



Coggeshall Elementary School

Newport

SALT Visit Team Report

May 11, 2001



School Accountability for Learning and Teaching (SALT)

The accountability program of the Rhode Island Department of Education

Rhode Island Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education

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1. THIS REPORT'S PURPOSE AND LIMITS

School Accountability for Learning and Teaching (SALT) is Rhode Island's comprehensive school accountability system. SALT is based on using information to improve learning and teaching so that the learning of all students in the state dramatically improves. The SALT visit and other major SALT components are designed to aid schools in their ongoing development and implementation of an effective School Improvement Plan.

The purpose of the visit to Coggeshall Elementary School from May 8, 2001 through May 11, 2001 was to draw conclusions about the School in the three focus areas of SALT:

- ◆ *Student Learning*
- ◆ *Teaching*
- ◆ *The School*

The design of the SALT visit ensures that accountability supports improvement of schools by directly connecting judgments of quality and recommendations for improvement to the actual life and work of a school.

This report is built upon the observations and conclusions of the visit team. The visit team is composed of Rhode Island school practitioners and a parent. Their affiliations are included at the end of the report.

The School Improvement Plan for Coggeshall Elementary School was the touchstone document for the team. However informative written reports may be, there is simply no substitute for being at the school while it is in session—in the classroom, in the lunchroom, and in the hallways. The specific information generated by a team visit is about how the students, staff, and administrators go about their day. Thus, this visit allowed professional colleagues and stakeholders to build informed judgments about the teaching and learning that actually takes place at Coggeshall Elementary School.

The visit team collected its evidence from the following:

- ◆ *a total of 50 classroom observations that totaled over 75.5 hours spent in direct classroom observation. All classrooms were visited at least once. Most teachers were observed more than once.*
- ◆ *many observations of the school (outside of classroom)*
- ◆ *following 6 students for a full day*
- ◆ *observing the work of teachers, specialty teachers and staff for a full day*
- ◆ *scheduled meetings with the following groups:*
- ◆ *school improvement team*
- ◆ *school and district administrators*

- ◆ *students*
- ◆ *parents*
- ◆ *conversations and/or interviews with students, teachers, staff, and school administrators*
- ◆ *examination of student work, including a selection of work collected by the school*
- ◆ *review of student portfolios*
- ◆ *analysis of achievement and equity gaps based on Information Works! data*
- ◆ *review of district and school policies*
- ◆ *review of professional development activities*
- ◆ *review of classroom assessments*
- ◆ *review of public relations and news articles binder*
- ◆ *review of the following documents:*
 - *School Improvement Plan for Coggeshall Elementary School*
 - *district strategic plan*
 - *1999-2000 SALT Survey report*
 - *classroom textbooks*
 - *1998 Information Works!*
 - *1999 Information Works!*
 - *2000 Information Works!*
 - *1998, 1999 New Standards Reference Examination results*
 - *1999, 2000 Rhode Island Writing Assessment results*
 - *2000 New Standards English Language Arts Reference Exam School Summary*
 - *2000 New Standards Mathematics Reference Exam School Summary*

- *Math Performance Assessment Project 2000*
- *Newport Public Schools Literacy Outcomes and Competencies K-6*
- *East Bay Educational Collaborative outcomes K-12*
- *KITES in Teaching Elementary Science (KITES) Notebook*
- *WWIII Focus School Portfolio*
- *New Standards Performance Standards Book*
- *Technology Plan*
- *Coggeshall Elementary School Communications Notebook*
- *Assessment data Newport Public Schools Handbook - Writing Evaluation*
- *Writing Prompts and Quick Writes (KITES Writing Resource)*
- *School Improvement Portfolio*
- *Public Relations News Articles*

The full team has built the conclusions, commendations and recommendations presented here through intense and thorough discussions. The visit team met for a total of 29 hours in six separate meetings spanning the four days of the visit. This time is exclusive of the time spent in classrooms, with teachers and in meetings with students, parents, and school and district administrators. The team sought to develop conclusions, commendations, and recommendations in the three focus areas that, in its judgment, would be helpful to the school as it works to improve teaching and learning.

