



Centredale Elementary School

North Providence

The SALT Visit Team Report

February 8, 2002



School Accountability for Learning and Teaching (SALT)

The accountability program of the Rhode Island Department of Education

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

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This report is available at <http://www.rideo.net/schoolimprove/salt/visits.htm>

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1. THE PURPOSE AND LIMITS of this report

Overview

This is the report of the SALT team that visited Centredale Elementary School from February 4 through February 8. The following features are at the heart of the report:

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

The major questions the team addresses are:

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

The findings of the SALT report are presented in six report sections:

Profile describes some of the key features of the school and sums up the school's results on state tests.

The team writes *Portrait* as an overview of what it thinks are the most important themes in the conclusions that follow. While *Portrait* precedes the team's conclusions, it is written after they are complete.

The team's conclusions are about how well the team thinks the school is performing in each of the three SALT focus areas: Learning, Teaching and The School.

The team may award commendations in each focus area for aspects of the school that it considers unusual and commendable. The team must make several recommendations to the school for each focus area, drawing on the conclusions for that area. The team may make recommendations to other agencies, e.g. the district.

The team provides the school with some brief comments about how it thinks the school should proceed, in the *Final Advice* section.

The Catalpa Ltd. endorsement of the legitimacy of the report and its conclusions appears on the final page.

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

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

Sources of Evidence for This Report

In order to write this report the team examines test scores, student work, and other documents related to this school. The school improvement plan for Centredale 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 builds its conclusions primarily from information about what the students, staff, and administrators think and do during their day. Thus, the visit allows the team to build informed judgments about the teaching, learning, and support that actually takes place at Centredale Elementary School.

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

- ◆ *observing a total of 71 classes. The team spent a total of over 87 hours in direct classroom observation. Almost every classroom was visited at least once, and almost every teacher was observed more than once.*
- ◆ *observing the school outside of the classroom*
- ◆ *following 6 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 administrator*
- ◆ *observing the Centredale Elementary School Whole Faculty Study Group*
- ◆ *reviewing completed and ongoing student work*
- ◆ *interviewing teachers about the work of their students*
- ◆ *analyzing three years of state assessment results as reported in Information Works!*
- ◆ *reviewing the following documents:*
 - district and school policies and practices*
 - records of professional development activities*
 - classroom assessments*
 - school improvement plan for Centredale Elementary School*
 - district strategic plan*
 - 1999, 2000 SALT Survey report*
 - classroom textbooks*
 - 1998, 1999, 2000 2001 Information Works!*
 - 1998, 1999, 2000 New Standards Reference Examination results*
 - 1999, 2000, and 2001 Rhode Island Writing Assessment results*
 - 2001 New Standards English Language Arts Reference Examination School Summary*
 - *2001 New Standards Mathematics Reference Examination School Summary*
 - *reviewing Centredale Elementary School Portfolios for the Feinstein Good Deeds Program*
 - *reviewing Centredale Teacher Self-study Binders*
 - *reviewing Centredale Teacher Schedules*
 - *reviewing Centredale Elementary School Report Cards*
 - *reviewing Centredale Elementary School Building Level Action Plans 2000-01, 2001-02*
 - *reviewing Centredale Elementary School Self Study*

The full visit team built the conclusions, commendations, and recommendations presented here through intense and thorough discussion. The team met for a total of 22 hours in six separate meetings spanning the

four [five] days of the visit. This time is exclusive of the time the team spent in classrooms, with teachers, and in meetings with students, parents, and school and district administrators.

The team must agree that every conclusion in this report:

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

Using the Report

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

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

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

This report is not prescriptive. The value of this report will be determined by its effectiveness in improving teaching and learning. By considering how important it considers what the team has said and why, the school will take its first step in becoming accountable in a way that actually improves learning.

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

After the school improvement team considers this report, it should make changes in the school improvement plan. The revised plan will form the basis for negotiating a Compact for Learning with the school district. The purpose of the Compact is to ensure that the school and its district work out an agreement about the best way to improve the school and the best way to target district support for the school. A RIDE Field Service Team representative will offer assistance in preparing the compact.

