



# Veazie Street School

Providence

## The SALT Visit Team Report

October 25, 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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**For information about SALT, please contact Rick Richards at 401-222-4600, x 2194 or [salt@ridoe.net](mailto:salt@ridoe.net).**

**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 Veazie Street School from October 21-25, 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.
- ◆ The team makes its judgment explicit.

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 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

Providence One Plan 2002-2003 for Veazie 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, 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 Veazie Street School.

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

- *spending over 136 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 8 students for a full day*
- *observing the work of teachers and staff for a full day*
- *meeting at scheduled times with the following groups:*

- *teachers*

- *school improvement team*

- *school and district administrators*

- *students*

- *parents*

- *talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administrators*
- *reviewing completed and ongoing student work*
- *discussing with teachers 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*

- *Providence One Plan 2002-2003 for Veazie Street School*

- *district strategic plan*

- *2002 SALT Survey report*

- *classroom textbooks*

- *2002 Information Works!*

- *2002 New Standards Reference Examination results*

- *2002 Rhode Island Writing Assessment results*

- *2002 New Standards English Language Arts Reference Examination School Summary*
- *2002 New Standards Mathematics Reference Examination School Summary*
- *Teacher Evaluation Handbook for Probationary and Tenured Teachers (8/16/98)*
- *Veazie School Incentive and Discipline Initiative (VIDI)*
- *H.E.L.P. (Health and Education Leadership for Providence) Video and school binder*
- *Virginia Lockwood Uncut Video*
- *Providence Public Schools Administrative Procedures*

The full visit team built the conclusions, commendations, and recommendations presented here through intense and thorough discussion. The team met for a total of 24 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 representative will offer assistance in preparing the compact.

## 2. PROFILE OF Veazie Street School

### Background

Responding to the burgeoning population, as well as the increase in the number of children barred from working in the mills and factories, Veazie Street School opened in 1909. Children, mostly from recently arrived Italian families, attended grades 1-8 and then graduated to work or, if fortunate, to high school. The creation of Junior High Schools in Providence in 1929 changed the grade structure at Veazie from grades 1-8 to grades 1-6; kindergarten was added a few years later. Throughout its history, there have been administrative offices at Veazie Street School, in addition to its classrooms. In the 1970s the Providence School Department used areas on the first and second floors across from the cafeteria for its the Personnel Office, Student Relations Office, and Audio-Visual headquarters. As the student population shrank in the 1970s, this use of Veazie Street increased until, in 1980, the Providence School Department completely took it over for administrative purposes. With the infusion of new populations from the Caribbean, East Asia, and West Africa, Veazie reopened in 1992 after a \$9 million renovation.

Through funds obtained from the H.E.L.P. (Health and Education Leadership for Providence) Coalition, Veazie has worked closely with nationally recognized educational consultant Virginia Lockwood to improve classroom-teaching practice in balanced literacy. Veazie initiated the Lab-Site embedded professional development model in which teachers, working with Ms. Lockwood, developed, modeled, and critiqued lessons in reading and writing in classrooms. The Lab-Site model continues.

A professional staff of a principal, an assistant principal, 41 faculty members including a literacy coach and two math coaches, one school counselor, a school nurse-teacher, a speech therapist, one occupational therapists, one full-time and one half-time school social worker, one psychologist, one half-time diagnostic prescriptive teacher, one physical therapist service the Veazie Street School. In addition there are 12 teacher assistants, one certified occupational therapist assistant, two secretaries, a secretarial assistant, five custodians, and six Marriott kitchen staff. There are two kindergarten classes. There are four classes each for grades one, two, four, and five; grade three consists of six classes. These include an ESL classroom for each grade from kindergarten through grade three. There is an additional grade four/five ESL classroom. There are three self-contained classrooms and three resource services: intensive resource, resource K-two, and resource three-five.

Of the 632 students at Veazie Street School, 332 are male and 300 are female. Two hundred forty eight (38%) are Hispanic, 235 (36%) are black, 137 (21%) are white, 19 (3%) are Asian/Pacific Islander, and 13 (2%) are Native American. Six hundred nineteen (95%) are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. One hundred one students (16%) comprise the Special Education population. Of that total, 30 are enrolled in self-contained classes, 52 receive resource services, and 19 children receive speech services only.

