



Gladstone Street School

Cranston

The SALT Visit Team Report

March 1, 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 of the 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.ridoe.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 Gladstone Street School from February 25, 2002-March 1, 2002. 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 Gladstone Street 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, in the hallways, and on the playground. 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 Gladstone Street School.

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

- ◆ *observing a total of 122 complete classes and 32 partial classes. The team spent a total of over 126 hours in direct classroom observation. Every classroom was visited at least once, and almost every teacher was observed more than twice.*
- ◆ *observing the school outside of the classroom*
- ◆ *following nine 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*
- ◆ *breakfast with members of the Child Opportunity Zone (COZ)*
- ◆ *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

Cranston Professional Development Institute booklet

classroom assessments

Strategic Plan Gladstone Street School September 2000

district strategic plan

2000 SALT Survey Report

classroom textbooks

1998, 1999, 2000 2001 Information Works!

1998, 1999, 2000, 2001 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

Gladstone Street School Creed

Cranston Schools Mathematics Framework and Curriculum Guide, Spring 1998

Title I Schoolwide Plan 2001-2002

Planning Center Action Plan

Project Gladstone publication

Gladstone Street School 2001-2002 School Year Classroom Schedules

Gladstone Street School SALT Visit Books One and Two

Cranston Public Schools Teacher Evaluation Handbook

Limited English Proficiency Regulations 2000

The full visit team built the conclusions, commendations, and recommendations presented here through intense and thorough discussion. The team met for a total of 29 hours in six separate meetings spanning the 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 Gladstone Street School

Background

The Gladstone Street School is located in the Arlington neighborhood of the city of Cranston, Rhode Island. The school opened in 1953 and has continued to serve the community as an elementary school for the past 49 years. Gladstone Street School currently serves students in kindergarten through grade five.

One principal, one assistant to the principal, 42 part- and full-time teachers, two guidance counselors, two secretaries, 12 aides and support staff, and four custodians serve the 486 students in the school. Fifty-seven percent of the students are white, 20 percent are Hispanic, 17 percent are Asian/Pacific Islander, and six percent are black. Gladstone Street serves an extremely diverse student population that includes students arriving from Armenia, Korea, and Syria, plus students of Kurdish descent. Twenty-seven percent of the students receive ESL services, and 23 percent receive special education services. Seventy-four percent of Gladstone Street students are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. The student population has a mobility index of 31 percent.

Gladstone Street School became a school wide Title One school this year. The school is in its second year of implementing an Early Reading Success Initiative, a program that has helped kindergarten through second grade teachers to implement the latest research-developed practices for improving reading instruction. In addition, the school is the only elementary school in Cranston that has implemented all of the safe school recommendations developed by the Cranston Task Force on School Safety.

Students participate in the active student council and a school safety patrol in the school. Additionally, the active Parents Teachers of Gladstone (P.T.G.) supports the school financially and assists with academic and extracurricular planning. The school also involves families in the life of the school through family literacy, parent nights, Project Ready, and the Child Opportunity Zone (COZ) that is located in the building.

State Assessment Results for Gladstone Street School

On the subtests of the 2000-2001 New Standards Mathematics Reference Examination one in three of the fourth graders (34%) met or exceeded the standard in Basic Skills; almost one in 10 of the fourth graders (9%) met or exceeded the standard in Concepts; and almost one in 10 of the fourth graders (8%) met or exceeded the standard in Problem Solving. *Information Works! 2001* (2000 assessment data) shows that equity gaps (a difference of more than 15%) exist in mathematics for Special Education students. The same assessment results show that students at the Gladstone Street School perform at the same level as similar students in the state on the Concepts and Problem Solving subtests and below the level of similar students in the state on the Basic Skills subtest.

On the reading subtests of the 2000-2001 New Standards English Language Arts Reference Examination almost two in three of the fourth graders (61%) met or exceeded the standard in Reading: Basic Understanding, and almost one in two of the fourth graders (47%) met or exceeded the standard in Reading: Analysis and Interpretation. *Information Works! 2001* (2000 assessment data) shows that equity gaps (a difference of more than 15%) exist in reading for the following groups of students: Special Education and Limited English Proficient. The same assessment results show that students at the Gladstone Street School perform at the same level as similar students in the state on the Basic Understanding subtest and above the level of similar students in the state on the Analysis and Interpretation subtest.