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

It is important to note that this report reflects a “moment” in the life of the school. The conclusions here are different from those that can be made from statewide assessment data or from information collected and analyzed by members of the school. This report is not intended to be prescriptive. Rather, it is a different lens, one not clouded by the daily life of the school. This new lens is one through which the school can look to help focus on important issues resulting in the development of strategies for overall improvement in the teaching and learning process.

The value of this report is not determined by the hard work of the team. The value will be determined by how Coggeshall Elementary School responds to the report. At first the critical criteria will be the thoughtfulness of that response and later it will be the school’s actual effectiveness in improving teaching and learning. The response of the faculty and staff will be most critical early on but later there is a shared responsibility to support the school in making progress. The School Department, the citizens of Newport, and the Rhode Island Department of Education will share that responsibility.

While a SALT visit report is designed to promote productive action, it is the school improvement team, not the visiting team that decides what that action should be. Following your school's review of this report, use the information it provides to consider what changes to make in your School Improvement Plan. Refer to the *SALT Guide: Using the SALT Visit Report* for guidance on considering the information presented in the various sections of this report and use this information to make modifications to your School Improvement Plan. The revised plan will form the basis for negotiating a Compact for Learning with your district. The purpose of the Compact is to ensure that your school and your district work out an agreement about the most important priorities for your school and how best to target district support in reaching them. Your RIDE Field Service Team representative will offer some assistance in facilitating the preparation of the Compact.

It is important to read and consider this report as a whole. Recommendations and commendations should be considered in context with the conclusions. That is the way they were written.

2. PROFILE OF Coggeshall Elementary School

Coggeshall Elementary School is one of 6 elementary schools in the Newport Public School System. It serves students in grades K-5 for the city of Newport, Rhode Island. Newport is an urban city with a population of approximately 28,000. The present school first opened its doors to students in 1899.

A seven-member elected school board governs the Newport Public School District. A mayor and a seven-member city council govern the city. Coggeshall Elementary School students are served by a professional staff of 1 administrator, 29 full and part-time faculty, 9 aides and support personnel, and 1 custodian.

Coggeshall Elementary School has an attendance rate of 93 percent. Of the 213 students attending this school 63 percent are white, 12 percent are Hispanic, and 25 percent are black. Forty-eight students totaling 22 percent receive special education services. Ten students totaling .5 percent are Limited English Proficient and 49 percent applied for and receive free or reduced-price lunch.

Coggeshall Elementary School is involved in a number of initiatives. This year they include: being a Math Focus School with the East Bay Educational Collaborative, participating in the KITES Program (Kits in Teaching Elementary Science), and participation in the Feinstein Program. Additionally, students are involved in the district writing assessment, the Four Blocks Reading framework, and the Early Start Program—a two week 1/2 day program in late August for students in need of reinforcement of literacy skills in 1st and 2nd grade.

The team used the test score information found in *Information Works!* and the 2000 New Standards Reference Exam School Summaries to determine the equity and performance gaps discussed in the student learning conclusions. Equity gaps, a difference of greater than 15 percent, exist between males and females and between poverty and non-poverty students on three subtests of the New Standards Reference Exam. 2000 New Standards Reference Examination results have been appended to this report. *Information Works!* data for Coggeshall Elementary School is available at www.ridoe.net.

3. PORTRAIT OF Coggeshall Elementary School AT THE TIME OF THE VISIT

Coggeshall School provides a friendly, nurturing community for all students. Children are polite, eager to learn, and view their 100 year-old school as a friendly, caring, and fun place to learn. Parents respect the teachers and staff, like the school, and feel their children receive a strong education there.