The Literacy Resource Center at Brown University, the Education Department at Providence College, the Education Department at Rhode Island School of Design, and McDonald's Restaurant on Branch Avenue all have partnerships with Veazie Street School. The school participates in on-going district-wide professional development for administrators through the Institute for Learning at the University of Pittsburg.

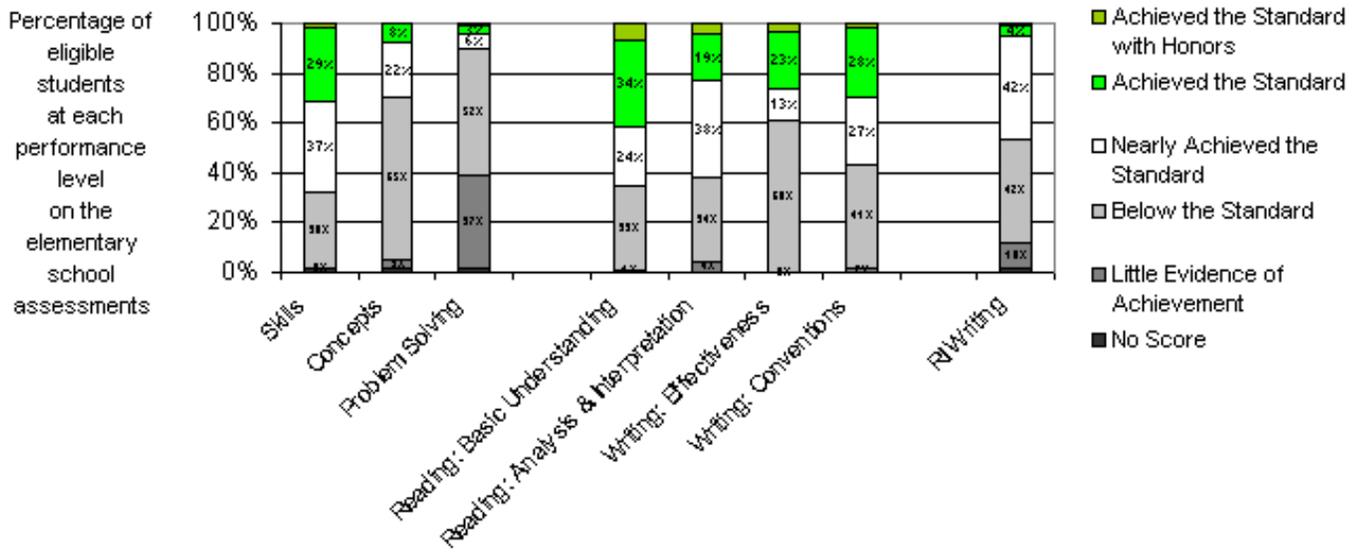
### State Assessment Results for Veazie Street School

This section of the school profile shows results from the latest available state assessment program four different ways: against performance standards; compared to similar students in the state; across student groups within the school; and over time. Assessment results create pieces of evidence that the visit team uses as it conducts its inquiry. The team uses this evidence to shape its efforts to locate critical issues for the school. It also uses this evidence, along with other evidence, to draw conclusions about those issues.

#### Results in relation to performance standards

The first display shows how well the students do in relation to standards in English/Language Arts and mathematics. Student results are shown as the percentage of students taking the test whose score places them in the various categories at, above, or below the performance standard. Endorsed by the Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education in 1998, the tested standards can be found in the publication *New Standards Performance Standards*.

*Table 1. 2001-02 Student Results on Rhode Island State Assessments*

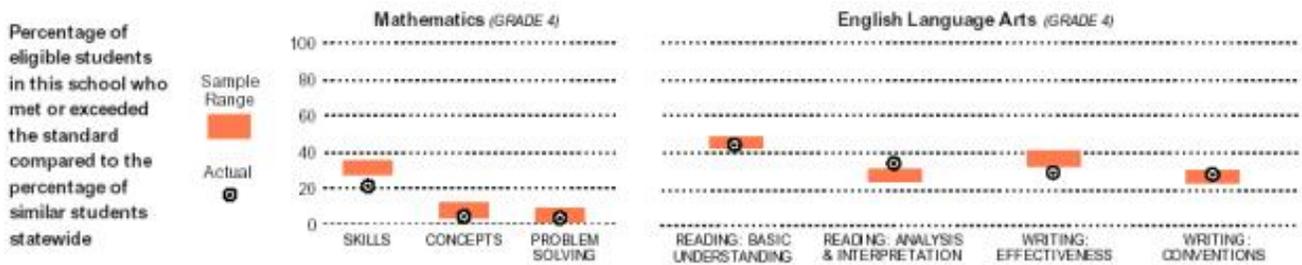


Fourth grade students at Veazie Street School were considerably below standard on all three math subtests. The greatest gaps to standard were on the areas of concepts and problem solving. More than half of the students were in the two lowest categories on these subtests. The majority of students did not achieve the standard on the reading and writing subtests and the Grade 3 RI Writing Test.