2. PROFILE OF Centredale Elementary School

Background

Centredale Elementary School is the fourth school to be so named in the history of the city of North Providence, Rhode Island. Constructed in 1961, the school currently houses pre-kindergarten through eighth grade. The current school year is the last that grades six through eight will be housed in this school, as a middle school program is planned for the 2002-03 school year.

The current student population of Centredale Elementary School is 241. Of these students 25% qualify for free or reduced-priced lunch. Ninety percent are white, 4.5% are black, 2.5% are Asian/Pacific Islander, and 3% are Hispanic. Thirty-two percent of the students receive special education services.

The school staff consists of a principal, 11 regular education faculty members, four special education teachers, a Title I reading specialist, a speech pathologist, six teacher assistants, a sign language consultant who are assigned to this school full time along with a school secretary and two custodians. Additional itinerant staff members, who serve the Centredale students, include two physical education teachers, a health teacher, music teachers, art teachers, librarians, a foreign language teacher, a school nurse, a social worker, a guidance counselor, a school psychologist, an adaptive physical education teacher, and occupational and physical therapists.

Several programs are in place at Centredale Elementary School that are not common in the city's elementary schools. These include Model Classroom Initiative (MCI), which is funded by grants used to equip classrooms with state-of-the-art technology. Centredale School also participates in the Alan Shawn Feinstein "I Can Make A Difference" Program. This program recognizes and honors both students and parents for their achievements and contributions at a monthly "Feinstein Breakfast." For six consecutive years Centredale School has been awarded \$1,000 for participation in the Feinstein Program.

Centredale School currently is working with the National Association for the Education of Young Children towards accreditation for its pre-kindergarten and kindergarten program, one of only two schools in North Providence applying for this recognition.

The principal and staff provide a large number of after school programs, social and athletic activities, and in school special events.

State Assessment Results for Centredale Elementary School

On the subtests of the 2000-2001 New Standards Mathematics Reference Examination, six in 10 of the fourth graders (60%) met or exceeded the standard in basic skills; one in four of the fourth graders (24%) met or exceeded the standard in concepts; and approximately one in 10 of the fourth graders (11%) met or exceeded the standard in problem solving. Equity gaps (a difference of more than 15%) exist in writing for the following groups of students: special education students.

On the reading subtests of the 2000-2001 New Standards English Language Arts Reference Examination, three in four of the fourth graders (78%) met or exceeded the standard in Reading: Basic Understanding, and just more than one in two of the fourth graders (54%) met or exceeded the standard in Reading: Analysis and Interpretation. Equity gaps (a difference of more than 15%) exist in reading for the following groups of students: poverty, multi-racial, special education.

On the writing subtests of the 2000-2001 New Standards English Language Arts Reference Examination

almost one in two of the fourth graders (46%) met or exceeded the standard in Writing: Conventions, and seven in 10 of the fourth graders (70%) met or exceeded the standard in Writing: Effectiveness. On the Rhode Island Writing Assessment just more than one in 10 of the third graders (12 %) met or exceeded the standard. Equity gaps (a difference of more than 15%) exist in writing for the following groups of students: poverty, multi-racial, special education students, and males.

On the subtests of the 2000-2001 New Standards Mathematics Reference Examination one in three of the eighth graders (35%) met or exceeded the standard in basic skills; one in 20 of the eighth graders (5%) met or exceeded the standard in concepts; and one in six of the eighth graders (15%) met or exceeded the standard in problem solving.

On the reading subtests of the 2000-2001 New Standards English Language Arts Reference Examination three in four of the eighth graders (75%) met or exceeded the standard in Reading: Basic Understanding, and three in 10 of the eighth graders (30%) met or exceeded the standard in Reading: Analysis and Interpretation. Equity gaps (a difference of more than 15%) exist in reading for the following groups of students: males and special education students.