Students are motivated learners who look forward to reading on a daily basis. They are polite, respectful of each other and adults, and actively participate in their own learning. Reading is a main focal point in most classrooms; this is evident in the enthusiasm that students show for reading. Many students express similar views about mathematics. Fewer students are as enthusiastic about writing. The principal, teachers, staff, and parents actively cultivate the culture of respect and the love of reading that students exhibit.

The teachers and staff are very professional. The staff, teachers, and principal show an obvious commitment to children. Teachers are enthusiastic, caring, outgoing, and supportive; they seek out opportunities to further their professional development. Most teachers are making a number of changes to their instructional practices in reading, writing, and mathematics to improve student learning. The professionalism of the staff is reflected in the patience with which they interact with their students and the efforts they display to promote learning and foster social skills.

Significant efforts are underway to raise student knowledge and understanding of reading, writing, mathematics, science, and the arts. A number of effective standards-based practices designed to develop basic and higher order thinking skills are emerging in this school. Coggeshall provides a number of support services, enrichment programs, extra curricula activities, and summer programs that have a positive impact on children at all achievement levels. These efforts are presently hindered by the lack of a coordinated, focused K-5 mathematics program.

Parents are concerned with their children's education. Most parents report being very happy with the school, find it "family friendly," feel welcome in the school, and enjoy participating in school events. Some express concerns about potential safety issues, limited communication, or the lack of developmentally appropriate materials in some classrooms. There are some strong examples of parent volunteers in the classroom and parents working to improve the school by participating on the school improvement team or organizing the creation of a new playground. Although the school presently has a number of plans to involve parents, it is only just beginning to fully capitalize on this valuable resource.

Teachers, staff, and the principal all express a willingness to make changes in teaching and the operation of the school in order to provide students with the best possible education. This school has begun a journey of continuous improvement. The next steps for this school include: ongoing changes in teaching and assessment practices, more conscious efforts to develop the learning represented by the standards, the collaborative examination of and reflection on student work, effectively integrating technology into students' daily learning, and more fully involving all stakeholders in establishing and implementing the School Improvement Plan for this school.

Coggeshall Elementary School has a strong foundation on which to build. This foundation will serve the school community well as it strives to fulfill its mission statement to provide each child with "a quality, standards-based education in a safe and challenging environment."

4. FINDINGS ON STUDENT LEARNING

Sources of Evidence

- ◆ *2000 Information Works!*
- ◆ *2000 Rhode Island Writing Assessment results*
- ◆ *2000 New Standards English Language Arts Reference Exam School Summary*
- ◆ *2000 New Standards Mathematics Reference Exam School Summary*
- ◆ *1999-2000 SALT Survey*
- ◆ *examination of student work*
- ◆ *following students*
- ◆ *classroom observations*
- ◆ *scheduled meetings with school and district administrators, students, and parents*
- ◆ *conversations and/or interviews with teachers, staff, and students*
- ◆ *observations of the school*
- ◆ *review of student portfolios*

Conclusions

The students at Coggeshall Elementary School are exceptionally polite, friendly, and well behaved. They demonstrate an ability to communicate effectively with each other and solve common differences. Students like school and love the teachers, staff, and principal. Most students are eager to learn and are proud of their school and their work. (*scheduled meetings with school and district administrators, students and parents, conversations and/or interviews with teachers, staff and students, classroom observations, observations of the school, following students*)

The majority of students read well. Students are excited about reading, read often, read independently, and explore text in a variety of genres. Many students work in literature circles and effectively demonstrate their comprehension by retelling, summarizing, making predictions, and connecting what they read to their daily lives. Most students demonstrate knowledge of phonemic awareness; they can blend sounds, and decode words. Fewer students can use these skills to read fluently, comprehend the text, analyze and interpret. Correspondingly, on the 2000 New Standards English Language Arts Reference Exam, the fourth grade students at Coggeshall Elementary School met or exceeded the standard in the following: *Reading Basic Understanding* – 79 percent, *Reading Analysis and Interpretations* – 63 percent. Furthermore, the student

performance on both reading subtests of the 1999 New Standards Reference Exam is comparable to similar students statewide. (*classroom observations, following students, examination of student work, 2000 New Standards English Language Arts Reference Exam School Summary, 2000 InformationWorks!, 1999-2000 SALT Survey*)