On the writing subtests of the 2000-2001 New Standards English Language Arts Reference Examination more than two in five of the fourth graders (45%) met or exceeded the standard in Writing: Conventions, and almost three in five of the fourth graders (59%) met or exceeded the standard in Writing: Effectiveness. On the Rhode Island Writing Assessment fewer than one in 20 of the third graders (3%) met or exceeded the standard. *Information Works! 2001* (2000 assessment data) shows that equity gaps (a difference of more than 15%) exist in writing for the following groups of students: Special Education and Limited English Proficient. The same assessment results show that students at the Gladstone Street School perform at the same level as similar students in the state on the Writing:

Effectiveness subtest and below the level of similar students in the state on the Writing: Conventions subtest. Between 1998 and 2001 student performance in Writing: Effectiveness has increased steadily from 15 percent to 59 percent achieving or exceeding the standard.

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

3. PORTRAIT OF Gladstone Street School AT THE TIME OF THE VISIT

A friendly, open atmosphere permeates the Gladstone Street School. Friendly smiles and welcoming words greet visitors. Colorful displays, showing the kind of work students complete in the school, line the hallways. The administrators and teachers have established a community in which they, as well as their students, share the knowledge that each of them belongs; they are a team. The principal builds trust and respect throughout the school. Teachers are lifelong learners, who work hard to bring their students to higher levels of learning. Students, who represent a wide ethnic diversity, feel comfortable with each other and feel safe in school. Every day, when the principal announces the rooms with perfect attendance and perfect homework, the hallways echo with student cheers in response. Students at Gladstone Street School enjoy coming to school and they come ready to learn.

Project Gladstone, a highly successful program that was initiated to address inappropriate student behaviors, has grown to encompass the social, emotional, and academic needs of all students in the school. The school creed, recited by students daily, reads in part that students will, “respect their teachers and their classmates by being honest, reliable, and kind.” This is a reality at Gladstone Street School.

The school still faces great academic challenges, but Gladstone is purposefully confronting them. One major concern of the school has been the students’ low reading levels. In order to raise student reading levels teachers focus on teaching phonics skills. However, they often emphasize phonics at the expense of teaching higher order thinking skills. In writing classes teachers use a workshop approach in which students follow sequential steps to develop their work. Although all teachers instruct their students in the use of an organizing strategy when they write, they do not yet encourage students to use different strategies to organize their writing. Gladstone Street School does not have a sequential, comprehensive math program in place; in order to address student weaknesses in math, teachers spend much of their class time teaching basic skills and simple problem solving strategies. They have not yet moved their students to learning the higher-level strategies of thinking required for complex problem solving.

Although students are ready to become independent learners, teachers still assume much of the responsibility for student learning in the classroom. Teachers ask students too often to respond only to teacher directed questions and do not enable students to make their own meaning from individual and group investigations.

The Gladstone Street School is a mutually supportive community that truly cares about its members. While this community still faces great challenges, the school will move its students to higher levels of learning if it sustains its strong sense of community, maintains its belief that “we can do this,” enables its teachers to extend student learning even further, and continues the very hard work that already takes place here.

4. FINDINGS ON STUDENT LEARNING

Sources of Evidence

- ◆ *2001 Rhode Island Writing Assessment results*
- ◆ *2001 New Standards Mathematics Reference Examination School Summary*
- ◆ *2001 New Standards English Language Arts Reference Examination School Summary*
- ◆ *reviewing completed and ongoing student work*
- ◆ *following students*
- ◆ *observing classes*
- ◆ *talking with students, teachers, staff, school administrators*
- ◆ *interviewing teachers about the work of their students*
- ◆ *breakfast meeting with members of the Child Opportunity Zone (COZ)*
- ◆ *observing the school outside of the classroom*
- ◆ *meeting with the school improvement team, students, school administrators, district administrators, parents*
- ◆ *Gladstone Street School Creed*