On the writing subtests of the 2000-2001 New Standards English Language Arts Reference Examination just more than six in 10 of the eighth graders (65%) met or exceeded the standard in Writing: Conventions, and seven in 10 of the eighth graders (70%) met or exceeded the standard in Writing: Effectiveness. On the Rhode Island Writing Assessment one in eight of the eighth graders (12%) met or exceeded the standard. Equity gaps (a difference of more than 15%) exist in writing for the following groups of students: males and special education students.

The most recently available New Standards Reference Examination results have been appended to this report. Information Works! data for Centredale Elementary School is available at <<http://www.rido.net>.

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

Centredale Elementary School is at the heart of the Centredale neighborhood. Visitors to this school can expect to be greeted warmly. Smiling faces and engaging personalities are encountered everywhere. The school principal, secretary, teachers, custodians, teacher assistants and, most especially, the students are friendly, kind, and joyful. All members of this learning community accept responsibility for themselves and for others. Their mutual respect, concern, and affection for one another are clearly evident.

This entire school community is on a journey toward school improvement. All stakeholders make tireless efforts to educate and support each child—academically, socially, emotionally, and physically. The professional staff has demonstrated a willingness to develop and refine their teaching toward standards-based instruction and performance-based assessment. They have engaged in self-study activities that help them make choices for their professional development. They are willing to share their expertise and ideas and to work together to improve the delivery of instruction to their students. The principal serves as a true educational leader, modeling lessons and teaching classes so that classroom teachers have the opportunity to observe the teaching of their peers.

While there are still some hurdles to clear on this path to improved student learning, there is little doubt that all of the necessary talents to make this a reality already exist within this school. The incredibly devoted and supportive principal, hard-working teachers, dedicated support staff, concerned parents, and eager students all work towards the same goal.

4. FINDINGS ON STUDENT LEARNING

Sources of Evidence

- ◆ *2001 Information Works!*
- ◆ *2001 Rhode Island Writing Assessment results*
- ◆ *1998, 1999, 2000, 2001 New Standards Reference Examination results*
- ◆ *2001 New Standards English Language Arts Reference Examination School Summary*
- ◆ *2001 New Standards Mathematics Reference Examination School Summary*
- ◆ *reviewing completed and ongoing student work*
- ◆ *meeting with the school improvement team, students, school administrator, and parents*
- ◆ *following students*
- ◆ *observing classes*
- ◆ *observing the school outside of the classroom*
- ◆ *talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administrator*
- ◆ *reviewing Centredale Elementary School Portfolio for the Feinsein Good Deeds Program*
- ◆ *reviewing Centredale Teacher Self-study Binders*
- ◆ *interviewing teachers about the work of their students*

Conclusions

The students at Centredale Elementary School are polite, kind, well-behaved, and respectful of their teachers, principal, school support staff, and one another. They demonstrate genuine concern for all members of their school and the larger community, and they enjoy serving others. They actively participate in the Feinsein Good Deeds Program by raising funds and by participating in food and clothing drives and numerous other outreach programs for people in need. They also engage in schoolwide support programs such as peer mediation and reading buddies. These children have developed a strong sense of citizenship; they recognize the importance of helping others and are proud of the contributions they make to this school and the larger community. *(meeting with the students, school administrator, and parents, following students, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, talking with students, teachers,*

staff, and school administrator, reviewing Centredale Elementary School Portfolio for the Feinstein Good Deeds Program)

Students at Centredale Elementary School are active participants in their learning. Students readily engage in their learning in a variety of settings. Most eagerly participate in classroom discussions, cooperative learning groups, and peer and teacher conferences. Students are not afraid to ask for help when they need it. Some students are able to direct their own learning by making thoughtful choices when presented with learning options; they work well independently and with other students. They are enthusiastic learners, who are anxious to please the adults in this building—all whom they view as supportive, kind, and caring. The students contribute to the positive learning environment that exists in this school. *(following students, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, meeting with students, school administrator, and parents, talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administrator)*