**Results compared to similar students in the state**

This chart includes the performance levels of students with special education needs, students participating in ESL or bilingual programs, low socio-economic status (a composite of income level, racial background and parental education), as well as the performance of students with none of these characteristics. Taking all these characteristics into account, the graph displays the overall performance of students in this school compared to - a group of students from across the state whose characteristics match this school's students.

*Table 2. 2000-2001 Student Results in Comparison to Similar Students Statewide*

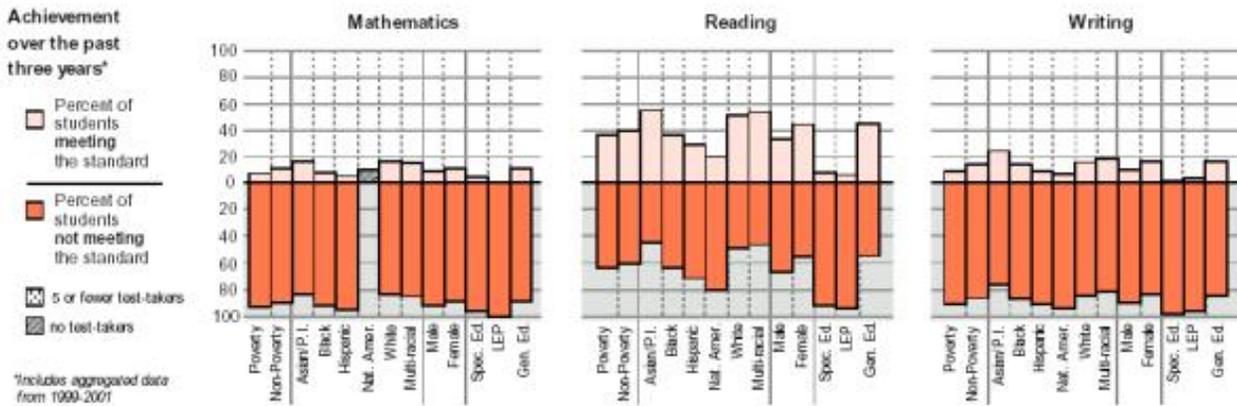


Veazie Street School students performed below similar students statewide on the mathematics skills subtest. In all other subtests Veazie Street students performed the same as similar students statewide.

**Results across student groups within the school**

An important way to display student results is across different groups of students with different characteristics who are in the school. This display creates information about how well the school meets the learning needs of its various students. Since breaking students into these smaller groups can result in groups becoming too small to show accurate results, this display shows the results based on three years of testing. The Department defines an important gap between different groups (an equity gap) to be a gap of 15% or more.