Conclusions

Some students at Gladstone Street School are fluent readers. They connect what they read to themselves and to the world. They read about geometric shapes in math prior to recognizing them in their environment; in social studies they gather information from nonfiction texts such as newspapers and books; and in science they research material about planets. However, many students spend too much of their daily reading time developing and practicing phonics skills. While the use of phonics helps students decode what they read, phonics alone does not enable them to acquire the higher order thinking skills that characterize fluent readers. Student performance on the 2001 New Standards English Language Arts Reference Examination reflects their relative strength in Basic Understanding; 61 percent achieved or exceeded the standard, as compared with their performance in Analysis and Interpretation, where 47 percent achieved or exceeded the standard. (*following students, observing classes, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, talking with students and teachers, interviewing teachers about the work of their students, breakfast meeting with members of the Child Opportunity Zone (COZ), 2001 New Standards English Language Arts Reference Examination School Summary*)

Students write throughout the day and across the curriculum. They often write in response to prompts; they sometimes free write in journals. They respond to literature, write reports in science and social studies, and write to explain the strategies they have used to solve problems in math. Most students successfully follow a process in their writing: they brainstorm, use graphic organizers, draft, self/peer/group edit for mechanics, conference with the

teacher, and publish. Students are adept at using classroom tools such as word walls and personal dictionaries to assist them in their work. However, because they are confined to responding to a prompt within a stated framework, their writing often is constrained. Their writing is seldom marked by originality, voice, and development of ideas. Student classroom writing practices are consistent with their performance on the 2001 Rhode Island Writing Assessment in which only three percent of the third graders achieved the standard. (*following students, observing classes, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, observing the school outside of the classroom, 2001 Rhode Island Writing Assessment results*)

Although students practice basic math skills daily, their computation skills are weak. To practice strategies for solving math problems, students engage in simple problem-solving activities such as working backwards, making a list, drawing a picture, and simplifying. Although these strategies are vital, these beginning steps to solving math problems are not sufficient to enable students to solve complex, open-ended problems successfully or to meet school performance standards. On the 2001 New Standards Mathematics Reference Examination student performance is poor. Thirty-four percent of students achieved or exceeded the standard in Skills; only nine percent achieved or exceeded the standard in Concepts; and only eight percent achieved in Problem-Solving. (*following students, observing classes, 2001 New Standards Mathematics Reference Examination School Summary, talking with students, teachers, school administrators, meeting with the school improvement team, students, school administrators, district administrators, parents, breakfast meeting with members of the Child Opportunity Zone (COZ), reviewing completed and ongoing student work*)

Students at Gladstone Street School function as a harmonious community in which everyone belongs. They like all the adults in their school. They feel comfortable and safe here and enjoy coming to school. Students demonstrate the spirit of the school creed, as they “respect their teachers and their classmates by being honest, reliable, and kind.” A fifth grade student stated, “The school creed is a promise that can’t be broken.” This positive, caring atmosphere frees students to learn. (*Gladstone Street School Creed, following students, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, meeting with students, parents, school administrators, talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administrators, breakfast meeting with the COZ*)

Commendations for Gladstone Street School

The students' sense of belonging

Students who want to be here

Recommendations for Gladstone Street School

Create and implement a more balanced reading program in which phonics is one of many strategies used to move all students to become fluent readers who can analyze and interpret written language.

Provide more flexible and varied writing opportunities for students. Individualize student writing assignments. Give students choices for their writing that will help to give them ownership of their work. Provide constructive feedback to all students.

Explore ways to provide students with a comprehensive math program that includes skills embedded in concepts and complex problem-solving.