The students at Centredale Elementary School write on a daily basis, and most enjoy the opportunities to write. They demonstrate a willingness to share their work and take pride in their accomplishments. Students readily engage in a variety of writing activities. In many classrooms students write in journals, write personal narratives, and respond to literature. Some students effectively engage in the writing process. They successfully brainstorm their ideas, create rough drafts, revise, peer and self-edit, conference with their teachers, and create high quality published pieces. As a result, some students are becoming effective writers. This is evidenced by the 2001 New Standards English Language Arts Reference Examination results, which show that 70% of the fourth grade students and 70% of the eighth grade students, who were tested, met or exceeded the standard in Writing: Effectiveness. Forty-six percent of the fourth grade students and 65% of the eighth grade students met or exceeded the standard in Writing: Conventions. *(1998, 1999, 2000, 2001 New Standards Reference Examination results, reviewing Centredale Teacher Self-study Binders, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, interviewing teachers about the work of their students, observing classes, talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administrator, meeting with the school improvement team, students, school administrator, and parents)*

Students at Centredale School are developing an appreciation of literature and a love of reading. Students read independently, in groups and pairs; they enjoy adults reading to them. Some students engage in spirited conversations about the books they have read, although most of these conversations focus on sharing basic story elements. They are developing a familiarity and appreciation for the authors whose works they study. Most students know the strategies for identifying words and use context clues to aid them in their comprehension. However, many still read at a literal level and are not employing higher order thinking skills and strategies to analyze and comprehend text. These findings are supported by the results of the recent 2001 New Standards English Language Arts Reference Examination, which show that 78% of the fourth grade students and 75% of the eighth grade students met or exceeded the standard in Reading: Basic Skills. Additionally, 54% of the fourth graders and 30% of the eighth graders met or exceeded the standard in Reading: Analysis and Interpretation. *(observing classes, talking with students, teachers, and school administrator, meeting with the school improvement team, students, school administrator, and parents, following students, 2001 New Standards English Language Arts Reference Examination School Summary)*

Most students at Centredale Elementary School are having difficulty with computation and trying to understand the ideas behind math. Many are not able to apply concepts and skills to solve problems. Most of the students in this school can articulate the four steps for problem solving that are part of their mathematics curriculum. While some students are able to employ a variety of strategies successfully when they are solving problems, many are confused and frustrated with the application of these strategies and

verbalize this. This is particularly true when students are asked to explain their process orally or in writing. Consequently, on the 2001 New Standards Mathematics Reference Examination 60% of the students in grade four and 35% of the students in grade eight met or exceeded the standard in Basic Skills. Twenty-four percent of the grade four students and 5% of the grade eight students met or exceeded the standard in Concepts. Additionally, 11% of the fourth grade students and 15% of the eighth grade students met or exceeded the standard in problem solving. (*following students, observing classes, interviewing teachers about the work of their students, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, talking with students, teachers, and school administrator, meeting with the school improvement team, students, school administrator, and parents, 2001 New Standards Mathematics Reference Examination School Summary*)

Commendations for Centredale Elementary School

The polite, kind, well-behaved, and respectful student body

The generosity and concern students have for all members of their school and the larger community

Students' eager and active participation in their learning

Student appreciation of literature and love of reading

Recommendations for Centredale Elementary School

Consistently engage your students in all steps of the writing process.

Provide more opportunities for your students to make connections, predict, infer, compare and contrast, synthesize, and analyze what they read.