Student writing proficiency varies widely between and among grades. A number of students produce high-quality writing that includes specific details, descriptive language, and personal experiences. Other students are less adept at producing writing that goes beyond the recall of basic information or that makes reasonable and responsible interpretations. Some students demonstrate an effective ability to follow steps of a writing process—prewriting, creating a draft, revising, editing, and publishing. While many students have knowledge of the rules of grammar and conventions, too few students effectively transfer this knowledge into their writing to create cohesion between sentences and paragraphs or to organize their writing for an appropriate purpose and audience. Similarly, on the New Standards English Language Arts Reference Exam, the number of fourth grade students at Coggeshall Elementary School who met or exceeded the standard in the following: *Writing Conventions* – 25 percent and *Writing Effectiveness* – 53 percent. On the 2000 Rhode Island Writing Assessment, 3 percent of the third grade students met or exceeded the standard. (*following students, examination of student work, classroom observations, review of student portfolios, 2000 New Standards English Language Arts Reference Exam School Summary, 2000 InformationWorks!, 2000 Rhode Island Writing Assessment*)

Students are engaging in a variety of tasks to develop proficiency in skills, concepts, and problem solving. Many students are successful in using mathematical skills, but they are less secure in their understanding and application of mathematical concepts. Many students are able to do word problems, solve them in multiple ways, and explain how they arrived at the solution. Some students demonstrate the ability to write number stories and to read and record data in graphs. While some students demonstrate a strong grasp of effective problem solving strategies, many students lack tactics and techniques to approach and attack mathematical problems successfully. More students in the primary grades than in the upper grades use manipulatives to solve basic and multi-step problems. The fourth grade students at Coggeshall Elementary School met or exceeded the standard in the following: *Skills* – 71 percent, *Concepts* – 32 percent, *Problem Solving* – 48 percent. Furthermore, student performance on the math skills subtest of the 1999 New Standards Reference Exam is below similar students statewide and comparable to similar students on the concepts and problem solving subtests. (*classroom observations, following students, examination of student work, 2000 InformationWorks!, 2000 New Standards Mathematics Reference Exam School Summary*)

Commendations for Coggeshall Elementary School

The behavior of students

The politeness of students

Student love of reading and eagerness to learn

Recommendations for Coggeshall Elementary School

Continue to foster the social/emotional development of your students.

Increase the focus on reading fluency, comprehension, analysis, and interpretation.

Use the available information from both state testing data and classroom assessment to make decisions about the scope and sequence of curricula.

Spend more time helping students to develop mastery of conventions and to follow the steps of the writing

process.

Provide more opportunities to write in different genres and for a specific audience and purpose.

Implement new strategies to increase students' performance on the Third grade Rhode Island Writing Assessment.

5. FINDINGS ON TEACHING

Sources of Evidence

- ◆ *classroom observations*
- ◆ *observations of the school*
- ◆ *2000 New Standards Mathematics Reference Exam School Summary*
- ◆ *conversations and/or interviews with many students, teachers, and staff*
- ◆ *following students*
- ◆ *scheduled meetings with school and district administrators, students, and parents*
- ◆ *review of student portfolios*
- ◆ *review of classroom assignments*
- ◆ *examination of student work*
- ◆ *review of New Standards Performance Standards Book*

Conclusions

The professional staff is caring, hard working, and willing to change current practices. Most teachers are enthusiastic, take pride in their school, actively engage their students in the learning process, and are willing to participate in professional development. They are concerned about their students, want them to excel academically, and concurrently develop academic and appropriate social / emotional skills. They collaborate and share ideas as well as materials with their colleagues. (*classroom observations, following students, conversations and/or interviews with teachers, staff, and students, scheduled meetings with school and district administrators, students, and parents*)