*Table 3. 2000-2001 Student Results across Subgroups*

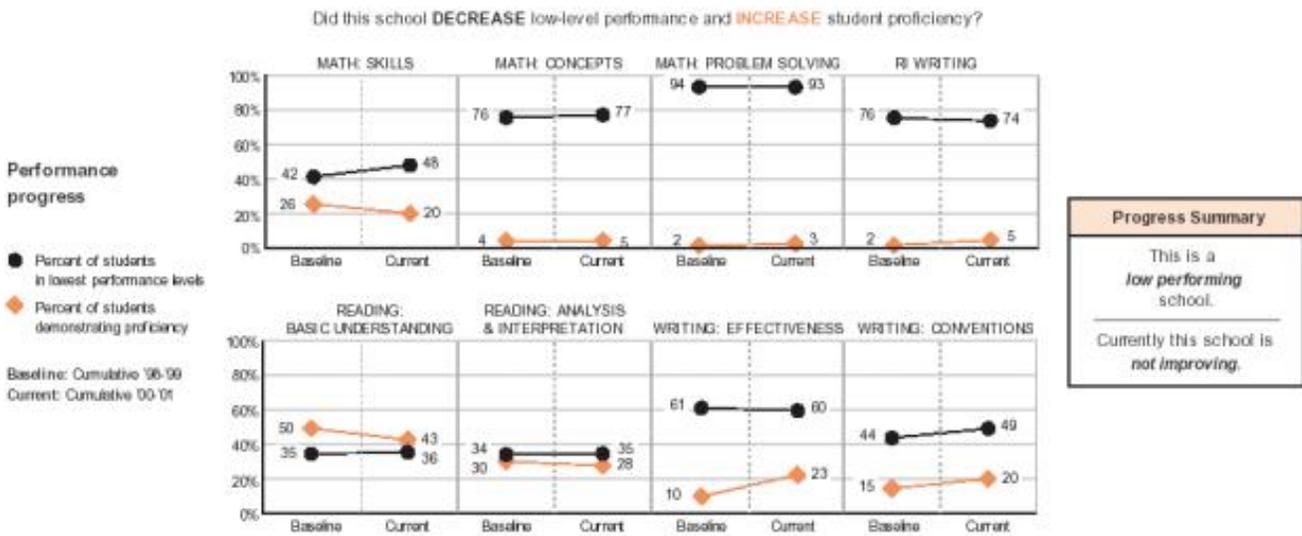


Equity gaps in reading exist for black students, Hispanic students, Native American students, and students participating in special education and LEP classes. In mathematics and writing scores are too low to identify gaps.

**Results over time**

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

Table 4. 2000-2001 Student Results Showing Change Over Time



Although this school does not meet the criteria for an improving school, evidence for improvement occurs in all three writing subtests where the percentage of students demonstrating proficiency increased by at least 3 percent. There is no evidence of improvement in either math or reading.

Information Works! data for Veazie Street School may be available at <<http://www.rido.net>>.

### 3. PORTRAIT OF Veazie Street School AT THE TIME OF THE VISIT

Veazie Street School is located in a vibrant, working-class neighborhood of Providence. The exterior view of the school does not prepare visitors for the spacious, immaculate, and colorful learning environment within. Bright and colorfully decorated classrooms line the long hallways on all four floors.

Literacy is the heart of Veazie Street School. The beat is palpable as you walk its hallways and visit its classrooms. There are books everywhere—in students' hands and student book boxes. There are leveled books in labeled boxes, books sorted by author, and books sorted by genre. Charts, rubrics, and daily schedules in every classroom guide students in purposeful instruction and gently remind them of appropriate behaviors.

For three years teachers have accepted and embraced the difficult challenge of improving student performance in literacy. Not only have they changed their teaching, they have changed their thinking. They are on the threshold of a new challenge, as they implement a new math program. They must also embrace this initiative so that students will improve their performance in mathematics.

The efforts to develop a community of learners are reflected in many classrooms. Students recite the Veazie Pledge, but many have not internalized its basic message. The behaviors of some children are unacceptable, and the consequences for these behaviors are inconsistent.

Here at Veazie both students and teachers demonstrate a willingness to “take on the work.” Much has been accomplished, but there is still work to do.

## 4. FINDINGS ON STUDENT LEARNING

### Sources of Evidence

- ◆ *reviewing completed and ongoing student work*
- ◆ *following students*
- ◆ *observing classes*
- ◆ *observing the school outside of the classroom*
- ◆ *meeting with the school improvement team, students, school administrators, and parents*
- ◆ *discussing student work with teachers*
- ◆ *talking with students, teachers, and school administrators*
- ◆ *reviewing classroom assessments*
- ◆ *2002 Information Works!*
- ◆ *2002 Rhode Island Writing Assessment results*
- ◆ *2002 New Standards Reference Examination results*
- ◆ *2002 SALT Survey Report*

### Conclusions

Students at Veazie Street School do what successful readers do! State assessment scores do not reflect the learning currently going on in Veazie classrooms. In text-rich classrooms surrounded by new and attractive books, students are reading in different genres, understanding written text, analyzing characters, developing vocabulary, and responding to literature in a variety of ways. Their reading responses are substantive and thoughtful. Students enjoy interactive read alouds and engage in meaningful conversations. In classrooms, where guided reading is regularly practiced, students use accountable talk to discuss their books and they develop and use strategies to improve their reading. Demonstrating knowledge of literature, they make frequent connections to other books and authors. Most accept the challenge of meeting the standard of reading 25 books on their own and see themselves as successful readers. (*following students, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, talking with students, teachers, and school administrators, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, 2002 New Standards English Language Arts Reference Examination School Summary, meeting with students, school administrators, and parents*)