Provide students with additional time to practice computational skills, develop mathematical concepts, apply a variety of strategies when solving problems, and explain their process orally and in writing

5. FINDINGS ON TEACHING

Sources of Evidence

- ◆ *observing classes*
- ◆ *following students*
- ◆ *observing the school outside of the classroom*
- ◆ *meeting with the school improvement team, students, school and district administrators, and parents*
- ◆ *talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administrator*
- ◆ *reviewing Centredale Elementary School Portfolio for the Feinsein Good Deeds Program*
- ◆ *1998-1999 SALT Survey Report*
- ◆ *2001 Information Works!*
- ◆ *interviewing teachers about the work of their students*
- ◆ *reviewing completed and ongoing student work*
- ◆ *reviewing Centredale Teacher's Self-Study Binders*
- ◆ *observing the Centredale Elementary School Whole Faculty Study Group*

Conclusions

Teachers at Centredale Elementary School are very devoted to their students. Their dedication and concern for the whole child leads them to nurture and provide for their academic, social, emotional, and physical needs. This concern extends to the children's families and the larger community. The generosity they display, through the contributions of their time, talents, and personal resources, models exemplary citizenship for their students. This same devotion is evident in their interactions with all members of the school staff. They contribute to a learning environment in which all members feel safe, secure, and protected. (*observing the school outside of the classroom, meeting with the school improvement team, students, school and district administrators, and parents, talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administrator, reviewing Centredale Elementary School Portfolio for the Feinsein Good Deeds Program, 1998-1999 SALT Survey Report, observing classes*)

There are examples of outstanding teaching methods and practices at Centredale Elementary School. Some teachers are highly skilled in the delivery of instruction. They help their students make connections in their

learning and relate their learning to real life. Some motivate and inspire their students with their own enthusiasm. Some possess considerable talents in classroom management. Most teachers possess the necessary content knowledge that enhances their ability to be effective teachers. There are teachers in this school who exhibit all of these outstanding qualities. Teachers have been given the opportunity to observe best practices modeled by their peers. As a result, teachers in this school have begun to further develop, refine, and enhance their teaching skills. (*observing classes, following students, talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administrator, meeting with the school improvement team, students, parents, school and district administrators, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, interviewing teachers about the work of their students, observing the Centredale Elementary School Whole Faculty Study Group*)

Most teachers at Centredale Elementary School endorse the adoption of standards-based instruction and performance-based assessment. They have begun to make real progress toward the achievement of this goal. Some teachers have incorporated both content and performance standards into their daily instruction. Some are becoming proficient in the use of performance-based assessments. A few teachers use information from these assessments to guide their instruction and to group and regroup students. While many teachers are beginning to use criteria checklists and rubrics effectively to clarify their expectations to students, not all students are able to use this information to produce high quality work. Additionally, teacher feedback on student work is sometimes insufficient to support students when they are working to improve, revise, and edit their work. As a result, the quality of the students' work does not always meet high standards. (*reviewing completed and ongoing student work, interviewing teachers about the work of their students, following students, observing classes, meeting with the school improvement team, school and district administrators, parents, talking with teachers and school administrator*)

In most classrooms at Centredale Elementary School student participation and engagement in the learning process is clearly evident. Teachers employ a wide variety of teaching strategies. Some teachers effectively engage their students in hands-on learning activities, cooperative-learning groups, and project-based units. In some classrooms there is a major emphasis on teacher-directed lessons. While each of these has its advantages, the challenge to Centredale teachers is to build a productive balance in each classroom between teacher-directed learning activities and independent learning activities. (*observing classes, following students, talking with teachers and school administrator, meeting with parents*)

While most teachers at Centredale Elementary School express a desire for all children to meet high standards, high and clear expectations are not evident to all students. In cases where students are ready to accept more rigorous challenges, instruction is not being differentiated to meet their needs. This is true for students who have already met high standards, as well as for those who have nearly achieved the standard or are below standard. As a result, not all students have an opportunity to reach their full academic potential. (*observing classes, following students, interviewing teachers about the work of their students, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, reviewing Centredale Teacher's Self-Study Binders, talking with students, teachers, and school administrator, meeting with the school improvement team, students, school administrator, and parents*)

Commendations for Centredale Elementary School

The devotion and dedication teachers have for the students and their families

Teacher generosity

Teachers modeling exemplary citizenship

Recommendations for Centredale Elementary School

Encourage and guide your students to connect their learning to real life experiences, to prior knowledge, and across academic disciplines.