Teachers are working very hard to improve student reading proficiency and contribute to the enthusiasm their students show for reading. Many teachers have effectively adopted reading practices that include: the Four-Block reading framework, literature circles, the use of leveled readers, partner reading, reading logs, response journals, take-home book bags, and daily independent reading. Some teachers still overuse a number of less effective practices, such as round robin reading, and provide limited opportunities for students to work collaboratively. Most teachers are focusing on character, plot, setting, sequence of events, summarizing, predicting, and making connections to students' personal experiences. Fewer teachers have students analyze and interpret text by making connections with other writing or by exploring the point an author is trying to make. (*classroom observations, following students, conversations and/or interviews with teachers and students, examination of student work, review of student portfolios*)

There is a variety of writing across the grades that is integrated into many different subject areas. Teachers

are making a concerted effort to improve writing. They are employing a district writing initiative, using a common prompt that is scored collaboratively, and often using the results to drive instruction. Day-to-day writing includes: journals, poetry, narratives, research reports, book reviews, letter writing, explaining mathematical solutions, and science observations. Many teachers are using rubrics to guide student writing. While a few teachers are effectively teaching students to use the writing process to extend their pieces of writing to go beyond the recall of basic information and to make reasonable and responsible interpretations, this is not occurring schoolwide. Many writing tasks provide too few opportunities for students to consistently employ pre-writing strategies, organize writing into sentences and paragraphs, revise their writing based on peer and teacher feedback, select their own writing topics, and write in different genres and to different audiences. In addition, teaching and assessment of writing often are not consciously linked to standards. (*classroom observations, conversations and/or interviews with teachers, review of student portfolios*)

Teachers are providing a wide variety of experiences in the development of math skills. Teachers are working valiantly to pull from a variety of sources to provide a positive math experience; they have tripled the percentage of students achieving the standard in problem solving (16% - 48%). Although many teachers are consciously working on problem solving, the lack of an organized math program contributes to disjointed skill and concept development, inconsistent teaching of problem solving, and a lack of continuity between and within grade levels. Computation skills, fractions, and other basic skills receive considerable attention. Conversely, mathematical concepts such as visualizing two dimensional and three dimensional shapes, making and interpreting graphs, and geometry receive less school-wide attention. Additionally, too few manipulatives are readily available for mathematics instruction. (following students, classroom observations, review of student portfolios, examination of student work, review of classroom assignments, 2000 New Standards Mathematics Reference Exam School Summary)

Effective standards-based instructional and assessment practices are emerging in this school. Many teachers' knowledge and understanding of standards are at the awareness level. While a number of effective standards-based practices can be found throughout the school, they happen as a result of good sound instructional practices rather than a clear and definitive focus on standards. Too few classroom assignments and assessments purposefully develop and evaluate the learning represented by the standards. The limited emphasis placed on the performance indicators (guidelines under the standards) provides both teachers and students with insufficient information about desired student outcomes. Additionally, a few teachers are effectively incorporating technology into their daily lessons to collect, organize, analyze, and present information. However, most teachers are not fully utilizing the technology available in their classroom as both a teaching and learning tool. (*classroom observations, following students, examination of student work, review of student portfolios, review of New Standards Performance Standards Book, conversations and/or interviews with teachers, scheduled meetings with school and district administrators and students*)

There are some excellent examples of oral and written feedback at Coggeshall Elementary School. A number of teachers are effectively using student conferences to improve student understanding of and proficiency with reading and writing. Rubrics are used throughout the school by teachers and students to guide the format, and sometimes the quality, of student work. Some teachers have begun to look collaboratively at student work to assess student performance. While some teachers provide specific diagnostic comments that students can use to improve the quality of their work, most written comments take the form of supportive remarks that encourage students. (*examination of student work, classroom observations, review of student portfolios, following students*)

Commendations for Coggeshall Elementary School

The dedication of the staff

The efforts to change and improve for the betterment of students

The caring of staff and their camaraderie

Creating a positive school climate

Recommendations for Coggeshall Elementary School

Expand the use of literature circles, where appropriate, and other effective reading practices found in this school to increase consistency from grade to grade. Provide additional opportunities for students to analyze and interpret text.