5. FINDINGS ON TEACHING

Sources of Evidence

- ◆ *observing classes*
- ◆ *observing the school outside of the classroom*
- ◆ *talking with students, teachers, staff, school administrators*
- ◆ *breakfast meeting with members of the Child Opportunity Zone (COZ)*
- ◆ *meeting with the school improvement team, students, school administrators, district administrators, parents*
- ◆ *following students*
- ◆ *2001 Rhode Island Writing Assessment results*
- ◆ *2001 Information Works!*
- ◆ *2001 New Standards Mathematics Reference Examination School Summary*
- ◆ *2000 SALT Survey Report*
- ◆ *interviewing teachers about the work of their students*
- ◆ *reviewing completed and ongoing student work*
- ◆ *classroom textbooks*
- ◆ *Cranston Schools Mathematics Framework and Curriculum Guide, Spring 1998*
- ◆ *Limited English Proficiency Regulations 2000*

Conclusions

Teachers at Gladstone Street School express a sense of pride in their school, as well as optimism about the work they are doing; they are professionals who really want to be here. They are lifelong learners who embrace school wide initiatives as members of a cohesive team. These caring and supportive teachers wholeheartedly focus on bringing their students to higher levels. (*following students, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, meeting with the school improvement team, students, school administrators, district administrators, parents, talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administrators, 2000 SALT Survey Report*)

Teachers assume much of the responsibility for what students learn in the classroom. They structure lessons so that students have few opportunities to make decisions, to take leadership roles in classroom learning, to learn from one another, and to think creatively and independently. This practice fails to meet the diverse needs of all students.

Teachers too often assign all students the exact same task to complete. As a result, some students complete their assignments and then sit and wait while other students struggle to complete the assignment in the time allotted. *(following students, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, meeting with students, parents, talking with students, teachers, staff, interviewing teachers about the work of their students, reviewing completed and ongoing student work)*

A few teachers balance their lessons between direct instruction and independent student work. While students work independently, teachers address the needs of individual students. However, teachers in many classrooms spend too much class time in direct instruction. This provides students with little time to construct their own meanings from their individual and group investigations. Because teachers dominate the lessons for long periods of time, students often do not have enough time to complete their work, to show their understanding, and to internalize their learning through daily applications. *(following students, observing classes, meeting with parents, talking with students, 2000 SALT Survey Report)*

Most teachers give students specific prompts for their writing assignments. They focus student work in writing around one organizational strategy, a 4-square model. This is a good strategy for beginning student writers, but this graphic organizer is only one of many different tools that students can use to help them improve their writing. The over-reliance on one strategy limits the opportunities for students to learn a number of different ways to develop and improve their writing. *(reviewing completed and ongoing student work, following students, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, interviewing teachers about the work of their students, talking with teachers, students, and parents, 2001 Rhode Island Writing Assessment results)*

Teachers demonstrate inconsistent approaches to math instruction. They focus primarily on teaching skills and simple problem solving in isolation and do not balance this by including a focus on skills, concepts, and complex problem solving. Without a sequential, comprehensive math program in place teachers are severely limited in their abilities to empower students to perform at higher levels. *(following students, observing classes, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, talking with students, teachers, and school administrators, observing the school outside of the classroom, classroom textbooks, 2001 Information Works!, 2001 New Standards Mathematics Reference Examination School Summary, Cranston Schools Mathematics Framework and Curriculum Guide, Spring 1998, meeting with school improvement team)*

Teachers at Gladstone Street School are beginning to use rubrics in their classrooms. Some teachers use task specific rubrics that set clear expectations for their students' work; they give their students clear feedback that enables them to know what they must do to improve their work. However, most teachers use rubrics as evaluation tools to assign grades to students. They give students little constructive feedback. As a result, students are not clear about how to improve their work. Additionally, teachers do not yet use rubrics for their own reflection and as tools to facilitate their instruction. *(following students, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, interviewing teachers about the work of their students, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, breakfast meeting with members of the Child Opportunity Zone (COZ), meeting with students and parents, talking with teachers)*

Teachers of English as a Second Language (ESL) students work very hard to meet the many different needs of their diverse populations. This difficult job is made even more challenging because there are large numbers of ESL students in most classes. Teachers have limited time to work with students at many different skill levels. As a result, there are unequal learning opportunities for all students, which in turn contributes to equity gaps in the school. *(following students, observing classes, talking with teachers, meeting with district administrators, 2001 Information Works!, Limited English Proficiency Regulations 2000)*

Commendations for Gladstone Street School

The caring and supportive teachers who wholeheartedly focus on bringing their students to higher levels of learning.