Increase opportunities for teachers to observe and share the best practices modeled by other teachers in this building.

Establish high standards, and increase your expectations for all students.

Engage in professional development in the areas of differentiated instruction, classroom management, standards-based instruction, and performance-based assessment.

Differentiate instruction to provide more rigorous challenges for all students.

Establish and maintain a balance between teacher-directed and student-centered lessons.

Recommendations for the North Providence School District

Provide resources for the professional development opportunities that are needed.

6. FINDINGS ON THE SCHOOL

Sources of Evidence

- ◆ *observing classes*
- ◆ *observing the school outside of the classroom*
- ◆ *talking with many students, teachers, staff, and school administrator*
- ◆ *following students*
- ◆ *meeting with the school improvement team, students, school and district administrators, parents*
- ◆ *reviewing completed and ongoing student work*
- ◆ *interviewing teachers about the work of their students*
- ◆ *reviewing Centredale Teacher's Self-Study Binders*
- ◆ *reviewing Centredale Elementary School Building Level Action Plans, 2000-2001*
- ◆ *reviewing Centredale Teacher Schedules*
- ◆ *observing the Centredale Elementary School Whole Faculty Study Group*
- ◆ *reviewing Centredale Elementary School Report Cards*
- ◆ *1999-2000 SALT Survey*
- ◆ *reviewing Centredale Elementary School Self Study*

Conclusions

The principal of Centredale Elementary School is exceptional. She exemplifies the qualities of a true educational leader. She is completely devoted to the students, families, faculty, and staff. Her personal sacrifices of time and energy are without limit. Because of her kind, supportive, and cheerful nature, she has the complete loyalty, respect, and admiration of the entire school community—including the district administrators, teachers, staff, parents and students. She is completely committed to the learning process, not only for her students and teachers, but also for herself. She embodies the ideal of lifelong learning and models it for all members of this school community. (*observing the school outside of the classroom, talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administrator, meeting with the school improvement team, students, school and district administrators, parents, observing the Centredale Elementary School Whole*

Faculty Study Group)

Centredale School is the heart of the Centredale neighborhood. Support between the school and community is reciprocal. Parents are very satisfied with almost all aspects of their children's educational experiences. Many credit the positive changes that have been recently implemented in this school to the leadership of the school principal. They are very comfortable with the school's nurturing environment and believe that their children are safe and that their needs are being met. They report that the principal and teachers in this school are open and available to communicate with them. They are aware of the school's general procedures, operations, and practices. Some are concerned that specific information regarding their own child is somewhat limited. Many are not satisfied with the report card that currently is being used and state that it does not provide enough information about their child's progress. Others express a desire to see more of the student's work on a regular basis. Parents also express concern that they are not fully informed and educated about standards-based instruction or the implications it has for their children's learning. However, it is clear that parents support this school and its staff. *(meeting with parents, 1999-2000 SALT Survey, reviewing Centredale Elementary School Report Cards, talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administrator, reviewing Centredale Elementary School Building Level Action Plans 2000-01)*

This school is progressing toward its goal of adopting standards-based instruction and performance-based assessment. The principal has supported this initiative by providing numerous opportunities for staff to engage in professional development. The principal and members of the faculty participate in a monthly Whole Faculty Study Group in an effort to support all teachers, as they begin to adopt standards-based instruction. Some teachers have embraced the changes that need to be made. Others have been willing to explore some parts of this comprehensive initiative but have not yet fully implemented or accepted it. This results in inconsistencies in the delivery of instruction, in student performance, and in overall improvement in student learning. *(reviewing Centredale Elementary School Building Level Action Plans 2000-01, meeting with the school improvement team, school and district administrators, parents, talking with teachers, staff, and school administrator, observing the Centredale Elementary School Whole Faculty Study Group, reviewing Centredale Elementary School Self Study)*