Expand the use and frequency of student-to-student and student-to-teacher conferences for writing and reading in all classrooms.

Increase the focus on mathematics concepts and the use of math manipulatives to reinforce concepts and problem solving strategies.

Expand the student use of technology in all classrooms.

Investigate and consider adopting the Principles of Learning to facilitate and simplify the adoption of standards-based instructional practices.

Design classroom assignments, activities, and assessments consciously linked to standards-based performance indicators.

Provide additional written, diagnostic comments that students can use to improve the quality of their work.

Develop and use task-specific rubrics with a clear link to the standards that focus on the quality of student work.

Collaboratively look at student work on a schoolwide basis and use that information to guide future instruction.

Recommendations for Newport Public School District

Provide the requisite materials and training to implement the new district-wide K-6 mathematics program.

Provide the resources and technical assistance Coggeshall Elementary School will need to address the recommendations in this SALT report.

6. FINDINGS ON THE SCHOOL

Sources of Evidence

- ◆ *classroom observations*
- ◆ *observations of the school*
- ◆ *conversations and/or interviews with many students, teachers, and staff*
- ◆ *scheduled meetings with school improvement team, school and district administrators, students, and parents*
- ◆ *following students*
- ◆ *School Improvement Plan for Coggeshall Elementary School*
 - ◆ *Review of Newport Public Schools teacher evaluation instrument*
 - ◆ *review of public relations and news articles binder*
 - ◆ *1999-2000 SALT Survey*
 - ◆ *review of Math Performance Assessment Project 2000*
 - ◆ *Newport Public Schools Literacy Outcomes and Competencies K-6*
 - ◆ *East Bay Educational Collaborative outcomes K-12*
 - ◆ *KITES Writing Resource Notebook*
 - ◆ *WWIII Focus School Portfolio*

Conclusions

A strong sense of family exists at Coggeshall Elementary School among the students, parents, teachers, principal, and the community served by the school. This sense of family contributes to the camaraderie of the faculty and the respectfulness of the students. All parties take a great amount of pride in this school. This is clearly evident in the recent completion and dedication of the new playground and the community participation in the recent Centennial celebration. (*observations of the school, conversations and/or interviews with teachers, staff, and students, review of public relations and news articles binder, scheduled meetings with school improvement team, school and district administrators, students, and parents*)

The school improvement team has conducted a self-study and established a School Improvement Plan

complete with a mission, objectives, tactics, and action steps. This sets an ambitious plan for school and is a good first step in the cycle of continuous improvement. While the action plans found in the School Improvement Plan provide a good focus for change, presently many of these action steps lack measurable criteria that the school can use to gauge its progress toward achieving the desired plans for improvement. Although the school improvement team has set an effective course for improvement, the school has not fully realized the benefits of broad-based teacher, family, and community involvement in self-study, as well as in the design and implementation of a School Improvement Plan. *(review of School Improvement Plan, scheduled meetings with school improvement team, parents, and district administrators, conversations and/or interviews with teachers, 1999-2000 SALT Survey Staff Charts SF-1.3-1 and SF-H-2)*

Parents feel welcome in this school; they like and respect their children's teachers. Parents are an integral part of the teaching and learning that take place in a number of classrooms. The school makes efforts to communicate with its parents through school and classroom newsletters, progress reports, and report cards. Nevertheless, some parents desire more frequent information about the progress of their children and clearer expectations of what the child should be learning, as well as explanations regarding standards and rubrics. Correspondingly, a number of effective community-based programs help support the education that takes place in Coggeshall School including: The Salvation Army After School Program, The Safe Schools Healthy Students Summer Program, D.A.R.E., Volunteers in Newport (VINE), Feinstein Good Deeds Program and university partnerships. *(1999-2000 SALT Survey Parents Response Charts A-5.2 and A-2, scheduled meetings with school improvement team, district administrators, and parents, observations of the school, conversations and/or interviews with teachers, classroom observations)*