Many Veazie Street School students communicate well in writing. They write often and enthusiastically. Students make connections between the work modeled by the teacher and their own writing; they can explain the writing process and produce published pieces. They effectively use the word walls and other sources of print in their rooms. Students often use rubrics to evaluate their own final products. Students at varying levels of ability see themselves as part of a community of writers, and they proudly share their work with others. Their engaging narratives demonstrate use of writer's craft. Students' consistent efforts and positive attitudes toward writing are likely to improve their scores on assessments. (*following students, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, meeting with students, school administrators, and parents, talking with students, teachers, and school administrators, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, 2002 Rhode Island Writing Assessment results*)

There is little evidence of student learning in math because of the limited amount of time spent on math. Many students report that they like the new district math program *Investigations* and are excited about using tools and playing games, but they show little understanding of the underlying math concepts and skills. (*following students, observing classes, meeting with students, school and parents, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing classroom assessments, 2002 New Standards Mathematics Reference Examination School Summary*)

While students are developing a sense of community in their regular classrooms, many exhibit a deliberate lack of self-control and a disturbing disrespect for adults and peers outside of their regular classrooms. These behaviors are totally inappropriate in any school or social environment and result in potentially dangerous situations for both children and adults. Students and teachers report that this lack of self-control adversely affects student learning and creates an unsafe environment. (*following students, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, meeting with students and parents, talking with students, teachers, and school administrators, 2002 SALT Survey Report*)

## Commendations for Veazie Street School

Students' use of writer's craft

Establishment of a community of readers and writers

Accountable talk

## Recommendations for Veazie Street School

Create a safe environment for learning by addressing the behavior issues.

Provide more opportunities for students to acquire skills, learn concepts, and to solve problems in mathematics.

Move ahead with plans for guided reading in all classrooms.

## Recommendations for Veazie Street School Students

Be respectful and responsible members of your entire school community.

## 5. FINDINGS ON TEACHING

### Sources of Evidence

- ◆ *observing classes*
- ◆ *talking with students and teachers*
- ◆ *discussing student work with teachers*
- ◆ *meeting with students, parents, and school and district administrators*
- ◆ *following students*
- ◆ *reviewing completed and ongoing student work*
- ◆ *2002 New Standards English Language Arts Reference Examination School Summary*
- ◆ *reviewing records of professional development activities*
- ◆ *2002 Rhode Island Writing Assessment results*
- ◆ *2002 New Standards Mathematics Reference Examination School Summary*
- ◆ *H.E.L.P. (Health and Education Leadership for Providence) Video and school binder*
- ◆ *Virginia Lockwood Uncut Video*
- ◆ *reviewing district and school policies and practices*
- ◆ *Veazie Street School Incentive and Discipline Initiative (VIDI)*

### Conclusions

Veazie Street School teachers have embraced the Balanced Literacy Program. Their effort and commitment is evident at all grade levels. After participating in extensive professional development most teachers implement the components of the program with considerable skill. Using a common vocabulary and shared expectations for learning outcomes, they effectively model a wide variety of reading strategies and provide students with multiple opportunities to gain and apply meaningful knowledge through a text-rich environment. They have clear expectations for student performance and promote accountable talk with and among students. (*following students, observing classes, meeting with students, school and district administrators, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, talking with students and teachers*)

Veazie Street School teachers are strongly committed to helping students develop as writers. They have participated in summer training with Virginia Lockwood, and they use a Lab-Site model of job-embedded professional development to improve their practice. In their classrooms teachers enthusiastically and successfully implement the new model of the writing process. They support each other by scheduling common lessons, opening their classrooms to their peers, and sharing student work. As a community, they celebrate writing pieces publicly by inviting parents and community officials to listen and share both students' and teachers' work at regular, scheduled events. If students continue to write daily, if teachers continue to model the writers' craft effectively, and if the excitement that drives writing at Veazie Street School continues, student writing is likely to improve. (*following students, observing classes, meetings with school and district administrators, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing records of professional development activities, H.E.L.P. (Health*

and Education Leadership for Providence) Video and school binder, Virginia Lockwood Uncut Video, 2002 New Standards English Language Arts Reference Examination School Summary, 2002 Rhode Island Writing Assessment result)