The current program for Special Education students at Centredale Elementary School is meeting the needs of some, but not all, of the students being served. In some cases students are not being placed in their age-appropriate, least restrictive environment. Additionally, extra time scheduled for classes such as physical education, music, and art limits instruction time for reading, writing, and mathematics. For some of these students expectations seem particularly low. Some staff members express a belief that these students are unable to achieve even minimum standards. This is evident from the classroom activities that are provided for these students. As a result, not all special needs students have an opportunity to maximize their potential. *(reviewing completed and ongoing student work, interviewing teachers about the work of their students, reviewing Centredale Teacher's Self-Study Binders, observing classes, following students, talking with teachers and staff, reviewing Centredale Teacher Schedules)*

Through the efforts of the principal and staff, Centredale Elementary School is technologically well equipped. The high quality of technology and its availability and use enhance learning for many students and their families. One night each week the principal remains at school for an extended period of time so that parents can use the school computers. Special assistive technology has been acquired for special needs students. Some teachers have successfully incorporated the use of technology into their daily instruction, making it possible for their students to enrich their work and take pride in their accomplishments. In some classrooms technology has not yet been fully incorporated into the curriculum, despite the availability and quality of the equipment. This occurs when classroom teachers are less familiar with the operation of the equipment or the advantages technology offers. *(observing classes, observing the school outside of the*

classroom, talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administrator, meeting with the school improvement team, students, school and district administrators, parents)

Currently the use of time and staff at Centredale Elementary School is not optimal. The overall organization and structure of the school schedule interferes with the consistent delivery of instruction for all students. Scheduling of itinerants is inefficient. For example, one full-time teacher, rather than two part-time teachers who exchange duties, would better serve students within this school. Other time issues include the inconsistent start of instruction in all classrooms each morning. In some cases transitions between classroom activities are too frequent and often disorganized. Additionally, insufficient time is spent on tasks in some classrooms, as is the amount of time allotted to complete a full lesson. Consequently the learning and teaching in the school succumbs to the schedule, rather than the schedule supporting learning and teaching. *(reviewing Centredale Teacher Schedules, talking with teachers, staff, and school administrator, following students, meeting with the school and district administrators, observing classes)*

Commendations for Centredale Elementary School

The exceptional principal

The Whole Faculty Study Group

The school's safe and nurturing environment

The reciprocal support between the school and the Centredale community

The high quality of technology and its availability to students and their families

Recommendations for Centredale Elementary School

Inform and educate parents in the implementation of standards-based instruction and performance-based assessment.

Explore opportunities to further inform and engage parents in their children's learning such as parent conferences, sharing student work, and increased informal communication between teachers and parents.

Review and assess special education services for all special needs students.

Set high expectations for all students.

Seek professional development opportunities for those teachers who are not yet incorporating technology into the curriculum.

Utilize time and staff in this school more efficiently to maximize student learning, especially the use of itinerant teachers.

Adhere to the established time for the start of instruction.

Recommendations for the North Providence School District

Review the report cards currently being used and align them to the type of instruction being delivered and

the actual achievement of the students.

Support and guide this school as it reviews and assesses special education services.

Utilize staff in this school more efficiently to maximize student learning, especially the use of itinerant teachers.

7. Final Advice to the School

As you consider the conclusions, commendations, and recommendations in this SALT visit report, remember to celebrate the successes that you have already accomplished. You have laid the foundation for a real learning community. Through your self-study you have already identified your school's strengths and weaknesses and have set goals for the improvement of learning and teaching. Do not lose sight of these goals.

The support you enjoy from the larger school community and your total devotion to the education of the whole child will make your goals easier to achieve. This will also provide comfort and stability, as you honestly evaluate your current status on your journey to school improvement. As frightening as it may be, take the leap of faith needed to make important changes. The result will be the creation of an educational community in which you can all take great pride

The Centredale Elementary School Improvement Team

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Parent

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Parent

Gina DePetrillo
Teacher

Julie Kwolek
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New Standards Reference Examination and RI Writing Assessment Results (2001)

Endorsement of SALT Visit Team Report

Centredale Elementary School

February 8, 2002

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.
April 7, 2002