Coggeshall School supports professional development for all its teachers as documented in the teacher evaluation tool and the school's strategic plan. Both the teacher evaluation system and the mentoring program are designed to improve teaching practice. There is a lack of continuity in the type of development that teachers participate in schoolwide. Many teachers initiate their own professional development and implement acquired strategies in their own classrooms. However, the school does not have a professional development committee or a formal professional development plan designed to support the objectives of the School Improvement Plan and to provide focus, guidance, and continued support for the staff. This hinders the school's ability to provide each teacher with the instructional tools needed to implement new initiatives effectively and in a unified manner. *(scheduled meetings with school improvement team and school administrator, conversations and/or interviews with teachers, review of School Improvement Plan)*

Teachers are working hard to adopt new instructional practices and meet the needs of their students. These efforts are hindered by disparate curricula guides, limited training in standards-based instructional practices, and the lack of enough instructional materials. To compensate for this many teachers purchase these supplies and materials with their own money. *(classroom observations, following students, conversations and/or interviews with teachers, scheduled meetings with school and district administrators, review of Math Performance Assessment Project 2000, Newport Public Schools Literacy Outcomes and Competencies K-6, East Bay Educational Collaborative outcomes K-12, Kites Writing Resource, WWIII Focus School Portfolio, 1999-2000 SALT Survey Staff Chart SF-1.3-1)*

Ninety-six percent of the parents responding to the SALT Survey indicate that Coggeshall School "is a safe place." However, a number of parents, students, and staff express concern about the potential dangers of unlocked doors and loosely enforced sign-in / sign-out policies for visitors. Facilities issues negatively impact the teaching and learning environment, i.e., the cleanliness of the building, inadequate and uncomfortable furniture, and insufficient phone lines to make confidential phone calls to parents. *(conversations and/or interviews with teachers and staff, scheduled meetings with school improvement team, students and parents, 1999-2000 SALT Survey Parent Chart A.2)*

Commendations for Coggeshall Elementary School

The sense of family

The creation of the new playground

The involvement of the community

The supportive after-school and summer programs

Recommendations for Coggeshall Elementary School

Review the action steps in the School Improvement Plan and add, when appropriate, measurable criteria and timelines that the school can use to gauge its progress.

Increase the school and community participation in shared decision making through the school improvement team, as well as increase their involvement in revising and implementing the School Improvement Plan.

Devise and implement a professional development plan that focuses on the tactics of the School Improvement Plan, incorporating standards-based instructional practices and rubrics into daily lessons, the collaborative use of student work to guide instruction, and using technology as a teaching and learning tool.

Re-examine the current allocation of resources to ensure teachers have the necessary amount of developmentally appropriate instructional materials to deliver the desired educational program.

Address the facility and the potential safety concerns expressed by members of this learning community.

Extend the custodial time before or after-school to ensure sufficient opportunities to adequately clean and maintain the facilities.

Recommendations for Newport Public School District

Increase the resources available for instructional materials.

Develop district wide K-12 standards-based curricula with a scope and sequence in the various academic areas.

Provide the resources and technical assistance necessary for Coggeshall Elementary School to make the changes and recommendations outlined in this SALT report.

7. Final Advice to the School

Coggeshall is a school where students enjoy learning and teachers enjoy teaching. In many ways, you already demonstrate a wonderful sense of family with good efforts to “pull together” in pursuit of quality education for the common good of students. Even so, a few teachers and parents say they have limited input into building level decisions. Take advantage of the strong foundation that you have built in this school and broaden the existing spirit of cooperation to ensure that everyone feels heard, appreciated, and a part of the team. Realizing your desire to help all children achieve at high levels will require the participation of all stakeholders. Concentration of effort is the primary requisite for excellence.