The emphasis on literacy at Veazie Street School, and in Providence schools generally, has limited the instruction time for math. Although usually included in teachers' schedules, math is often overlooked if time runs out. Overall, teachers are just beginning to implement the district math program *Investigations*. Many express concern about their lack of familiarity with the program and its lack of emphasis on skills. The limited time teachers spend on math and their inconsistent approach to teaching mathematics result in low math performance for Veazie Street School students. (*following students, observing classes, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, meeting with students and parents, talking with students and teachers, 2002 New Standards Mathematics Reference Examination School Summary*)

Many teachers have put an incredible amount of time and effort into developing an impressive learning community with established routines and mutual respect. Most classroom teachers maintain highly structured learning environments that support their well-planned and well-executed lessons; unfortunately, this practice is not evident in all learning situations. The constant struggle to maintain control frequently interferes with the delivery of instruction. When discipline is not consistent throughout the school, the work of all teachers is made more difficult. In addition, the current school policy of returning children with more serious infractions to the classroom is demoralizing and unsafe. (*following students, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, meeting with students, parents, and school and district administrators, reviewing district and school policies and practices, Veazie Street School Incentive and Discipline Initiative [VIDI]*)

## Commendations for Veazie Street School

Teachers' school-wide commitment to literacy

Strong sense of professional community

## Recommendations for Veazie Street School

Identify those teachers who need assistance in maintaining classroom discipline and develop action plans to help them.

Include itinerant teachers in grade level common planning time to unify discipline approaches and instructional units.

Increase math instruction. Take advantage of all opportunities for professional development in *Investigations*.

## 6. FINDINGS ON THE SCHOOL

### Sources of Evidence

- ◆ *observing classes*
- ◆ *following students*
- ◆ *observing the school outside of the classroom*
- ◆ *talking with many students, teachers, staff, and school administrators*
- ◆ *meeting with students, parents, school improvement team and school and district administrators*
- ◆ *reviewing Providence One Plan 2002-2003*
- ◆ *reviewing teachers' schedules*
- ◆ *2002 Information Works!*
- ◆ *reviewing records of professional development activities*
- ◆ *Veazie Street School Incentive and Discipline Initiative (VIDI)*

### Conclusions

Discipline is a serious problem at Veazie Street School. The implementation and enforcement of the VIDI (Veazie School Incentive and Discipline Initiative) is not consistent, and currently it is not effective. Not all teachers apply the consequences appropriately and fairly. Some confusion exists about what behaviors are addressed by each disciplinary level. Sending disruptive students to other classrooms is neither an appropriate nor an effective remedy. Teachers report that they are not satisfied with how the administration handles Level 3 offenses. This mistrust and confusion only exacerbates and perpetuates the discipline problem. (*following students, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, reviewing Providence One Plan, talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administrators, Veazie School Incentive and Discipline Plan, meeting with the school improvement team, students, parents, and school administrators*)

Veazie Street School and the Providence School Department strongly support new initiatives with regular, available, and on-going classroom-embedded professional development. The Lab-Site model initiated at Veazie Street School serves as an exemplary model to all districts. This investment of time and money has led to exceptional school-wide buy-in, participation, and commitment to both Balanced Literacy and writing instruction. Veazie Street School has not yet fully supported the *Investigations* math program with adequate professional development. (*meeting with school improvement team, school administrators, and district administrator, talking with teachers, reviewing records of professional development activities, reviewing Providence One Plan*)

ESL, self-contained, and resource classrooms are well equipped, bright, large, and print-rich learning environments where children feel part of the school community. They employ the Balanced Literacy Program, *Investigations* math, and the writing process at appropriate levels with appropriate modifications for their students. This environment prepares students well for inclusion in some regular education classes for academic subjects. However, this is not happening at Veazie Street School on a regular basis. (*following students, observing classes, talking with students and teachers*)

The 30 minute periods included in the current schedule require too many transitions and frequent walks through the long hallways for both students and teachers. Children lose valuable instruction time and teachers lose indispensable preparation time. Student behavior deteriorates during these transition times. In addition, 30 minutes is not sufficient for adequate and effective instruction of special subjects. (*reviewing teachers' schedules, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom,*

*talking with teachers, meeting with school administrators)*

The current large class size of 26 students contributes to some of the problems at Veazie Street School, especially in the primary grades. As a result, academic inclusion of special needs students is hampered, behavior is adversely influenced, and instruction is made more difficult. *(2002 Information Works!, following students, observing classes, talking with teachers)*