The unified teacher partnership

Recommendations for Gladstone Street School

In order to address student learning needs engage in professional development in balanced literacy, standards-based math, inquiry learning, and differentiated instruction. Implement the strategies you learn in all classrooms.

Analyze your students' math needs now. Investigate and adopt a single, sequential, comprehensive math program in all grades to empower students to perform at higher levels.

Look closely at how time is utilized in the classroom. Streamline the schedule and use the time you gain for individual and group inquiries.

Decrease the number of students in ESL classrooms.

Investigate ways to shift the focus of instruction from lessons that are teacher-directed to lessons that focus on student-centered learning.

Review the distribution of personnel assigned to work in the same classroom in order to ensure the optimal use of all staff.

Recommendations for Cranston School Department

Provide the Gladstone Street School with the resources necessary for all teachers to participate in professional development around balanced literacy, standards-based math, inquiry learning, and differentiated instruction.

Work with the school in order to investigate, adopt, and implement a sequential, comprehensive math program.

6. FINDINGS ON THE SCHOOL

Sources of Evidence

- ◆ *observing classes*
- ◆ *observing the school outside of the classroom*
- ◆ *talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administrators*
- ◆ *Title I Schoolwide Plan 2001-2002*
- ◆ *Planning Center Action Plan*
- ◆ *meeting with the school improvement team, students, school administrators, district administrators, parents*
- ◆ *following students*
- ◆ *Strategic Plan Gladstone Street School September 2000*
- ◆ *Gladstone Street School 2001-2002 School Year Classroom Schedules*
- ◆ *breakfast meeting with the Members of the Child Opportunity Zone (COZ)*
- ◆ *Project Gladstone publications*
- ◆ *Gladstone Street School SALT Visit Books One and Two*
- ◆ *Cranston Professional Development Institute booklet*
- ◆ *Cranston Public Schools Teacher Evaluation Handbook*

Conclusions

Project Gladstone is a school wide program that was originally initiated to address disruptive student behaviors. This extremely successful program has been expanded to promote “a positive and healthy school environment” by addressing the social, emotional, and academic needs of all students. The components of this proactive program include a behavior modification team, a student planning center where students receive academic support, and a community resource network. Through Project Gladstone, students are empowered to self-monitor their behavior in positive ways that enable them to become successful in school. (*Project Gladstone publications, following students, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, meeting with the school improvement team, students, school administrators, district administrators, parents, Strategic Plan Gladstone Street School September 2000, talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administrators, Title I Schoolwide Plan 2001-2002, Planning Center Action Plan*)

The principal is a proactive leader who builds an encompassing trust and respect among all members of the Gladstone Street School community. His highly visible and vital presence in the school and community has

contributed to a school culture that is characterized by traditions, celebrations, and a sense of belonging. *(following students, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, talking with students, teachers, and staff, breakfast meeting with members of the Child Opportunity Zone (COZ), meeting with the school improvement team, students, district administrators, and parents)*

Teachers are supported in many ways in Gladstone Street School. The Assistant to the Principal provides valuable support in his role as a behavior interventionist. The two guidance counselors model character development and conflict resolution in the classroom and lead study skills lessons. They also meet an extensive number of small groups of students and individual students to set goals that support academic learning and appropriate behavior. The Planning Center teacher supports teachers by working with students in small groups to address specific needs such as making up academic deficiencies and improving organizational skills. In addition, the Reading Consultant and Title I teachers model strategies for teaching reading and writing, and they work collaboratively with teachers in their classrooms. The Early Reading Success Initiative provides teachers with many professional development opportunities. *(Title I Schoolwide Plan 2001-2002, Project Gladstone publication, Gladstone Street School SALT Visit Books One and Two, Strategic Plan Gladstone Street School September 2000, meeting with the school improvement team, school administrators, district administrators, parents, breakfast meeting with members of the Child Opportunity Zone (COZ), following students, observing classes)*

The Cranston School Department also supports teachers in several ways. It offers a wide array of professional development opportunities for teachers through its Professional Development Institute, as well as responds to specific requests for professional development from schools. The district mentoring program helps teachers new to the school; the school-based mentor at Gladstone enables mentees to work easily and directly with their mentors. Also, the teacher evaluation tool, a rubric-designed instrument that includes goal setting, can be useful in helping teachers improve their practice. *(Cranston Professional Development Institute booklet, meeting with district administrators, Cranston Public Schools Teacher Evaluation Handbook, talking with teachers and school administrators)*