In your effort to address the recommendations in this report, work through your school improvement team. Broad-based involvement in the design and implementation of a School Improvement Plan will facilitate the process of shared decision making. Establish a professional development committee and a formal plan that supports the school’s chosen reforms, as well as the instructional practices needed to make the changes recommended in this report. Use this plan to ensure that all staff members acquire a common knowledge base so that the entire school can contribute to the education of each child in a coordinated manner. Continue to learn from each other, share with each other, and capitalize on these invaluable in-school resources. There are a number of very effective practices in this school. Consider including opportunities for in-class modeling as part of an overall plan for professional training.

A number of teachers expressed how rubrics are helping students focus their work. A purposeful link to the standards can have the same effect on students’ thinking. When you design learning activities, begin with the standards or desired outcome in mind. Look at the performance indicators found in the standards. Decide what evidence you will need to determine that students have mastered the desired learning; then design classroom lessons/activities that will develop this understanding in students and that will yield the evidence needed to assess students’ performance. Collaboratively look at student work. This will produce a wealth of information about individual student strengths and the nature and quality of assignments and assessments. It will also support your efforts to build on student knowledge from year-to-year.

Thoughtfully reflect on what you presently do; decide which practices and assignments can be eliminated or combined and which ones need to be expanded. Rely on the strengths of your staff to help you channel your efforts, narrow your vision, and sift through the myriad of testing materials and teaching practices that which are all necessary to bring standards-based education alive.

Capitalize on the positive beliefs and feelings parents have for this school. Work to increase home / school communication and parental involvement in the education of children at school, in the classroom, and at home so that parents become true partners in the education of their children. Continue to expand your efforts to establish community partnerships that yield new resources and supports for the school.

Your willingness to make the changes needed to improve student achievement in reading, writing, and mathematics is reflected in the improved state assessments scores. Take pride in the steps you have taken to bring sound educational strategies into the school. Continue to develop your expertise in using the standards to drive your instruction. Because of the culture and talents that exist among the professional staff of Coggeshall Elementary School, the challenging and exciting work ahead of you is not insurmountable.

As you work with this SALT report, we hope you will realize that our conclusions, commendations, and recommendations are designed to help you make this strong learning community better meet the needs of your students. For that is, unquestionably, the intent of our team.

Coggeshall Elementary School Improvement Team

Mrs. Chrostowski
Teacher

Mrs. DeVos
Parent

Mr. Frizelle
Principal

Ms. Hatch
Teacher

Ms. Lahart
Staff Member

Mrs. Leys
Teacher

Mr. Mey
Teacher

Mrs. Silveria
Parent

Mrs. Spohn
Parent

Ms. Sullivan
Teacher

The SALT Visit Team

Dr. Michael S. Barnes
Technology Education / Department Chairperson
Ponaganset Middle / Senior High School
Foster-Glocester, Rhode Island
(on leave to Rhode Island Department of Education to serve as a SALT Fellow)
Chair of the Team

Morag Anne Cronkite
Grade 2 Teacher
Wickford Elementary School
North Kingstown, Rhode Island

Mary Ellen Dwyer
Kindergarten Teacher
Sowams Elementary School
Barrington, Rhode Island

Shirley A. Fisher
Resource Teacher
John F. Kennedy Elementary School
Middletown, Rhode Island

John T. Kelly
Special Education Teacher
Ponaganset Middle School
Foster-Glocester, Rhode Island

Barbara J. Sirois
Parent
Middletown, Rhode Island

New Standards Reference Examination and RI Writing Assessment Results (2000)

Endorsement of SALT Visit Team Report

Coggeshall Elementary School

May 11, 2001

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

1. This report was produced by a legitimate SALT Visit that was led by a trained SALT Visit Chair and conducted in a manner that is consistent with SALT Visit procedures.
2. The conclusions and all other content of this report meet the criteria specified for a SALT Visit report.

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



Thomas A. Wilson, EdD
Catalpa Ltd.
June 6, 2001