The safety of all members of the Veazie Street School community is jeopardized during the school day because the main entrance of the school is not locked. *(observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, talking with teachers and staff, meeting with district administrator)*

## Commendations for Veazie Street School

Long-term planning to create a unified, school-wide approach to reading and writing

Professional commitment to the Balanced Literacy Program

Voluntary efforts by some classroom teachers to provide inclusion experiences in literacy and math

## Recommendations for Veazie Street School

Immediately ensure that all administrators, teachers, students, and parents have a common understanding of VID. Consistently enforce the plan. Implement your Providence One Plan by hiring a behavior consultant to assist you, as you solve the discipline problem. Then, revisit the VID with a team of administrators, faculty, and parents. Investigate alternative plans, if necessary.

Begin professional development in math immediately. Expect students in all classrooms to do work in *Investigations* daily.

Protect your investment of time, money, and effort in professional development by addressing staff needs for classroom support, effective scheduling, and consistent discipline.

Allow students in self-contained classrooms to attend academic classes with their peers, when appropriate.

Provide a safer environment by considering ways to lock the building, while assuring easy access for parents and visitors.

## Recommendations for the Providence School Department

Ensure that appropriate initiatives to support behavior management are developed and implemented at Veazie Street School.

## 7. Final Advice to the School

Our time at Veazie Street School has been a week of outstanding professional development in Balanced Literacy. We return to our schools richer because of our experience here. Continue this wonderful work in reading and writing. Your dedication to this work on behalf of your students is admirable.

Do not be afraid to give this same time and effort to your new math program. We have confidence that with time and training you will be successful and so will your students. Math must become part of your daily routine.

Strengthen relations with families by communicating regularly and by providing all notices and newsletters in the students' home languages. Use the Family Center and other resources to link the school to families. Provide some non-academic opportunities in the school for children and their families.

Discipline is a community responsibility. All members of the Veazie Street School community must join together to ensure that the children get the best possible education in a safe and secure environment. Allocate funds to support efforts to tackle the behavior issues at Veazie. Have high expectations for behavior and consistent consequences for inappropriate behavior, both at school and at home.

As Veazie approaches its 100<sup>th</sup> birthday, the whole school community must accept responsibility for helping students to become good citizens. We know you are ready. "Take on the work. . . ."

## The Veazie Street School Improvement Team

Janet Carretti, Teacher

Carol Schneider, Teacher

James Borges, Principal

Eusebio Lopes, Assistant Principal

Colleen Moran, Providence Teachers' Union

Ginger Olivelli, ESL/Special Populations

Sue Kopech, Teacher

Michele Paris, Providence Teachers' Union

Suzanne Maher, Technology

Margaret Szlosek, SPED/Special Population

Angel Sweeney, Community

Pam Cassidy, Parent

Melanie Williams, Parent

Calvin Jones, I/Specialist

Adele Goss, Teacher

John Chamberland, RISD

Leslie Lawton, Teacher

Hlee Ly, At large

Lisa Vargas, Administration

## The SALT Visit Team

Carol A. Belair  
Grade 4 Teacher  
Wilbur and McMahon Schools  
Little Compton, Rhode Island  
On leave to the Rhode Island Department of Education  
To serve as a SALT Fellow

Erin Arndt  
Grade 1 Teacher  
Anna McCabe School  
Smithfield, Rhode Island

Bruce Butler  
Grade 1 Teacher  
Curvin-McCabe School  
Pawtucket, Rhode Island

Sharon Cabral  
Kindergarten ESL Teacher  
Cowden Street School  
Central Falls, Rhode Island

Rosemary Lightbown  
Grade 1 Teacher  
Ashton School  
Cumberland, Rhode Island

Maria Mindy daGraca  
ESL Supervisor  
East Providence, Rhode Island

Joan DiOrio  
Principal, Fallon School  
Pawtucket, Rhode Island

Marti Schwartz  
Grade 3 Teacher  
William Winsor School  
Smithfield, Rhode Island

## Endorsement of SALT Visit Team Report

**Veazie Street School**

October 25, 2002

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The steps Catalpa completed for this review were:

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

The findings from the review are:

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

Accordingly, Catalpa Ltd. endorses this report.



Thomas A. Wilson, EdD  
Catalpa Ltd.  
November 25, 2002