Some teachers plan together and coordinate their lessons. They meet informally during their prep times or before or after school. Although special education and self-contained teachers meet once a quarter for a half-day formal planning session, regular, designated planning time is not a part of the schedule for all teachers. As a result, grade level teacher collaboration is hindered. *(observing classes, talking with teachers, school administrators, Gladstone Street School 2001-2002 School Year Classroom Schedules)*

While one of the school's action plans is to increase the use of technology, technology currently is underutilized in the school. This limits the development of Gladstone Street students in computer literacy. *(following students, observing classes, Strategic Plan Gladstone Street School September 2000, talking with students, teachers, and school administrators, meeting with parents, school administrators, district administrators)*

The Strategic Plan Gladstone Street School 2000 includes six goals. Four of these address academic areas, and two address school and community issues. Many of these goals have already been achieved. The plan includes action steps, but few of these are new. Thus, the plan is a limited tool for the school to use in its improvement efforts. *(Strategic Plan Gladstone Street School 2000, meeting with the school improvement team)*

Commendations for Gladstone Street School

Project Gladstone

The many supports for teachers in the school and district

The proactive leadership

Recommendations for Gladstone Street School

Establish specific planning time within the schedule to provide teachers with more time to examine student work.

Make better use of the computers that are already in the school. Participate in professional development in the integration of technology across the curriculum. Implement the training throughout the school.

Carefully review the school improvement plan. Use this report along with self-study results to revise the plan to include useful and purposeful action steps to move the school forward in its improvement efforts. Develop a school-wide professional development plan that is directed at the specific needs of the school.

Continue with Project Gladstone.

Maintain the supports for teachers that are currently in place.

Recommendations for the Cranston School Department

Work with the school and the Cranston Teachers' Alliance to create formal common planning time for teachers within the daily schedule.

Continue to fully support Project Gladstone.

Support the school with the resources necessary to improve technology and its use in the school.

7. Final Advice to the School

Gladstone Street School has begun to confront its challenges and is ready to take the next step. Build on the foundation you have established with Project Gladstone. Sustain the many supports for teachers that it offers. Use the strong sense of team membership among the adults in the school and the proactive leadership, together with your students' strong sense of belonging, to move everyone in the school to higher levels of teaching and learning. Pursue academic excellence with the same vigor that you have invested in Project Gladstone.

Look closely at the impact of your reading instruction. Establish a more balanced reading program in which phonics is only one of many strategies you use. Expand student writing activities to include many ways for organizing, developing, and improving writing. Implement a comprehensive, sequential math program for all students that will enable them to learn complex problem solving skills, as well as math concepts and basic math skills.

Provide students with many opportunities to assume active roles in their own learning. Shift the focus of instruction to a student-centered model in which children learn through questioning, inquiry, and discovery.

Make a concerted effort to include all teachers in the good use of common planning time. Use common planning time to coordinate your teaching efforts and to focus on student work. Use the information you learn from looking at student work to guide you in the revision of your school improvement plan.

Through the learning experiences you provide them, Gladstone Street School students can become strong readers, writers, problem solvers, and effective decision makers.

The Gladstone Street School Improvement Team

Cheryl Ascenzi
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Librarian

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Parent

Gail Derobbio
Parent

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Reading Teacher

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Principal/ SIT Chair

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Grade 5 Teacher

Mildred Moriera
Grade 5 Teacher

Marie Palazzo
Grade 5 Teacher

Heather Palmieri
Grade 4 Teacher

Wendy Rocchio
Grade 3 Teacher

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Grade 2 ESL Teacher

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The SALT Visit Team

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Grade 4 Teacher
Hampden Meadows School
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Sharon Simpson
Grade 4 Teacher
Harry Kizirian School
Providence, Rhode Island

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

Endorsement of SALT Visit Team Report

Gladstone Street School

March 1, 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.
March 17, 2002