMENT OF SALT VISIT TEAM REPORT

Alan Shawn Feinstein Elementary School

April 1, 2005

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The steps Catalpa completed for this review were:

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

The findings from the review are:

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

Accordingly, Catalpa Ltd. endorses this report.



CATALPA LTD.

Thomas A. Wilson, EdD

Catalpa Ltd.

April 30, 2005

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 Alan Shawn Feinstein 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 Alan Shawn Feinstein 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 7 students for a full day*
- ◆ *observing the work of teachers and staff for a full day*
- ◆ *meeting at scheduled times with the following groups:*
 - teachers*
 - school improvement team*
 - school and district administrators*
 - students*
 - parents*
- ◆ *talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administrators*
- ◆ *reviewing completed and ongoing student work*
- ◆ *interviewing teachers about the work of their students*
- ◆ *analyzing state assessment results as reported in Information Works!*
- ◆ *reviewing the following documents:*
 - district and school policies and practices*
 - records of professional development activities*
 - classroom assessments*
 - school improvement plan for Alan Shawn Feinstein Elementary School*
 - district strategic plan*
 - 2004 SALT Survey report*
 - classroom textbooks*
 - 2004 Information Works!*
 - 2004 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries*
 - 2004 Rhode Island Writing Assessment results*

*School and District Report Cards**Binders:**Balanced Literacy**Math Investigations**Science Schedule**Reading 180**GLST Binder**School Improvement Team**Special Education**SAT 9**MAC Binder**Parent Engagement**Faculty Handbook**Reading First Budget**Gates Foundation Grant Budget**Administrative Procedure Blue File Box**Agreement between Providence Teachers Union AFT Local 958 and the Providence School Board***State Assessment Results for Alan Shawn Feinstein 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.

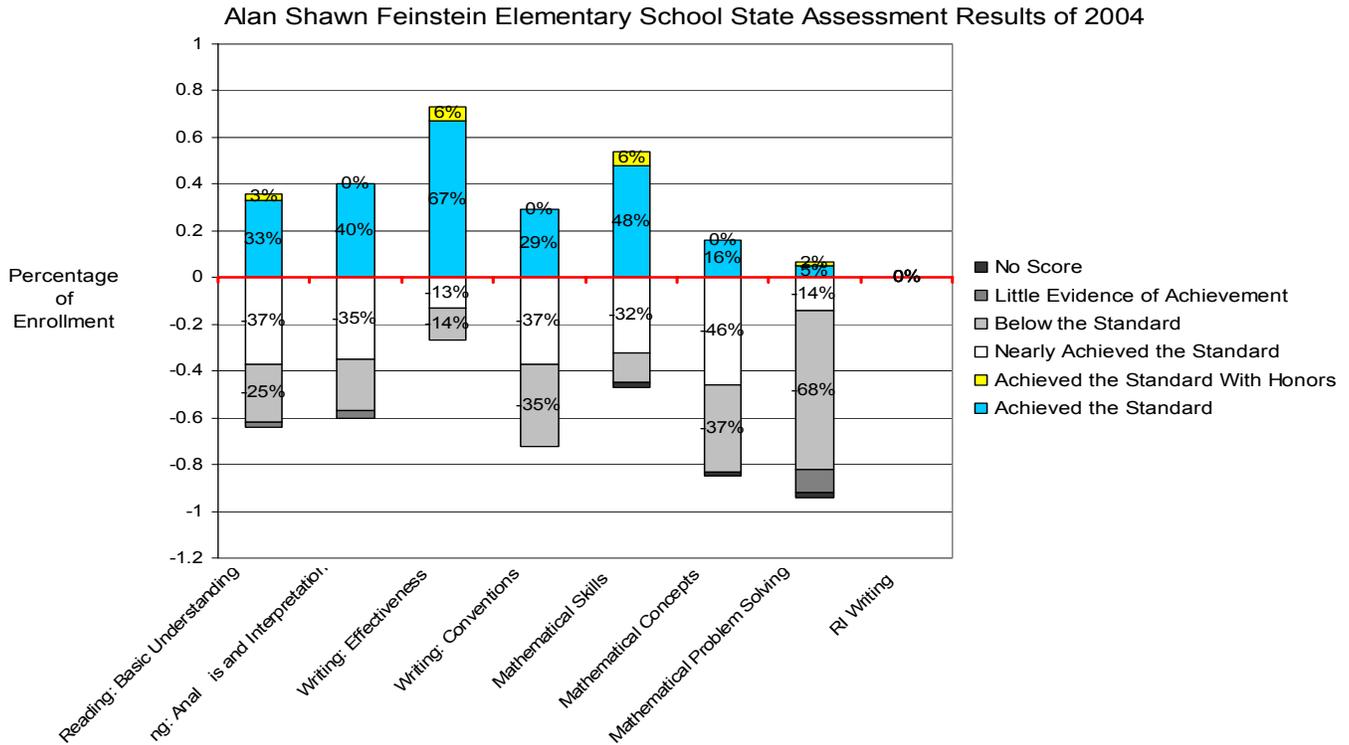
This school's results are from the latest available state assessment information. It is presented here in four different ways:

- ◆ *against performance standards;*
- ◆ *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



An important way to display student results is across different groups of students with different characteristics who are in the school. This display showing targets and index scores, in accordance with the No Child Left Behind federal legislation 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. Any student group whose index scores do not meet the targets set by RIDE require additional attention to close its performance gap.

Table 2 2003-2004 Student Results across Subgroups

REPORT CARD FOR ALAN SHAWN FEINSTEIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

This Report Card show the performance of Alan Shawn Feinstein Elementary School compared to the school’s annual measurable objectives (AMO).

These report card scores describe Alan Shawn Feinstein Elementary School as a school in need of improvement, making progress.

Table 3. Report Card for Alan Shawn Feinstein Elementary School

2004 Rhode Island School Report Card

RI SCHOOL: **ALAN SHAWN FEINSTEIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

RI DISTRICT: **PROVIDENCE**

GRADE: **04**

INDEX PROFICIENCY SCORE, 2002-04	ENGLISH LANG. ARTS TARGET SCORE: 76.1				MATHEMATICS TARGET SCORE: 61.7			
	THIS SCHOOL	TARGET MET?	THIS DISTRICT	THE STATE	THIS SCHOOL	TARGET MET?	THIS DISTRICT	THE STATE
All Students	75.5	YES††	74.4	86.1	60.6	YES††	63.4	77.5
African Americans	72.2	YES†	74.5	77.8	58.2	YES†	61	65.9
Asian	*	YES	78.8	84.5	*	YES	69.4	77.1
Hispanic	77.2	YES	73.7	75.8	62.4	YES	63.5	65.8
Native Americans	*	YES	73.9	83.9	*	YES	61.3	73
White	76	YES††	78.6	88.5	60.3	YES††	68.1	82
Students with Disabilities	*	YES	56.5	69.5	*	YES††	54.8	66.4
Students with Limited English Proficiency	*	YES	67.6	68.9	*	YES	59.4	61
Students who are Economically Disadvantaged	75.9	YES††	74.1	77.8	60.7	YES††	63.2	68.4

PERCENT OF STUDENTS TESTED, 2002-04	Target: 95%				ATTENDANCE RATE	Target: 90%			
	THIS SCHOOL	TARGET MET?	THIS DISTRICT	THE STATE		THIS SCHOOL	TARGET MET?	THIS DISTRICT	THE STATE
English Language Arts	99.6	YES	98.3	99.1	92.8	YES	92.5	94.8	
Mathematics	98.8	YES	98.9	99.4					

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

THIS SCHOOL IS CLASSIFIED AS:

School in Need of Improvement/Making Progress

THE ALAN SHAWN FEINSTEIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT TEAM

Christine Riley
Principal

Deborah Schmeller
Kindergarten Teacher

Stephanie Rezendez
Grade 1 Teacher

Christina Myers
Grade 2 Teacher

Nancy Ashworth
Grade 4 Teacher

Raphael Diaz
Grade 5 ESL Teacher

Carolyn Giramma
Grade 5 Teacher

Carol Lynn Wilcox
Special Education Teacher

Susan Sprague
Library

Laurie Fuge
Math Coach

Ralph Montella
Community Representative

Diana Caraballo
Parent

MEMBERS OF THE SALT VISIT TEAM

Ruth S. Haynsworth
Grade 5 Teacher
Stony Lane Elementary School
North Kingstown, Rhode Island
To serve as Regents SALT Fellow
Team Chair

Karen Amitrano
Grade 3 Teacher
Woodridge Elementary School
Cranston, Rhode Island

Kathy Crowley
Special Education Teacher
Leo A. Savoie School
Woonsocket, Rhode Island

Daniele Mallari
Grade 2 Teacher
Citizens' Memorial Elementary School
Woonsocket, Rhode Island

Cara Sanchez
Literacy Coach
Primrose Elementary School
Barrington, Rhode Island

Jacki Sisun
ESL Teacher
Henry J. Winters School
Pawtucket, Rhode Island

Kathleen Suriani
Principal
Francis J. Varieur School
Pawtucket, Rhode Island